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# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

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## Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Con. 23-6-57

| G.O. No. | 1220 | Press Mis. |
|---|---|---|
| 112-117 | | |
| Dated | 23-6- | 1857. |

***Not to be folded or roughly handled***

*Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 23rd June 1857.*

No. 118. Read the following Extract from the Proceedings of the Chief Engineer, dated 12th June 1857, No. 1119.

Read the following letter from W. FRASER, Esq., Civil Engineer; to Colonel C. E. FABER, Chief Engineer, dated Ootacamund, 2nd June 1857, No. 43.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Circular No. $\frac{11}{10}$ of 1857-58 having relation to Officers in the service passing an examination in some native language on the 8th of August next.

My object in writing this letter is to show cause why Mr. Brosnahan and I should not be required to pass so soon, and I am sure that, to accomplish my object, I should have little more to do than to bring the subject to your notice.

In the first place I have to state that I never saw Circular, No. 8758 of the 11th of December last, from which an extract is given in the circular now under consideration.

You are aware that up to April last Mr. Brosnahan and I had been living, almost constantly in the jungles for about 18 months. During that time it was quite impossible for us, from the irregular and engrossing nature of our work, to study Tamil, the language we are learning; especially as we could get no teacher to come into the jungles with us, the unhealthy character of those round about the Hills being so notorious. Of our writers we made the best use we could in this way, but they were at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of their time in fever, and for the greater portion of it away from us altogether.

We read as well as we could without a Teacher, but until the publication of "Pope's, first Lessons" there was so far as I know, no book suitable for self instruction; and so desirous were we of learning the peoples language, that I got the sheets of that work from the Printer as they were struck off.

I mention this merely to show our appreciation of the advantages of a knowledge of the language, and our desire to make up for the unfavorable situation in which we were placed, but until we came in here in April last, we never had the advantages of a teacher and our progress was irregular and slow.

Under these circumstances I claim indulgence for Mr. Brosnahan and myself, especially as we are fully aware of the value of understanding the language of the people and would learn it as speedily as we could whether or not such were enjoined upon us.

I brought this question to the notice of Major Lawford when he was lately here and he is I think aware of how utterly impossible it was for us to learn Tamil during our residence in the jungles.

In conclusion I have to state that we were always under the impression that we would not be required to pass until the end of January next and that although I shall not be able to pass on the 8th of August next I hope to be able to pass very soon after.

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Resolved that copy of the foregoing letter be forwarded to Government, with the recommendation of the Chief Engineer that as the circumstances set forth in explanation of the difficulties that Messrs. Fraser and Brosnahan have had to contend with in the acquisition of a knowledge of a Vernacular language, are of so peculiar and exceptional a nature as to warrant in their case the indulgence they solicit, the rule which directs their passing in August next may be relaxed in their favor and the period extended to 28th January 1858.

(Signed) C. E. FABER, Colonel,
*Chief Engineer.*

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No. 119. ORDER THEREON, No. 1226; dated 23rd June 1857.

Ordered that the foregoing Extract be recorded.

(Signed) H. FORBES,
*Acting Secretary to Government.*

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No 1119

Extract from the Proceedings of the Chief Engineer
in the Department of Public Works.
Under date the 12th June 1857

Read the following
No 49.

From
H. Fraser
Civil Engineer

Civil Engr's Office
Ghazeepore
2d June 1857.

To
Colonel Baker
Chief Engineer
Fort St George.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Circular No 70 of 1857 - & having relation to officers entitled & desirous of passing an examination in the languages noted in the 8th para of Regulation XIX.

My object in writing this letter is to show Cause why Mr Brosnahan & I should not be required to pass the same, & I am sure that, to accomplish my object, I shall have little more to do than to bring the subject to your notice.

In the first place I have to state that I never saw Circular, No 8758 of the 11th of Decr last, nor which any extract is given in the Circular now under consideration.

You are aware that upto April last Mr Brosnahan & I had been living, almost constantly, in the jungles for about 18 months. During that time it was quite impossible for us, from the irregular & engrossing nature of our work, to study Persian, the language we are learning; especially as we could

get

get no teacher to come into the jungle to live with us, the unhealthy character of those round about the A.C.s being so notorious. Of our wishes we made the best we could in this way – but they were at best a poor substitute for a teacher – & for the greater portion of the time were altogether of no avail.

We read as much as we could without a teacher, but in the pronunciation of Pali words & phrases, there was so far as I know, no book available for self instruction; & as desirous were we of learning the peoples language, that I got the Lascars of the work from the Cranbrook as they were time & opportunity permitted.

I mention this merely to show our appreciation of the advantages of an knowledge of the language, & our desire to make use of the unfavorable circumstances in which we were placed, but until we came on shore in April last, we never had the advantages of a teacher & our progress was irregular & slow.

Under these circumstances I claim indulgence for Mr Bramahan & myself, especially as we are fully aware of the value of understanding the language of the people & would learn it as speedily as we could whether or not such were enjoined upon us.

Should the question as to the meaning of Major Lambert when he was lately here & he was informed aware of how utterly impossible it was for us to learn Tamil during our residence in the jungles.

In Conclusion I have to state that we were always under the impression that we would not be required to pass until the end of January next, & that although I shall not be able to pass in the 2d of August next,

I hope to be able to pass very soon after.

I have the honor &c

Signed J.W. Fraser
Civil Engineer.

Resolved that Copy of the foregoing letter be forwarded to Government, with the recommendation of the Chief Engineer that as the Circumstances set forth in explanation of the difficulties that Messrs Fraser & Bramahan have had to contend with in the acquisition of a knowledge of a vernacular language, are of so peculiar & exceptional a nature as to warrant in their case the indulgence they solicit, and rule which directs their passing in August next may be relayed in their favor & the period extended to 28th January 1858.

(A true Extract)
H.C. Taylor Lieut.
Chief Engineer.

To

The Secretary to Government.
P.W.D.

Pub. Works 1857 Ordered
Cons: 25 June.

No 1214

Letter of Secy. the Board
of the Chief Engineer

To Pub. Works & Cost Office

Sheds 18th
Ice 13th } Sent 26th

No 1119

Sir,

I am directed by the Board of Public Works to transmit herewith for your information a Report from the Chief Engineer dated the 23rd instant stating that the Contractors for the Ice Houses and Storage Sheds at Point St George and Cockburn Island have failed to comply with the conditions of the Agreement entered into with them for the completion of the Buildings, and requesting that a Warrant may be drawn in favor of the Contractors for the Instalment payable on the completion of the Buildings, which should have been paid in August last, as the Buildings have been completed within the period intended by the Board.

I am Sir
Your obedient Servant
Recorder

No 1226
Recorded
Point St George 25th June 57