1. Number of pages 8
2. Date of repair 16-6-5
3. Initials of Reference

M.R.O. 1—32,400—28-11-50.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 569	Press Mis.
55-56	
Dated 28—3—	1857

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 55. Read the following letter from Lieutenant Colonel W. E. BAKER, Secretary to the Government of India; to J. D. BOURDILLON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Fort Saint George, dated Fort William, the 30th January 1857, No. 510.

SIR,

I am directed to request the attention of the Government of Madras to the question of the general levy of Tolls on roads throughout the provinces of that Presidency.

2. The Governor General in Council has observed that, with the present constant expenditure of large sums of money on the construction of roads in all parts of India, both from the General Revenues and from Local funds, the difficulty of providing for the opening of new Lines and for the repair of those already made, must continue to increase year by year, and that, sooner or later, an entire stop must be put to all progress on such works unless some means are found to make those who use the roads, contribute for their maintenance.

3. His Lordship in Council can see no valid objection to the general levy of Tolls on all made roads, so long as they are restricted to this object, and provided they are fairly assessed and placed under proper management. The duty of the State to advance the Capital required for such works, is not called in question, but as the money thus laid out, must ultimately be supplied by the people in some form or other, it may be doubted whether, in the present condition of India, and as a general rule, there can be any better plan suggested than that of making those persons pay for the roads of the country who actually use them.

4. As a mere abstract matter of right, the justice of realizing a fair return on money sunk in the construction of an ordinary road, rests on the identical arguments which would apply to the case of a Railway or Navigable Canal; and no one doubts that direct payments are proper in these latter works. The only question that can reasonably be raised in the matter is, with reference to the good or bad policy of this or that way of providing for roads which, at all hands, are admitted to be essential to progress and real civilization, but for which some special provision beyond the ordinary revenues of the country, appears to the Governor General in Council to be a matter of urgent necessity.

5. The disinclination which seems hitherto to have existed to the introduction of Tolls in India rests, it is believed, in a great measure on the doubts which have been entertained whether they might not lead to extortion on the part of the Toll receivers, and thus cause a general obstruction of the trade of the country. But the experience on the Grand Trunk road in the North Western Provinces has sufficiently shown that, under proper regulation, these evils are not really felt. A certain amount of evasion no doubt takes place, but still a large revenue is realized without a word of complaint. The advantages of the made road are indeed so great, that when they are once properly appreciated, the payment of a moderate Toll will certainly not be looked upon as a grievance by any one. Neither is there any novelty in the idea of Tolls which are already collected in every part of the country at Ferries and bridges of boats.

It is at present the desire of the Government of India rather to seek for opinions as to the manner in which the roads of the country might be made more or less self supporting, than to offer them; and I am consequently desired to place the matter in the hands of the Madras Government for the careful consideration which a subject of this great importance deserves, with the request that the Right Honorable the Governor in Council will submit an early expression of his opinions as to the best method of providing for the maintenance of all roads, whether constructed from the general revenues or from Local funds, by a systematic levy of Tolls.

No. 56. ORDER THEREON, No. 569; dated 28th March 1857.

The Government observe that the question of levying Tolls has already received their consideration in para. 8 of Minutes Consultation dated 27th May 1856, No. 785, and the Chief Engineer was requested in para. 19, of the same order to submit certain information preparatory to the introduction of the measure. The subject was also noticed in para. 9 of Despatch No. 7 of 1856, to the Honorable the Court of Directors, copy of which was forwarded to the Supreme Government with Mr. Bourdillon's letter dated 27th May 1856.

2. Resolved however that copy of the letter recorded above be sent to the Chief Engineer with a request that he will expedite the submission of the information required in the order above quoted. The Government think it necessary that Colonel Faber should ascertain the views of the several Collectors and District Engineers on the subject and submit their communications to Government together with his own opinion. The form of return, which it has been proposed to circulate, for the information required in the order of Government dated 27th May was approved of in Minutes Consultation of this day's date No. 568, but as the preparation of that return will very likely be a work of time, the Chief Engineer will be good enough to apply separately for the information requisite for framing his report on Tolls, and to expedite its submission.

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

Public Works Dept.

No. 569

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation
Under date the 28th March 1857

Read the following
letter from the Secretary to
the Government of India.

Rec. enter 30th January 1857
No. 510

The Government
observe that the question
of levying tolls has already
received their consideration
in para 8 of their
Consultation dated 27th May
1856, No. 785, and the Chief
Engineer was requested
in para 19 of the same
Order

Order to submit certain information preparatory to the introduction of the measure. The subject was also noticed in paragraph of despatch No 7 of 1856 to the Honorable the Court of Directors, Copy of which was forwarded to the Supreme Government with Mr Bourdillon's letter dated 27th May 1856.

2 Resolved however that a copy of the letter recorded above be sent to the Chief Engineer with a request that he will expedite the submission of the information required in the Order above quoted. The Govt

Govt think it necessary that Colonel Taber should ascertain the views of the several Collectors and District Engineers on the subject and submit their communications to Govt together with his own opinion. The form of return, which it has been proposed to circulate for the information required in the order of Govt dated 27th May, was approved of in Minutes Consultation of this days date No but as the preparation of that return will very likely be a work of time the Chief Engineer will

will be good enough to apply
separately for the information
requisite for framing
his report on tolls, and to
expedite its submission.

51 Copies to the
Chief Engr. Dirs. &c.

c19 March R24th

Comm. 27th May/56 No 79681

Public Works 1857 Dept.
Dr to Comm: 31st March.

No 569.

Extract Mins of Comm:
Dy 28th March 57.
From Chief Engr 9th Inst 6145
& No 1804 to Comm: 19th Inst
Thro' Bd of Rt 19th March 58 No 1405
in b Ltr 19 March
Observing that the
question of levying Tolls
has already received the
consideration of this Govt
requesting however, that
the Chief Engineer will
expedite the submission of
the information called for in
Para 19 of Extt Mins. Comm dated 27th
may/56 No 785, relative to
the levy of tolls on roads
throughout the Presidency. —

No 55 & 56.