M.R.O. 1—52,400—28-11-60.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 588 Press ~~Mis.~~

Dated 6 9 1858

B No. 13-14

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Fort Saint George, Financial Consultation, 7th September 1858.

No. 13. Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Public Works Department, dated 28th August 1858, No. 1762.

(*Vide* Diary to Consultation, 31st August, Nos. 92 and 93.)

(*Communicating copy of a letter from the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines submitting certain explanation relative to the discreditable state of the Steam Engine which was purchased from the Arsenal for the service of the Mint and suggesting the necessity of enjoining on all Departments a strict adherence to the rules which regulate the issue of Stores from the Arsenals.*)

No. 14. ORDER THEREON, No. 588; dated 6th September 1858.

Ordered to be forwarded to the Mint Committee for communication to the Acting Mint Master.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. J. A. Wilson.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Public.

No. 1762.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation under date the 28th August 1858.

Read the following letter from Lieutenant Colonel G. BALFOUR, Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, dated 3rd August 1858, No. 205.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Extract Minutes of Consultation No. 1369, dated 15th July 1858, calling for any observations I may have to offer, relative to the discreditable state of the Steam Engine referred to in the correspondence quoted under the Extract.

2. From the communications I have perused connected with the subject under reference, it appears to me very difficult to fix the accountability of the condition of the Steam Engine on any one of the three Departments through which it has passed, viz. the Exhibition Committee the Ordnance Department or the Mint; but I shall now explain the case, to enable the Government to decide. Considering however the principle which regulates the issue of stores from the Arsenal, the Ordnance Department is virtually exempt from the responsibility in question. The Steam Engine was indented for by Colonel Cotton, Acting Mint Master in May 1857. The Indent was passed for compliance, the Chief Engineer and Secretary Mint Committee duly attesting the same with their countersignatures. The issue of the Article having been authorized, it became the duty of the Mint to accept delivery and *then* all responsibility connected with the Engine, now the property of the Mint, was removed from the Arsenal.

3. But the Steam Engine having, with the approval of Government, the Chief Engineer and Mint Master, been sent from the Arsenal to the Madras Exhibition and it being in good order, as the Principal Commissary of Ordnance states, and as may be inferred also from Mr. Thompkinson's letter embodied in the Extract under reference, as well as from the fact of its efficient working order at the Exhibition as the members of Government witnessed, I hold that the Ordnance Department have a fair claim to be considered free from blame at the commencement, and as, on the closing of the Exhibition the Engine was available for the Mint, it became necessary, as the Principal Commissary of Ordnance observes, that "the Engine should be transferred to the Mint and that it was Mint property."

4. The Engine was removed to the Arsenal in the early part of June 1857, consequent on the building requiring to be cleared (where the Exhibition was held) to afford accommodation to the Artillery from the Mount. In referring to the circumstance, the Principal Commisary of Ordnance reports as follows:

"The Engine was received in a very dirty state; but being considered Mint property, and "its removal daily expected, it was not cleaned with the exception of oiling the screws, the Mint "Master was expected to remove it at once, but did not do so until the 27th June 1857" but this was only a few days after the receipt of the Engine into the Arsenal from the Exhibition

5. It appears therefore that the Arsenal was employed as the medium of the transfer of the Engine from the Exhibition to the Mint and that the period which intervened before the Mint took charge was so short as to preclude all idea of injury to the Engine.

6. In a letter dated 12th March 1858 from the Acting Secretary Mint Committee, (nine months after the removal of the Engine to the Mint) the first official intimation was received by this Department regarding the unserviceable condition of the Steam Engine, and instructions requested as to its disposal. It is also definitely stated in that letter that the Engine was never used by the Mint Department so that the deterioration must have increased during the period it was allowed to lie unused and uncleaned. The communication from the Acting Mint Master, however, dated 15th July 1857, alluded to in the 1st para. of the order of Government under acknowledgment, brought to the notice of the Chief Engineer the bad state of the Engine very soon after its receipt at the Mint, so that, admitting the recorded opinion of the Committee that "the injuries sustained by the Engine have been the result of mismanagement since its

arrival in this Country," the presumption is, that these injuries must have been caused by a neglect of the Engine whilst at the Exhibition, in fact, the proceedings of the Committee shew that the nature of injury was not owing to the neglect at the Arsenal.

7. The case under reference urges me again to request Government will be pleased, for the safety of the Ordnance Department, and with a view to fixing a due limitation to the responsibility that attaches to it, to enjoin upon all Departments the necessity of a strict adherence to the Rules which regulate the issue of Stores from all the Arsenals. When an Indent is passed for compliance on an Arsenal, an authorized Officer of the Indenting Department should be instructed to receive the articles indented for who, first satisfying himself as to the efficient state of the article and its suitableness for the purposes required, should give a Certificate to that effect to the Ordnance Officer in charge of the Arsenal, and then remove the articles. It being understood that, from the date of such removal, the Ordnance Department ceases to bear any reponsibility in reference to the future condition or appropriation of the articles issued, and I recommend Government to publish Para. 23 of the rules referred to in Minutes Consultation in the Public Works Department, No. 772, dated 26th April 1858.

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1. The Proceedings of the Professional Committee appointed by the Chief Engineer to report on the condition of a Steam Engine which was originally the property of the Public Works Department, but had been purchased from the Arsenal for the service of the Mint, and had some time after been pronounced by the Acting Mint Master as unserviceable and second-hand, were reviewed in Extract Minutes Consultation dated 15th July 1858, No. 1369, together with a separate letter on the same subject from Mr. Thompkinson, the Mechanical Engineer. It was there noticed that in the opinion of the Committee, the condition of the Engine was to be ascribed, not to its having been sent out from England in an unserviceable state, but to mismanagement since its arrival in this Country; and that, from Mr. Thompkinson's personal knowledge, it was in "a most disgraceful state" after its return from the Madras Exhibition, and notwithstanding his suggestion to clean it, was allowed to stand in the Arsenal yard exposed to all weathers. The Inspector General of Ordnance was accordingly called upon to offer any explanation he had it in his power to afford, in respect to the disgraceful state of the Engine.

2. In the letter above recorded, Colonel Balfour submits that the responsibility, in regard to the neglect of the Machine must attach to the Madras Exhibition Committee and the Mint Establishment; and the Ordnance Department be exonerated in that its responsibility ceased from the date when the issue of the Engine to the Mint was authorized and delivery accepted. The Engine was subsequently again received at the Arsenal from the Exhibition and in a very dirty state "but being considered Mint property and its removal daily expected it was not cleaned with the exception of oiling the screws." "The Arsenal was employed as the medium of the transfer of the Engine from the Exhibition to the Mint and the period which intervened before the Mint took charge was so short as to preclude all idea of injury to the Engine. Colonel Balfour adds that the present case shews the necessity of enjoining on all Departments a strict adherence to the rules, which regulate the issue of Stores from Arsenals, and explains that when an Indent is passed, an Officer of the Indenting Department should at once receive and remove the required article, first, satisfying himself of its proper condition, and granting a certificate to the Arsenal Officer, whose responsibility as the future condition or appropriation of the article issued would cease from the date of its removal. In furtherance of this view, Colonel Balfour recommends publication of para. 23 of the Rules referred to in Extract Minutes Consultation dated 26th April 1858, No. 772.

3. There seems no reason to believe that the Engine was otherwise then in good order when removed from the Arsenal to the Madras Exhibition. When returned to the Arsenal from the Exhibition it was according to Mr. Thompkinson's account in a most disgraceful state. He adds that he then "suggested that it ought to be cleaned, but no notice was taken of it, for sometime it stood in the Arsenal yard exposed to all weathers." From Colonel Balfour's letter it seems that the Engine was removed to the Arsenal in the early part of June and the Principal Commissary of Ordnance reports that it was taken away by the Mint Master on the 27th of that month. It must therefore, have been at the Arsenal some fifteen or twenty days, still as its removal to the Mint was daily expected, the Government are not prepared to attribute grater blame to the Ordnance Department than that on Mr. Thompkinson's report, they consider that it should have been examined and cleaned and further that it ought assuredly to have been placed under cover and protected from the weather during its stay in the Arsenal. It does not however seem to have sustained much injury there.

4. The remarks of the Inspector General in the concluding para. of his letter seem to the Government very reasonable, and they resolve to forward a copy of it to all Departments and to enjoin their observance of the course as therein laid down. It is to be observed however that although Indenting Officers are bound to remove the articles indented for as soon as possible after the Indents have been passed, yet that cases may occur in which delay may be unavoidable, and that the responsibility of the Ordnance Officers for the due care of the article will not determine until its actual removal from the Arsenal. The rules referred to by Colonel Balfour have been approved by Government Extract Minutes Consultation 26th April 1858, para. 4, and authorized to be at once put into circulation among the Officers concerned. There is however no objection to publishing para. 23 as suggested by Colonel Balfour and that will be done accordingly.

(A true Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines.
" Board of Revenue.
" Officiating Chief Engineer.
" Director of Revenue Settlement.
" Conservator of Forests.
" Public &c., Departments.
" Military Department.

Financial
~~Public~~. 1858 Septr

Consy Septr

Extract Minutes Consul-
-tation in the Public
Works Septr — 175

B/28
B/31st Augt/58.

No 294
2 spare copies.

Communicating copy of a
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General of Ordnance and
Magazines submitting cer-
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the discreditable state of the
Steam Engine which was
purchased from the Arsenal
for the service of the Mint
and suggesting the necessity
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the issue of stores from the
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With an Order

No 588.
Ordered to be for-
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the Acting Mint Master.

JP

Fort St George
6 September, 1858

To the Mint Committee. Dispd 0?

13-14.