[L. & M. 3,000—19-11-96.]

Local & Munl. (1896) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS.

G.O., No. 1269 L

DATED 15th July 1896

[Despatch Abstract.]

Establishment.

Recording G.O.Revenue Department recording Board s Proceedings recording proceedings of the Revenue department communicating G.O.No.1021 L dated 3rd June 1896 approving with remark the appointment of Mr.E.A.Barren as District Board Engineer Nellore district.

(not a Revenue docket)

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

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

NELLORE COLLECTOR'S OFFICE.

NO 631 / 263 — 21 May 1896.

From W. S. Mayer Esquire,
President, District Board, Nellore.

To the Chief Secretary to Government,
Local and Municipal Department,
Madras.

Sir.

I regret that Government has once more to be addressed with reference to the appointment of a Local Fund Engineer for this district.

2. It will be recollected that the services of Mr. Cecil Scott were dispensed with by Mr. Glynne for most unsatisfactory work; that there was then an interregnum during which Mr. Arbuthnot, the Sub Divisional Officer Ongole, was in charge of the Engineering Office, and that, after a certain amount of correspondence, the appointment of Mr. R.W. Thompson as District Board Engineer was sanctioned by Government subject to a period of one year's probation (Govt

+ G.O. No. 1057 Mis dated 20th June 1895

S. S. N. Press. (7-3-96.)

6-8-95 and 12-8-95)

3. Mr. Thompson entered on his duties in October last, and on the 10 March last he gave notice that he wished to resign his appointment, in consequence of certain severe strictures which the late President, Mr. Le Fanu, was compelled to make on his utter neglect of out-door work. His resignation was accepted and he is now holding Office only till a suitable successor can be appointed.

4. Before I proceed to deal with the question of the succession I think it well that Government should know how matters now stand in regard to the Engineering branch of the District Board's administration.

[illegible] orable state of [illegible] end of the Official [illegible] as set forth in Paras [illegible] Honoured on Rajah's [illegible] Report perused in

in G O No 1709L. 16-9-95. The Government was compelled to remark (para 4 (1) of the G O) that it was "evident that the whole of the District Board's Engineering Department was throughout the year in a state of entire disorganization and Confusion", but it expressed the hope that, with a revised establishment and the advent of a new Engineer (Mr Thompson), the ground that had been lost in the last few years would be made up. That hope, I regret to say, has not been fulfilled.

6. The allotment for works to be executed by the Board's Engineering Department for 1895-96 was Rs 2,24,685. The actual expenditure has been Rs 1,12,011, or 49·9 per cent of the allotment, and even that miserable result has,

I fear, been obtained by the passing in some cases of Contractors bills without adequate check-measurement and by putting down stuff on roads in the last weeks of the official year when there was no water to consolidate it.

7. Mr Arbuthnot, who was in office for the 1st half of the year, seems to have done hardly anything, and if I were asked to summarize Mr Thompson's services to the Board I should say that they consisted in drawing his pay, sitting sedulously at head quarters engaged in "office work" which he might have done as well in camp, a few flying inspections of roads round Nellore, and the giving of a free hand to his Supervisors and Overseers. I can speak with some confidence on the subject as I have recently had occasion to carefully peruse and consider a long

long explanation which Mr Thomp-son offered with reference to Mr Le Hunte's Proceedings above mentioned not with a view to getting his resignation reconsidered, but appa-rently to clear his character. He is now for the first time, and that not on his own initiative, making a systematic inspection of the Great Trunk Road between Nellore and Ongole. Utter absence of zeal, energy and physical exertion have been, in short, the Keynotes of his tenure of office as District Board Engineer.

8. The state of the roads, as may be imagined from the inadequate expenditure of recent years, is a disgrace to the District and Taluk Boards.

3 Vol. The root of the evil is briefly this. Estimates, instead of being ready as

as they should be before the official year begins, are at that time not even Commenced. The result is that the dry months, in which the material for spreading on the roads ought to be Collected and stacked, are spent in getting the estimates out; the material is got together when the rains begin and it ought to be spread; and spreading is either done at the end of the year, when the supply of water which ought to be available for Consolidation no longer exists - or not at all.

Mr. Wynn's Contract system referred to in para 39 of the last Administration Report has, as worked under these Circumstances, more harm than good. It would work well if estimates were ready in proper time, and if the Engineer were allowed a freer hand in respect to petty Contract work. As it is, the estimates being late, further delay was caused by tenders for the supply and the spreading of material having to be then called for by the District and Taluk Boards and Contractors selected. It also gave the Local Fund Overseers an opportunity for shirking further work on the plea that the Board selected a set of "cheap & nasty" tenderers with whom they could not work satisfactorily. Lastly the fact that the work of "Collecting and spreading" was given to the same men led them to stack metal on the roads themselves, so as to give them

them less trouble in putting it down hereafter, to the great impediment of traffic in many places.

I have made some modifications in the system — which as I say presupposes for its proper working an efficient staff and the early submission of estimates for the current year which will, I think, tend to greater promptitude and efficiency under present circumstances.

10. The defects in the roads, so far as I have been able to judge from those I have been over in the Ongole, Kandukur, Kovali, and Nellore Talukes, are due simply to the neglect of adequate maintenance in past years. I will quote as an example the important road from Ongole to Kothapatam which is, I think, in a worse state than any in the District.* It is so full of ruts and holes that for a great part of its extent the Carts have abandoned it and sought a natural traffic by its side. I myself over it more than once lately and so far as I could see all that was necessary was the filling up of the ruts above mentioned, and yet for years past the Engineering department has been playing with a "fancy" estimate for Rs 55,000 and odd for remaking it, leaving it in the meantime without a rupee for maintenance. I may add that Mr Thompson never thought of going near this road, though its condition has

* Since writing the above I have been over the road between Kovali & Ilummala — pentapolis, though not so important for traffic, is in an even worse state.

5.

has for long been a scandal, till I summoned him by telegram to attend to it the other day

11. There is the less excuse for the bad state in which the roads are in that throughout most of the district, their up-keep presents no natural difficulties, as it does for instance in the delta tracts of Godavary & Tanjore. In the Coast talukas they run largely through hard laterite soil which only requires clearing and smoothing to make a fair natural road of itself, while in the interior there is gneiss in abundance. At the same time these facts are not without some agreement for the future. Given an active and zealous Engineer, who will make his subordinates get out their estimates and carry them out at the proper seasons, it only requires hard work and proper supervision to remedy the results of past negligence — though this of course cannot be done "all in a day"

12. Nor is it in the matter of "works" only that thorough reform is required. The state of the Engineer's office and of its accounts is any thing but satisfactory. I would ask a reference in this connection to the papers recorded in G O No 668 L dated 8th April 1895 and to Mr Monomadon Rajahs letter dated 1st May 1895 No 591/D83 and must say that, so far as I have been able to ascertain, things have improved but little since.

6.

since. There are claims of Local Fund Contractors of several years standing still pending settlement, while against the Engineer's own office there are Audit objections which have been outstanding for over two years.

13. The pendency of Contractors' claims is another illustration of the results which follow the late submission of estimates and the consequent delay in the execution of works. 80 or 90 per cent of a claim is hurriedly passed at the close of the year, to show expenditure, "pending check measurement" which gets postponed to the Greek Kalends. Nothing pleases the wily Contractor better, for his plan is to stick down his metal any how, leave it to traffic to

to effect a natural "Consolidation", and then claim payment for Consolidation work when it can no longer be ascertained what he actually did. I have issued orders that, in future Contracts, a time for the Completion of the work, outside of which no claims will be admitted, should be distinctly laid down.

14. If Government has done me the honor to follow me so far, it will observe that the new Engineer, if he is to restore order and efficiency, need not possess a large degree of what may be called "high engineering" (for the work to be done on our roads is simple and straightforward, and the estimate for any specially elaborate

elaborate work that might be necessary would be referred to the Superintending Engineer) but must be a man accustomed to Knocking about, able to get a proper out turn from his subordinates, willing and used to work hard himself, familiar with accounts, and with a character above suspicion.

15. The vacant Engineership has been duly advertized and there have been numerous applications for the post, some of them from men who appear to be not without a fair share of technical qualifications. But there is no one whom I know or have any special reason for believing, to be possessed of all the other essential qualities above noted, and the case of Mr Thompson is a terrible and warning against trusting to another "dark horse".

16. In G.O. No. 1057 Lmio dated 20th June 1890 Government refused the deputation of a Public Works officer; but it has occurred to me that the same objection would not apply to lending the Board the services of a Competent Salt Inspector with some special experience of "Works". Such a man would under present circumstances be just the person the Board requires. An Officer who has been for a Considerable time in charge of Salt Factories will have had to Construct a number of works-

lines,

lines plat forms, channels and
factory roads - which require
just as much skill as the
ordinary Local Fund Engineering
work in this District. If he
has been long in the department,
Constant travelling, and that
often in most disagreeable places,
will have become to him a
second nature, while no one
can be an efficient Salt Inspector
without being able to "drive"
successfully all sorts and Condi-
tions of subordinates. Lastly, to
a man who has the elaborate
Salt and Abkari Forms and
Accounts at his fingers ends.
those erected from a Local
Fund Engineer would be mere
child's play.

I request therefore that

17. Government

Government will be pleased,
under the special Circumstance
of this District, to permit
the deputation as its Local Fund
Engineer of Mr E. A Barron, a
3d grade Inspector in the Salt
Abkari and Customs Department
at present in charge of the Nega-
-patam Circle, on the terms here-
-inafter proposed. I make this
application after reference to
and with the Consent of the
Commissioner of Salt, Abkari,
and Separate Revenue vide* copy
of letter from his Secretary enclosed
and after ascertaining from
Mr Barron that he would
be glad to take up the appoint
-ment on these terms.

9.

18. I enclose also copy of a
letter

WR

* N.B I have not thought it necessary to send further copies of the enclosures which will be found in the original letter cited

letter from Mr Barren from which it will be seen that, besides having had a very Considerable experience of "Works" in the Lalt Department, he has been through the Civil Engineering College in Madras and has had five years practical work in the P. W. D. I may add that he has been highly recommended to me by officers Connected with the Lalt Department under whom he has served among whom I may specially mention Mr. T. H. Merriman, and that his character is of the highest.

9. The terms on which I ask for Mr Barren's deputation are these:-

(1) He should retain his rank and position as a Lalt Inspector, but his services would be lent to the District Board of Nellore for 3 years, during which period the Board would pay his salary as Engineer (Rs 400 the 1st year; Rs 450 the 2d; Rs 500 the 3d) and the necessary pensionary Contribution to Government.

(2) It is possible however that Mr Barren might discover that the work here did not suit him, or that he might be found unsatisfactory. I propose therefore that his deputation should be terminable at any time by 3 months notice on either side, at the end of which period Mr Barren would revert to his ordinary duties in the Lalt Department. In the event of such notice being given or received by the District Board President, the fact

fact would of course be at once communicated to the Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue.

31 Sir, as I hope may be the case, Mr Barren serves the Board satisfactorily for the full three years of his deputation, it would be open to the President to apply for the renewal of the same on such terms as might then be deemed expedient.

20. I enclose Copy of the resolution of the District Board agreeing to bear the Cost of Mr Barren's Lenzeiway Contribution which the Treasury Deputy Collector advises me will come to 20 per cent of his pay. As the present Engineer was appointed on Rs 500, to rise to Rs 550 at the end of the year, it will be seen that even including this Contribution there will at the outset be a saving as compared with the existing arrangements, while the increase in the third year, should Mr Barren continue to work efficiently under the Board up till then, would be money well spent.

21. I respectfully request that this letter may be treated as "urgent" and orders communicated to me by telegram. For Mr Thompson is under present circumstances not likely to do much zealous work for the Board, while Mr Arbuthnot, the Sub Divisional Officer at Ongole has gone to a better appointment in Malabar (our Overseer is in charge of his work till a competent successor

Successor can be procured),
and the temporary Supervisor
sanctioned in G.O. No 2272 Mis
dated 23d November 1895 has
just died.

22 I may add that the
Overseer establishment will in
my opinion need sifting and
strengthening at no distant date;
but I reserve proposals under this
head till the new Engineer has
joined and has been able to make
himself acquainted with the
situation.

I have &c
(Sd) W.S. Meyer

(True copy)
W.S. Meyer
23/5.

1897 1896.

1896
REVENUE D....
Enclosure No. 1
To Current No. 452

year, it will

Revenue Department.

Proceedings of the Madras Government.

Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, Separate Revenue, No. 2504 Mis, d/15th June 1896, on Proceedings of the Revenue Department, No. 2265 Mis, d/11th June 1896, communicating Proceedings of the Local and Municipal Dept. approving with remark the appointment of Mr. E.A. Barren, as Dt. Board Engineer of the Nellore Dt:-

Resolution:-

Recorded with reference to Board's Proceedings Sub No. 2963 d/6th June 1896.

Order thereon, No. 2597 Mis, dated the 2nd July 1896.

Recorded.

(True Extract).

For Ag. Under Secretary to Govt.

To

The Local & Municipal Dept, with the President's letter returned.

F 21 2,000—19-6-96.

Govt. of {1896} Madras.

REVENUE.

Local & Municipal Dept.
Diary No. 1897

To

The Local & Municipal
Dept.

Dated

Recd. 7 JUL. 96

Encl.

Mis. / P. G.O., 2nd July 1896, No. 2597

SUBJECT.

Recording B.P. recording Proceedings of the Rev. Dept. communicating ~~Proceedings~~ G.P. No. 1021 dated 3rd June 1896 ~~of the Local and Municipal Dept.~~ approving, with remark the Appointment of Mr. E. A. Barren as Dt. Board Engineer, Nellore &c.

R
ain.

Order No. 1269 Lmis dy 15/7/96
Recorded

V.R
11/7/96

1088
13.7.96

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When given for copying ____
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When examined ____
When signed ____
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READ AGAIN G.O., No. DATED
189 ,

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
LETTER OF GOVERNMENT								
STATEMENT WITH DITTO								
PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL.								

N.B.—
A = Copy in full.
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