

- 8.
1. Number of pages.
 2. Date of repair.
 3. Initials of Reference.

M.R.O. 1-32400-22-11-50

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Cons. 17.2.57

G.O. No. 3/7

Press
Mis.

41-42

Dated

17-2-

18 57.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 17th February 1857.

No. 41. Read the following Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Military Department, dated 27th January 1857, No. 302.

Read the following Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Public Works Department.

Containing observations and orders with regard to the maintenance of roads, bridges, drains &c., in Military Cantonments, on a better system than has hitherto obtained in this Presidency by the Conservancy Committee. (Here enter 22nd January 1857, No. 157.)

Communicated to the Commander-in-Chief and Departments concerned.

2. Referring to para. 1, Minutes of Consultation No. 2546, dated 1st October 1856, the Governor in Council observes that existing arrangements must continue in force until funds can be made available for Conservancy Committee under the foregoing order.

(True Extract and Copies.)

(Signed) H. MARSHALL, Lieut.-Colonel,
Dy. Secretary to Government.

No. 42. ORDER THEREON, No. 317 ; dated 17th February 1857.

Ordered that the foregoing Extract be recorded.

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

No. 302.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation, 27th January 1857,

Read the following letter,

No. 380.

From

The Quarter Master General of the Army,

To

The Secretary to Government, Military Department.

Sir,

Referring to Extract Minutes of Consultation No. 2799 dated 28th October last approving generally, of the measures proposed for conducting Conservancy duties in Cantonments, which measure His Excellency is happy to observe, has received the sanction of the Honorable the Court of Directors, I have the honor by order of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to request, that Government will be good enough to say, whether the provisions of para. 28 of my letter, regarding the transfer of the Road Department to Conservancy Committees, on the 1st January next is to take place.

QR. MR. GENERAL'S OFFICE,
FORT SAINT GEORGE,
6th December 1856.

I have &c.

(Signed) F. A. REID,

Qr. Mr. General of the Army.

Referred for consideration in Department Public Works with advertence to Para. 1, Mins. of Consultation No. 2546 and No. 2799, Military Department dated 1st and 28th October 1856 respectively.

By Order.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
11th December 1856.

(Signed) H. MARSHALL, Lieut. Colonel,

Dy. Secretary to Government.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Public Works Department, under date the 22nd January 1857, No. 157.

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

On the subject of the maintenance of roads, bridges, drains &c., in Military Cantonments, on a better system than has hitherto obtained in this Presidency. (Here enter 28th October, 10th, 24th and 25th November and 11th December 1856, Nos. 2799, 2929, 3065, and 3078.)

The foregoing correspondence is on the subject of the maintenance of roads, bridges, drains &c., in Military Cantonments, on a better system than has hitherto obtained in this Presidency. It has arisen in consequence of the orders of Government in the Military Department 4th February last, No. 312, authorizing in accordance with the Bengal plan, the construction and maintenance of such works by Government, and approving of station Conservancy Committees to Supervise and determine the public and sanatory wants of Military Cantonments. The letter of the Quarter Master General of the Army of the 13th October last, furnishes a sketch of the arrangements under which it is proposed to carry out the objects contemplated, and conveys the recommendation of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, that the transfer by the Military Board of the Conservancy of roads &c., to the Committees to be appointed for the purpose, may be allowed to take place on the 1st January 1857. The general arrangements proposed having been already approved by Government in the Military Department, it is now only necessary to pass such orders on the subject in this Department as properly come within its province.

Provision of Funds.

2. It is part of the new plan to classify the roads in the Cantonments according to their standard of formation, and to assign annual allowances for their maintenance, as also to allot

estimated sums for the provision of masonry and other works; the total annual estimated amount for all works, excluding Convict labor and the estimate for Vizagapatam already separately sanctioned, being set down at Rupees 1,02,999, in the amended table furnished with the Quarter Master General's memo. of the 13th October. The proposed system of classification is approved, the Chief Engineer, to whom the correspondence will be communicated, will however examine the several estimates stated* to have been transmitted to him; and having done so, he will furnish to Government an abstract shewing the expenditure required strictly for maintenance charges in each Cantonment, and also in all the Cantonments of each Collectorate, in order that the amounts may be entered together with the general repair allowances, in Statement No. 3, of the Budget. Estimates for new works proposed by the Conservancy will, like other estimates for new works, be submitted in the usual course for the sanction of Government, and for entry in the Budget.

Supply of Stores and Tools.

3. The Military authorities are desirous to be allowed to indent on the Arsenals for stores and supplies, in preference to obtaining them by purchase at the Arsenals or elsewhere; the principal reason urged being that the rates at which they may be purchased are unknown, and that the rates themselves may probably vary according to circumstances. On the other hand, the Military Board urge strongly a strict adherence to the recognized principle of purchase, in order that their check and control over the issue of store &c., may be complete and uninterrupted in all Departments; and to meet the alleged difficulty as to rates, they furnish a table of prices at which the several articles required by the Conservancy may be supplied by the Arsenals. The Government have in recent† orders affirmed the rule that all stores and supplies issued from the Arsenals on account of Public Works shall be paid for, and this rule will be applicable to supplies and tools required by the Conservancy Committees. The estimates should therefore be amended in the Chief Engineer's office, so as to include the amount necessary for the provision of tools and other supplies.

Employment of Convicts.

4. Paras. 32 to 36, of the Quarter Master General's letter of the 13th October, treat of the employment of Convicts, and of the payment to the Judicial Department for their labor from para. 33, there appears to be objection to the employment of Convicts, under the misapprehension that the rates of hire to be paid for their labor exceed those of free labor. In Extract Minutes Consultation in this Department dated 8th November last, No. 2074, the Government determined that the rate of hire to be paid hereafter on account of Convict labor when the work cannot be done by task work shall be one half the wages of daily coolies at the ordinary current rates of the District. These orders will now be communicated to the Military Department to be circulated for the information of the Conservancy Committees. Under the foregoing order Estimates wherein deduction has been made on account of the expected employment of Convict labor will require to be corrected by entering the cost of the proposed work at the ordinary local rates. It should be understood that it will be entirely at the option of the committees or the Executive Officers to employ Convict labor or free labor in every case as may be found most convenient or economical.

Transfer of powers to the Committees, and principle of executive functions.

5. The transfer of the Conservancy of Public Works in Cantonments to the station Committees, will take place in this month as recommended by His Excellency the Commander in Chief, and it remains to pass orders as to the agency to be employed in the execution of work under them. In his letter of the 6th December 1855, No. 296, the Quarter Master General conveyed the opinion of the Commander in Chief that the Supervision of Public Works in Cantonments should be entrusted to the Quarter Master General's Department, and the executive part left to the Public Works Department. The Chief Engineer in his letter 21st January last, No. 432, objected to this proposal, as tending to charge the Public Works Department with duties that might clash with others more important and as subjecting the Engineer to a double authority; and he recommended instead that the station Staff Officer should in all cases be entrusted with the executive duties, the local Engineer being only a consulting member

of the Committee. The Government do not however anticipate the evils stated by Colonel Faber. They approve the principle of Supervision and execution embraced in the proposal of the Commander-in-Chief; and they resolve to prescribe the following general rules for the performance of the executive duties with the view of ensuring unity of system and efficiency.

6. The station Staff Officer at each Cantonment will be the Executive Officer within its limits for work under the Conservancy Committee; his estimates will be countersigned by the District Engineer, and through this Officer alone will he draw funds for the works entrusted to him. In the case of mere repairs, the station Staff Officer's estimates on countersignature by the District Engineer and approval by the Conservancy Committee, will be carried into effect out of the maintenance funds allotted to the Cantonment, which he will draw from the Collector through the District Engineer like other Executive Officers. In regard to new works, the estimates approved by the Committee will be forwarded through the District Engineer with his countersignature to the Chief Engineer, for the sanction of Government with the usual explanations; and for such works when sanctioned, separate funds will be provided. Thus, in all executive functions, the station Staff Officer will take the place of an executive Engineer, and he will be under the general control of the District Engineer; he will draw funds through him, he will submit monthly to him Accounts Current of his expenditure, and he will receive instructions from him on all matters connected with his executive duties.

(A true Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. BOURDILLON,
Secretary to Government.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Public Works Department, under date the 8th November 1856, No. 2074.

Read the following letter from the Chief Engineer.

States the opinions of the Inspector of Prisons and of the District Engineers on the question of the value of Convict labor, and adds that he does not consider that a convict's labor is generally worth more than $\frac{1}{2}$ that of an ordinary laborer, but that on roads at Civil stations, and for emergency works such as cutting a bar, their services are useful and worth $\frac{1}{2}$ of a cooly's labor, but as these are special cases recommends that $\frac{1}{2}$ a day's cooly be charged for a convict's day's labor.

Here enter 11th October 1856, No. 7189.

Para. 1. In this letter the Chief Engineer reports after communication with the Inspector of Prisons and with the Engineer Officers on the subject referred to him in para. 2 of Extract Minutes of Consultation 30th January 1856, on the system of charges to be adopted for convict labor supplied to the Department of Public Works.

2. The Inspector of Prisons in his letter to the Chief Engineer, dated 26th March, states that piece works should be paid for at the Talook rates, and where the work to be done has no fixed price, that two-thirds of the ordinary rate of hire ought to be paid. In his latter letter to Government, dated 16th April, he repeats this statement, and adds "that a prisoner if properly tasked can do a great deal more than a cooly on daily pay will." He suggests that whatever can be reduced to piece work should be paid for as piece work at the current rates, and that whatever cannot be so estimated, should be charged according to the day's work, and considers two thirds of the ordinary wages of the district a very low charge.

3. On the other hand Captain Gibb, who has had much experience in the working of convicts, having had charge of convicts in the operations at Paumben for eleven years, considers that free labor is more economical than that of convicts, and he gives his reasons for this opinion in his letter of the 8th June 1856. He prefers cooly labor, because the men would be more under his control, and more work would be performed in a more satisfactory manner; he would be glad to be relieved of the convicts at Paumben and to be allowed to employ coolies in their stead. Similar testimony is borne by other Officers. The Engineer of the 7th Division, finds on reference to the Session Judge of Coimbatore that a convict does only a fourth of what ought to be done by free labor; the Civil Engineer of the 9th Division states, that only half the work of an ordinary cooly can be expected from a prisoner; the Engineer in charge of the Chingleput District is of opinion that a convict's daily work is about one-third of that of an ordinary cooly; the Officer in charge of Salem is of opinion that a cooly well looked after on 2 annas per diem is cheaper than a convict on one anna; and the acting Civil Engineer of the 5th Division would never think of employing convicts when free labor was procurable. The Chief Engineer in sub-

mitting these reports, expresses his own view of the matter, viz. that except in the special case of convicts employed continually on one kind of work under good Superintendence, a convict's work is not worth more than half that of a cooly working freely.

4. These several opinions, lead the Government to believe that the value assigned by the Inspector of Prisons, to convict labor viz, "two-thirds of the ordinary wages of free labor" is too high. They think with Mr. Rohde, that the labor of convicts furnished to the Public Works Department should be charged for, wherever it is practicable to employ them on piece work, at the current rates; but that when the work to be done has no fixed price, that one-half the wages of a day cooly at the ordinary current rates of the District, would be the safest rate to charge. The Government direct that this rule be observed for the future, and request that the Chief Engineer will issue instructions in conformity therewith for the guidance of the several Officers of the Public Works Department.

(A true Extract.)

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

(A true Copy.)

(Signed) J. D. BOURDILLON,
Secretary to Government.

Communicated to the Commander-in-Chief and Departments concerned.

2. Referring to Para.1. Minutes of Consultation No. 2546, dated 1st October 1856, the Governor in Council observes that existing arrangements must continue in force until funds can be made available for Conservancy Committee under the foregoing order.

(True Extract and Copies.)

To the Department Public Works. *With a true copy* Dy. Secretary to Government. ✓
„ Quarter Master General.
„ Military Board.
„ Commissary General.
„ Chief Engineer Mysore.
„ Do. Hyderabad.
„ Do. Nagpore.

Nov. 29th Albany 1834 12 537

Charles H. Smith 1834 12 537
Nov. 19th Albany

1834

Extract from the
Annals of the
Military Department

Nov. 29th January 1834
Dec. 12th February -

Observing that existing
arrangements must continue
in force, until funds can be
made available for the
Committee to conduct the
duties in Cantonments.

1834

Record

John H. George 1834 12 537

1834 12 537