

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	2143	Press
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	199.200	
Dated	11—9—	1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 100. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 29th August 1867, No. 5,610.

Read the following letter from the Collector of Tinnevely, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 24th June 1867, No. 334:—

1. Upwards of ten years ago Colonel Horsley proposed an anicut at Streecy-cuntam on the Tambrapurny, and the project was pronounced well devised and feasible; the mutiny unfortunately stopped the work, and the Government have since remitted upwards of a lac of Rupees for withered crops on the very area that

Extract from Minutes of Consultation, No. 116, dated 25th January 1856, Public Works Department.

would have been so fertile and flourishing had the anicut been built. The Revenue lost to Government, and the profits fore-

gone by the ryots of the villages that would have been irrigated, may, at a very low computation, be estimated at upwards of 11 lacs of Rupees; while the want of grain during the recent scarcity was more severely felt in this neighbourhood and along the sea-board to the south than anywhere else in the district.

2. There is no anicut lower than Marudur, nine miles above Streecy-cuntam, and 27 miles from the sea, and during both the south-west and north-east monsoons, an enormous body of water flows over the Marudur anicut, and is entirely lost to the district.

3. Comparatively speaking the Tambrapurny is a better river than the Cauvery; the freshes are far more frequent, but instead of being utilized to the last drop, as is the case in the Cauvery, there is no anicut in the Tambrapurny for the last 27 miles of its course, and millions of cubic yards of water are allowed to flow out to the sea. The people are so impressed with the advantage of the work proposed, and are so anxious that it should be sanctioned before the revision of assessment, and the registry of lands at the settlement, that they have subscribed and paid into the Treasury 20,000 Rupees as a donation towards the work, and as an inducement to Government, to accord their sanction at once.

4. We are just now peculiarly well situated for commencing a work of this sort. The fort at Palamcottah has been recently dismantled, and allowing a large margin for works in the neighbourhood, there are 25,000 cut stones that I should be only too glad to see moved. The money subscribed is sufficient to cart these to Streecy-cuntam, and if the Government will advance a like sum now, and accord a general sanction for the work when it has been properly budgetted for, I might at once collect supplies and assist the Engineer greatly in getting the channels laid out. These channels will pass through a series of villages where the Pullers, a low class of labourers, enjoy "Puller Maniyam" for the performance of Maramut work; and if the channels are dug, as they must be at the dry season when the Pullers have nothing to do, each village will gladly contribute 200 or 300 men to work at much lower rates than those paid for labour during the cultivating season.

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
11th September 1867.*

5. Cheap labour, the free gift of stone, and the free cartage of stone to the work, will save the Government at least half a lac of Rupees.

6. The Superintending Engineer is now revising the original estimate to suit the altered prices of to-day, and I am not aware of the aggregate cost proposed;

24th April 1867, No. 95.

but whatever the cost may be, the return will amount to about a lac of Rupees per

annum, as explained in the following extract from my letter to the Engineer:—

"I have been over most of the villages likely to be affected by the Streevycuntam anicut, and have seen the enormous benefits likely to be conferred by the work; between Streevycuntam and the sea, a distance of twenty miles, the crops are now on the ground (at the end of April), and are not reaped till May, instead of in February, as is the case higher up the stream. The tanks from which these lands are irrigated receive their supply from the overflow of other tanks supplied from the Maradur anicut, some ten miles above Streevycuntam, and many good freshes come and go before the lower tanks receive a drop of water; in fact, the cultivating season far down the river is three months later than it need be, and the remissions made for failure of crops below the proposed anicut during the last ten years amount to upwards of a lac of Rupees. The proposed anicut will bring under cultivation 1,500 acres of nunjai waste, assessed at 7,500 Rupees,

These are the rates that would probably be imposed at the settlement; the existing rates are very much higher.

"will convert 3,000 acres of single crop land into double crop, which at 2½ Rs. an acre represents 7,500 Rupees, and will irrigate 3,000 acres of dry

land, which at 5 Rupees an acre, represents 15,000 Rupees; total 30,000.

"There is moreover a tract of marsh extending from Kulasegarapatnam to Vypar almost entirely uncultivated, but capable of growing rice crops if supplied with fresh water to wash out the salt.

"I have lately ridden over the whole length of this with the Inspector General of Police, and we both agreed that this barren tract, some forty miles in length, by an average of one in breadth, might be irrigated apparently with the greatest ease. The level is low, almost the sea level, and if the flood water that collects there during the monsoon had but an exit through the sand hills, this alone would wash out the salt. An exit is easily provided, and here are 25,000 acres that the people would readily take up at 3 Rupees an acre, lying waste from want of the water that fills the river day after day and week after week during the several months of the year."

7. It is not by irrigating fresh land only that the Government and the ryots will profit; the lands now poorly irrigated from the surplus of the Maradur anicut will receive an abundant supply direct; the harvest will be some months earlier, and the annual settlement may be early in proportion; the kists will be paid with greater promptitude, and should the irrigation extend as far as proposed and bring

Fresh water is now sold in Tuticorin at 4 pies per chatty full.

fresh water to Tuticorin, the aspect of the country will be changed, and the condition of the people in our most important

sea-port town will be very greatly improved.

8. The enclosed plan exhibits the general direction of the channels, and the area proposed to be irrigated; but I think this area may be greatly extended.

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particularly if the channel from the Maradur anicut on the northern bank of the river after having passed through the Streevycuntam and Perur tanks is relieved from supplying the Sevali, Perungulam, Arunugamangalam, Iruvapapuram and Korkoi tanks as it does at present, and is taken away from Perur on a high level to irrigate the whole of the sandy waste that stretches for miles round Tuticorin. The feasibility of this can, however, only be determined by levelling, and I would suggest that an Officer be at once deputed to take the requisite levels.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Sketch.

1. The Board are much obliged to Mr. Puckle for bringing forward the very important work to which he refers in the foregoing letter, and they resolve to submit the matter to Government, with their recommendation that, if possible, a grant of funds for the early prosecution of the work be sanctioned, or that, at any rate, authority be given for the expenditure of the sum subscribed by the ryots likely to benefit by the project.

2. It is quite evident that the anicut with its subsidiary channels will be a remunerative work, but the Board request Mr. Puckle to forward a rough estimate of the probable cost as soon as possible, with a statement giving the area of the dry and wet land likely to be affected by the work.

3. The liberality of the ryots in raising so large a subscription for the prosecution of the work merits the commendation of Government, and evinces their confidence in the project.

No. 200. ORDER THEREON, 11th September 1867, No. 2,143.

Irrigation, No. 8.

Transferred to the Department Public Works, with the opinion of Government in this Department that as the project has been already approved, as well devised and feasible, and promises to be very beneficial to the people and sufficiently remunerative, the equivalent of the sum subscribed by the ryots towards its execution should be at once placed at the disposal of the Superintending Engineer to enable him to start the work, and no effort should be spared to expedite its completion.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Public Works Department.
.. the Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

W-2143.

Transmitted the
Sept. 18th. to the
opinion of Govt. in the report
that in the project. Each one about
approved as well desired of the
promises & the very beneficial
of the people & sufficiently convenient
two. The execution of the same
intended by the report. Given
in execution. The above
placed at the disposal of the
Govt. & the
start the work. and support
the spread & expedite its
completion. S.B.

W.M.

11th Sept 1867.

21 copies to the Govt. Dept. 12
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