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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Cons 13. to 57

G.O. No. 1925 Press Mis.

70-71

Dated 13—10— 18 57

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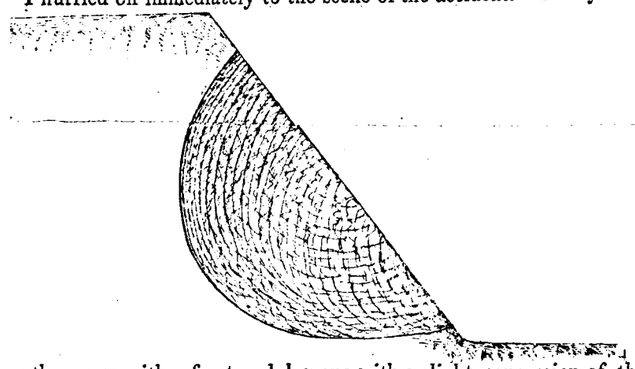
Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 13th October 1857.

No. 70. Read the following Extract from the Proceedings of the Chief Engineer, dated 6th October 1857, No. 4229.

Read the following letter from Lieutenant SHAW STEWART, Acting District Engineer Kurnool; to Colonel C. E. FABER, Chief Engineer, dated 30th September 1857, No. 678.

SIR,

I deeply regret to have to inform you of a serious accident which took place here on the evening of the 29th Instant which has resulted in the death of 4 individuals and in injury to 2 others, both of whom however the Surgeon reports as likely soon to recover. The accident occurred in excavating for the wing walls of the south abutment of the bridge across the Hindree river here. The work was under the executive charge of Assistant Overseer J. H. Woodward. I happened to visit the work twice in the course of the 28th Instant. On the last occasion on which I visited it previous to the accident which was late on the evening of that day the excavation was carried down to a depth of about 20 feet, the slope of the sides being about 2 to 1. I thought that it then required barely one foot more in depth to complete the excavation, and I certainly did not then anticipate the slightest danger from the appearance of the excavation, although I inspected it minutely. I was in the Company of Captain Collyer Superintending Engineer when the intelligence of the accident reached me. It was a little after 6 p. m. and I hurried off immediately to the scene of the accident. On my arrival I found that a large mass of earth, weighing probably about 50 tons had slipped from the side of the cutting, in the manner shewn in the accompanying sketch, burying in its fall, 8 individuals who were at work beneath. Of these thanks to the exertions of Assistant Surgeon Miller and Mr. Woodward 4 were rescued previous to my arrival, 2 of these had received no injury; the others, one with a fractured leg one with a slight concussion of the spine were conveyed to the Hospital, and I am happy to say they are both reported in a fair way to recover. The remaining four I regret much to say could not be rescued. They were buried deeply under the mass of earth which had fallen upon them and all our efforts to extricate them were useless. At last, warned by the crumbling state of the bank, which completely overhung us, I was obliged to put a stop to the efforts of our party, which I did with the less reluctance, that Dr. Miller who had been most unwearied in his exertions, assured me that life must have been long extinct, and I did not feel myself justified in risking valuable lives where none could possibly have been saved. This morning I directed the clearing to be commenced from the surface of the ground above, and I trust that in the course of to-morrow, the bodies will all be extricated. The proceedings of the inquest will be forwarded to you as soon as it is held. I do not know in what way to account for the accident. The slope given to the sides was I think quite sufficient; it was more than was given to the same soil in excavating for the foundation of the abutment. As I have already mentioned I had carefully inspected the spot only the evening previous to the accident and it did not then strike me that there was the slightest danger, no crack in the ground or other warning of any kind being perceptible. The slip did not commence from the surface of the ground, but at some distance down the slope of the cutting. I shall as soon as possible forward to you an application for a gratuity to the families of those killed by the late accident.



Resolved that the foregoing narrative from the District Engineer Kurnool No. 678, of the 30th September 1857, of a serious catastrophe causing a deplorable loss of 4 lives whilst exca-

vating for the foundation of the south abutment of the Hindree bridge be forwarded for the information of Government with an expression of the Chief Engineer's opinion that much as the sad occurrence is to be lamented, it cannot be attributed to any want of customary precaution or foresight or to a careless manner of carrying on an indispensable operation by the Executive Officer's of the Department Public Works.

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

No. 71. ORDER THEREON, No. 1925; dated 13th October 1857.

Ordered that the foregoing Extract be recorded.

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

No. 4229

Extract from the Proceedings of the Chief Engineer in the Department of Public Works.

Under date the 6th October 1857

Read the following

No. 678

To

The Chief Engineer Dpt.

Sir

I deeply regret to have to inform you of a serious accident which took place here on the evening of the 29th inst which has resulted in the death of 4 individuals & injury to 2 others, both of whom however the Surgeon reports as likely soon to recover. The accident occurred in excavating for the wing walls of the south abutment of the bridge across the Hindree river here. The work was under the Executive charge of Asst Overseer J. H. Woodward. I happened to visit the work twice in the course of the 28th inst. On the last occasion on which I visited it previous to the accident

which

which was late on the evening of that day the excavation was carried down to a depth of about 20 feet, the slope of the sides being about 2 to 1. I thought that if there required barely one foot more in depth to complete the excavation, I certainly did not then anticipate the slightest danger from the appearance of the excavation, although I inspected it minutely. I was in the company of Capt Collyer Lufs Engr when the intelligence of the accident reached me. It was a little after 6 pm & I hurried off immediately to the scene of the accident. On my arrival I found that a large mass of earth, weighing probably about 50 tons had slipped from the side of the Cutting, in the manner shewn in the accompanying Sketch, burying in its fall, 8 individuals who were at work beneath. Of these,

thanks

thanks to the exertions of Asst Surgeon Miller and Mr Woodward 4 were rescued previous to my arrival. 2 of these had received no injury; the others, one with a fractured leg one with a slight concussion of the spine were conveyed to the Hospital, and I am happy to say they are both reported in a fair way to recover. The remaining four I regret much to say could not be rescued. They were buried deeply under the mass of earth which had fallen upon them & all our efforts to extricate them were useless. At last, warned by the crumbling state of the bank, which completely overhung us, I was obliged to put a stop to the efforts of our party, which I did with the less reluctance, that Dr Miller who had been most unwearied in his exertion, assured me that life must have been long extinct, and I did not feel myself justified in risking valuable lives where none could possibly have been

been saved. This morning I directed the clearing to be commenced from the surface of the ground above, and I trust that in the course of tomorrow, the bodies will all be extricated. The proceedings of the Inquest will be forwarded to you as soon as it is held. I do not know in what way to account for the accident. The slope given to the sides was I think quite sufficient, it was more than was given to the same soil in excavating for the foundation of the abutment. As I have already mentioned I had carefully inspected the spot only the evening previous to the accident & it did not then strike me that there was the slightest danger, no crack in the ground or other warning of any kind being perceptible. The slip did not commence from the surface of the ground, but at some distance down

down the slope of the cutting. I shall as soon as possible forward to you an application for a gratuity to the families of those killed by the late accident

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obedient Servant
Signed / Shaw Stewart Lt
Agt Dist Engr Kurnool

Kurnool Dt Engrs Office
30th Sept 1867

Resolved that the foregoing narrative from the Dist Engr Kurnool No 678 of the 30 Sept/67 of a serious catastrophe causing a deplorable loss of 4 lives whilst excavating for the foundation of the South abutment of the Kindree Bridge be forwarded for the information of Government with an expression of the Chief Engineers opinion that much as the sad occurrence is to be lamented, it cannot be attributed to any want of customary precaution or foresight or to a careless manner of carrying on an indispensable operation by the Executive Officers of the Dept.

Lieutenant Colonel
Chief Engineer

To The Secretary to Govt
PWD

Pub: Works 1857 Dept
Cors 13th October
No 1990

Extract from the Proceedings
of the Chief Engineer
to
The Secretary to Govt Bdg

Dated 6th 2nd October 1857
Recd 6th 13th

No 4229
From Dy Lt Col Crow R.E. 57 Cat No 2301
Circulars 23rd Dec
Submitting for the inspn
of Govt copy of a letter from the
Dy Engr Kurnool reporting a
serious accident which took
place in excavating for the
wing walls of the South
abutment of the Hindree
Bridge with an expression
of the Chief Engrs opinion that
it cannot be attributed to
any want of due caution

No 70 & 71.

precaution or foresight on

Jobs Recorded
No 1925
13th Octr 57

Cy Govt Bdg