

60-61
13-11-64

B

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Railway
Department, 13th December 1864.*

No. 60. Read the following letter from H. NEWILL, Esq., Officiating Resident in Travancore and Cochin, to the Honorable A. J. ARBUTHNOT, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Trevandrum, 5th November 1864, No. 75.

In reply to the Proceedings of the Madras Government, No. 3011, dated 20th ultimo, calling for further information as to "what definite meaning is attached to the countenance and support" of the British Government, sought by Messrs. Scott Brothers & Co., on behalf of their scheme for a Branch Railway from the Madras Railway at Shoranoor to Narakal and Cochin, I have the honor to submit copy of a letter, dated 31st idem, from that Firm, explaining that it was not any pecuniary aid, or guarantee of interest on the outlay, that was sought, as appeared to be implied in the Government Order.

2. Messrs. Scott Brothers & Co. further state that, considering the relations which exist between the British Government and the States of Cochin and Travancore, they deem it essential that, before taking further steps in the matter, they should be assured of the approval, on the part of the paramount power, of the undertaking, as one calculated to be of great advantage not only to British Southern India, but to the Native States under its protection.

3. They further particularize the assistance sought,

1st.—In the confirmation, on the part of Government, of any grants, or privileges, to be obtained from the Native Governments.

2nd.—In the grant of the exclusive right to form a junction as proposed with the Madras Railway.

3rd.—In the promise of the improvement of the harbour of Cochin, as circumstances may require; and,

4th. In any other way the Government may be pleased to accord it.

4. With reference to the 1st point, I am able to lay before the Government the terms on which His Highness the Rajah of Cochin is prepared to enter with the proposed Company, and to add that His Highness, in granting them, has expressed his hearty approval of the project.

5. The arrangements His Highness proposes are as follows:—

1st.—His Highness will make over to the Company the Shoranoor bridge, and as much land as may be required for the Railway and for Termini.

2nd.—His Highness to be a shareholder to the extent of the money expended by his Government in the construction of the Shoranoor bridge, and in the purchase of land required for the Railway and its Termini, and for any other purpose connected with the Railway.

3rd.—The Railway must not interfere with any of the principal Pagodas on the way, and the line must be so selected as to avoid the destruction of houses in the towns of Trichoor and Triponnitorah.

4th.—The Railway officials to be amenable to the laws of the country, Civil, Criminal, and Police.

6. The terms are the same as those which were laid before the Government by Mr. F. N. Maltby, in his letter No. 10 of 11th February 1862, in reference to the Railway then proposed from Shoranoor to Trichoor, and on which the Government in their Proceedings, No. 126 of 10th March 1862, were pleased to authorize the Resident to communicate with the Company which proposed to undertake the work; and should the Government approve, I request that the same permission may now be accorded to me, with reference to the project under consideration.

7. In the 2nd item, Messrs. Scott Brothers & Co. ask for the exclusive right of a junction of a Branch Railway from Cochin with the Madras Railway. Such right it is presumed, must be so far exclusive (provided the Government are satisfied with the project and its prospects of success) that there is no room for competition in any opposition line.

8. In granting this exclusive privilege, it might perhaps be thought that some further assurance, beyond the outline of the project, should be afforded, that resources will be forthcoming for successfully carrying out the undertaking; but, on the other hand, the projectors have abstained from prematurely canvassing public support, until they are assured that the measure meets with the general approval of Government.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Railway
Department, 13th December 1864.*

9. The 3rd point will no doubt receive due consideration from Government.

10. I may add that His Highness the Rajah of Travancore has expressed his satisfaction and interest in the proposed undertaking, and his willingness to give favorable consideration to the proposal for the further extension of the Railway into Travancore, should such be eventually deemed desirable.

From MESSRS. SCOTT BROTHERS & Co., Cochin, to H. NEWILL, Esq., Resident in Travancore and Cochin; dated Cochin, 31st October 1864.

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 25th October 1864, giving cover to Proceedings of Government, Public Works Department, under date 20th October 1864, wherein information is sought by the Madras Government, as to what definite meaning is attached to the expression "countenance and support," used in our letter of 21st September 1864.

2. Considering the relations which exist between the British Government and the States of Cochin and Travancore, it will be granted, we presume, that without seeking the countenance and support of the paramount power, a scheme such as we propose would scarcely stand chance of success; but we hasten to assure Government it was not in the nature of a pecuniary aid, or a guarantee of interest, to which we looked. The days for such assistance, every one, and none more readily than ourselves, must recognize as passed; but, unless we had the assurance of Government that they viewed the undertaking we propose as one calculated to be of great advantage, not only to British Southern India, but to the Native States under their protection, we could scarcely say we are prepared to undertake it. "Countenance and support," may, we think, be readily seen in this case to mean many things besides pecuniary aid;—thus we may specify,

A. Assistance of Government in making arrangements with the Native States for grants of land through which the proposed line would run; or, should the interference of Government be deemed unnecessary (and we think it is) in making these arrangements, their promised sanction of any grants, or other privileges obtained from the Native Governments.

B. A grant of exclusive right for the proposed Company to form a junction with the Madras Railway at Shoranoor, or any other station which may be determined on. By "exclusive," is meant that the right should be given to this Company, and this Company alone, to prevent useless and fractious opposition.

* *Sic in original.*

D.* Some promise from Government to improve the terminal port of Cochin, which as it will necessarily become, in the event of a Railway connecting it with Southern India, the resort of large steamers and increased traffic, would demand some little improvement of its bar and quays;

E. And any other support a liberal and wise Government may be graciously pleased to accord.

3. We have thus, as far as it strikes us at present, the honor to explain what we mean more particularly by "countenance and support," and hoping the Madras Government may be inclined to view with favor what appears to us an essentially useful, sound and practical undertaking.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. NEWILL,
Officiating Resident.

No. 61.

ORDER THEREON, 13th December 1864, No. 800.

His Excellency the Governor in Council directs that Mr. Newill will inform Messrs. Scott, Brothers & Co., that the Madras Government will regard with favor any practicable project for the construction of a line of Railway from Shoranoor to Narakal and Cochin.

2. The Governor in Council sees no objection to the arrangement which His Highness the Rajah of Cochin is prepared to enter into with the proposed Company.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Railway
Department, 13th December 1864.*

3. He cannot, at present, guarantee to the proposed Company the exclusive right of forming the proposed junction; but, should a well considered project be laid before Government, with satisfactory evidence that the requisite funds will be forthcoming, there will be every disposition on the part of the Madras Government to prevent the construction of a competitive line. The Madras Government cannot enter into any pledge in regard to the improvement of the harbour and port of Cochin; but will be prepared to aid the undertaking, by effecting such useful improvements to the Cochin port as may be feasible, having regard to the funds available for expenditure on Public Works.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Resident in Travancore.

„ Public Works Department.

„ Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. J. H. Burns.