

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Jurial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	556	Press
		~~Mis.~~
10-11		
Dated	7-5-	19-458

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Fort St. George, Judicial Consultation, 11th May 1858.

No. 10. Read the following Extract Minutes Consultation in the Revenue Department, dated 27th April 1858, No. 533.

Communicating the orders passed by Government on certain } (Vide Revenue Consultation, 27th April 1858,
points in connection with the subject of provision of sup- } Nos. 47 and 48.)
plies and carriage for Troops marching.

No. 11. ORDER THEREON, No. 596; dated 7th May 1858.

To be recorded.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

No. 533.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation under date the 27th April 1858.

Read the following Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Military Department.

Communicating a letter from the Quarter Master General of the Army laying the opinion of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief on the original supply of provision of carriage for Troops marching. (Here enter 22d February 1858, No. 671.)

1. With his letter of the 21st February 1857, the Member of the Legislative Council for this Presidency transmitted a bill, introduced by Mr. Grant, for amending the law regarding the provision of supplies to Troops and Travellers, and to punish unlawful impressment; and requested the opinion of Government on the expediency of extending the bill to this Presidency. After consulting the Commander-in-Chief on the subject, the Government, for the reasons fully explained in their letter to Mr. Elliott of the 28th April 1857, expressed a decided opinion against the proposed extension; and on the same date, they called on the Board of Revenue to report, as requested by Mr. Elliott, the actual practice of the Civil officers in the districts in regard to the provision of supplies to Troops and Travellers, and whether there had been any material improvement in this respect since Sir T. Munro wrote his Minute on the subject in 1821. The Board replied to this reference in their Proceedings of the 24th November 1857. They first adverted to the existing practice regarding the provision of supplies to Travellers, and the Government concurred with them that there was no occasion for any change in this respect. They then stated their views on the provision of supplies to Troops, and the impressment of carriage for them, and offered (paras. 6 to 29) certain suggestions with a view to diminish the evils and inconveniences experienced under

* *Ex. M. C. 20th Jan. 1858, No. 76, para. 5.* the present system. These suggestions were referred* to the Military Department for consideration, and a copy of the Board's Proceedings was transmitted to Mr. Elliott,

with an intimation that, in the Board's opinion, a decided improvement had taken place in the system of supplying Troops and Travellers, since Sir T. Munro wrote his Minute in 1821, and that they anticipated still further improvement, if the suggestions they had offered should be carried into effect.

2. With the Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Military Department recorded above, is transmitted a letter from the Quarter Master General of the Army, giving the views of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief on these important matters, and the Government will now pass orders on such points as can be decided in the Revenue Department, and will refer, for consideration on the Military side, such as may be peculiarly connected with that branch of the administration.

3. The Board of Revenue proposed that, "in every case where the number of troops is larger than the ordinary bazars can supply, or where the bazars are distant from the line of march, supplies should be purchased and conveyed to the halting places at Government expense, the owners receiving payment when the purchase is made, and not being required to quit their residences. The supplies should, on the arrival of the troops or their advanced guard, be made over at once to some officer of the Corps, whose duty it should be to arrange for their distribution and payment, the Magistrate's subordinates having simply to provide the articles previously indented for; articles not bought by the Regiment might be made over to the Magistrate for resale by auction, and the loss (which, the experience of some Districts already shows will be but trifling) borne by Government." They adduced the fact that, in those Districts where this system had been always in force, there had been few complaints; and remark that the trader and the sepoy are equally saved, the one from injustice, the other from over charge. The Board suggest that the duty of thus providing supplies may, if it should be thought preferable, be discharged by the Commissariat; but His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief decidedly prefers that it should be in the hands of the Civil Authorities, and the Government concur in the opinion. This will therefore be the rule invariably followed in future.

4. As regards carriage, it appears for the present to be absolutely necessary to retain in the hands of the Magistrate, the power to press carts on occasion of troops marching, the evil is great,

31

it is known, and admitted, but at present there is no remedy, and all that can be done is to take what precautions may be possible, to reduce its pressure and its weight.

5. It appears that the evils which may be remedied are ; 1st, taking carts more than one march ; 2nd, the employment of the carts of one man on different duties with the marching corps, and 3rd, over charge made by the person who, under the name of Maistry, undertakes to supply carriage.

6. The first evil the Commander-in-Chief proposes to remedy by the grant to each owner of a cart pressed for the service of troops, a ticket, specifying the distance he is required to go, and exempting him from any second impressment for a certain specified period. The Government are apprehensive that this would not be always practicable, but they are willing so far to adopt the suggestion as to direct that the local authorities shall always give consideration to the case of those who have but lately been sent with troops, and shall in preference make available the carriage of parties who have been longest free from impressment.

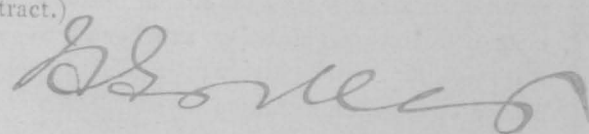
7. The second point, viz. the arrangements to be made on the line of march, in order that the carts of each owner may be employed on one duty, and thus be together, and under the care of their owners, will receive attention in the Military Department.

8. As regards the third point, the capacity namely of the Maistries who are said to make a considerable profit out of the supply of carriage, remains to be considered. The Government are at all times unwilling in any way to interfere with the regulation of prices and rates, such matters are, almost universally, better left to the ordinary principles of supply and demand, and Governments usually err when they think they understand the merchants' interests better than they do themselves ; when however troops are forced to march on the one hand, and owners are forced to give them carriage on the other, ordinary principles are so far departed from, that it may be very necessary for the Government to step in, and to prevent the cart owners from taking advantage of the soldiers' necessities, and their own position as forced to supply them, and so to regulate charges as may be not unjust to either.

9. On future occasions therefore of carriage being supplied to the troops when marching, by the Civil authorities, the Magistrate will forward to the Officer Commanding a statement of the charge to be made for each cart, and the payment of that charge it will be the duty of the Commanding Officer to enforce. The Government consider that in consideration of the carriage being pressed, the owner is entitled to rather more than the regular rate of hire, and as it would not be fair that the extra charge should fall upon the sepoy, that the amount should be debited to the State.

10. The remainder of the Quarter Master General's letter referring to the frequency of reliefs will be considered in the Military Department.

(A true Extract.)



Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

„ Military Department.

„ Judicial Department.

