1404-05

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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1404-05 Press ~~Mis.~~

227-29

Dated 8 5 1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
8th May 1867.

No. 227. Read the following letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, (Establishment), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Public Works Department, dated Calcutta, 15th April 1867, No. 602 E.—

I am directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Government of Bengal, representing that the urgent necessity for affording assistance to the Public Works Establishments in Orissa, has reduced the Engineer Establishment of the Public Works Department in Bengal much below the actual requirements of the Province, and to state that the Governor General in Council requests that the services of any Royal Engineer Officers available in Madras may be placed at the disposal of the Government of India for employment in Bengal.

From the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in the Public Works Department, (Establishments), to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, dated Fort William, 15th March 1867, No. 1,608.

1. The urgent necessity which has lately arisen of affording additional assistance to the Public Works Establishments in Orissa has formed the subject of previous communications, but the present and prospective effect of extra demands on the Establishments of Bengal generally renders it necessary to bring the matter forward in a special manner, with the view of the Government of India affording aid by placing additional Officers at the disposal of this Government, and I am accordingly to request that the Government of India may be solicited to temporarily increase the Engineer Establishment by posting six extra Officers to Bengal, who should be either Assistant Engineers or of the lower grades of Executive Engineer, such as might be employed as Assistants.

2 The propriety of the present application will probably be readily evident when it is considered that the Establishments of Bengal, which are certainly no more than sufficient under the best arrangements to carry out the ordinary work of the Department, have been called upon to meet a pressing emergency in Orissa at a time when there are great and increased demands throughout Bengal generally. The consequence is that the present want of the Relief Works in Orissa have only been met at the expense and serious inconvenience of works in other places

3 But it is only ordinary prudence to anticipate that, even should distress in Orissa not increase, there will still be further demands on our establishments; for it can scarcely be supposed that some of the Officers undergoing the exposure and hardships inseparable from carrying out relief works requiring constant supervision in remote situations will not fail in health. This will make a further demand on the now insufficient Establishments elsewhere. Another contingency to be borne in mind is the possibility of relief being called for elsewhere, and past experience has shown how, when such demands arise, they come with an urgency that must be fairly met, and will allow of no expedients. Then, in addition to these possibilities, there is the prominent fact that important works are now suffering from what has been already done.

4. Up to the present time six members of the Engineer Establishment have been specially sent to Orissa, in order to afford additional assistance, and one more is still required The temporary increase which is now asked is therefore very moderate, and it is only the known incompleteness of the present Establishments generally throughout India and the difficulty of procuring extra assistance that has prevented a larger demand being made.

5. In addition to the temporary increase the Lieutenant-Governor desires me to apply for a permanent increase of three Assistants for the large and important Military Works now being undertaken, for which no requisition has yet been made. These Officers would be employed in

the new Barracks at Hazareebaugh, Barrackpore, and Darjeeling, and, when a decision is arrived at regarding Dinapore, an additional Assistant will be required for the new Military Works in that Division

6. The Lieutenant-Governor regrets the necessity for making this urgent appeal to the Government of India, but there seems no possibility of otherwise obtaining the necessary assistance Already deserving young Officers of the Local Establishment, who have been appointed to the Imperial Establishment, have been retained in that Establishment in order to keep it up to its full numbers, the original intention of re-transferring those Officers to local duties, where they are much required, having been abandoned Two Assistant Engineers have been temporarily entertained for employment in Orissa in addition to the members of the Regular Establishment whose transfer has already been noticed Inquiry has also been made from the East Indian Railway and Irrigation Companies, but without success These Companies require additional assistance themselves, and the most that could be expected from them would be to obtain their less worthy members

7 It may here be noticed that several applications have been refused, as indifferent men, who can obtain no employment elsewhere, are not the persons required for the present emergency, and the incubus that such men will eventually prove to the Department is obvious The Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces in his Minute on Public Works of those Provinces for 1865-66, has remarked on the previous inferiority of his Public Works Staff, and on the improvement that had resulted from weeding it of the less efficient members. The Chief Commissioner's remarks* are most apposite ; and the importance of a good *personnel* in the Public Works Establishments has been so evident in Bengal, especially in regard to Officers received from other Provinces, that the Lieutenant-Governor is not only averse to entertaining questionable persons himself, but has thought it necessary to notice the subject, as such persons entertained in the first instance elsewhere have been not infrequently transferred to the Establishment under this Government

* On former occasions I have had to point out the detriment to the best interests of the Public Works occasioned by the too frequent incapacity of the Executive Engineers At all times there have in these Provinces been a certain number of Executive Officers, whose zeal and skill did credit both to themselves and the Department But at most times there were many Officers quite deficient both in professional knowledge and practical ability There must always be *some* proportion of such Officers But during several years the proportion in these Provinces was excessive much greater indeed in this Department than in any other Despite all the exertions of successive Chief Engineers, the amount of bad work, of undue expense and various irregularities, has been considerable, owing to the circumstances abovementioned But within the last year or two, the improvement in this respect has been marked and satisfactory Most (if not all) of the untrained and inefficient Officers have been eliminated. And the new Officers, supplied by the Government of India, have proved to be well educated Engineers Several of the young Civil Engineers sent out from England are gentlemen of really remarkable promise and aptitude.

8 There is at the present time a considerable demand for qualified engineering assistance. The East Indian Railway require it for their Chord Line, the Irrigation Company for their Soane project, and as these Companies give higher salaries to their junior Officers, there is little prospect of Government obtaining the description of men it requires without holding out a prospect of permanent employment and due advancement, and even then it can scarcely expect to secure the best men, who can rise more rapidly in private employ, perhaps with a chance of hereafter entering the Department in the higher grades without passing the numerous tests required in ordinary course. Considering that Government Servants look to the certainty of the service, and to the prospect of benefiting by its expansion, or by any fortuitous circumstances that may arise, it would be impolitic, as it would scarcely be just, even were duly qualified men procurable, to introduce at once new persons into the higher grades, or to take them into employ at higher salaries to the detriment of the Officers in the service

9. There being then both a difficulty in procuring qualified persons and of arranging for their introduction into the Department, it remains to consider what can best be done to meet the present difficulty, and I am to suggest, for the consideration of the Government of India, the employment on this side of India, of Public Works Officers from the Madras and Bombay Presidencies as a means of obtaining the immediate relief so much required. Some inconvenience would no doubt be felt in those Presidencies, but it could not amount to any thing like what is experienced here, and on the whole the State would benefit

10 But whatever may be the decision on this point, there is an immediate want of temporary assistance, also an immediate and a considerable prospective want of permanent assistance in connection with Military and Irrigation works, if not, with the Department generally ; and experience shows that the best Officers of Government are those, whether Civil or Military, who have entered the service early and worked their way up It is therefore in every way most necessary not only to keep the Department fully complete, but to strengthen it by an increased number of Officers, Civil or Military, from England.

11. I am to apologise for the length of this communication, but the importance of an efficient and sufficient staff of Officers in the Public Works Department is so great at the present moment that the Lieutenant-Governor has thought it necessary to urge the matter, and trusts the Government of India will be able to afford the temporary assistance so greatly required, and to provide for the future permanent wants of Bengal

12 The usual Tabular Statement is enclosed

No. 228. ORDER THEREON, 8th May 1867, No. 1,404.

ESTABLISHMENT, No. 25.

Ordered that the following letter be sent :—

(Here enter No. 1,405, dated 8th May 1867.)

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

7.B.

No. 1608.

FROM LIEUTENANT-COLONEL J. E. T. NICOLLS, R. E.,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal
in the Public Works Department,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

P. W DEPARTMENT.
Establishments

Fort William, the 15th March 1867.

SIR,

The urgent necessity which has lately arisen of affording additional assistance to the Public Works Establishments in Orissa has formed the subject of previous communications, but the present and prospective effect of extra demands on the Establishments of Bengal generally renders it necessary to bring the matter forward in a special manner, with the view of the Government of India affording aid by placing additional Officers at the disposal of this Government, and I am accordingly to request that the Government of India may be solicited to temporarily increase the Engineer Establishment by posting six extra Officers to Bengal, who should be either Assistant Engineers or of the lower grades of Executive Engineer, such as might be employed as Assistants

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3. But it is only ordinary prudence to anticipate that, even should distress in Orissa not increase, there will still be further demands on our Establishments; for it can scarcely be supposed that some of the Officers undergoing the exposure and hardships insuperable from carrying out relief works requiring constant supervision in remote situations will not fail in health This will make a further demand on the now insufficient Establishments elsewhere. Another contingency to be borne in mind is the possibility of relief being called for elsewhere, and past experience has shown how, when such demands arise, they come with an urgency that must be fully met, and will allow of no expedients. Then, in addition to these possibilities, there is the prominent fact that important works are now suffering from what has been already done.

4 Up to the present time six Members of the Engineer Establishment have been specially sent to Orissa, in order to afford additional assistance, and one more is still required. The temporary increase which is now asked is therefore very moderate, and it is only the known incompleteness of the present Establishments generally throughout India and the difficulty of procuring extra assistance that has prevented a larger demand being made

5 In addition to the temporary increase the Lieutenant-Governor desires me to apply for a permanent increase of three Assistants for the large and important Military Works now being undertaken for which no requisition has yet been made. These Officers would be employed in the new Barracks at Hazareebaugh, Barrackpore and Darjeeling, and, when a decision is arrived at regarding Dinapore, an additional Assistant will be required for the new Military Works in that Division.

6 The Lieutenant-Governor regrets the necessity for making this urgent appeal to the Government of India, but there seems no possibility of otherwise obtaining the necessary assistance Already deserving young Officers of the Local Establishment, who have been appointed to the Imperial Establishment, have been retained in that Establishment in order to keep it up to its full numbers, the original intention of re-transferring those Officers to local duties, where they are much required, having been abandoned Two Assistant Engineers have been temporarily entertained for employment in Orissa in addition to the members of the Regular Establishment whose transfer has already been noticed Enquiry has also been made from the East Indian Railway and Irrigation Companies, but without success. These Companies require additional assistance themselves, and the most that could be expected from them would be to obtain their less worthy members.

7 It may here be noticed that several applications have been refused, as indifferent men, who can obtain no employment elsewhere, are not the persons required for the present emergency, and the incubus that such men will eventually prove to the Department is obvious. The Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces in his Minute on Public Works of those Provinces for 1865-66, has remarked on the previous inferiority of his Public Works Staff, and on the improvement that had resulted from weeding it of the less efficient members. The Chief Commissioner's remarks* are most apposite, and the importance of a good *personnel* in the Public Works Establishments has been so evident in Bengal, especially in regard to Officers received from other Provinces, that the Lieutenant-Governor is not only averse to entertaining questionable persons himself, but has thought it necessary to notice the subject, as such persons entertained in the first instance elsewhere have been not infrequently transferred to the Establishment under this Government

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12 The usual Tabular Statement is enclosed

I have the honor to be,
SIR,
Your most obedient Servant,
J E T NICOLLS, *Lieut-Colonel, R E.,*
Secretary to the Government of Bengal
in the Public Works Department.

No. 602 B

91

Government of India
Public Works Department
Establishment

To

The Secy. to the Govt. of Madras
Public Works Department

Calcutta, 15th April 1867.

Sir,

I am directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Govt. of Bengal requesting that the urgent necessity for affording assistance to the Public Works Establishments in Orissa, has reduced the Engineer Establishment of the P.W. Dept. in Bengal, much below the actual requirements of the Province, and to state that the Governor General in Council requests that the services of any Royal Engineer Officers available in Madras may be placed at the disposal of the Govt. of India for employment in Bengal.—

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obedt. servt.

W Dicken Colonel R.A.

Secy: to the Govt. of India

Council

Public Works Department

No. 1404

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Dated the 8th May 1867

Read the following

From

The Secretary to the Govt. of India

(Here enter No. 602 Dated 15th April 1867

Ordered that the following letter be sent

No. 1405

To The Secretary to the Govt. of India

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 15 Ultimo, No. 602, in which you request the services of any Royal Engineer Officers available in Madras may be placed at the disposal of the Government of India for employment in Bengal

I am to invite atten

Ord. 1867 Despatch
Pro. of Govr. Genl. in Council
No. 1591.

From

The Secy. of State for India.

To The Secy. of Govt. of India.

Dated 15th April 1867
Rec'd 4th May 1867

Enclosure No. 602.

Forwarding copy of a letter from the Govt. of Bengal requesting that the services of any Royal Engineer Officers available in Madras may be placed at the disposal of the Govt. of India for employment in Bengal

No. 1404-1405 - 8th May 1867

No. 227

Copy sent May 1867 (R. 6th)

to my letters of the 13th & 30 April and 20th March 1867 Nos 762, 867 and 1282 respectively, and to state, that whatever necessity there may be for affording assistance in the present emergency to the Engineering Establishment in Bengal, there is as much, or perhaps a still more urgent want of Engineer officers in this Presidency, and I am accordingly to say that His Excellency the Governor in Council regrets his inability to comply with the wishes of the Government of India.

Fort St George
8th May 1867

Desp: 9/5/67

157

Pub: Works 1867 Separate

Pro: of Govt for May

No. 1404 & 1405

Pro: of the Madras Govt.

Dt. 8th Mar 1867

Passing orders on a letter from the Govt. of India, regarding that the services of Royal Engineer Officers available in Madras, may be placed at their disposal for employment in Bengal.

No. 229 - 230 & 231

2 Lets May 1867