M.R.O. 1—77,000—8.6.37.

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(2) Date of repair _____

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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	Press Mis.
Dated	18

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30th October 1866.

No. 678. Read the following Circular from the Government of India, Public Works Department, (Railway,) dated Simla, the 5th October 1866, No. 19 R:—

Bribery for the despatch of Merchandize by Railways.

Read again—

Public Works Department Circular No. 2 R. of 14th February 1866.

Public Works Department Resolution Nos. 555-9R., dated 13th June 1866.

Read—

Letter No. 6,147-259, dated 9th April 1866, from the Commissioner of Mysore, and enclosure.

Letter No. 210-7,420, dated 10th April 1866, from the Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

Letter No. 237, dated 29th May 1866, from the Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Oudh.

Letter No. 1,792, dated 7th June 1866, from the Secretary to Government, Madras, and enclosure.

Letter No. 155, dated 16th June 1866, from Under Secretary to Government, Punjab.

Letter No. 16 R.-C., dated 18th June 1866, from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces, and enclosure.

Letter No. 2,055, dated 29th June 1866, from Secretary to Government of Madras.

Read also—

Office Note on the replies to Circular No. 2 R. of 1866.

In Circular No. 2 papers on the subject of bribery alleged to have obtained in Berar in connection with the transit of cotton by rail and the measures taken to put it down, were sent to the Local Governments and Administrations for any suggestions or remarks they might wish to offer. Brief abstracts of the replies received have been made.

2. *The Government of Madras* states that no complaint of undue preference has been made in connection with the Madras Railways, though one person irregularly employed in the weighment of cotton did receive a consideration of 5 Rupees.

Preventive measures have been taken, and the question of entrusting weighments to responsible agency has been pressed on the Railway Company. The Madras Government is satisfied that it will not be necessary to adopt the arrangements found needful in Berar.

The Government, North-Western Provinces, refers to the Report of the Committee on the malpractices on the East Indian Railway last season as exhausting the subject; observes that the system of bribery being a consequence of the deficiency of stock, the real remedy is obvious. The rates, too, should be increased so as to bring the traffic within bounds.

Is of opinion that the Berar system is the best that can be devised, but it should be applied by the Railway Company and not by Government.

Notices that the East Indian Railway Company will not acknowledge responsibility for goods till they are laden on the trucks, and considers that the Berar plan of an enclosure at the Stations, and a small fee for goods deposited and registered, would meet the case.

The Sudder Board of Revenue, North-Western Provinces, reports that the system of Government registration, introduced at Agra and Allygurh, was practically a failure, and attributes this to its having been undertaken too late and after the difficulty had, in a great measure, been got over.

The Commissioner of Agra points out that the failure of the system is probably due to its being *optional*, and is of opinion that, so long as Railway officials ignore Local Officers and do not invite their aid, bribery will continue.

In the *Meerut Division* Mr. Cordery's, or the Berar, system is accepted.

The *Civil Officers* of the *Benares Division* would try the system at once, but dwell on the necessity of good supervision.

The *Commissioner of the Allahabad Division* would not permit goods to be deposited at Stations, unless there was an early prospect of their being worked off. Does not see that the Berar system would put a stop to bribery, while it would relieve, in a very mischievous manner, the Railway Company of the responsibility for the safe custody and keeping of the goods they receive for conveyance, and which is now avoided by refusals to give receipts for goods until actual despatch. Would have godowns at every Station for 15 days' traffic, and bind the Company to give receipts for goods, rejecting such goods as could not be stored, and confining Government interference to the erection of godowns for the reception of such rejected goods. The Magistrates at Sudder Stations only to be authorized to inspect the registers, the godowns, &c., say once a week.

The Magistrate of Allahabad dwells upon the extent to which combination for purposes of fraud is carried amongst the Railway Company's servants, in consequence of the want of knowledge of native character prevailing amongst the superior Officers of the Company. Suggests that private individuals should be permitted to supply their own vehicles. Considers that the system of Government registration will only prove successful with unremitting supervision. But after all recurs to his recommendations of a radical reform in the subordinate Railway officials, and proper mixture of classes, proper inspection by competent inspectors, and supervision and control by high authority from some central position. The present difficulties are in no way diminished by the great centralization of all departments, and by the fact that the chief authorities live at the extremity of the line, and are practically inaccessible and unaware of what is really going on on the line, for the whole truth cannot be related in reports, or discovered by a flying visitor's journey of inspection.

The Magistrate of Cawnpore is averse to a Government register, as it would lead to more bribery and inextricable confusion in cases of enquiry into malpractices. Otherwise agrees in the system of registration, as accepted by the Government of India in its Resolution on the malpractices on the East Indian Railway last season.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab is of opinion that, when the carrying power is sufficient, no interference is necessary. When the demand for waggons increases, the rates should be raised up to a maximum, but non-interference must be maintained. When the demand is so great that the maximum limits do not give relief, then a system of registry should be used, and when registering even does not suffice, then the Berar system should be resorted to.

His Honor is further of opinion that a portion of each train should, under all circumstances, be reserved for perishable goods and articles of value occupying little room.

The Commissioner of Mooltan considers that the system of registration and assignment of plots cannot be successful, without a good officer to superintend it.

The Commissioner of Lahore recommends inspection by officers of higher pay, at uncertain times, who should be authorized to receive complaints.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30*th October* 1866.

The Commissioner of Umritsur would notify publicly that applications for waggons are to be made to the Traffic Manager's Office, the Company reserving the right to allot as they chose. Does not consider that the Berar system will be any check over Station Masters, and the Consulting Engineer agrees in this. This Officer and the Financial Commissioner agree in considering that the real remedy is an ample supply of rolling-stock, and failing that a Government system of registration is the proper thing. The Consulting Engineer thinks it is out of the question that the Railway Company should provide godown accommodation for more than three or four days' traffic.

The Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, thinks the Berar plan a good one, but not perfect. He recommends the adoption at every station of an enclosed Government Cotton-yard, sub-divided into *Chabootheas* of varying sizes, to keep consignments of different firms separate. A fee of one Anna per bale should be charged, and a system of registration and check should be adopted, in order that waggons might be allotted in regular order.

He further adds that only men of character and status should be appointed Masters of important Stations.

The Chief Commissioner of Oudh is of opinion that the Berar system is the best under the circumstances, but thinks that the evil will not be stopped until the carrying stock is increased, and cotton properly screwed.

Considers that Station Masters should be selected with the greatest care, and be remunerated adequately; also that Travelling Inspectors and Traffic Managers should be looked to for a "most energetic performance of their duties," and especially in the matter of the despatch of all goods according to registers prepared according to priority of *receipt*.

The Commissioner of Mysore states that there does not appear to be any reason for supposing that bribery is resorted to in the Mysore District.

3. The measures proposed and carried into effect in Berar were chiefly a system of registration, and storing on an enclosed plot of ground adjacent to the Stations, by a Government Officer, of the batches of Cotton as they arrive, the object being not only to prevent bribery, but to ensure despatch in the order of arrival of consignments.

In the Hyderabad Administration Report for 1865-66, it is stated that the system has been very successful in checking the unfairness with which carriage was allotted by the Station Masters.

In Resolution Nos. 555-59 R., paragraphs 14 to 21, the Government of India indicated that the proper system, in their opinion, was a system of registration of arrivals as regards imperishable goods, of applications for freight as regards perishable goods. The only sound principle for regulating the distribution of waggons is priority of arrival, but until the capabilities of the line are on a par with the demand for transport, this principle cannot be adopted unconditionally without sacrificing the trade in perishable goods. A system of registration, combined with the marking out of the Station-yards into blocks for the stacking of imperishable goods, and efficient supervision of the subordinate servants, will go far to remove all grounds of complaint of bribery and undue preference. A separate Government registration, as an additional check, might also be useful; but should it lead to an additional system of bribery, it could be summarily suppressed.

OBSERVATIONS.—The replies that have been received tend to show that the system approved by the Government of India in Resolution Nos. 555-9 R., is probably the best—the interference of Government being avoided until abuse is distinctly alleged or suspected.

2. The question of the East Indian Railway Company, declining responsibility for goods delivered or deposited at Stations, until loaded in waggons, has been separately considered and satisfactorily disposed of. Sheds for outward goods will be erected where required, which will enable the Company to meet the public in this respect.

3. The remedy for the whole matter lies in the carrying capacity of the lines being made commensurate with the traffic. Meantime, that traffic may be fairly limited by raising the tariff, as is proposed in some of the replies; but this measure should only be adopted after sufficient notice.

4. The screwing of cotton also affects the question very seriously; but until this is done by traders in their own interests, the transport by rail of loose or half-screwed cotton can be discouraged, if not limited, by the system introduced on the East Indian Railway, of charging by measurement instead of by weight, or else by charging differential rates if it be preferred to adhere to weight.

5. There is much unanimity of opinion as to the necessity of having Station Masters of a superior class, which is worthy of consideration by Railway Companies.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of these Observations, together with a copy of the Office Note, be forwarded to the Home Department for information, and for the purpose of being published in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India*.

Ordered also, that copies be forwarded for information to the Department, Governments and Administrations marginally noted—the replies to the Circular being sent to the Government of Bengal, in original, for the special consideration of the Agency of the East Indian Railway Company.

Foreign Department.	Punjab.
Madras.	Oudh.
Bombay.	Central Provinces.
Bengal.	Hyderabad.
N. W. Provinces.	Mysore.

(Signed) C. H. DICKENS, Lieut.-Colonel, R. A.,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 679. ORDER THEREON, 30th October 1866, No. 3,449.

RAILWAY, No. 43.

Communicated to the Consulting Engineer for Railways, with reference to the Proceedings of Government No. 1,791, dated 7th June 1866.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

No 3449 54

Circular to the
Consulting Engineer for
Railways, with reference
to the Proceedings
Govt No 1791, dated 7th June
1866