M.R.O. 14—5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 2828 Press ~~Mis.~~

534. 535

Dated 28-11— 1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
28th November 1867.

No. 534. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department :—

Passing orders on letter from Secretary Revenue Board requesting that, in future, proposals made by Department Public Works to transfer funds for the repairs of irrigation works from one district to another, may be referred for the remarks of the Board and District Officers before disposal by Government. } (Here enter 23rd November 1867, No. 3,641.)

No. 535. ORDER THEREON, 28th November 1867, No. 2,828.

Irrigation, No. 17.

Ordered to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) F. H. WILKINSON,
Acting Under Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

No. 519. Read the following letter from the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 28th October 1867, No. 7,012:—

1. With advertence to Order of Government, Department of Public Works, dated 2nd October 1867, communicated with the Proceedings in the Revenue Department, under date 4th October 1867, No. 2,334, I am directed by the Board of Revenue to request that, in future, when proposals are made by the Department of Public Works to transfer funds for the repairs of irrigation works from one district to another, they may be referred for the remarks of the Board and the district Officers before disposal by Government.

2. In the case under notice, it will be in the recollection of Government that the Board, in their Proceedings under date 24th April 1866, No. 2,877, brought to the special notice of Government the state of disrepair into which the irrigation works of the two Government talooks of the Vizagapatam district had been allowed to fall; that they at the same time observed that the same complaint was received from many districts, and that they had reason to anticipate serious effects on the revenue and on the general prosperity of the country, if effective means were not speedily adopted for checking and remedying the evil.

3. The Government in their Proceedings in the Department of Public Works, under date 17th May 1866, No. 1,587, while calling for a statement of the works needing repair, and remarking that much might apparently be done by enforcing the ordinary village labor, observed that the grants for the repair of works of irrigation were very limited, and that they were distributed throughout the districts in such manner as the Government considered most advantageous. The Government were pleased also to observe that, under such circumstances, general statements such as those made by the Board could not receive attention.

4. In their Proceedings, under date 25th May 1866, No. 3,608, the Board called upon the Collector of Vizagapatam for the required return of irrigation works out of repair, and observed that it was precisely because they were aware of the utter inadequacy of the very limited sum assigned to the Madras Government for the repairs of the numerous irrigation works on which the revenue of the State was so largely dependent, that they so often pressed on the consideration of Government the absolute necessity of devising some means of augmenting the amount.

5. Eventually, with their Proceedings under date 8th October 1866, No. 7,216, the Board submitted the Collector's report upon the wants of the two talooks of Vizagapatam, both in regard to new works and repairs, remarking that no observations from them were necessary to establish the imperative necessity of some special effort for the restoration of the irrigation works of the district if the revenue was to be maintained.

6. The Government were accordingly pleased to make the large provision for irrigation repairs in the Vizagapatam district, which is adverted to by the Acting Superintending Engineer of the 1st Division. The Board submit that, after such strong expressions of their views as those recorded above, the transfer of these funds should not have been made to another district without any reference to the Board, and contrary to the wish of the Revenue Officer in charge of the district, merely because the Acting Superintending Engineer, in opposition to the views

expressed by Messrs. Boswell and Carmichael, and endorsed by the Board and Government, considered that Rupees 20,000 would be a sufficient expenditure on irrigation repairs in the present official year.

7. The Board now regret that, when they received a copy of the Government Order under date 30th August 1867, No. 2,012, they did not desire the Collector to submit his report through them, but they believed that the previous correspondence had merely to be referred to, as it doubtless would be by the Collector, in order to insure the rejection of the Acting Superintending Engineer's proposal.

8. The Board have not seen a copy of the Collector's letter to the Superintending Engineer; but they fully concur with him in thinking that it would have been far better to employ additional establishments in order to utilize the grants made for a special purpose, than to transfer the funds elsewhere. The Board are quite aware that the late date at which these funds were transferred from the Revenue Department to the Department of Public Works, must have acted as a principal cause for the delay which has taken place in expending the amount, but this difficulty would have been met by the Collector's proposal.

9. With reference to the remark of the Acting Superintending Engineer in paragraph 1 of his letter to Government, the Board direct me to express their decided opinion that under no circumstances should a smaller annual allotment be made for irrigation repairs than ten per cent. on the revenue of the land dependent on the works, and they trust that the more liberal policy in regard to irrigation works, which has recently been enunciated by the Home authorities, will enable this to be done invariably. The annual revenue from the irrigated land in the two talooks under notice is about Rupees 2,00,000; thus, without including the Inam lands, an allotment of at least Rupees 20,000 should be made annually, in order to keep the works in proper repair, and the exceptional expenditure of Rupees 41,000 in the present year, would certainly not have been too much, considering the paltry outlay which had been made in previous years.

10. The Board also desire me to point out the fallacy which underlies the argument made use of by the Acting Superintending Engineer in paragraph 5 of his letter. It is now well known that, in consequence of the price of agricultural produce having risen to three times what it was twenty years ago, while land assessments have been reduced, a very large quantity of land is now taken up and held on puttah with a very precarious supply of water. Whereas, in former days, agricultural operations were not a paying speculation unless a fair crop was obtained which could only be secured by a full supply of water, the ryot of the present day will be no loser if he can secure a third of a crop from the scanty water supply which is now so frequently all that is afforded to him by the defective irrigation works. The general shortness of crops also, which for some years has been an almost universal complaint in the Provinces, and has been often incorrectly described as wholly the result of adverse seasons, is doubtless in a great measure attributable to the general disrepair of the irrigation works.

11. In conclusion I am to observe that the Board have now, for the first time, heard of the practice which the Acting Superintending Engineer so confidently asserts to be general, in the concluding sentence of the 5th paragraph of his letter. In fact, from the complaints which have occasionally come before

them from the holders of Inam lands, they were under the impression that the contrary was the case. From the remarks on this subject in the following paragraph of his letter, the Acting Superintending Engineer is apparently ignorant of the Order of Government, under date 11th August 1865, No. 1,871, which gave to all holders of registered irrigated land on Inam tenure the right to water for the same without any charge.

Transferred to the Department Public Works.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government, R. D.

5th November 1867.

No. 520. ORDER THEREON, 23rd November 1867, No. 3,641.

IRRIGATION, No. 26.

1. The Superintending Engineer of the 8th Division, in his letter of the 25th July 1867, No. 828, having shown that the outlay on irrigational repairs in the Melúr talook of the Madura district had been very inadequate for several years past, and that, for the amelioration of the distressed condition of agriculture in that talook, it was necessary that additional funds should at once be placed at his disposal to carry out the works he had in hand, the Government, on looking about for the means of increasing the allotment to Madura, were led to think that perhaps funds might be obtained from the exceptionally large assignments for agricultural repairs that had been made to the districts of Tanjore and Vizagapatam. The Superintending Engineers of the 1st and 6th Divisions were accordingly called upon to report whether the whole of their allotments under that head could be properly spent, and, if not, what portion of them could be given up for transfer.

2. In reply the Superintending Engineer of the 1st Division reported that, in his opinion, not more than Rupees 20,000 could profitably be expended on irrigation repairs in Vizagapatam, and that the remaining Rupees 21,000 of the allotment might be transferred; but, having neglected to mention whether the Collector concurred in this opinion, Captain Beckley was desired, in Proceedings under date the 24th August 1867, No. 2,594, to supply that information. In complying with that requisition Captain Beckley forwarded a copy of a letter from the Collector, in which Mr. Master objected to parting with any portion of the money assigned to his district for the repair of its irrigational works, as the whole of it, he believed, was required, and might, he thought, be spent through the agency of Goomastahs appointed for the purpose. This Captain Beckley did not dispute, but he explained that, though there would be no difficulty in spending even much more than the whole of the Rupees 41,000 allotted to Vizagapatam in the manner suggested by the Collector, not more than Rupees 20,000 could, in his opinion, be properly laid out without a greater command of labor and a larger amount of trustworthy superintendence than were at his disposal. Fully agreeing with this opinion, and taking into consideration all that the Superintending Engineer of the 8th Division, and the Board of Revenue itself had brought to notice in its various Proceedings as per margin, of the ill condition of the tanks in the Melúr talook of Madura, the Madranticum talook of Madras, and the Polur talook of North Arcot, and of

21st June 1867, No. 3,851.
12th August ,, ,, 5,186.
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expressed by Messrs. Boswell and Carmichael, and endorsed by the Board and Government, considered that Rupees 20,000 would be a sufficient expenditure on irrigation repairs in the present official year.

7. The Board now regret that, when they received a copy of the Government Order under date 30th August 1867, No. 2,012, they did not desire the Collector to submit his report through them, but they believed that the previous correspondence had merely to be referred to, as it doubtless would be by the Collector, in order to insure the rejection of the Acting Superintending Engineer's proposal.

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9. With reference to the remark of the Acting Superintending Engineer in paragraph 1 of his letter to Government, the Board direct me to express their decided opinion that under no circumstances should a smaller annual allotment be made for irrigation repairs than ten per cent. on the revenue of the land dependent on the works, and they trust that the more liberal policy in regard to irrigation works, which has recently been enunciated by the Home authorities, will enable this to be done invariably. The annual revenue from the irrigated land in the two talooks under notice is about Rupees 2,00,000; thus, without including the Inam lands, an allotment of at least Rupees 20,000 should be made annually, in order to keep the works in proper repair, and the exceptional expenditure of Rupees 41,000 in the present year, would certainly not have been too much, considering the paltry outlay which had been made in previous years.

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the urgent need of increased grants being made to those talooks, the Government decided upon transferring the Rupees 21,000, that there was at least a doubt of being able to spend properly in Vizagapatam, in equal proportion to those three talooks where not only was money pressingly required, but it could be expended with the greatest benefit and profit.

3. As it is the duty of the Government to take care that the money placed at their disposal shall not only be expended, but that it shall be expended to the greatest possible advantage, they are satisfied that a re-distribution of the disproportionately large sum allotted to Vizagapatam was necessary, and they see no reason to fear that it has not been made in a judicious manner.

4. The allotments to districts for agricultural repairs are too small to admit of any part of them, as a rule, being given up at an early period of the year, and it is generally only just before its close that, if any sums are likely not to be expended, transfers are made in adjustment of outlay or in order to utilize grants to the utmost. The circuitous course of reference regarding such transfers which the Board recommend would probably prevent many of them being effected, and thereby cause a lapse of funds; and the Government are of opinion, that, under all the circumstances, there is no reason to issue special orders on the subject, but they will be careful that the fullest consideration shall be given to each transfer that may be proposed before it is ordered, and that a reference shall be made to the Board when time will permit.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, Revenue Department.
,, Superintending Engineer, 1st Division.

Ed. S. T. Augustin.

Revenue 1867 Dept.
Proof Guns for Mour.
W. 3205.

Proceedings of the
P. W. Dept.

Dated 23rd Nov.
Received 25th " 1867.
W. 3644

Passing orders on
letter from Secy Rev Bd
requesting that, in future,
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No 2828. 28 Nov.
With Order

No. 534-535