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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works. DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 3877	Press
278-79	Mis.
Dated 12 12	18/8.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
12th December 1868.*

No. 278. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the
Public Department :—

Passing orders for the protection, cleansing, and
preservation of Tirumala Naik's Palace at Ma-
dura, and requesting Mr. Chisholm to proceed
to Madura for the purpose of inspecting the
ancient buildings there, and of preparing a
report upon the best means of restoring and
adapting them to public purposes. Requesting
Dr. Hunter to make a selection from the
photographs of architectural subjects taken
by the School of Arts, for submission to the
Secretary of State.

(Here enter 2nd December 1868, No. 1,478.)

No. 279. ORDER THEREON, 12th December 1868, No. 3,877.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 36.

Communicated to the Superintend-
ing Engineer of the 8th Division for in-
formation and guidance.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Sept. of 1868 Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

T,

THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER.

SUB DIVISION

Dated December, 12th.

Recd.

Ind.

G. O., 12th December 1868, No. 3,877.

DECEMBER.

Nos. 278-279

Tirumala Naik's Palace at Madura.—
Proceedings Public Department request-
ing that measures may be adopted for the
protection, cleansing, and preservation of
the building known as Tirumala Naik's
Palace at Madura, and for Mr. Chisholm pro-
ceeding to that place for the purpose of in-
specting the ancient buildings, and of pre-
paring a report upon the best means of
restoring them, communicated to the Officer
concerned.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,

2nd December 1868.

No. 8. Read the following MINUTE by His Excellency the PRESIDENT,
dated 18th November 1868.

Captain Lyon, who has been employed by Government in taking photo-
graphs of the architectural antiquities of the Presidency, has returned to Ootaca-
mund, and has transmitted to me the accompanying selection from his works in
the Northern Provinces.

The results of his southern tour are already known to the Members of Council.

The artist will proceed to England in the beginning of December, and will
there prepare the complete series of photographs of which this Government has
engaged to take ten sets, at the price of Rupees 1-8-0 for each impression, leaving
the negatives in his possession.

Some specimens of the short explanatory notices prepared by Captain Lyon
are appended.

Captain Lyon would prefer to see the collection bound in a series of volumes,
but I question the propriety of this opinion. No doubt, the photographs would be
better preserved in that form, but they would be less available for scrutiny.
Many of the subjects represented are extremely minute and delicate. The pictures
are intended not only to please by their beauty, but to be the objects of curious
study. Such volumes as are contemplated by Captain Lyon would be cumbrous
and ill adapted for close inspection. A separate leaf can be carried to the light
and examined with much greater facility. In my humble judgment, the impres-
sions should simply be mounted on card board, and the explanatory notice should
be pasted on the back of each card. This method will best serve the purpose which
the India Office has in view, and it is the cheapest method.

2. The account of Captain Lyon's expenses on his recent excursion is also
enclosed, and he requests that the balance due to him may be paid at an early date.
An opinion having been, I believe, entertained that the terms on which Captain
Lyon has undertaken this work are unduly high, I think it right to submit that I
do not share this view of the subject. Captain Lyon and his wife, who has acted
as his assistant, have given their valuable time and distinguished artistic skill
almost gratuitously to Government. The Government has merely paid their
travelling expenses, and made them a moderate money allowance for food. In
exchange for these advantages, the Government obtain ten copies of each impres-
sion for a sum which Captain Lyon assures me is cost price, for half the price
at which they will be supplied in detail sale to the public. The Artist stipulates to
retain the negatives, in order to indemnify himself for his expenditure of time,
chemicals, and skill. The negatives are his remuneration. If the art authorities
in England desire to possess them, they can be purchased hereafter.

3. The photographic illustrations of National Art in Southern India, which
are thus presented to students of art in England, will be highly appreciated by a
critical class of judges, though they may never attract the attention of the multi-
tude. They will arouse an interest for a department of art history which has been
imperfectly observed, and which has never been analyzed. But I am far from affirm-
ing that the collection so rapidly presented by Captain Lyon, single handed, fulfils
the object of the Home Government, if they desire to secure substantial and compre-

hensive records of the religious and historical monuments of this extensive and diversified region. The present work is only a step in that direction. It is rather suggestive than satisfying. It is a picturesque preliminary to laborious and scientific investigation. In these plates an intelligent inquirer obtains a competent superficial view of the early and recent Brahminical art as practised in the limits of this Presidency (including Mysore), with the exception of Ganjam and Malabar, which present some specific local features not included here: he finds the principal examples of the style which was employed in secular structures by an intermixture of the Hindoo and Mussulman forms in the 16th and 17th centuries, and he possesses specimens of Jain and Buddhist works, with rock sculptures and inscriptions of disputed origin. It would, however, be vain to expect in this compilation such a methodical selection, comparison, or classification of monuments as could form the basis for an exact conception of the march of art in these countries, which has no doubt been controlled by numerous influences belonging to tradition, religious belief, contact with foreign ideas and foreign races, materials, climate, and other causes which have all to be explored. The arts of Southern India are a mighty maze in which there is scarcely a glimmer of light or understanding. Captain Lyon has merely opened some prospects on a scene in which there is space for the life-long labor of a Rickman or a Fergusson. The photographs now submitted will enable the Secretary of State, in consultation with the art authorities, to determine whether it is desirable to prosecute the subject further. It may be that a view of these productions will induce Her Majesty's Government to prescribe a methodical inquiry. We may be required to procure accurate plans and measurements, historical notices founded on a critical revision of inscriptions, local traditions, and manuscript accounts, carefully prepared models of individual objects—in short, all the data on which alone the true art history of the land can be deciphered and composed in England. In that case it would be necessary to proceed with much care and deliberation, and with the benefit of direction from South Kensington. The work would be a work of time and cost. There is no man here capable of conducting it, and it could only be effected by combination of appropriate agents. I may even affirm that there is no one in this Presidency capable of indicating the object which would be most useful as illustrations of the history of art, or of selecting the details which would be acceptable at Home as examples and models. To accomplish the undertaking which I have adverted to, it would be necessary to entertain at least the following staff of agents:—

(1). An architect or artist capable of measuring buildings, of drawing ground plans with intelligence and taste, of supplying ruined or obliterated portions, of discriminating the distinctive marks of style, connecting them with historical, religious, and physical causes, and appreciating the value of particular objects for the study and practice of art in Europe—in fact, a person perfectly versed in comparative æsthetics, the science which the Kensington Museum teaches. The duty of this gentleman would be to select and describe the fabric or monument and compose its history.

(2). An accomplished photographer for the executive pictorial part of the work. A more competent person than Captain Lyon could not be chosen. He is skilful, zealous, and acquainted with the country.

(3). An intelligent Native interpreter conversant with the several vernacular languages and English, with some knowledge of the history of the country, of Sanscrit, and, if possible, of other ancient characters and dialects. He must be found in the Madras Presidency among the Brahmin servants of Government.

(4). A party of Native Art Students, with some knowledge of drawing, modelling, and photography. They could be supplied by Doctor Hunter from the Art School of Madras.

4. It would, in my opinion, be a great error to expect useful results from the employment of agencies in any degree inferior to those which I have indicated. We cannot look to the Art School of Madras for the organization of such an enterprise. Doctor Hunter is a zealous and able man, entirely devoted to his duties, but he can hardly possess, if we regard his long residence in this country, the recent critical culture requisite for the task. The Officers of the Department of Public Works are out of the question. They know little or nothing of these matters, and have more important duties on hand. Amateurs can only supply isolated examples and specimens taken at random here and there. If such a review of the art monuments of Southern India as I have here contemplated should be attempted, the selection of objects should be limited. The field is really boundless, the number of monuments is incalculable; but I suspect that the significant, characteristic works are not numerous. It is of the first importance that labor should not be wasted on repetitions, on mediocrity, on modern examples. The collection formed by Captain Lyon is open to this objection. It exhibits to the common eye a tedious repetition of the same trivial and familiar forms. Captain Lyon is sensible of this defect. His justification is that his attention was often directed by indiscriminating persons to places remote and hard of access, without any accurate description of the monument to be delineated. He reached the spot with difficulty; he was naturally unwilling that his pains should be altogether cast away; he took his picture, rather than return empty handed. I can only hope that the better informed art student in England may discern varieties and distinctive traits which escape any blunt observation. We live in an age which would rather have too much than too little, and there are every where amateurs of the German school who despise nothing.

5. The object which the Secretary of State has in view is not only to possess accurate records and representations of objects of art, but also to preserve the worthiest of them from destruction and decay. The design is legitimate and honorable. It would be unworthy of our Government, and unjust to the Natives of the country, to permit the historical monuments of ancient Native power to be obliterated. Fortunately, all that is necessary for this purpose can easily be effected. I would do little for the temples and mosques, whether ruined or entire. The ruined works in forsaken localities which possess any vital artistic interest are for the most part of very enduring materials. The climate does not affect them much. They will last for ages, unless wantonly demolished. It would be sufficient, I believe, to direct the revenue authorities to give such instructions in their respective districts as they may think fit to prevent all ancient buildings, and especially all sculptured or inscribed stones, from being defaced or removed without special permission. The permission may sometimes be granted with advantage. We are now constructing the Streevaguntum Weir with the materials of two grand Pagodas. The Mussulmans pulled down the Pagodas to build a fort, and

the English are pulling down the fort to make an irrigation work. The gods are going to the river. Art will not suffer, and agriculture will gain. The great Brahminical structures, on the other hand, which are still the seats of pilgrimage and worship, possess, either in land revenues or in the offerings of the faithful, sufficient means of restoration and maintenance. They do not require the assistance of the State. Some of them are ill attended to, and more are disfigured by attention, but the Government cannot interfere administratively with advantage, and it is hoped that a projected amendment of the law respecting Pagoda Funds may ensure a stricter application of these revenues in future.

6. Dismissing the religious structures, the maintenance of which is either unnecessary or sufficiently provided for, the Government might, I think, with great propriety contemplate the restoration of secular buildings which have been left to us by the Native dynasties. The palaces of Bijeanugger have fallen into a state of dilapidation which renders restoration impossible. Moreover, they are situated in a wilderness of ruins, haunted rather than inhabited by a few peasants who cultivate or pasture the area of the city, which is merely visited from time to time by a vagrant swarm repairing on pilgrimage to the single living temple at Humpi. It would be idle to attempt the restoration of anything at Bijeanugger: it would be like repairing Palmyra. But Bijeanugger in its secular buildings represents a phase of art which is repeated under far more favorable circumstances at Madura, where the Naik Princes seem to have worked in emulation of their northern rivals and superiors. At Madura, the old palatial buildings, though neglected and impaired, are not ruined, not ever quite abandoned by men. The agencies of English Government still cling to some habitable portions of that vast and curious pile which is associated with the name of Tirumala, and in which the Brahmin, the Mussulman, and the Jesuit Father have all left their marks. Madura is an opulent and beautiful city, retaining after all its vicissitudes some of the arts and some of the accumulated wealth belonging to the hereditary residence of a Court. It is the capital of a little kingdom, of a Collectorate numbering more than two millions of inhabitants. In the province there are the remains of a great aristocracy; in the city, there are flourishing trades and a rich religious corporation. Various offices for the Revenue, Judicial and Municipal Departments are wanting. I would place them all in the palace of Tirumala. An opinion has got abroad that the buildings are not susceptible of restoration and adaptation, and, under this impression, a new Small Cause Court was recently constructed, in the shadow of the ancient walls, which is an outrage on good taste. The restoration of this old palace, and its appropriation to useful purposes, would be one of the most commendable and popular works which could be undertaken. There is no European Government that would not prosecute it with enthusiasm; there is no European artist who would not be proud to associate his name with such a renovation of the past. I do not believe that it would be costly. There are Native artificers on the spot who would only require the instructions of a single Englishman of competent knowledge and discrimination. We possess that Englishman in Mr. Chisholm. I need not say that there are many precedents in India for the course which I advocate; and if they did not exist, this would be a good opportunity for creating one. The Mussulman buildings of Seringapatam have been restored by the Government of India without any view to utility whatever, merely for their historical associations

and artistic beauty. The revenues of the Supreme Government have been liberally expended at Delhi and Agra I believe, without reference to practical purposes. But here I propose to repair a Native palace, and make it the machine of civilized administration. I believe it would not cost more than to build three public offices with stucco Doric pillars on the "standard plan." The expenditure might be, and ought to be, scattered over a long series of years. The steady appropriation of thirty or forty thousand Rupees would do the good work in ten years every year would give the artisan more consciousness of his artistic task, and the public a deeper interest in the enterprise and greater fondness for it. It would become a local school for skilled labor and decorative taste, like the pattern school of a Cathedral or College in England. Indeed, it would be a school of art for the working man—not a theoretic academy, but a practical one. Art cannot be fruitfully taught by books, pictures, and lectures only. As well might anatomy be inculcated without a knife or a subject. The rest of the world has seen buildings would even give a general intellectual impulse. I shall not the subject if it became the starting point of a considerable revival of art in the Native taste. No person who has not been in India can conceive the possibilities of the study of the most cultivated minds of Europe, and the progress of the art of Poverty, conquest, innovation, imitation, feeling, the trade of the artist, and destructive work. The native craftsman has been left to his own resources, and would become the English Government, which has been so long at the disposal of the Indian people by scientific, social, and political education, to assist in the restoration. Art is not a capital interest, but it is a national one. A country of Government cannot in the present time neglect any branch of human activity which has a larger element in value. Even in a commercial point of view, beauty is becoming every day a

7. Such are my opinions with reference to the restoration of the most interesting examples of secular architecture in the Presidency. I do not, however, expect that my views will be immediately accepted, still less that they will be acted upon without careful inquiry. I shall, therefore, confine myself for the present to the two following proposals:—

(1). That the Superintending Engineer of the Division be instructed to take measures for the protection, cleansing, and preservation of the buildings known as Tirumala Naik's Palace at Madura, and especially for the removal of vegetation on the roofs and walls.

(2). That Mr. Chisholm be directed to proceed to Madura, as soon as he can do so with due regard to the other duties in which he is engaged, for the purpose of inspecting the ancient buildings and of preparing a report upon the best means of restoring them and adapting them to the uses of the Public Service.

8. It only remains for me to suggest, in connexion with this subject, that it would be desirable to request Dr. Hunter to make a selection from the photographs of architectural subjects taken by the School of Arts, for submission to Her Majesty's Government. Dr. Hunter possesses in his collection some very fine monuments which are not embraced in that of Captain Lyon, and which would be regarded as a valuable addition to the series formed by that gentleman.

(Signed) NAPIER.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
2nd December 1868.*

No. 9. ORDER THEREON, 2nd December 1868, No. 1478.

Before taking measures for giving effect to the proposals contained in the foregoing Minute of His Excellency the President of the Council, the Government resolve to direct the Superintending Engineer of the 8th Division to take measures for the protection, cleansing, and preservation of the building known as Tirumala Naik's Palace at Madura, and especially for the removal of vegetation on the roofs and walls.

2. Mr. Chisholm will be requested to proceed to Madura, as soon as he can do so with due regard to the other duties in which he is engaged, for the purpose of inspecting the ancient buildings there, and of preparing a report upon the best means of restoring them and adapting them to the public uses indicated in His Lordship's Minute, paragraph 6.

3. The Government also resolve to request Dr. Hunter to make a selection from the photographs of architectural subjects taken by the School of Arts, for submission to the Secretary of State for India.

(True Extract).

H. Ellis

Chief Secretary.

To the Public Works Department. ✓
To R. F. Chisholm, Esq. ✓
To the Superintendent, School of Industrial Arts.

1868
Govt. of Madras

1740
PUBLIC.

To

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

&c., &c., &c.

Dated December, 2nd.

Recd. " 5 "

Encl. 1

G. O., 2nd December 1868, No. 1478.

DECEMBER.

Nos. 8-9.

Passing orders for the protection, cleansing, and preservation of Tirumala Nakh's palace at Madura, and requesting Mr. Chisholm to proceed to Madura for the purpose of inspecting the ancient buildings there, and of preparing a report upon the best means of restoring and adapting them to public purposes. Requesting Dr. Hunter to make a selection from the photographs of architectural subjects taken by the School of Arts, for submission to the Secretary of State.

With an order

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3877 No 3877 116

Comd to the Superintendent
Inspector of the 8th Division
for information and
guidance.

Fort St George
12th Dec 1868

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Govt. of {1868} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To The Superintending Eng^r
8th Division
A.C.

Dated

th.

Recd.

G. O., 12th Dec^r 1868, No. 3877

Nos. 278 & 279

Ranks Palace at Masina,
and for Mr. Chisholm
proceeding to that place
for the purpose of in-
specting the ancient
buildings and of preparing
a report upon the best
means of restoring them - Cms
Wm. Th. Cms.

Trimmala Ranks Palace
at Masina Pro. Subdys
requesting that measures
may be adopted for
the protection, cleaning
and preservation of the
building known as Trimmala
Ranks

10077/15 Dec 1868