

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1746	Press
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Dated	S. 11.	19 1866

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
5th November 1866.*

Read the following papers:—

No. 42. From the Superintendent of the Jail, Vizagapatam, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Vizagapatam, 8th October 1866, No. 143.

In accordance with the request contained in your Telegram of the 6th instant, I have the honor to forward a rough sketch of the temporary Jail.

2. This Jail was constructed, at my instigation, in August 1863, and the original cost was Rupees 436, but, on account of the gradually increasing number of prisoners, it has been necessary, from time to time, to make extensions and alterations, the total amount of which, with the original cost, has been Rupees 845-10-6.

In addition to this, Rupees 348-12-8 have been spent in repairs, which is at the rate of Rupees 116-4-2 per annum.

3. The plan of the Jail will be seen in the accompanying sketch; the fact of its being constructed piece-meal, according to requirements, will account for what may be considered faulty.

4. The flooring of the sheds is made of beaten earth raised one foot from the ground; the walls, eight feet high, are made of wattle and dab; and the roof, which rises at the centre to 16 feet in height from the floor, is made of bamboos, and thatched with palmyra leaves.

5. The sheds are open on that side looking to the centre of the enclosure, the beams and roof being supported on pillars made of an ordinary country wood, called Muddee Kurra, the beams and uprights being made of the same. The plastering of the back and end walls is discontinued at one foot from the junction of the wall and roof, which causes a thorough ventilation of the sheds. The cooking sheds have no walls, but the slope of the roof reaches to within four feet of the ground, thus giving protection from rain.

6. The air in these sheds is always perfectly sweet and wholesome. I have frequently visited them at night, and never discovered any thing unpleasant to the olfactory sense. A bag of charcoal is suspended from each beam.

7. The enclosure is surrounded by a fence, ten feet high, placed six yards from the back of the sheds, made of stout posts with the thin branches of trees between, placed vertically, and interlaced with bamboos running horizontally. Shallow trenches are dug in the proper directions for carrying off the rain fall.

8. There are no latrines for the prisoners, but they are marched out by the rear gate every morning and evening to a large piece of ground 200 yards to the North-west of the Jail. A wide trench is here dug, in which the prisoners defecate; a foot of earth is immediately afterwards thrown in; and when one trench thus becomes filled, another is opened.

9. There are now 410 prisoners incarcerated (the number fluctuates between 400 and 450); of these 109 sleep in the finished blocks of the new Jail. By this distribution, each man has about 450 cubic and 36 superficial feet of space. In my telegram, I allowed 400 and 32. I think that is enough, considering the sheds are so freely open to the air, but a much larger amount would be necessary in a pukka building. In order to provide this, however, I have been obliged to utilize the cooking sheds as sleeping wards; putting them aside, the Jail is only capable of containing 230 prisoners.

10. There has been considerable mortality of late in this Jail, but it is very slightly, if at all, due to overcrowding. The mortuary returns show a fearful amount of mortality from cholera and other diseases all over the district; the starved condition of some when committed is a second cause; but the most persistent cause is the incarceration of Hill men near the coast—they pine away, and no amount of medicine or nourishment has power to prevent the fatal issue.

11. A Jail of this description costs rather more to guard than a pukka Jail—one Constable to five Convicts in the former, and one to seven in the latter being allowed; but it is remarkable how seldom the prisoners attempt to escape, considering how great the facilities are. I attribute this to the fact that they are so well pleased with the present arrangement, that they will not risk being locked up in a pukka building by any misconduct here.

12. There have been only seven attempts at escape in three years, out of a total of 2027 prisoners incarcerated.

13. Should any further information be required, I shall have much pleasure in furnishing it.

No. 43. From Lieutenant Colonel W. J. WILSON, Inspector General of Jails, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Ootacamund, 15th October 1866, No. 86.

I have the honor to report that I received the Order of Government noted in the margin on the 6th instant, when at Trichinopoly, and that I proceeded forthwith to Vellore, for the purpose of ascertaining the best means of relieving the Jail at that place, and also the one at Chittoor.

2. The only public building which is available, and at the same time fit to be adopted for the reception of Convicts is the old Range of Barracks in the Fort, which was formerly occupied by the European Regiment stationed therein. I visited this Barrack on the 9th instant, in company with Colonel Boileau, and Captain Brockman, the Superintending and Executive Engineers of the District, Mr. Barlow, the Joint Magistrate, and Surgeon Major Young. The buildings occupy three sides of a quadrangle, measuring about 226 feet by 186. There is a spacious yard in the centre, and the rooms are commodious and well ventilated. At the right hand corner, there are two rooms, which may be used as the Hospital and Surgery, and on the left there are two others of similar dimensions, which would do for Jailer's quarters. They are at present used as a Post Office, but I believe that other accommodation for that Department may be found.

3. I herewith forward a ground plan, which, although unaccompanied by sections, gives a good idea of the building. The roof is tiled and supported by pillars. The superficial area, exclusive of the proposed Hospital and Jailer's quarters, is 14,215, and the cubical space 170,436 feet. Two hundred and fifty-eight persons might thus be accommodated with the full allowance of cubical space to each, and a great deal more of superficial area. At 600 feet of cubical space and 49 of superficial area to each man, the building will hold 279. The approximate estimate for converting it into a Jail is Rupees 2500. I presume this relates to the main building alone, but something must be laid out on the subordinate buildings, such as cook rooms and

latrine. There is a substantially built privy some 40 yards behind the Barrack, which might easily be adapted to the dry earth system; and in a neighbouring Range, which was originally the Hospital for Europeans, and subsequently used as an Artillery Barrack, there are two cook rooms of sufficient size. The cost of putting these cook rooms into order, and of adapting the privy to the dry earth system will, I should think, be inconsiderable. The only objections which occur to me at present are, in the first place, that the building is somewhat deficient in security, and, in the second, that there are facilities for communication with the prisoners through the windows in the outer walls. These objections, however, do not appear to be of sufficient weight to counterbalance the value, at the present time, of accommodation which may be obtained at a moderate cost.

4. I will now revert to the matter which more immediately presses; that is, the relief of the Jails at Vellore and Chittoor. Whatever may be determined upon by Government with respect to the conversion of the Barrack into a Jail, it could scarcely be made fit for occupation under three months from the date of the Order; and the most expedient mode of relief which presents itself appears to be the location of the surplus Convicts in huts upon the site of the new Central Jail. Colonel Boileau informed me that he had already given instructions for the purchase of materials, and that he would commence to erect, as speedily as possible, huts for the reception of 350 persons. This accommodation may be increased whenever necessary. Surgeon Major Young expressed an opinion to the effect that it would be hazardous to locate men upon ground long fallow, or never before cultivated, such as the Vellore site, because excavations under such circumstances have caused disease, as was the case recently at Mysore, where the 6th Regiment N. I. was engaged in building operations; and he suggested that the Convicts should be huddled beyond the site. I doubt whether the excavations for the foundation of the Jail will be of such magnitude as to be the source of danger, but I have felt bound to mention the objection taken. The ground is gravelly and covered with short grass, but there is nothing like rank vegetation.

5. Pressure of business, and the fact of my being constantly travelling until the 12th instant, has hitherto prevented me from calling upon the Superintendent of the Jail at Chittoor for the explanation required by the Order of Government quoted above, but I am now addressing him on the subject.

6. The other evils adverted to, as existing at Vellore and Chittoor, shall be remedied as far as possible. With respect to Vellore, I beg to submit the following remarks:—Messrs. Rohde and Ellis having stated, in their report of the 10th April 1865, that "some improvement might be made in the ventilation of the Jail," a Local Committee was appointed to report upon the suggestion, and also to state whether any other improvements were requisite. The Report of the Committee was forwarded in August 1865, and contained a recommendation for the insertion of 15 ventilators in the roofs of the wards; and, also, for the construction of a Latrine Shed. The cost of these improvements was estimated at 900 Rupees, and was sanctioned in the Order noted in the margin. The Latrine Shed has been built, but the ventilation has not yet been carried out. I was informed, when at Vellore last week, that the insertion of the Ventilators had proved more difficult than had been expected, owing to the massive

nature of the roofs, and that one of the wards had been considerably shaken and injured by the attempt. I will ascertain exactly how the matter stands, and also whether it is possible to effect any ground ventilation. The result shall be duly communicated. The matter complained of in paragraph 49 of the Honorable Mr. Ellis' report shall be rectified; but, with this exception, and the substitution of an iron-barred door for the wooden one in No. 1 room, I would not advise any outlay on this Jail, pending the decision of Government upon the proposal to convert the European Barrack into a Prison, and considering that the contemplated erection of the huts justifies the hope that the Jail may be soon relieved of its surplus population.

7. Some of the evils complained of at Chittoor are owing to defective management. The others arise from overcrowding, from want of sufficient ventilation and drainage, and other deficiencies in the buildings. Steps shall be taken to remedy those of the first class, and the Jail shall be relieved by transfer, whenever the huts at Vellore are ready. I will now proceed to mention the steps that have been taken with the view of improving the buildings.

Messrs. Rohde and Ellis, made the following observations in their report upon this Jail in April 1865:—"This Jail is surrounded by a moat, and there may be difficulty in providing, as in other Jails, for sub-soil drainage. Lateral ventilation should be improved, by the substitution of iron grated doors and windows for the wooden batten doors. The Hospital drainage should be improved by both sub-soil and surface drainage, as there is not the same difficulty in doing this as is the case with the Jail. A granite platform for washing should be built in the Hospital." A Local Committee was subsequently appointed to inspect the Jail, and their report, with my remarks, and the Order of Government thereon, was published

with the proceedings noted in the margin. The Committee provided for the drainage of the Jail, for ventilation,

Judicial Department, 7th May 1866, No. 87.

Privies for the Wards to be used at night, Privies for the Hospital, granite platforms for the Hospital yard, and for a general Latrine, but they did not consider that anything was required in the way of drainage for the Hospital. These recommendations were sanctioned by Government on the 7th May last, but the plan of general Latrine has not yet been settled. The points remaining for notice are the Female Wards, the removal of the ramparts, and the lowering of the Hospital wall. In my remarks upon the proposals of the Committee for improving the Female Wards, I stated that they did not meet the exigencies of the case. The number of female prisoners was at that time, as now, 39, and I suggested a plan by which the existing accommodation might be nearly doubled at a small expense. This increase was thought sufficient, as about two-thirds of the women were of the class which it is intended to confine in the Central Jail. The removal of the rampart, and the substitution of a wall, will cost 10,300 Rupees. The expense of lowering the Hospital wall, and of surmounting it with an iron railing, is not stated, but would not be inconsiderable. Both of these measures would no doubt be beneficial, but it may be a question whether the money can be spared, without interfering with some of the numerous and important works now in progress for the purpose of increasing Jail accommodation, or with other requirements which seem to me equally urgent, such as the provision of a Hospital and Female Barrack at the Central Jail at Salem,

which is still without these indispensable adjuncts, although it has been occupied for some years. It must also be remembered that most of the District Jails in the Presidency call for improvement, and I, therefore, venture the opinion that, unless ample funds are forthcoming, it will be more expedient to endeavour, in the first instance, to meet the most pressing wants in all Jails, than to spend a large sum on any particular prison; and it was on these grounds that I did not support the recommendation of the Medical Officer at Chittoor, with respect to the removal of the ramparts, and the lowering of the Hospital wall.

8. The Order of the 7th May 1866, No. 698, was duly communicated to the Department of Public Works, but it would appear that the improvements and alterations have not yet been commenced.

No. 44. ORDER THEREON, 5th November 1866, No. 1746.

The Governor in Council directs that huts for the reception of 350 Convicts be erected, with as little delay as possible, on the site of the projected Central Jail at Vellore. The Superintending Engineer of the 4th Division will be furnished with a copy of the foregoing letter from the Superintendent of the Jail at Vizagapatam, describing the temporary Jail erected at that station, and with a copy of the sketch which accompanied it. The cost of the temporary Jail in question, which is capable of holding 230 prisoners, was only Rupees 845-10-6, or, in round numbers, about Rupees 3-10-0 per man.

2. The Government do not apprehend any risk of disease from locating the Convicts on the site of the new Jail. Vellore is not, like Mysore, a feverish locality, and it is of great importance that the Convicts should be located within the limits of the outer wall of the new Jail, in order that, when the outer wall is finished, the cost of guarding them may be reduced.

3. It is probable that the location of 350 Convicts on the site of the proposed Jail will enable the Inspector General to afford material relief to the existing Jails at Vellore and Chittoor, but advertent to the great and pressing want of additional Jail accommodation throughout the Presidency, the Government think it desirable that the European Barrack at Vellore should at once be made available for that purpose, which apparently can be done at a moderate cost. Orders will be issued in the Department Public Works for the preparation of the necessary estimates.

4. The Governor in Council concurs in the opinion of Colonel Wilson that, under the present circumstances, it is not advisable to incur the heavy expense that would be entailed by the removal of the ramparts at Chittoor. The cost of lowering the Hospital wall should be stated.

5. It is observed that the general plan of Latrines has been settled in the Proceedings of Government of the 24th ultimo, No. 1688.

(True Extract).

J. D. SIM,

Secretary to Government.

To the Inspector General of Jails.

- „ Public Works Department, with two Sketches.
- „ Military Department.
- „ Sanitary Commissioner.
- „ Inspector General of Police.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Judicial Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read letter from Supdt. of Jail Vizagapatam. 27th Decr 1866.

Read letter from the Inspector
General of Jails.

21st Decr 1866 No 86.

Order thereon. 5th Nov^r 1866 No 1746.

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the Superintendent of
the Jail at Vizaga-
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the temporary Jail
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and with a copy of the sketch which accompanied it. The cost of the temporary Jail in question which is capable of holding 230 prisoners was only Rs 845-10-6 or in round numbers about ^{Rs} 3-10 per man.

2. The Govt. do not apprehend any risk of disease from locating the convicts on the site of the new jail. Vellore is not, like Mysore, a feverish locality and it is of great importance that the convicts should be located within the limits of the outer wall of the new jail in order that when the outer wall

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Inspr Genl of Jails

Public Works Dept

Public Works Dept
Secy to the Commissioner

Inspr Genl of Police

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Judicial 1867. Department.

No. 1746

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

of the 21st. 23rd.

Date of November 1865

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