

Revenue (1898) Department.

PRESS SERIES.

G.O., No. 90

Dated 15th February

[Despatch Abstract.]

Comm^d to the Secy of Revenue of the Govt of India forwarding a copy of despatch to the Rt Hon the Secretary of State for India & a copy of the reply thereto regarding the reduction of the Revenue Board & the volume of official correspondence in the Madras Presidency.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
C.N. 5482/00.							

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Revenue (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 1186.

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Has full blue
H.E. Governor

Order No 908/15th Feb. 1898.

Communicated
to the Board of Revenue

(Has before has seen)
From

The Government of India
Rev. & Agric. Dept.

No. 139-110-3.

Dated 24 Jan
Received 10 Feb
Registered 11
Enclosures 2
Spare copies.

Issue
7/11/98

SUBJECT.

The Board of Rev. & R.
des. 1-2-98

14/11/98

note this in
the will book

Forwarding to the Govt of
Madras for information copy
of despatch to Secretary of State
No 81 dated 11 Nov 1897 and a
copy of reply thereto re. the re-
duction of the Revenue Board
& the volume of official corres-
pondence in the Madras Press.

Recd
14/1/98

C. 14/1/98

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

No. 81 OF 1897.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE.

LAND-REVENUE.

To

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD GEORGE F. HAMILTON,
Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

Simla, the 11th November 1897.

MY LORD,

IN Despatch No. 15 (Revenue), dated 13th February 1896, Your Lordship requested us to furnish you with clear and definite information as to what could be done to reduce the cost of the Madras Board of Revenue, and also in the matter of reducing the volume of official correspondence in that Presidency. Your Lordship remarked that the subject had been pending since 1891 when Lord Cross drew the attention of the Government of the Marquis of Lansdowne to the expediency of reducing the number of Members of the Board, and of relieving the Board from Forest, Municipal and Local Board work, and requiring those branches of public business to be dealt with by the Government direct, and without the intervention of the Revenue Board.

2. We now transmit for Your Lordship's information a copy of letter No. 60, dated 30th January 1897, from the Government of Madras, and of the correspondence accompanying it, dealing with the several questions on which Your Lordship has asked for information. Of the accompanying correspondence the most important papers are the Revenue Board's Resolution No. 294, dated 3rd August 1896, reporting at length on Your Lordship's despatch, and the Madras Government's Order No. 59 (Revenue), dated 30th January 1897, passing orders on the Board's report. The remaining documents relate to the measures taken from time to time by the Government of Madras to reduce the volume of the Board's official correspondence.

3. Paragraphs 9 to 14 of the Board's Resolution of the 3rd August 1896 contain a full statement of the considerations which in the Board's opinion make the transfer of the Forest Department from the Board to the Government highly

undesirable. These paragraphs are quoted in full in the Madras Government's letter to us, and are accepted by the Madras Government as an unanswerable argument for the continuance of the existing system of control over the Forest Department. The Board, it will be seen, dwell strongly on the necessity of connecting the administration of the forests in the Madras Presidency with the general land revenue administration, and this for two special reasons;—*first* the exceptional importance of the grazing question in the Madras forests, and *secondly* the great amount of forest settlement work which is in progress in Madras. The Government of Madras, in accepting these arguments, add the further one that the Members of the Executive Council are unable to find time for the proper discharge of the heavy additional responsibilities involved by the proposed change.

4. After carefully considering the matter we do not see our way to differ from the view taken by the Government of Madras. The forest policy of the Madras Government is, in many respects, perhaps more liberal, and more fully in accord with the policy which we have recently urged upon Local Governments, than is the case in any other province in India; and we attribute this fact very largely to the subordination of the Forest to the District Officer, and to the close control of forest administration by the Revenue authorities, which have been carried further in Madras than elsewhere. We should view with regret any change which might tend to weaken that control; especially as the Government of Madras maintain that they could not find time to do the work properly.

5. Your Lordship will observe from the Madras Government's letter that Municipal and Local Board work is not dealt with by the Board of Revenue, as Lord Cross apprehended. The Board and the Madras Government have also furnished an explanation of the words cited in paragraph 3 of Your Lordship's despatch from the Board's Resolution of the 17th February 1894, which will, we think, be found satisfactory by Your Lordship. Briefly, the Board at the time the Resolution in question was recorded, had discussed in another case a similar proposal that the Forest Department should be transferred to the Government, and they thought it unnecessary to go over the ground again.

6. In the matter of reducing the volume of official correspondence between the Board and the Madras Government, the Government of Madras appear to have devoted much attention to the subject during the last three years, and we are unable to make any suggestions for the further reduction of correspondence. The Government of Madras correctly point out that the bulky appearance of their Revenue Proceedings is greatly due to the Board's plan of printing subsidiary reports and letters in full, and have suggested to the Board a change of practice. The suggestion made by the Government of Madras in a subsequent paragraph of their letter that with a view of curtailing work the right of appeal against departmental punishments enjoyed by subordinate officials should be restricted, raises a general question with which we are separately dealing.

7. We now come to the question whether any reduction in the number of Members in the Madras Board is possible. This question turns on the extent to

which the Board's work in connection with land-revenue settlements may be expected to diminish on the completion of the initial settlements in the Presidency. It was at one time anticipated that the initial settlements would be completed this year. The Madras Government, however, show that in three districts initial settlement operations will continue till 1900 and that resettlement operations involving a reclassification of soils are also proceeding in the delta taluks of the Kistna and Godavari districts. We are constrained to agree with the Government of Madras that the supervision of these settlements will occupy a good deal of time, and that the retention of the fourth Member of the Board who, as Settlement Commissioner, is charged with this branch of administration, is necessary until 1900. Were the fourth Member to be brought under reduction, either the settlement work of the Presidency would have to be supervised by one of the two Land Revenue Members in addition to their present duties, or a special office, such as exists in other provinces under the title of Settlement Commissionership or Directorship of Land Records and Settlements, would have to be created. We accept the view of the Government of Madras that the Land Revenue Members could not be expected to give that close and continuous supervision to the settlements at present in progress which is desirable. Whether after 1900 the Settlement Member of the Board could be brought under reduction is a point on which we would reserve our opinion until that time arrives. We do not agree in all points with the anticipations of the Government of Madras that resettlements of districts, where an initial settlement had been made, will ordinarily differ little in complexity and laboriousness from an initial settlement. The case of deltaic areas is special. In the ordinary Madras district we believe that no general reclassification of soils will be needed, and that a very simple and expeditious method, as in the recent case of the resettlement of the Trichinopoly district, will be found sufficient. But, making this qualification in the considerations urged by the Government of Madras, we think that for the satisfactory supervision of resettlement operations a special officer of the standing of a Settlement Commissioner or Director of Land Records and Settlements would be required, if the fourth Member of the Board be reduced after 1900 A. D. And if we are right in this view, the economy would be small.

8. It is urged by the Government of Madras in paragraph 19 of their letter that the cost of the Revenue Board, so far from being excessive, is extremely moderate as compared with that of the corresponding establishments in the other large provinces. We consider that the Government of Madras are right in this contention, and that no case for a retrenchment in the cost of the Revenue Board by a reduction in the number of its Members can be made out from the point of view of comparative expenditure on such establishments in Madras and elsewhere. We would observe that the question as to whether four Members were required in the Madras Board did not thus originate. It arose out of the question of curtailing future settlement operations after the completion of the initial settlements, and has been pressed from this standpoint. But as the Madras Government point out, the Settlement Member takes his share in other Departments of work in the Board, and his withdrawal might thus generally weaken the working force of the Board. We are disposed to rate highly the supervision and control exercised by the Madras Board over the large branches of revenue entrusted to it, and we think that any diminution of such supervision is to be deprecated.

o. We recommend that no action be taken until the year 1900, and that the Madras Government be then invited to again consider the question.

We have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servants,

ELGIN.

G. S. WHITE.

J. WESTLAND.

M. D. CHALMERS.

E. H. H. COLLEN.

A. C. TREVOR.

C. M. RIVAZ.

Nos. 2631 to 2633—110-2.

COPY, with a copy of Madras Government's letter No. 60, dated 30th January 1897, and enclosures, forwarded to the ^{Home}
^{Financial}
Inspector-General of Forests Department, for information.

By order,

F. G. SLY,

Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

LIST OF ENCLOSURES.

Letter from Government of Madras, No. 60, dated 30th January 1897, and enclosures.

File No. 110 of
1897.

Serial No. 2.

No.

1897.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND
AGRICULTURE.

LAND-REVENUE.

No. 81, DATED SIMLA, THE 11TH NOVEMBER
1897.

(Copy.)

*Letter to Her Majesty's Secretary of State
for India.*

SUBJECT.

In reply to Despatch No. 15 (Revenue), dated
13th February 1896, forwards correspondence
received from the Madras Government regard-
ing the reduction of the Revenue Board and
the volume of official correspondence in
the Madras Presidency.

42k
Despatch from the Secretary of State No. 228 R. dated 23rd
December 1897.

I have considered the papers received with your
Excellency's letter No. No. 81 (Land-Revenue), dated the 11th
November 1897. I am glad to learn that the Local Government
have taken steps to check the undesirable length of the reports
and letters prepared by their officers. I accept your view
that, for the present, no steps should be taken to place the
control of their Forest Department directly under the Madras
Government, and that the question of reducing the number of
members of the Madras Revenue Board should be again considered
in the year 1900.

No. 139-110-3.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE.

(L.R.)

Calcutta , dated the 24th January 1898.

Copy with copy of despatch to Secretary of State No. 81 dated 11th November 1897 forwarded to the Government of Madras for information with reference to its letter No. 60 dated 30th January 1897.

By order,

E. Macdonald
Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

List of Papers forwarded.

Despatch to the Secretary of State No. 81 dated 11th November 1897.
Ditto from ditto No. 228 R. dated 23rd December 1897.

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wakes

Government {1898} of Madras.
REVENUE.

Recd.

Regd.

} 1898.

Enclosures

Spare copies

G.O., No. 90, 15th February 1898.

FEBRUARY.

**Reduction of the Revenue Board and the Volume of official
correspondence in the Madras Presidency.**

Communicating to the Board of Revenue endorsement of the Government of India
forwarding a copy of despatch to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India and a
copy of reply thereto regarding the —.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following endorsement from E. MACONOCHE, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Land Revenue), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated Calcutta, the 24th January 1898, No. 139-110-3:—

Copy with copy of despatch to Secretary of State, No. 81, dated 11th November 1897, forwarded to the Government of Madras, for information with reference to its letter, No. 60, dated 30th January 1897.

ENCLOSURE.

From ~~F. G. SLY, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Land Revenue), to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, dated Simla, the 11th November 1897, No. 81.~~

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We recommend that no action be taken until the year 1900, and that the Madras Government be then invited to again consider the question.

4

No. 90, REVENUE, 15TH FEBRUARY 1898.

Nos. 2631 to 2633—110-2.

Copy, with a copy of Madras Government's letter No. 60, dated 30th January 1897, and enclosures, forwarded to the ^{Home} Financial Department, for information.
Inspector-General of Forests

(Signed) F. G. SLY,
Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

DESPATCH from the Secretary of State, No. 228 R., dated 23rd December 1897.

I have considered the papers received with your Excellency's letter No. 81 (Land Revenue), dated the 11th November 1897. I am glad to learn that the Local Government have taken steps to check the undesirable length of the reports and letters prepared by their officers. I accept your view that, for the present, no steps should be taken to place the control of their Forest Department directly under the Madras Government, and that the question of reducing the number of Members of the Madras Revenue Board should be again considered in the year 1900.

ORDER—No. 90, Revenue, dated 15th February 1898.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. S. FORBES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue).

Exd. Shaik Karim.

35 Copies.

First copy sent to Press.

Returned for signature.

Despatched in print.

RECEIVED AGAIN G.O. No. 120

RECEIVED NO.

INITIALS FROM G.O. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT

STATEMENT WITH INITIALS

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RECEIVED

A = Print in full.

B = Not to be printed.

P = Print abstract only.

Q = Print heading only.

9/2/16 ✓

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