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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Vol. 15

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Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 15th March 1859.

No. 148. Read the following Extract Minutes Consultation in the Military Department,
dated 3rd March 1859, No. 854.

Directing that the correspondence in the P. W. D., regard- } (Vide Military Consultation, 8th March 1859,
ing the improvements of the Godavery Navigation be com- } Nos. 3 at 5.)
municated to the Commander-in-Chief.

No. 149. ORDER THEREON, No. 603; dated 15th March 1859.

Ordered that the foregoing Extract be recorded.

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

No. 854.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation, 3rd March 1859.

Read copy of a letter from the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, Fort Saint George, 20th January 1859, No. 198; to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department.

1. I am directed to submit for the consideration of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council, a copy of a despatch* from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, and of its enclosure from Lieutenant Haig, recommending the immediate execution of certain temporary works for the improvement of the Godavery navigation, pending the carrying out of the more important operations contemplated in his report on the river.

2. These temporary works are the same which have already formed the subject of correspondence with the Supreme Government. An outlay of rupees 35,600 was at first proposed in December 1856, but from an alteration of Plan, their cost was reduced to rupees 25,200 as shewn in Mr. Secretary Forbes' letter of 14th October 1857. The Government of India however, declined on the 8th December 1857, to authorise the expenditure; and your letter of 10th December last No. 3200, contained a reiteration of that refusal when the subject was again brought forward in the letter noted in the margin, in consequence of the receipt of a Despatch from the Honorable Court of Directors. Under ordinary circumstances, this Government would have now felt compelled to regard the matter as closed for the present. But with the papers above referred to before them, and with the new facts adduced in the letters* from the Commandant of Engineers, and the Inspector General of Ordnance, which are also enclosed, they have now resolved to bring the question once more before the Government of India.

3. The Right Honorable the Governor in Council would especially, in the first place, advert to the considerations set forth in paras. 5 to 7, of Lieutenant Haig's letter, as to the cheapness and rapidity with which both military stores and troops might be conveyed by the Godavery. They would earnestly press on the Government of India, his view that, "after the fearful lessons we have had during the last year, to neglect, or even delay for a single year to take advantage of the Godavery as a military high-way, appears little short of infatuation," and this more particularly, when it seems clear that by an utterly trifling outlay, and in a very few months, this advantage may be secured over a distance of 300 miles. Lieutenant Haig states considerations, to shew the enormous saving of actual outlay in the conveyance of military stores, to say nothing of increased speed and security, which would be effected by the very trifling expenditure of £ 3000. On this head however, this Government prefer to appeal to the letters of Colonels Cotton and Balfour, who have gone more fully into the subject, and who bring forward more positive facts. The latter Officer shews, that 1,200 tons of military stores were sent last year from Masulipatam to Secunderabad and Nagpore, at a cost of nearly 88,000 rupees; whereas, with the facilities which will be secured by the execution of the proposed works in the Godavery river, a saving would have been effected of no less than rupees 54,806-4-0, without taking into consideration, that in the expense of escorts. Considering the larger European military force to be maintained hereafter in Central India, in comparison with that heretofore usual, it seems unlikely, that the quantity of material hereafter to be sent inland from Masulipatam, will be much less than in 1857. But even supposing that it amounted to no more than two-thirds of that, there will still be a saving each year, of considerably more* than the whole cost† of the locks, and their subsidiary works now proposed.

*Rupees 36,000.

†Rupees 30,000.

4. The Governor in Council is unwilling to load this despatch with heavy extracts from the enclosures or abstracts of them: but he would earnestly commend the whole of the two papers of Colonels Cotton and Balfour, to the consideration of the Governor General in Council. In view of the facts there stated, I am directed to point out, that the allegation of financial difficulties as an impediment to the proposed works is wholly an error. The question is not at all whether the money shall be spent, it is spent already every year. The real question is, whether

it shall be spent once for all, and in such a mode as to secure great and permanent good, or whether the same outlay shall be repeated year after year, with no other effect, than that of continuing the present very defective and inconvenient modes of conveyance.

5. It is the hope of the Governor in Council, that under the facts and considerations now laid before them, the Government of India will not persist in their refusal of the small sum asked for, but will accord the whole amount proposed by Lieutenant Haig, both for the river improvements and the steam-boats, viz., 60,000 rupees. The great importance attached to this matter by this Government, is attested by the fact of their thus again and again urging it on the higher authorities, in spite of the mortification of repeated refusals, and no words could prove it more strongly; but I am instructed to add in conclusion, that looking to the smallness of the amount required, and the magnitude of the results to be reasonably expected, to the public as well as directly to the Government, this Government is of opinion that no more profitable or beneficial expenditure could be proposed, than that which is now recommended.

6. I am further directed to state the particular request of this Government, that as the very short working season on the upper Godavery is now close at hand, the Government of India will be pleased to pass an order on this letter, at as early a date as possible, and that they will cause it to be communicated to this Government by Telegraph.

7. Referring to the second para. of your letter, I am directed to state, that the result of the operations on the two Shoals will be duly reported for the information of the Government of India. As respects the illegal exactions by the Hyderabad Zemindars, I am to request the attention of His Lordship in Council, to para. 25 of Colonel A. T. Cotton's letter now transmitted. From that passage it appears, that the exactions complained of, are again in operation on the part of certain Zemindars, and that the Native trade on the river has been thereby stopped. A further communication will be immediately made to the Resident at Hyderabad, on the subject so far as regards that territory, and measures will be taken to stop the alleged illegal acts on the part of the Zemindar of Bejee.

To *Public Works, No. 6.*
The Right Honorable the Governor in Council, at Fort Saint George.

MY LORD,

Herewith is transmitted, copy of a letter dated 9th instant from Captain Haig, recommending the immediate construction of certain works on the Godavery, which in his opinion would, at a comparatively trifling expense, have the effect of at once rendering the river navigable for a distance of three hundred miles.

2. All that he deems absolutely necessary for this purpose is, the completion of the two locks commenced by himself in 1856, at the Sintral barrier, and the construction of three or four locks of a similar description, at the Enchampilly barrier, together with the removal of any isolated rocks or other obstructions that may be met with, in different parts of the stream; but he likewise recommends as very desirable, though not indispensable, the construction of two steamers of such a size as the locks would admit. The cost of the locks, and of removing isolated rocks, he estimates at £3,000, and that the steamers at £3,000 more.

3. Having considered the matter in Council, I am disposed to leave it to your judgment to determine, whether in the present state of Indian finance, it may be expedient to act upon Captain Haig's suggestions, so far as they relate to operations in the bed of the river. I would further observe, that if it be deemed advisable to postpone for a time, the provision of the steam-vessels, the advantage derivable from the works proposed by him, may be obtained to a considerable extent without their aid.

EAST INDIA HOUSE,
LONDON,
30th November 1858.

(Signed) STANLEY.

Letter from Captain F. Haig, Madras Engineers, to the Under Secretary for India, dated
Barnet Herts, 9th November 1858.

SIR,

I beg permission to call the attention of the Secretary of State for India in Council, to the importance of completing during the present working season, the temporary works of improvement commenced by me on the Godavery in the spring of 1857. The advantages which would

thus be secured are so great, and the outlay required so inconsiderable, that even in the present state of the public finances, postponement would be bad economy.

2. The project of rendering the Godavery navigable from the coast to the cotton districts of Berar, as set forth in my report of 3rd May 1856, was I believe, fully approved and adopted by the Court of Directors, and even ordered to be inserted in the first budget after my return to India, with any modifications which my visit to Europe and America might suggest.

It is not my intention to give here, the results of my recent investigations, but I will simply state in passing, that after having seen all that is worth seeing on both continents, of river improvements, I am fully satisfied that the treatment I have proposed for the Godavery, is the correct one, and that excepting in a few minor details, I have no alteration whatever to make in it. All further cause for delay on this ground is therefore removed, and the project may be ordered for immediate execution. As however there is no likelihood of any action being taken in the matter for another year, and as the construction of the works will be extended over a period of several years, it is most important, that I should again call attention to the fact, that the opening of 300 miles of the river for traffic, is within the compass of the operations of a single season, and of an outlay of £3000. The works required for this purpose are very simple, and their probable cost is not a matter of mere conjecture. Before describing them, it is necessary to glance briefly at the past history of the undertaking.

3. In the summer of 1856, I proposed to the Madras Government, a plan for rendering the Godavery serviceable for communication by means of portages round the barriers, which could be established in a single season, and might be used till the completion of the permanent works.

The proposal was forwarded with strong recommendations to the Supreme Government, and in anticipation of its sanction, £600 was given to me for the purchase of materials and other preparations.

The sanction of the Supreme Government never arrived: but while waiting for it, finding that the working season was rapidly drawing to a close, and that there was every probability of the loss of another year, I assumed the responsibility of applying the money at my disposal, to the construction of two small locks of a temporary character in the bed of the river, at the lower or Sintral barrier, which if completed would have

* For boats 90 feet long, by 10 feet broad. given access* to another 80 miles of river, that is to a distance of 220 miles from the sea. I had about 6 weeks to do the work. One lock was completed, and the other about three-fourths so, before the river rose. Since then, the floods of two rainy seasons have swept over them, and I heard lately from an Engineer Officer who visited the spot in the month of September, that they are almost uninjured. They have cost about £700.

4. The recommendations I have now to make, are as follows;—

1st. That these two works should at once be completed, and the communication at the Central barrier, placed in a thoroughly efficient condition, which I estimate may be done at a cost of £700.

2nd. That the next or Enchampilly barrier should be treated in the same way. Three or four locks of the same kind will be required there, and will not cost above £2000.

3rd. That a sum of £300 should be placed at the disposal of the Officer, to whom the works may be entrusted for removing any isolated rocks or obstructions which may be met with in other parts of the river.

4th. That in addition to the above, £3000 should be sanctioned for the construction of two small steamers of such a size as the locks will admit, with a few barges for towing.

5. All the work in the river bed, may I think be completed in the present season, if immediate orders are sent out, and a very serviceable and uninterrupted communication be thus opened from the ports of Coringa and Masulipatam, to a distance of 300 miles from the sea, and

to within 170 miles of Nagpore,* through a country notoriously lawless and disaffected; and a cheap, speedy and secure mode of transport afforded for the supplies of military stores, for which Nagpore is wholly dependent on the Arsenal of Masulipatam. Those supplies are now sent by land in common country carts, at a cost of 60 to 90 rupees per ton. The route they follow, is either round by Hyderabad and Nirmal, or more commonly by Buddrachel-

* Dewalommey on the Pranhita would be the upper terminus of the navigation.

him along the right bank of the Godavery to Madecopore and Chaudah. By either route, they have to traverse 200 or 300 miles of a wild unsettled country belonging to the Nizam of Hyderabad, but held by a number of Zemindars, who generally treat his orders with contempt, who even in times of general peace are guilty of the greatest excesses, and who hold the British name in so little awe, that I have even had a raft loaded with Government stores stopped and overhauled by one of them.

Is it wise I would ask, or politic, thus to depend for the safe transit of military supplies to one or two of the most important positions in the Peninsula, on the good will, or rather on the caprice, of a set of freebooters, who like all savages, are continually blinded by their own passions to what is most obviously for their best interests? Or, is British power so firmly consolidated in that part of India, that we can afford to neglect a line of communication extending 300 miles through the Hyderabad country into the Nagpore territories, by which, with the aid of two or three steamers a mere handful of men could overawe many thousands? It is but a few months since, a petty chief whose village is situated on the bank of the river about 40 miles above Dowlaishweram, and whose lands are separated by a belt of jungle 20 miles wide from the Rajahmundry district, burnt and plundered several of our villages, and that at a time when revolt was epidemic, and when a single spark might have lighted the flames of rebellion over a whole Province. I venture to say that had that man seen a steamer passing his house every other day, and know that at any moment, his head quarters could be beaten off by our troops in the course of three or four hours, he would have remained as quiet as any of his neighbours. And yet he is in every respect, the most contemptible of all the Zemindars whose territories our present line of communication with Nagpore traverses. A steamer has for three months past been running between Dowlaishweram and Buddrachellum, and assuredly we shall hear of no more outbreaks in that quarter.

6. I submit, that one of the most obvious lessons taught us by the history of the sepoy rebellion has been the paramount importance of our available lines of water communication in India, and that, had there been on the Ganges, an efficient flotilla of such light draught steamers as swarm on the shallow rivers of America, an incalculable amount of bloodshed and disaster might have been avoided.

I have once before, in a letter addressed to the Court of Directors a year ago, alluded to the importance of the Godavery in a military point of view, I trust I shall be excused for again forcibly directing attention to the same subject. After such fearful lessons as we have lately had, I must say, that to neglect, or to delay for a single year, to avail ourselves of the advantages offered by this river as a military highway, appears to me little short of infatuation. These advantages would be cheaply purchased at any price. They will be secured to the fullest extent on the completion of the great permanent works in contemplation, at an expenditure of £600 or £700 per mile. But they may now be realized to a certain extent, and in the course of a few months by the construction of the trifling works I now recommend, at a total outlay of £3,000.

7. I might here dismiss this subject, but before closing my letter, it is necessary that I should advert briefly to the saving in the cost of transport offered by the Godavery. In times of peace about 500 tons of military stores are annually sent to Nagpore and Jaulnah from the Arsenal of Masulipatam, at a cost of about 2 Annas per ton per mile. At present, the quantity thus despatched cannot be less than double this amount. In a statement recently sent me from India, it is estimated at a much higher figure. But the saving on even 1,000 tons, carried 300 miles by the river at 1 anna per ton per mile, instead of the same distance by road, would amount to 19,000 rupees (£1,900) per annum, besides the gain in speed and security, the actual cost of carriage by the steamer now engaged in conveying Telegraph wire to Buddrachellum (140 miles from the coast) and returning empty, is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ anna per ton per mile.

8. It thus appears how utterly insignificant is the expenditure now proposed in comparison of the advantage it will afford. A correct appreciation of the value of this line of transit would, I believe, dictate as a measure of simple precaution and of sound economy, the placing of a much larger sum than I have named, at the disposal of the district Engineer of Rajahmundry, who is acquainted with the river, and who will be better able to decide, how it may be most advantageously laid out in the improvement of the river, and the construction of steam boats, with reference to his available men and means than any one at such a distance as London, from the scene of operations can possibly be. More than one steamer has been turned out complete from the Dowlaishweram work shops, and I believe, that the construction of the small ones now proposed with their accompanying barges, will be best and most speedily carried out there.

From the Quarter Master General of the Army, Head Quarters, Camp Vizagapatam, 12th February 1859, No. $\frac{32}{1}$; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department.

I have had the honor of receiving and laying before the Commander-in-Chief, Extract Minutes Consultation No. 324, dated 24th ultimo, and Extract Minutes Consultation No. 424, dated 31st idem, both on the subject of the opening up the Godavery river, as a route for the conveyance of troops and stores.

His Excellency desires me to say, that the decision come to, has caused him the deepest disappointment—with regard to Minutes Consultation No. 424, it appears to Sir Patrick Grant in the highest degree improbable, that an Officer of the Commissariat department, can give an opinion of the very slightest value, with respect to navigating the Godavery, or the possibility of conveying stores by that route.

Resolved that the foregoing correspondence in the Department Public Works, be communicated to the Commander-in-Chief, with reference to the letter of the Quarter Master General of the Army above recorded.

(True Extract and Copies.)

Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Quarter Master General.

„ Department Public Works.

Ed. J. Davis.

