

(1) Number of pages _____

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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

P. W.

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1175	Press
285-6.		Mis.
Dated	18--April--	18 68

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
18th April 1863.*

No. 235. Read the following letter from the Consulting Engineer for Railways, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madras, 30th March 1863, No. 111 :—

1. From certain papers which have been forwarded to me by the Agent of the Madras Railway, and which I have the honor to submit, under a separate cover, for the information of Government, it will be observed that on the 24th instant no fewer than three fires took place upon the North-West Line.

2. On the arrival of the 5 A. M. goods train from Cuddapah at Reddipully, smoke was discovered issuing from a waggon which had been loaded with cotton at Moodanoor on the previous day. Upon examination, the upper part of the centre bale was found to be on fire, and this was fortunately extinguished before any serious danger had occurred. The fact that the bale in the centre of the waggon had caught fire, while those above and below, as also the tarpaulins and ropes, were uninjured, makes it, as Mr. Carter remarks, the most singular fire that has yet occurred. I cannot, however, agree with Mr. Carter in attributing its origin to spontaneous combustion.

3. Upon the arrival of the same train at Arconum, the ropes upon another waggon, also loaded with cotton at Moodanoor on the previous day, were discovered to be on fire, and further examination showed that two of the tarpaulins in the opposite corner of the waggon were burnt through, and a small hole made in one of the cotton bales.

4. The third case occurred to the train which left Moodanoor at 7-30 A. M. One of the empty waggons attached to the train was discovered to be on fire. It was speedily extinguished before the waggon had sustained much injury.

5. Of these three fires it is probable that the third was caused by a spark from the engine, and it is possible that the second also originated in the same way; but that which was detected at Reddipully must have had some other cause, and my own opinion is that it was the act of an incendiary.

6. The Government are aware that of late fires have unfortunately been of frequent occurrence upon the North-West Line. In addressing Government on the* 12th instant, I stated that the matter was in the hands of the Police, but I regret to say that no clue to the origin of the fires has yet been obtained.

7. I met the Agent and the Traffic Manager on the 28th instant, and discussed the question fully. I am satisfied that nothing has been left undone that was likely to throw light on the matter. At present the exertions of the Railway authorities have been fruitless, but I trust to be able soon to report a more successful result.

No. 236. ORDER THEREON, 18th April 1863, No. 1,175.

RAILWAY, No. 23.

Ordered to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

W. H. Webb Esq
Prin of Engineer & Civil
No 1195

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

From
The Consulting Engineer
for Railways,

To
The Secretary to Government,
Public Works Department,
Fort Saint George.

No 1175-18 April 1868

Dated 30 March 1868.
Received 7/4

No. 111

Submitting observations
on the series that took place
upon the North West
Line.
in 1865
Record
W. H. Webb
21/4/68

No 285 v 286
22nd April 1868 Ch. 15th