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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2737

Press

~~Mis.~~

443-444

Dated 20-9-

1864.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
20th September 1864.*

No. 443. Read the following letter from Captain F. J. MOBERLY, R. E., Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, to Colonel C. A. ORR, R. E., Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Camp, Kodakanel, 23rd August 1864, No. 924 :—

SIR,

• Vide G. O. No. 457, 21st February 1863. • 1. Referring to G. O. No. 1,893, 15th July 1863, and Public Department No. 163,

13th February 1863, I have the honor to report that during the past two months I have examined the Pulney hills and passes into the low country.

2. I see no reason for preferring the Devadanaputty pass to some of the others ; if it be considered the best line of communication, it will require to be completely re-traced, for the existing track is very rough and in parts almost precipitous.

3. Leaving Kodakanel the road descends in $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile about 600 feet, and then undulating for about $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, regains the height from which it started ; the next 2 miles down the side of the Palamally is very steep and rocky ; about 5 miles is easy with occasional ascents, the remaining 4 miles is rocky and steep, terminating in a zig-zag flight of steps down the side of the rock ; the stream falls about 600 feet sheer into the low country.

4. To the head of the Palamally the new trace would not, I think, be difficult, but from the head of the fall I see no alternative but zig-zags in the face of the rock.

5. This it appears to me is almost universally the difficulty in tracing a ghát on these hills, that the lower spurs rise very precipitously from the plains—the Penacolum track being the only exception that I have observed, here the precipices are near the summit, and the zig-zags are very short and awkward. I am of opinion that the ghát might be very much improved, and if it be considered advisable to make any further outlay on a pass to the south, that it would be more economical to lengthen and reduce the gradient of the Periacolum pass, than to lay out a new line to Devadanaputty ; to make either of them fit for wheeled traffic would be very costly.

6. I traversed the lower Pulneys to examine into the advantage and practicability of making a road by Kanavady, as I thought it would be of more general utility ; but I found that the different villagers held very different opinions as to the benefit of a pass, some trade with Devadanaputty by the east, some by the west side of the valley, some send their extra produce to Verupatchy others to Kanavady, all by exceedingly steep and difficult paths.

7. As far as I could discover they would prefer the short line to a more circuitous though better road.

8. I have therefore abandoned any idea of a line which could afford general benefit ; moreover, the ghát would be difficult, and the country traversed generally feverish. A short but sharp attack of fever and dysentery prevented my completing the examination of the passes from Pulney.

9. From what I have seen, however, and the information of several persons (European and Native) with whom I have conversed, I am of opinion that the line from Pulney by Palankee would be the most serviceable as well as the most practicable.

10. The great difficulty is as usual near the foot for about 1,000 feet of rise, the ground is very rocky and steep, but if a trace can be carried over this the remainder is so easy that an improvement of the existing trace would almost suffice.

11. Pulney is the nearest point in the Madura District to the Railway at Avanashy or Perandoray ; a line carried from Kodakanel would afford communication over the hills between Periacolum (the Cumbum valley) and the north, it would pass near Vilputty by which very fair pack roads could be made to the lower Pulneys if necessary, and a branch line might be made from Palankee to Pombarry and the western villages.

12. As regards the cost I regret that I have no data ; the Periacolum Ghát was made some years ago, by means which we cannot use now ; there is no labour procurable on the hills, and we should have to pay high rates to induce anybody to work on the hill slopes, which are feverish in dry weather.

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13. For a road 18 feet broad, however, I believe that 3,000 Rupees a mile should suffice on the average. I would make it to a general gradient of 1 in 25, which for 6,000 feet (the average height of the hills above the plain) would require a road nearly 30 miles in length, or one lac in all.

14. One-tenth of this amount would make a very fair and useful track at the same gradient; but before attempting to make even this I would suggest that the trace over the rocky hill (the Tullamally) at the foot be tried, if a good line cannot be carried over this any further expenditure at this point would be useless.

15. If the Government can place 2,000 Rupees at my disposal I would, as soon as the north-east monsoon ceases, in December next, look carefully into the matter myself and see what prospect there is of success in carrying a line up by Palanke.

No. 444.

ORDER THEREON, 20th September 1864, No. 2,737.

No. 163, dated 13th February 1863.

1. Communicated to the Public Department, with reference to the orders marginally noted.

2. The Government are unable at present to sanction the grant applied for in paragraph 15; but as the amount will not be required until December next, the Superintending Engineer will be requested to submit a renewed application early in November, when the Government may probably be able to provide the requisite funds from savings in other Districts.

(True Extract.)

(Signed.) J. H. M. SHAW STEWART, Major, R. E.,
Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division.
,, Public Department.

N^o 924
 Recd. 14th Sept
 J. Cro. of Court for September
 from J. H. 6347
 The Superior Engineer
 8th Division

To The Secretary of the
 J. H. 6347
 No 2737-20th Sept/64
 Dated 23rd
 Recd. 1st Sept.

With an order
 To pass upon the Puelo
 Hills, and pass into the
 Country in the Madras Dis-
 trict and states that if 2000
 be placed at his disposal he
 would in December next look
 carefully into the matter.

No 2737 Communicated to the Chief Department with reply

to the order accordingly noted.

The Government are unable at present to send
 the grant applied for viz Rs 10; but as the amount will be
 required until December next, the Deputy Engineer will
 be requested to submit a renewed application early in Nov
 when the Government may probably be able to provide
 the requisite funds from the ordinary revenue.

To The Deputy Engineer 8th Div.
 J. H. 6347
 Dated 21st Sept 1864
 W. H. 6347