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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2820 Press Mis.

Dated 29-9- 1864

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 29th September 1864.

No. 614. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Military Department:—

Communicating letter from the Government of Bombay forwarding copy of a correspondence relative to the erection of Stables for European Mounted Corps in that Presidency. } (Here enter 21st September 1864, No. 3,333.)

No. 615. ORDER THEREON, 29th September 1864, No. 2,820.
Communicated to the Superintending Engineers.
(True Extract.)

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

To the Superintending Engineers.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

3

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following papers :—

From the Secretary to Government, Military Department, Bombay Castle, 27th August 1864, No. 2325 ; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department, Madras.

I am directed to transmit, for the information of the Government of Madras, the accompanying copy of a correspondence relative to the erection of Stables for European Mounted Corps in this Presidency.

From the Quarter Master General of the Army, Head Quarters, Poona, 10th August 1864, No. 1596 ; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department.

The Commander-in-Chief desires to remark on that of which he has lately become aware ; that the Government of India, in the Public Works' Department, has recently declined to entertain the question of cheap Stable shedding on account of our several Mounted Corps. It will be in the recollection of the Honorable the Governor in Council that Sir William Mansfield has, on the grounds of humanity towards man and horse, of State economy and of the efficiency of the service, persistently advocated the introduction of a system of cheap shedding or stabling at all Stations in this Command, on account of the Government horses. His Excellency has desired me to subjoin an Extract of a letter, from this Department, to your address, dated 26th June 1860.

"There is another argument in favor of Stable sheds for the European Artillery and Cavalry. A very laudable custom prevails in this Presidency of exacting from our European Dragoon, a good deal of stable labor. Each Dragoon is responsible for his horse, and the number of Ghorawallahs allowed by Government does not suffice for much more than the care of the horses of Non-Commissioned Officers, of the men in Hospital, and for the sick horses. Consequently, it is required for the health of the men as well as for the health of the horses, that much of the Stable labor should be done in the shade. On a late occasion Sir William Mansfield inspected the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons ; the inspection lasted till half past 8 A. M., after which the men had a good hour at their horses. Fortunately, the morning was cloudy and no harm ensued ; but His Excellency would have been much grieved to have seen them at the same work at that hour on a sunny morning. Yet such work must ensue, and there must be great exposure to the late morning sun in all Stations where there are no sheds or Stables for the horses. The same rule applies to the Stable duty at 5 o'clock in the evening, which must be often fraught with mischief and disease to the men, except during the monsoon months."

2. I have further the honor to enclose, for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council, a very excellent Report written by the Principal Veterinary Surgeon. It is, Sir William Mansfield observes, impossible to add to the strength of his reasoning and the facts alleged in this document.

No. 295, *dated* 26*th July* 1864.

3. It is evident, as a mere matter of Rupees, that, if the very economical proposal in regard to construction hitherto suggested by His Excellency and approved by the Bombay Government, were adopted, a real saving of money would annually take place in the items of horse flesh and forage. At present owing to the absence of Stables of any kind, we are obliged to add to the forage ration at nearly every Station in the Command, during the monsoon ; whilst, as shown by the Veterinary Surgeon, Detachments of the mounted branches from time to time become absolutely inefficient, owing to the most deplorable and inhumane practice of picketing horses, under the drenching of the monsoon and the tropical sun of the hot weather, without cover.

4. It is, indeed, a bitter reflection upon our public arrangements that, as Mr. Veterinary Surgeon Hallen observes, our valuable Government horses should be permanently exposed to a treatment which, if perpetrated by a private individual, would entail upon him prosecution under the Penal Code.

5. In fine, His Excellency would remark that, according to the present strange system of open lines for horses, which is directly opposed to medical practice and theory, and to the treatment and care of horses, as shown by every man with regard to his own property, whether he be Native or European, we have to adopt one of two alternatives during the hot weather and rains.

The one is, that the horses must be neglected in order that the Dragoons and Drivers may not be exposed to weather, which must infallibly break down their health, or else that great additional labor be bestowed on the horses to remedy in part the want of cover; such additional labor entailing the exposure of the men which, as just shown, would never be permitted. The consequence is that, owing to the want of cover, the horses are not half groomed at certain seasons of the year, and at all times the men undergo rather more exposure to rain and sun than is good for them; Commanding Officers being obliged to make the best of matters and to steer a middle course. Yet it cannot be doubted that a great many men are damaged, perhaps for life, by such exposure; while the Principal Veterinary Surgeon's Report is conclusive with regard to the effect of the system on the horses.

6. Sir William Mansfield cannot permit me to conclude this letter without observing that he thinks the delay of the reform he has so long pressed is caused by its treatment in a Department which, from the nature of things, is unable to grasp the details of the subject.

7. Thus the question is handled simply as one of the Public Works, and as a trifling detail in a Budget which it may be convenient to put off till another day. But it is, indeed, not a mere Public Works question: it is one involving discipline, and health and economy in Departments, about which that of the Public Works cannot possibly know anything. Those Departments include recruiting; Sanitary reform in a very important particular; the early supply of Remounts, which might be delayed; great waste of forage, and, therefore, extravagance in Commissariat; and, finally the humane care of our Soldiers and our horses.

From the Principal Veterinary Surgeon, Bombay Presidency, Poona, 26th July 1864, No. 295; to the Quarter Master General of the Army, Poona.

Having been informed that the Government of India have declined to further the views of this Government in regard to providing shedding for the horses of the Army of this Presidency, I deem it an imperative duty to again report on the subject, and have the honor to request you will have the goodness to submit this letter for the consideration of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

2. In my letter, No. 149, dated 30th June 1863, addressed to the Adjutant General of the Army, I stated, "I have noticed that those horses of the Army that are kept under cover are in much better condition and health than those picketed in the open. In calling the attention of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to this fact, I would respectfully urge the necessity of shedding being afforded for all horses, not only with a view of preventing pecuniary loss to the State, (which doubtless entails from horses being exposed to the heavy rains and intense heat of a tropical sun, and to the variable temperature of this climate,) but I would further urge the importance of the measure for the higher reasons of humanity. To so tie a horse, by head and heels, in the open air, that he can barely move, and leave him exposed to the drenching rains of three or four months and to the tropical sun of another three or four months, doubtless leads to the production of disease directly or indirectly among the horses. Horses are not more proof than other animals against the attacks of disease resulting from continued exposure to heavy rain. I have seen horses killed directly and indirectly from it. Only Government horses and cattle are not given shelter from the sun and rain. In the same Commissariat yard may be often seen, the Contractor's bullocks under comfortable shedding, and the Government mules and bullocks tied in the open, under a scorching sun or the most heavy rains.

"The loss sustained by damage to the forage and constitution of animals, and the effects of not being cared for by their attendants not wishing to be exposed, like the poor animals are, to the weather, must be enormous. The horses of this Army will never be duly cared for during the hot and rainy seasons until shedding is afforded not only to shelter them, but to shelter the Europeans from sun and rain, and allow the latter time to bestow care upon the horses.

"At the time of year the horse requires most care (*viz.*, the monsoon,) he receives the least; the poor beast remains in the pouring rain to be fed and looked after, by the native attendants, who won't remain in the rain longer than, and probably not as long as necessary. The Europeans are of course, not permitted to attend to horses standing out in the rain. I have known horses not cleaned during a fortnight of rain, and if they were fed with a proper amount of grain during that time they

had much of their hay wasted by its being mixed with the mud of their stalls. Disease of course appeared amongst them; one died at once, and others suffered in constitution temporarily or permanently afterwards.

"The eyes of persons who have been long resident in the country have become accustomed to this way of treating Government horses and cattle, and as they are not cognizant of the injurious effects arising from it, believe it to be a good system, "as it makes a horse hardy and fit for service in the Field." This opinion is held by some but not by all. It might with as good reasons be suggested that the British Soldier should be made hardy and fit for service by being treated in a similar but milder manner. The Soldier is well-cared for, and is found thereby no less fit but better able, for the exposure and privation attendant upon Field Service. His horse should be similarly treated and then doubtless would be as able for service. The horse to be at his best requires great care; without care he becomes comparatively useless. If the eyes of those reconciled by long custom to the appearance of the unfortunate Troop horse, tied out in the open by head and heels in torrents of rain, or under the mid-day sun of an Indian May, were to see a dog or their own horse, similarly circumstanced, probably they might then think in the one case of the necessity of a Martin's Act and in the other of their own pocket. If shedding is generally afforded for horses, I beg to suggest iron shedding as the most durable, as being white ant proof, as being portable, (and thereby can be removed on occasions when the Stations of Cavalry or Artillery are changed) and as being most economical, on account of reasons first stated, also virtually, not costing more than wood and tiled buildings do, as wood is now very expensive, and tiled buildings require frequent repairs. An iron gate (Home-made) costs less than a wooden one of the same strength and dimensions made in this country. Iron sheddings can be made at Home, and put together and erected in this country at little expense."

3. I would now further add, that the past year's experience confirms in every particular the assertions made in the above quoted extract.

4. I earnestly appeal to His Excellency, in order that the question may be re-considered, in all its bearings; and beg to submit the following facts, with the hope, that a correct conclusion may be arrived at by the Authorities.

5. Veterinary Surgeons of any experience in India can testify to the great amount of loss sustained by the constant exposure of horses picketed in the open, throughout the hot and wet seasons in India, not only from some horses being directly killed, but from others becoming weakened in constitution, or incurably diseased, and rendered unserviceable from such exposure; also from a great amount of forage being blown away, in windy weather, or saturated in the mud of the Stalls and converted into manure in the rainy season.

6. I beg to remind His Excellency of the fact of its being found necessary to issue an extra amount of forage to the horses at certain seasons of the year; at the same time, I beg to note, that were Sheds afforded, instead of this extra grass being ever required, less than the ordinary amount of forage would suffice.

7. I have to note certain facts that have occurred in this Presidency during the last few years, bearing upon the necessity of giving shelter to horses from the hot sun and heavy rain of this tropical climate.

8. In 1861, the B. Battery, 4th Royal Horse Artillery, (now B. | E.) arrived at Kirkee from Hyderabad Sind. The horses were in most miserable condition and so weak, that the Officer Commanding had to request that some horses of another Battery might be sent to the port where they were disembarked on their arrival from Sind, to assist in pulling the Battery to Kirkee. These horses had been at Hyderabad for some two or three years, and had suffered so much from exposure to the very hot sun of that climate, and from much of their forage having been blown away, with the very gusty winds that prevail at certain seasons there, that they became in wretchedly low condition; many died from attacks of fever and liver; some died from glanders and farcy, and the remainder, excepting three or four that were left behind in Sind, suffering from the effects of farcy, were embarked at Kurrachee and arrived after a short and good passage, at Oolwa Bunder near Bombay, in such a weak state that after a march of only 75 miles to Kirkee, all, excepting a very few, were unfit for duty and had to be placed under medical treatment. Typhoid fever attacked many of them; several

died from the disease, others died from diseases engendered by exposure in Sind, and about six were after a time cast as being incurably diseased and unserviceable. In the aggregate about thirty horses of this Battery were thus lost to the State.

9. The Officer Commanding the Battery of Artillery A. | 18 stationed at Hyderabad brought to my notice, when inspecting the horses of the Battery in April last, that at the end of every hot season, several horses are found in very low condition and impaired health, from diseases of the liver and fever; and stated that such ultimately either died from diseased liver or had to be cast on account of having debilitated constitutions. Consequently this Officer is extremely anxious to have his horses kept under cover.

10. A Veterinary Surgeon who was in Sind on duty a few years ago, informed me that every post mortem examination he made of horses that died in Sind, he invariably found extensive disease of the liver.

11. The Sind horse and Mounted Policemen in Sind, are so fully aware of the necessity of providing shelter from the sun for their horses, that they are most particular in always keeping them duly stabled; and this system is generally adopted by owners of horses in civil life on this side of India.

12. When I inspected the horses of the A. Battery of the 4th Royal Horse Brigade, (now A. | E.) at Nusseerabad in January last year, I found many of them in very low condition and suffering from the effects of exposure to the sun. The Officer Commanding is so fully aware of the necessity of affording shelter for his horses, that he makes a rule of having every Stall of the Hospital stabling at all times occupied by horses.

13. The good effects of shedding and the evil effects of exposure, were very clearly shown in the case of the horses of the Batteries of Artillery, stationed at Ahmedabad last year.

The sheltered horses were in grand condition, the exposed horses were in indifferent order, and the Officer in charge of the latter, was most desirous to have cover provided for his horses. Owing to the former Battery having been removed from Ahmedabad, the shelter desired was obtained, and the horses that had been formerly exposed were inspected by me in March last; when I found them in excellent order; and the Officer Commanding had indeed reason to rejoice in having shelter for them.

14. At the station of Belgaum, Stables were erected some years ago, as horses in that District were liable to be attacked with a disease commonly known as "landwind" or "kumree."

The arrangement of the Stables was such that horses kept in them, were exposed to incessant draughts of wind, and became more liable to landwind than when in the open. The Stables were last year so altered that the horses were no longer exposed to constant draughts, and by referring to Returns in this Office, I am enabled to report, that not one case of landwind, or of death, occurred amongst the horses of that Battery during the past year. These horses I inspected in January last, and I never saw horses in better condition in every respect.

15. The Veterinary Surgeon of the 3rd Dragoon Guards stationed at Ahmednuggur, is so fully convinced of the necessity of protecting the horses from the sun and rain, that he takes advantage of an old Artillery Gun-shed, placed at the disposal of the Regiment, to keep many of the horses of the Corps in. He frequently changes these horses, so as to give every horse, suffering from the effects of exposure, a chance of recovering health under cover.

16. All Veterinary Surgeons and most Officers Commanding Batteries and mounted Regiments, invariably point out, when I am inspecting the horses of their respective Corps, certain horses that have been gradually falling off in condition; have become temporarily unserviceable, and will probably become incurably diseased, from exposure to the hot sun or the rain.

17. Doubtless, there are some Officers, who do not think stabling necessary; but the fact of their having been for so long a time accustomed to see horses maltreated by exposure, leads them to suppose such custom is on a par with proper treatment. When such Officers have the opportunity of seeing horses kept under cover, and, thereby means are afforded for having them duly treated, they will doubtless become aware of, though they may not at the first readily acknowledge, the necessity of cover. These Officers believe that the number of horses that die or become incurably diseased from constant exposure to a scorching sun or heavy rain, is but ordinary; and with their experience they can but have reason to believe the number to be "but ordinary."

18. Again an Officer, probably too, of long Indian experience, may affirm that constant exposure renders a horse hardy and always ready for field service; but such an Officer has not in his early service been taught that constant exposure in all weathers, entails disease leading to immediate death, or a weakened constitution, in all animals.

19. I would most respectfully represent, that were a Citizen to so tie his horse, (or any other animal) by head and heels as to be hardly able to move, in a public spot exposed to the extreme severity of the different seasons of this tropical climate, and thereby cause the animal so maltreated to become diseased, he would be amenable to law under the provisions of that Section of the Act of the Penal Code, corresponding to the Martin's Act of the United Kingdom.

20. In conclusion, I crave permission to report that I can certify, that many horses of this Army are annually, directly or indirectly destroyed, or become worthless from not being provided with cover.

From the Quarter Master General, Head Quarters, Poona, 13th August 1864, No. 1642; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department.

In continuation of my letter, No. 1596, dated 10th instant, I am desired by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to forward a most useful letter from Dr. Leith, the President of the Sanitary Commission, which corroborates in a remarkable manner what Sir William Mansfield has before advanced, as to the wisdom of supplying stabling on account of the men as well as the horses in our mounted branches.

No. 81, dated 10th August 1864.

2. As regards the grounds upon which Dr. Leith bases his 2nd, 3rd and 4th paragraphs, we have only to call to mind the fact that our system necessitates a good deal of daily exposure to the morning and evening sun, which, at nearly all the Stations of this Presidency, is very powerful during the greater part of the year from half an hour after sunrise to within half an hour or so of sunset.

From the President Sanitary Commission of Bombay, Poona, 10th August 1864, No. 81; to the Quarter Master General.

In accordance with the desire of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, communicated personally by you, I have the honor to state for the information of Sir William Mansfield that the Sanitary Commission has not the means of satisfactorily contrasting the health of mounted Soldiers whose horses are provided with Stables, with that of the same class of Soldiers whose horses are picketed without cover, there being so few of the former that the observations cannot be freed from the influence of disturbing circumstances.

2. It is found however that taking the Stations of the Army at which both Infantry and mounted men, either Artillery or Cavalry, are both present, the daily sick of the latter much exceeds that of the former, being 7-1 per cent. to 5-4 per cent.

3. It might be expected that mounted men from being more liable to accidents would be more in Hospital than Foot Soldiers, but this is not shown to be the case from the Returns of 1860 and 1861, among Troops serving in the United Kingdom, nor in any country could it reasonably be brought forward to account for so great an excess as the nearly one-third here shown.

4. This excess of sickness shown in the Returns of the Bombay Army for the year 1863, occurred while the mounted men had the advantage of greater area and greater space in Barrack accommodation.

5. It is not possible with only the data at present available to ascertain with any approach to precision the amount of sickness that is attributable to exposure to the weather, but seeing that an undue amount of sickness does exist in the Cavalry and mounted Artillery of this Presidency, it is highly advisable that all likely causes of detriment to health should be removed.

6. In the peculiar duties of the mounted Soldier there is an obvious source of injury to health in the exposure to inclemencies of weather which the care of his horse involves when it is picketed in the open air. When there is no other parade the stable duties, being performed early in the morning and late in the afternoon, are not in the fair season the occasion of any hurtful exposure; but on the many days on which there are other morning parades, attendance at Stables after them is required, and then the sun is high and cannot but be hurtful to the health of European Soldiers engaged in such duty while unprotected from its powerful rays.

7. During the rains the exposure to wet and cold during the attendance at Stables required by Regulations is an obvious source of sickness.

8. The Sanitary Commission thinks it necessary for the better preservation of the health of these Soldiers that they should have the shelter of a roof under which to perform the duty connected with their horses, that is required of them.

ORDER, No. 3338, 21*st September* 1864.

Communicated to the Commander-in-Chief.

(True Extract.)

Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Quarter Master General.
" Public Works Department. With 25 Spare Copies.
" President Sanitary Commission

Exd. T. Stubbs.

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Rcd 26 } Sept/64
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Communicating
letter from Asst. Engr Bombay
forwarding copy of a corres-
pondence relative to the
erection of Stables for
European Mounted Corps
in that Presidency.

evo 2820 - 29th Septr/64

Written an Order

P. 614. 615

Ld

evo 2820.

Communicated to the Superintend-
ing Engineers.

JM.

Chepauk
29th Septr/64

To
The Superintending Engineers.
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Dated 30th September