M.R.O. 1—77,003—8-6-51.

(1) Number of pages 26

(2) Date of repair 28.3.38

(3) Initials of the Referencer G

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Cal 4/1/59

G.O. No. 92 Press Mis.

G.O.G.S.

Dated 4—1— 1859.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Fort Saint George, Public Works. Consultation of 4th January 1859.

No. 44. Read the following letter from H. D. PHILLIPS Esq., Collector of Tanjore; to T. PYCROFT Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, dated Vullum 24th December 1858, No. 666.

SIR,

1. As reported in my communication of the date noted marginally, I adopted through the local Thasildars and their several subordinates, the measures necessary for closing the extensive and numerous breaches which had been occasioned by the late destructive inundation of the principal rivers in this District, and the work was in active progress, when, as I had been prepared to expect from the last Para. of Extract Minutes of Consultation dated 2nd instant, where the Government expressed their approval of the steps I had taken, Major Birdwood, the Officiating Superintending Engineer S. C. arrived in Tanjore. I lost no time in placing myself in personal communication with that Officer, who, when we met at Tanjore, at once proposed "that all Breaches and repairs to Roads, as the most emergent work, should be executed by the Thasildars leaving all breaches in the River and Channel embankments to be repaired by the D. P. W. Major Birdwood added "that the Executive Officers would be directed to prepare Estimates for repairing the breaches "in the different Roads and forward them daily to the Thasildars for their guidance."

27th November 1858, No. 954.

2. Although of opinion that the River breaches were by far the more important of the two classes, and feeling also that the aid of the Revenue Department, would be more advantageously brought to bear upon them, rather than that they should be left to the slow operation of the contract system now adopted by the professional Department, I also felt that union was essential for the public interests and therefore readily accepted Major Birdwood's proposal. The only object to be held in view by us was, by a division of labor, to economize time and accelerate the progress of works rendered necessary by an exceptional and unprecedented state of things, to meet which the ordinary available strength of the Professional Executive of the District was wholly and professedly unequal. Accordingly, I directed my Thasildars to discontinue repairs to River and Channel embankments, and to undertake those of the Roads within their respective ranges. These orders were issued by me only on the 14th instant, on the 18th I was favored with a letter from Major Birdwood, of which I enclose a copy, giving cover to one from the Officiating Chief Engineer's Office, requesting me to confine the repairs to the communications, to the extent of making them passable only for a single cart. I am not aware how far this course, amounting as it does to a virtual stoppage for the present of all repairs to the Roads, may be in accordance with the views of Government as conveyed in Extract Minutes of Consultation of the 2nd instant, but the Officiating Chief Engineer Major Lawford's instructions are probably based upon Rules 39 and 42 of the Public Works Code, and the road repairs, which at the request of the Officiating Superintending Engineer Major Birdwood, I undertook, must be at a stand-still till ordinary Estimates can be framed and receive the Chief Engineer's sanction in the regular course. By this time, it would seem intended, or perhaps it may be imagined, that the Professional Department will have finished the repairs to the irrigation works which they now have in hand and be prepared to enter upon those of the roads under the Estimates that may then have been sanctioned by the Central Office.

Page 586 and 587 Grant's Book.

3. Acting on the Superintending Engineer's letter, I have ordered the Thasildars to desist from any real, efficient, regular road repairs that they may already have undertaken.

4. Thus, the entire repair of the damage done by the floods, has reverted to the professional Department. If they feel that the strength and resources at their command are sufficient for and equal to the present important emergency, and are prepared to restore the now ineffective, Irrigation works of this province, as well as its numerous communications, so as to have the former at least in perfect order before the freshes of the ensuing season which may be expected about the 20th of April next, there is nothing in that respect left to be desired. The Government may rest satisfied that the Tanjore revenue is not in danger, and I can have no justifiable wish to interpose my aid. I am however desirous that the Government should have full knowledge of the extent of the injury done, of the condition and prospects of the District, and of the important interests at stake if the damage done should per chance not be repaired in time.

5. The District is at present a partial wreck. As far as accounts have yet been received by me, the number of breaches in river and Channel banks and tank bunds is computerl at about 5,000. If the next year's cultivation and revenue are not to be affected, this extent of devastation must be repaired before April, that is, in a period of little more than three months. But in about a month more, all the available labor of the province will be employed in harvest operations, which usually commence at an early date in January. Indeed, the Meerassidars generally, seeing the present state of the rivers and channels, seem to me to be more anxious as regards the prospects of the next year than about the results of the present one discouraging as they are.

6. I cannot refrain also from pointing out, that in justice to the people, to say nothing of other obvious considerations, no time should be lost in restoring the communications of the District some of these, under the measures taken by me just after the occurrence of the floods and approved by Government in the orders already quoted, had been made just passable for a cart; but I can state from my own personal observation, they can by no means be used safely or for any length of time; wheel conveyances, when passing over narrow slips of soil loosely and temporarily thrown down, with unclosed breaches and pits on either side, are liable to accidents, and accidents have been occurring where such work has been done; accordingly, the traffic of the District is much impeded from the necessity of going miles round instead of taking the old direct lines and may be said to be almost at a stand-still; such a necessity is particularly to be deplored at the present time, when paddy and rice are so extremely difficult of procural, and when we find them selling at prices of height so unprecedented as to press most severely on the poorer classes; It is worth mentioning that at this moment, it is with difficulty that 5 measures of rice can be had for a Rupee at Vullum, 56 miles from the coast; whereas, consequent on importations by sea from other places, it is selling at 9 measures, both at Negapatam and Tran quebar.

7. It would have been unnecessary to trouble the Government with this communication, if I could have satisfied myself that the aid of the Revenue Department had been cordially accepted as a fitting means of contending against the unusual emergency that at present exists. But, bearing in mind the opinion recently declared by Government that the strength of the present Marahmut Executive is insufficient even for an ordinary state of things, I have felt it to be my duty to bring the subject prominently forward, lest the public interests should eventually suffer from their inability to grapple with the enormously increased demand upon their attention and time.

Extract Minutes of Consul'ation 13th November 1858. No. 2386. Paras. 2-4 5 and 6.

8. I am far from questioning the desire of the principal European Officers of this Department to act up to the necessities of the time. We cannot, however, blink the fact of the Department being a new one, of its being untried on an emergency such as that now felt, of its having dealt with only ordinary circumstances since the first day of the Current year and that, too, in a manner so unsatisfactory to the Meerassidars of this most important District, that I am beset with complaints of the disregard paid to the just interests of those from whom the State has drawn so much of its revenue. I give these Gentlemen the utmost credit for a zeal on behalf of the Government we jointly serve, akin to what I myself feel, but it is my strong opinion that they are not equal to the extent of the work now cast on them and that unless the Government resolve to step in and force the adoption of special remedial measures, the revenue of the next and some succeeding years cannot fail to be affected.

Letter from Major W. J. BIRDWOOD, Officiating Superintending Engineer Southern Circle; to H. D. PHILLIPS Esquire Collector of Tanjore, dated Trichinopoly 18th December 1858.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward copy of a letter from the Officiating Chief Engineer to the address of the Officiating District Engineer of Tanjore under date the 14th instant, No. 6305 and to request you will accordingly give the necessary directions to your Thasildars to repair the breaches in the roads to *that extent only* as shall render them passable *for one bandy at a time* until estimate for their general repairs which will be prepared by this Department have received the sanction of Government.

From Lieutenant-Colonel E. LAWFORD, Officiating Chief Engineer; to the Officiating District Engineer of Trichinopoly, dated 14th December 1858, No. 6305.

SIR,

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, No. 1299, I have the honor to inform you that your intention of repairing the roads destroyed by the late floods so far as to render them passable has my approval, and will be reported to Government forthwith.

Your estimates for a more perfect restoration of the communications should be submitted as soon as possible.

No. 45. ORDER THEREON, No, 22; dated 4th January 1859.

In the above letter Mr. Phillips informs the Government, that as soon as possible after the disastrous floods of November, he adopted measures through his Revenue Subordinates for repairing and closing the numerous breaches in the irrigating channels, a step which Government in Extracts Minutes Consultation 2nd December 1858 fully approved of. In the same Extract Minutes Consultation they gave the Collector authority to act on this emergency independent of the Public Works Department, in those cases where it was in his power to carry on any repair to completion.

2. The Officiating Superintending Engineer of the Circle having proceeded to Tanjore, Mr. Phillips in communication with him, took upon himself to repair the roads leaving the Irrigation damages to the Public Works Department. This arrangement was adopted at Major Birdwood's suggestion, but the Government concur with Mr. Phillips that the aid of the Revenue Department might have been better employed in the repair of the river breaches, a work in which the Meerassidars of Tanjore have a personal interest, and one to which they were accustomed.

3. Mr. Phillips however in his present communication, points out that as regards the Roads the repair of which he has undertaken, he has been requested by the Officiating Chief Engineer to confine his operations to merely making the roads *passable* for a single cart, which he considers a virtual stoppage of all *repairs* properly so called.

4. Mr. Phillips is probably correct in supposing that Colonel Lawford's directions are based on Rules 39 and 42 of the Public Works Code which require "Estimates" to be made by the District Engineer, and sanctioned by the Chief Engineer; and which provide that emergent repairs shall only be such as may be absolutely necessary to prevent accident and injury. The Government in their order of 2nd December 1858 considered, and do still consider the case of the late disaster in Tanjore to be exceptional, and they are not prepared to adopt the somewhat dilatory process, which the regular rules of the Public Works Code would provide. When Mr. Phillips tendered the valuable services of his Revenue Subordinates, it was the desire of Government that what he would undertake to repair should be so repaired independent of the interference, or forms of the Public Works Department. It was and is a matter of vital importance to restore full communication through this fine Province, before the harvest time when the labours of the Meerassidars will not be available, and the Government are fully aware that the present reduced state of the Public Works Department is not able to cope unassisted with such emergent cases as that which has occurred in Tanjore.

Pages 586, 587, Circular Order Book.

5. The Government therefore direct, that whatever repair to the roads Mr. Phillips will undertake to have performed, shall be carried on at his own discretion, and a careful account kept of money expended, that the Bills may be subsequently audited and the expenditure debited to the Public Works Department.

6. These orders will be communicated to the Chief Engineer, who will direct the Officiating Superintending Engineer, or the District Engineer to consult Mr. Phillips as to the exact extent and line of road which can and will be fully repaired by the Revenue authorities, without any directions, restrictions, or interference on the part of the Public Works Department.

(Signed) W. H. BAYLEY,
Acting Secretary to Government.

No. 666

Tanjore Collector's Office
Vellum 24th December 1858

From

H. D. Phillips Esquire
Collector of Tanjore

To

T. Pycroft Esquire
Chief Secretary to Government
Fort Saint George

Sir,

1. As reported in my Communication of the 27th November 1858 date noted marginally, I adopted through the Local Hasildars and their several subordinates, the measures necessary for closing the extensive and numerous breaches which had been occasioned by the late destructive inundation of the principal rivers in this District, and the work was in active progress, when, as I had been prepared to expect from the last Rain of Consideration 2d instant, where the Government expressed their approval of the steps I had taken, Major Birdwood, the officiating superintending Engineer S. C. arrived in Tanjore. I lost no time in placing myself

No. 954

respectfully personal Communication with that
Officer, who, when we met at Tanjore, attended
suggested "that all Breaches and Repairs to Roads
on the most emergent work, should be executed
by the Thasildar leaving all Breaches in the
River and Channel embankments to be repaired
by the D. C. P. W. Major Birdwood added
that the Executive Officer would be di-
"rected to prepare Estimates for repairing the
"Breaches in the different Roads and forward
"them daily to the Thasildars for their gui-
dance."

2 Although of opinion that the River
Breaches were by far the most important of the
two classes, and feeling also that the aid of
the Revenue Department would be more ad-
vantageously brought to bear upon them, rather
than that they should be left to the slow opera-
tion of the Contract system, now adopted by the
Professional Department, I also felt that

union

union was essential for the public interests and
therefore readily accepted Major Birdwood's
proposals. The only object to be held in view
by us was, by a division of labor, to economize
time and accelerate the progress of works, render-
ed necessary by an exceptionable and unpre-
cedented state of things, to meet which the or-
dinary available strength of the Professional
Executive of the District was wholly and
professedly unequal. Accordingly, I di-
rected my Thasildars to discontinue re-
pairs to River and Channel embankments,
and to undertake those of the Roads
within their respective ranges. These orders
were issued by me only on the 14th instant.
On the 18th I was favored with a letter from Ma-
jor Birdwood, of which I enclose a copy,
giving Cover to one from the officiating Chief
Engineer's office, requesting me to Confine the
Repairs to the Communications, to the extent
of making them passable only for a single
Cart

Cant. I am not aware how far this Comd, amounting as it does to a virtual stoppage for the present of all repair to the Roads, may be in accordance with the views of Government as Conveyed in Ex. Sec: of Com: of the 2d instant; but the officiating Chief Engineer Major Crawford's instructions are probably based upon Rules 39 and 42 of the Public Works Code, and the road repairs, which at the request of the officiating Superintending Engineer Major Birdwood, I undertook, must be at a stand-still till ordinary Estimates can be framed and receive the Chief Engineer's sanction in the regular Comd. By this time, it would seem intended, or perhaps it may be imagined, that the Professional Department will have finished the repairs to the irrigation works which they now have in hand and be prepared to enter upon those of the roads under the Estimates that may then have

Page 584-587. Grant's Book

been sanctioned by the Central Office.

3. Acting on the Superintending Engineer's letter, I have ordered the Trichinopoly Division to desist from any real efficient, regular road repairs that they may already have undertaken.

4. Thus, the entire repair of the damage done by the floods, has reverted to the Professional Department. If they feel that the strength and resources at their Command are sufficient for and equal to the present important emergency, and are prepared to restore the now ineffective irrigation works of this province, as well as its numerous Communications, so as to hand the former at least in perfect order before the freshes of the ensuing season which may be expected about the 20th of April next, there is nothing in that respect left to be desired. The Government may rest satisfied that the Tanjore Revenue is not in danger, and I can have no justifiable wish to interpose my aid. I am however

desirous

decisions that the Government should have
full knowledge of the extent of the injury
done, of the Condition and prospects of
the District, and of the important inter-
ests at stake if the damage done should
not be repaired in time.

5. The District is at present a fram-
tic wreck. As far as accounts have
yet been received by me, the number of
breaches in River and Channel banks
and Tank bunds is Computed at
about 5000. If the next years Cultiva-
tion and Revenue are not to be affected,
this extent of devastation must be repair-
ed before April, that is, in a period
of little more than three months.
But in about a month more, all
the available labor of the province
will be employed in harvest operations,
which usually Commence at an
early date in January. Indeed, the
Inundations

Inundations generally, seeing the present
state of the Rivers and Channels, seem to me
to be more anxious as regards the prospects
of the next year than about the results
of the present one. discouraging as they are.

6. I cannot refrain also from pointing
ing out, that in justice to the people, to say
nothing of other obvious Considerations,
no time should be lost in restoring the
Communications of the District. Some
of these, under the measures taken by me just
after the occurrence of the floods and approved
by Government in the orders already quoted,
had been made just passable for a cart;
but I can state from my own personal
observation, they can by no means be used
safely or for any length of time. Wheel Con-
veyances, when passing over narrow slips of
soil, loosely and temporarily thrown down,
with unclosed breaches and pits on either
side, are liable to accidents, and acci-
dents have been occurring where such work
has

has been done. Accordingly the traffic of the District is much impeded from the necessity of going miles round instead of taking the old direct lines. And may be said to be almost at a stand still. Such an occurrence is particularly to be deplored at the present time, when paddy and rice are so extremely difficult of procurement, and when we find them selling at prices of freight incompressible as to press most severely on the poorer classes. It is worth mentioning that at this moment, it is with difficulty that 5 measures of rice can be had for a Rupee at Chilaw, 5 miles from the Coast. whereas it was Consequent on importations by sea from other places, it is selling at 9 measures, both at Negapatam and Tranquebar.

7. It would have been unnecessary to trouble the Government with this Communication, if I could have satisfied myself that the aid of the Revenue Department

Ex: Journ: of Con: 13th November 1848 No. 2386. Pages 2-4-5-6.

Department had been cordially accepted as a fitting means of contending against the immediate emergency that at present exists. But, bearing in mind the opinion expressly declared by Government that the strength of the present Peramount Executive is insufficient even for an ordinary state of things, I have felt it to be my duty to bring the subject prominently forward, lest the public interests should eventually suffer from their inability to grapple with the enormously increased demands upon their attention and time.

8. I am far from questioning the desire of the principal European Officers of this Department to act up to the necessities of the time. We cannot, however, blink the fact of the Department being a new one, of its being untried on an emergency such as that now felt, of its having dealt with only ordinary Circumstances since the first day of the

Current

Current year and that, too, in a manner so unsatisfactory to the Inspection of the most important District, that I am obliged with Complaints of the disregard paid to the just interests of those from whom the State has drawn so much of its revenue. Give these gentlemen the utmost credit for a Zeal on behalf of the Government we jointly serve, akin to what I myself feel, but it is my strong opinion that they are not equal to the extent of the work now Cast on them And that unless the Government resolved to step in and force the adoption of special remedial measures, the Revenue of the next and some succeeding years Cannot fail to be affected.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient Servt

[signature]

Collector

From

Major W. A. Birdwood

Officiating Superintending Engineer

Southern Circle

To

H. D. Phillips Esquire

Collector of Tanjore

Sir,

I have the honor to forward copy of a letter from the officiating Chief Engineer to the address of the officiating District Engineer of Tanjore under date the 11th instant, No. 6305 and to request you will according give the necessary directions to your Havildar to repair the breaches in the roads to that extent only as shall render them passable for one bandy at a time until estimate for their general repairs which will be prepared by this Department have received the sanction of Government

I have &c

Trichinopoly
18th Dec. 1858

Signd J. W. A. Birdwood
Offg Supt Engineer

Recd 38 Pkts 45 Parl 23rd/58

Dup. 1558 Dated 18th Decr 1858

From the Collector of Tanjore

To the Chief Secretary to Government Fort St. Geo.

Dated 24 Recd 28th Decr 1858

No. 666.

Enclosure 1.

G.O. No. 22. 4th January 59

Re Monthly Returns of the Executive Establishments of the Irrigation works and Communication in Tanjore during the month ending 15th Dec. 1858.

Rd.

Central Office of D. P. W.

Fort Saint George 14th Decr 1833.

No 6305.

From

The Officiating Chief Engineer

To The Officiating District Engineer

of Trichinopoly

Sir,

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, No 1299, I have the honor to inform you that your intention of repairing the road destroyed by the late floods so far as to render them passable has my approval, and will be reported to Government forthwith.

Your estimates for a more perfect restoration of the Communications should be submitted as soon as possible

I have &c

To The Offg District Engineer Trichy

(signed) C. A. Lawford

Offg Chief Engr

(True Copy)

(signed) W. A. Birdwood

Offg Supt & Engineer

(True Copies)

W. Wallace

Collector

Ass. Dep. Secretary
Land Revenue
Madras

Sir

I have the honor to forward herewith for the information of Government a letter from the Collector of Tanjore, dated 24th ultimo, with its enclosure, on the subject of the damage done to the Grand Anicut and other irrigation works in the late floods.

2 The Collector reports that the Grand Anicut has been breached in two places, and that the Vennar has overflowed its banks in many places, and that the Coleroon has also overflowed its banks in many places, and that the Grand Anicut has been breached in two places, and that the Vennar has overflowed its banks in many places, and that the Coleroon has also overflowed its banks in many places.

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No. 3178/58

Dated 24th Dec. 1858

Rec'd 27th Dec.

From Collector of Tanjore 24th Dec. 1858

No. 22

In the above letter Mr Phillips informs the Govt that as soon as possible after the disastrous floods of November, he adopted measures through his Revenue Subordinates for repairing & closing the numerous breaches in the irrigating channels, a step which Govt on 2nd Dec. 1858 fully approved of. In the same letter they gave the Collector authority to act on this emergency independent of the Public works Dept, in those cases where it was in his power to carry on any repair to completion.

2 The Officiating Supt Engr of the Circle having proceeded to Tanjore, Mr Phillips in communication with him, took upon himself to repair the roads, known the Irrigation damages.

to the Public Works Dept. Their arrangement was adopted at Major Boudwood's suggestion, but the Govt concur with Mr Phillips that the end of the Revd Department might have been better employed in the repair of the many breaches in a work which the Mussulmans of Tanjore have a personal interest, & one to which they were accustomed.

Mr Phillips however makes a present communication, & one that as regards the Roads the repair of which he has undertaken, & he has been requested by the Offg Chief Engineer to confine his operations to merely making the roads passable for a single cart, which he considers a virtual stoppage of all repairs properly so called.

Mr Phillips is perfectly correct in supposing that Maj Col Lawford's directions are based on Rules 39 & 42 of the Public Works Code which require "estimates" to be made by the Divisional Engineer, & sanctioned by the Chief Engineer; and which provide that

Emergent repairs shall only be such as may be absolutely necessary to prevent accident & injury.

The Govt in their Order of 2d Dec 1858 considered, & do still consider the case of the late disasters in Tanjore to be exceptional, & that they are not prepared to adopt the somewhat dilatory process which the regular rules of the P.W. Code would provide.

Mr Phillips tendered the valuable services of his Revd subordinate, in the name of Govt that which he would undertake to repair should be so repaired independent of the interference, or forms of the P.W.D. However a matter of mutual importance to settle, full communication through the fine Province, before the harvest time when the labour of the Mussulmans will not be available, & the Govt are fully aware that the present reduced state of the P.W.D is not able to cope immediately with such emergent cases as that which has occurred in Tanjore.

5- The Govt therefore direct, that should Mr Phillips undertake to have performed, & shall

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C.O. Book

be carried on at his own discretion, & a careful account kept of money expended, that the Bills may be subsequently audited & the expenditure debited to the P. W. Department.

2 Three others will be communicated to the Chief Engineer, who will direct the Office Supt Engineer, or the District Engineer to consult Mr Kellie's as to the exact extent & line of road which will be fully required by the Govt and therefore without any deviations instructions or interference on the part of the P. W. D.

6 N 13
29th Dec

10 Copies to the Chief Engr Dublin
3 — " — " Bd of Revn
1 — " — " Collector of Tuam

Public Works 1859 Dept.
Coun. 4th January 1859

No 22

Extract from Min. of Coun.
Dy 4th Jany/59.

Enclosed from the Min. of the Bd of Rs
dy 15th Jany/59 C. No 16 in Coun:
15 ℔ A
From the Clerk of Kingston Dy 17th
Feby 24/59 C. No 388 inclo: 25th Feby/59
& 432
From the Collr of Tyrone
dy 2d Apl/59 C. No 814 in Coun: 5th
Directing that enclosed
[illegible] to the Roads the Collector at Tyrone
[illegible] undertaken to have performed shall be
[illegible] out at his own discretion and that
[illegible] careful account of money expended
[illegible] all the Receipts given to the Bills being
[illegible] regularly audited and the expenditure
[illegible] to the Public Works Department.