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10/10/37

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<u>189.190</u> Dated <u>10-6-</u> 18 <u>5</u>	

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16/9/38

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
from 1st to 10th June 1859.*

No 189. Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. BELL, Chief Engineer;
to J. D. BOURDILLON, Esq, Secretary to Government, dated 6th May 1859,
No. 161.

In para. 17 of the order of Government as per margin, the Chief Engineer is directed to state
his opinion at an early date upon the means proposed to ensure uni-
formity and regularity in the preparation of Bills proposed by the
Commission for investigating Public Establishments.

2. I have found it difficult to give due attention to the many new subjects which press
upon me in my new office; and I cannot at present report fully and finally upon the proposi-
tion of the Commissioners, but I will, agreeably to the desire of Government, now submit my
opinion as far as I have been able to form one.

3. The form of "Certificate" recommended by the Commissioners is in principle the
same as that of the Bill which was in use in some Districts under the old system of Maramut
many years ago, and which was introduced by myself with the sanction of the Board of Reve-
nue throughout the Department of Public Works. But it found no favor with the Public
Works Commissioners, who denounced it as not a proper Bill at all, as causing a great deal of
trouble for its preparation, and as encouraging fictitious calculations and entries. I do not quote
the report of the Commissioners, but write from recollection of my personal communications
with them. I was not convinced by their arguments; but as their recommendations on such points
were generally adopted without question, the old form of Bill was superseded and abolished.

4. It will be apparent on very little consideration that if the Public Works Commissioners'
objections to the old form of Bill were in any respect valid, their validity would be increased
in the case of the piece or part Bills recommended by the Commission on Public Establish-
ments. If work were paid for in the Department of Public Works at a certain "rate" it
would be a simple process to calculate the "quantity and value;" but even contract work, of
which there is very little in the Department, is not so valued; and as to all the rest, except
Wodawars' work in earth and stone, its value can be computed only by reckoning together the
bricks, lime, sand (or other materials), sundries and operatives combined for its performance:
in other words, the whole process condemned by the Public Works Commissioners must be re-
peated over and over again as often as each "Certificate" is granted. Contract work again is
not paid for by the "rate," but the contract is usually made for the whole work, and when a
given portion of the building or other work is completed according to the Plan and Estimate,
and approved, the Contractor who has received an advance for the said portion, receives another
to enable him to proceed, and his account is finally settled without any valuation at all, unless
that may be said to be implied in the approval of the Inspecting Officer.

5. The present form of Bill, to which the strictest adherence has been enjoined in the
Department, is that which was approved by the Public Works Commissioners. It most truly
was never intended to "shew" the "progress in detail of each work or to bring periodically
under notice the whole working under each Estimate or Contract," for it is a mere list of mate-
rials and workmen with their cost and hire, and any Bill on inspection might be conceived
as applicable to an infinite variety of works containing generally equal quantities of the usual
materials. But when the Commission affirm that "there is not any regulation in this [the
North Arcot] District prescribing uniformity and regularity in the preparation of the Bills,"
they seem to me to have mistaken the facts of the case. There is indeed no local or provincial
regulation, but the departmental regulation for uniformity and regularity is as precise as possible;
and Bills by scores and hundreds are prepared continually all over the Presidency on one "uni-
form and regular" system. Nor has the Commission produced more than one instance of irregu-
larity even in North Arcot.

6. The "Certificate" would be of no use for the purpose of "allowing payment;" for the
payments would be all made before the valuation of the work could be computed. On the other
hand it would be very useful for the second purpose of "giving" a "full view of the work that
has been done," and "that remains to be done;" but it is as I have shown above altogether a

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
from 1st to 10th June 1859.

mistake to suppose that "little time would be expended in preparing" it. That would be true only if the estimated or any other arbitrary "rate" were taken for the valuation of the work; but if the rate were a genuine rate derived from the actual cost, as it must be to produce a true "Bill," its computation would by no means occupy a little time, but would involve more or less time and trouble according to the experience and aptitude of the computer. I am far from objecting on this ground to the "Certificate" or "Bill" proposed by the Commission, for I have always regretted that the Public Works Commissioners altered the form of which I had for many years proved the convenience; but it is one thing to acknowledge the goodness of a form, and another to introduce it over the whole Department in supercession of a form established after long deliberation, and habitual to every Executive Agent. There have been trouble and vexation enough in enforcing the present forms, and I fear that the disagreeable process would be abundantly repeated all over the provinces in teaching new ones, especially for Bills which seem to have been the universal *bête noir* of the Department. If indeed there were some extensive or general irregularities to be corrected much might be said in favor of devising new forms of procedure; but while the writer of the report on North Arcot has certainly made the most of those few which have been discovered, the Commissioners are doubtless fully aware that in the immense majority of the Bills of the Department there is no irregularity, though mistakes may often occur in them, as they certainly would do in every possible form of Bill.

7. Upon the whole I am not at present disposed to admit the necessity or expediency of the change proposed by the Commission. The present form of Bill is certainly of little or no use as a check on the progress report; but it has the advantage of perfect simplicity and truth, and of being intelligible to every sort of person who has occasion to use it. But I reserve my final opinion till I am able to report upon the whole system of Account and Audit.

8. I will only add that as the actual form of the "Certificate" has not been communicated, I have taken my information upon it from the textual description; but I believe that I have not misapprehended its true character.

No. 190.

ORDER THEREON, 10th June 1859 No. 1422.

The Chief Engineer reports his opinion in this letter as to the form of certificate or Bill proposed by the establishments Commissioners to be introduced into the Public Works Department in place of the Bill now in use. Though not approving the present form of Bill, and preferring that proposed by the Commissioners, Colonel Bell is yet adverse to the change now that the Bill in use has become established in the Department. He reserves his final opinion on the subject however, till he shall be able to report on the whole system of Account and Audit; which he has since done without expressing any further opinion on this matter.

2. The Governor in Council considers that the Chief Engineer has given good reasons for being adverse to the change, and the Government would be unwilling to make any alteration in the Rules of the Department in opposition to his judgment and wishes.

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

Central Office of P.W. 3
Fort Saint George
6 May 1859

No. 164

From
The Chief Engineer

To
The Secretary
to Government P.W.

Public

April 5th 1859
No. 811

In para 17 of the order of Government
as per margin the Chief Engineer is directed to state
his opinion at an early date upon the means proposed
to ensure uniformity and regularity in the preparation
of Bills proposed by the Commission for investigating
Public Establishments

2. I have found it difficult to give
due attention to the many new subjects which press
upon me in my new office; and I cannot at
present report fully and finally upon the proposition
of the Commissioners, but I will, agreeably to the
desire of Government, now submit my opinion as
far as I have been able to form one —

3. The form of "Certificate" recommended
by the Commissioners is in principle the same as that
of

of 1850, and proposing
that

of the Bill which was in use in some Districts under the old system of Maramut many years ago, and which was introduced by myself with the sanction of the Board of Revenue throughout the Department of Public Works. But it found no favor with the Public Works Commissioners, who denounced it as not a proper Bill at all, as causing a great deal of trouble for its preparation, and as encouraging fictitious calculations and entries. I do not quote the report of the Commissioners, but write from recollection of my personal communications with them. I was not convinced by their arguments, but as their recommendations on such points were generally adopted without question, the old form of Bill was superseded and abolished. —

4 It will be apparent on very little consideration that if the Public Works Commissioners' objections to the old form of Bill were in any respect valid, their validity would be increased in the case of the Piece or Part Bills recommended by the Commission on Public Establishments. If work were paid for in the Department of Public Works at a certain "rate" it would be a simple process to

5 to calculate the "quantity and value;" but even contract work, of which there is very little in the Department, is not so valued; and as to all the rest, except woodmen's work in earth and stone, its value can be computed only by reckoning together the bricks, lime, sand (or other materials) sundries and operatives combined for its performance: in other words the whole process condemned by the Public Works Commissioners must be repeated over and over again as often as each "Certificate" is granted. Contract work again is not paid for by the "rate", but the contract is usually made for the whole work, and when a given portion of the building or other work is completed according to the plan and Estimate, and approved, the Contractor who has received an advance for the said portion, receives another to enable him to proceed, and his account is finally settled without any valuation at all, unless that may be said to be implied in the approval of the Inspecting Officer. —

5 The present form of bill, to which the strictest adherence has been enjoined in the Department, is that which was approved by the Public

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that

Public Works Commissioners. It most truly was never intended to "show" the progress in detail of each work" or to bring periodically under notice the whole working under each Estimate or Contract; for it is a mere list of materials and workmen with their cost and hire, and any Bill or inspection might be conceived as applicable to an infinite variety of works containing generally equal quantities of the usual materials. But when the Commission affirm that "there is not any regulation in this [the North Street] District, prescribing uniformity and regularity in the preparation of the bills," they seem to me to have mistaken the facts of the case. There is indeed no local or provincial regulation, but the departmental regulation for uniformity and regularity is as precise as possible; and Bills by scores and hundreds are prepared continually all over the Presidency on one "uniform and regular" system. Nor has the Commission produced more than one instance of irregularity even in North Street. -

6 The "Certificate" would be of no use for the purpose of "allowing payments;" for the payments would be all made before the valuation of the work could be computed. On the other hand
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7
it would be very useful for the second purpose of "giving" a full view of the work that has been done, and "that remains to be done;" but it is as I have shown above altogether a mistake to suppose that little time would be expended in preparing it. That would be true only if the estimated or any other arbitrary "rate" were taken for the valuation of the work; but if the rate were a genuine rate derived from the actual cost, as it must be to produce a true "Bill," its computation would by no means occupy a little time, but would involve more or less time and trouble according to the experience and aptitude of the computer. I am far from objecting on this ground to the "Certificate" or "bill" proposed by the Commission, for I have always regretted that the Public Works Commissioners altered the form of which I had for many years proved the convenience, but it is one thing to acknowledge the goodness of a form, and another to introduce it over the whole Department in supersession of a form established after long deliberation, and habitual to every Executive Agent. There have been trouble and vexation enough in enforcing the present form

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that

P.W. Dept.

N^o 1422

Proceedings of the Madras Government

Undated the 10th June 1859

Read the following
letter from the Chief
Engineer.

(Here enter 6th May 1859
No 161)

The Chief Engineer
reports his opinion in
this letter as to the form
of certificate or Bill
proposed by the establish-
ments Commissioners to be
introduced into the Pub-
lic Works Department
in place of the Bill
now in use. Though not
approving the present form
of Bill, and preferring
that

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G

18

W

Case 5th 11th 1859 at 54-55

19th 1859 26th
June 1859

12/1/33.

From
The Chief Engineer
at
the Secretary to Government
Public Works Dept^y

Dated 6th May 1859
Rec^d 6
12/1/33.

Reports the views on
the means proposed to
ensure uniformity and
regularity in the preparation
of Bills proposed by the
Commissioners for investigating
Public Establishments.

14/189.
C 14/1422 10th June 1859.

C 3 June 1859

the whole of the
proposed Bill is
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will be of great
service to the
Department.

W. C. L. and
10th June 1859

in the
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works
department
and
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Bell is yet adverse to the
change now that the bill
in use has become estab-
lished in the Depart-
ment. He reserves his
final opinion on the sub-
ject however, till he
shall be able to report
on the whole system of
Account & Audit, which
he has since done without
expressing any further
opinion on this matter.

2 The Governor in
Council ^{considers} ~~observes~~ that
the Chief Engineer ~~marks~~
marks in Paragraphs
show that he is not
thoroughly acquainted
with the nature of
the proposed Bill
or the mode of preparing
it.

~~it, but~~ ~~it~~ has given
good reasons for being
adverse to the change,
and the Government
would be unwilling
to make any alteration
in the Rules of the
Department in oppo-
sition to his judgment
and wishes.

10 Copies to the Chief Eng^r & Dep^t St.

J. A.

Q17-5th June 59. 1254-53. Public Works 1859-1940.
Case: 10th June

At: 1422.

Ph: of the address of
110th June 189.

Government and
unwilling to make any
alterations in the rules
of the P.H. (regarding)
the preparation of bills.

No 189 & 190.

Q7-5th incl 5th 2254-53 In blue ink 1889-1910
Covers 10th 2254-53

As: 2222.

Pro: of the Standard of
the Standard.

Government and
unwilling to make any
alteration in the rules
of the S. P. A. regarding
the Standard of the
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1889 & 190.