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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1104	Press Mis.
269/1	
Dated 20 4	18 11 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
20th April 1871.*

Read the following papers :—

No. 269. From the Magistrate of Tinnevelly, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Tinnevelly, 6th April 1871, No. 134.

I AM requested by the Sessions Judge to bring to the notice of Government that the Controller of Public Works Accounts has passed bills for emergent works executed in the 1st Range of this district without a Completion Certificate in any one instance; that he has passed a bill for Rupees 414-7-0 over and above the amount of the estimate for one work in that range, namely, the Altur channel; and that an Accountant, attached to the Controller's office, has visited the 1st Range of this district and has made a cursory examination of the accounts, with which he has expressed himself perfectly satisfied, while a judicial enquiry was going on which has shown that there are serious discrepancies in these very accounts.

REFERRED to the Controller of Public Works Accounts for such explanations as he may have to offer.

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R.E.,

13th April 1871.

Secretary to Government.

No. 270. From the Controller of Public Works Accounts, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madras, 15th April 1871, No. 104.

1 Letter from Magistrate of Tinnevelly.
1 Packet marked A.
1 Do. do. B.
1 Do. do. C.
1 Copy of letter to Acting Superintending Engineer, 8th Division.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement on the enclosed letter from the Magistrate of Tinnevelly, under date the 6th instant, No. 134.

2. In that letter the Magistrate represents—

(1.) That this office has passed bills for emergent works executed in the 1st Range without a Completion Certificate in any one instance.

(2.) That expenditure on the Altur channel in excess of the sanctioned estimate by Rupees 414-7-0 was unauthorizedly admitted by me.

(3.) That the Senior Auditor and Manager of this office recently made a cursory examination of the accounts of No. 1 Range, and that he expressed himself "perfectly satisfied" with the state of those accounts, while a judicial enquiry was going on which has shown that there were "serious discrepancies."

3. With regard to the first of these statements, I have no hesitation in declaring that the expenditure on no single work estimated to cost more than Rupees 50, and carried out directly by Public Works Officers, has ever been passed by me without the Completion Certificate required by the rules. The Government are aware that every case in which such a certificate is not furnished within one month after the completion of a work is recorded in my monthly statements of Objectionable Items, and in order to show that, even after the receipt of the orders of Government on those statements, the matter is not lost sight of by me, I have only to invite

attention to the enclosed returns (marked A.) for the twelve weeks ended 3rd April 1871. These statements are a faithful record of the Completion Certificates due and received, and I am convinced that nothing more can be done to ensure a rigid adherence to rule in this respect.

4. If, however, the Magistrate's remark has reference to works executed in No. 1 Range of the Tinnevely District from advances made by the Range Officer to the Civil authorities, it is necessary that I should give a brief history of the circumstances of the case, to enable Government to arrive at an opinion upon the action of this office. Immediately after the great cyclone which passed over the

Tinnevely District in November 1869, the Government, in the Revenue Department,* having in view the great extent of most valuable crop which was in

danger of perishing, and the large amount of revenue which would be lost if immediate measures were not taken to repair the damages caused to Public Works, principally of irrigation, authorized the Collector to expend two separate sums of Rupees 50,000 each on emergency from *the funds in his treasury*. After the repairs had been some time in progress, it came to my notice that the work was being carried out chiefly by officers of the Public Works Department,

† Letter No. 1,874, dated 3rd January 1870.

and I, at once, pointed out to Government that, as it was a fundamental rule

that Range Officers should be supplied with funds only through their "Drawing Account," it was irregular to advance money to them direct from the Government Treasury, and as it appeared to me necessary that the whole of the outlay in the Tinnevely District should be covered by an allotment from the funds at the disposal of the Public Works Department, I requested that such an appropriation might be made, or, in the event of this being found to be impracticable, that such orders might be passed as would guide this office in the adjustment of the expenditure. In their Proceedings of the 20th January 1870, No. 230, the Government, promising to adjust the outlay, if possible, by specific assignments later in the year, directed this office to arrange for permanently transferring to the debit of the ordinary Public Works grant the expenditure which had been incurred under the orders in the Revenue Department above quoted, and I accordingly addressed the then Acting Superintending Engineer on the subject in letter No. 2,037, under date the 25th January 1870, copy of

‡ No. 265, dated 13th December 1869.

which is enclosed. In that letter, assuming that my previous‡ instructions for

the credit to "Deposits" of all monies received by Range Officers direct from the Collector had been attended to, I informed the Acting Superintending Engineer that, immediately on the receipt of his report of the sums actually made over to Range Officers from the advances authorized by the Revenue Department, I would grant credits for the amount drawn from the Civil Department, which amount, I added, should at once be refunded to that department, the refund being debited to "Deposits" in order to close the account, and the outlay charged against the

* Letter No. 2,528, dated 29th January 1870.

works on which it had been incurred. In reply,* the Acting Superintending Engineer reported that no credits to "Deposits" had appeared in the accounts

of Range Officers. The Collector, he stated, was authorized, by orders in the Revenue Department, to disburse money as required, and the latter considered that "payments for all emergent works should be made by Revenue Officers." Captain Prendergast explained that, at first, a small sum was placed at the disposal of the Tahsildars, and that some of the repairs to breaches were undertaken by them; that afterwards a distribution of funds was arranged by himself and the Collector, and the works carried on by Public Works Officers, who framed estimates, inspected works in progress, and "sent measurements for payments to be made by Tahsildars;" that thus the execution of work was in the hands of "Range Officers," while it was intended that the expenditure should be accounted "for by the Collector in the same way as he accounts for money advanced to him from the Public Works Department." Three of the four Range Officers in Tinnevely were said not to have expended one rupee directly, and as regards the exception, namely, the 1st Range Officer, it was stated that he, being at Palamcottah, had sums of money placed at his disposal by the Collector, which money was not brought to account in the Public Works books, but disbursed "as on the part of the Collector, and to be adjusted by bills furnished by him." When the second advance of Rupees 50,000 was authorized by the Revenue Department, the Acting Superintending Engineer stated that the distribution of the money was arranged by the Collector and himself, "all disbursements being made as in the Revenue Department, and the Public Works forms not being kept up." The Acting Superintending Engineer further urged that 350 estimates had been received, none of which appeared in the Range Progress Reports; that no specific appropriations had been made; and that it did "not seem at all possible to account in the ordinary way for expenditure up to date." While admitting that, under ordinary circumstances, it would be irregular to place money at a Range Officer's disposal otherwise than by formal credit, the Acting Superintending Engineer urged that at a time when the country was all in disorder, and all officers, both Revenue and Public Works, were engaged in stopping breaches in tanks and channels, when, too, a special grant had been sanctioned by Government out of the usual routine, it was necessary that such measures should be taken without loss of time as appeared best to the authorities on the spot. Taking all these circumstances, of a most exceptional character, into consideration, Captain Prendergast concluded as follows:—

"I thus think it will be best now, if the adjustment of expenditure be made as had been intended, and if I repay to the Collector, in one lump, in the month of March, or sooner, the sum of one lac which will have been disbursed under his directions, and cover the outlay made by all Civil Officers. If you receive an abstract of receipts and disbursements from the Treasury Deputy Collector, the expenditure can be adjusted in your books, and the bills of expenditure will then be sent to you as in the case of other works executed by Civil Officers."

5. In accordance with the Superintending Engineer's proposal, the sum of one lac of Rupees, which was provided from the Public Works grant in the Order of the 8th March 1870, No. 734, was paid to the Collector of Tinnevely for the adjustment of the advances made "out of the usual routine," and debited in the accounts of the 1st Range Officer to the head "advances to Civil Officers." In

due course the Collector furnished this office with the enclosed Abstract* of

* Marked B.

Receipts and Disbursements accounting for the advance, and bills have, up to date, been received for Rupees 96,262-2-9, and passed by this office. The grant sanctioned in the Public Works Proceedings of the 8th March 1870, just quoted, was made in a lump sum, and no specific appropriation for such work, upon a regularly sanctioned estimate, having, under the exceptional circumstances of the case, been authorized by the Superintending Engineer, this office had no alternative but to accept the estimates and appropriations as noted in the Collector's abstract. Against the total expenditure (Rupees 45,946-0-1) by the 1st Range Officer, bills have been received for Rupees 44,263-11-10, and Rupees 1,742-4-3 have still to be accounted for in the same way. Of the bills received (93 in number), seven, amounting to Rupees 4,046-6-0, were sent to the Magistrate of Tinnevely on the 18th February and 6th March last, and the

remainder* are herewith forwarded.

* Marked C.

Every one of these bills for actual work done, signed by a contractor, has, on its reverse, the following certificate by the Overseer:—

"Certified that the above claim is correct, that the measurements have been made by me, and that the work has been satisfactorily performed."

6. This certificate is countersigned by the Range Officer, who adds the remark, "completed." That remark, it

NOTE.—In two cases in which works were unfinished the remark "Incomplete" is inserted by the Range Officer.

will be observed, is repeated in the Collector's abstract, and the Auditor in this

office in special charge of Civil Officers' accounts, bearing in mind the fact that the adjustment of the expenditure was being made by the Revenue Department, accepted the foregoing certificate, countersigned by the Range Officer, as the Completion Certificate, which purpose it was doubtless intended to serve.

7. The whole procedure in connection with the expenditure under notice was out of the ordinary course, but had it been possible to abide by regulation, each Range Officer who made disbursements should have accounted to me directly for his portion of the expenditure. In that case, the authorization of appropriations, on specific estimates sanctioned by competent authority, would have been communicated by the Superintending Engineer to this office, which would then have insisted on a strict adherence to rule, with respect to vouchers, the entertainment of establishments, and the submission of regular Completion Certificates in the prescribed forms. Looking however to the extraordinary emergency which rendered the outlay necessary, the means by which the money was provided, the mode of making payments, and the various agencies by which the repair of the works was undertaken, it was impossible to look for such close conformity to rule in the accounts of expenditure submitted to this office. In a very similar case, the Government will observe, on reference to their Proceedings of the 1st May 1868, No. 1,350, that the Controller was allowed considerable latitude in the audit of expenditure having to be accounted for by Civil Officers, and was required to bring to notice "only very glaring cases of irregularity."

8. On several occasions, I have urged upon the attention of Government the absolute necessity of restricting Range Officers, in the matter of funds, to their regular drawing account, and the orders which have from time to time been issued upon this subject have had a most beneficial effect. Nevertheless, there are still cases in which Range Officers take upon themselves the responsibility of making irregular and unauthorized advances to Civil Officers, and of receiving money direct from the Civil authorities without the knowledge of this office, and I have only to refer to paragraph 9 of my report, No. 41, dated 5th April 1871, in support of this statement. If advances are, on the one hand, made to Civil Officers according to rule, and under proper authority, as well as upon specific allotments, and Range Officers, on the other, restrict their expenditure to the credits placed at their disposal in the regular way, not only is the work of this office simplified, but the expenditure is adjusted in a manner which is at once satisfactory to the disbursing officer and to the office of Account and Audit.

9. In reference to the Ahtur channel, referred to in the second of the representations made by the Magistrate, I have to explain that two estimates for work in connection with this channel, amounting respectively to Rupees 9,800 and 1,900, were sanctioned by the Local authorities in the year 1869-70.

10. No excess over either of those estimates would have been passed by this office, except under authority. That such authority was given will be apparent by a perusal of the accompanying "Abstract of Receipt and Disbursements" marked B, on page 6 of which Rupees 414-7-0 are entered by the Assistant Collector in charge of the treasury as the amount of the "sanctioned" supplemental estimate for the Ahtur channel. Against this supplemental estimate, the excess of Rupees 414-7-0, referred to by Mr. Puckle, was passed. If the excess in question be taken as against the estimate of Rupees 9,800, no special sanction was necessary for the admission of the outlay, the excess expenditure being within 5 per cent. If, on the other hand, the excess be regarded as having occurred on the smaller estimate, there was the distinct intimation given by the Collector's Department of the fact of a supplemental estimate of Rupees 414-7-0 having been duly sanctioned.

11. With respect to the recent examination of the Accounts of No. 1 Range by the Senior Auditor of this office, whose report is now before Government, I beg to point out that the object of these examinations, whether conducted by myself, the Deputy Controller, or the Head Auditor, is to check and bring to notice defects or irregularities in the recording of the transactions of Range Officers, and to aid the latter in the management of their accounts, so that those accounts may be prepared in a clear and methodical form, and, at the same time, kept free from useless redundancy. In the course of our examinations, all receipts from the treasury are compared with the counterfoils of the cheque books and with the pass book, and all extra receipts, such as Income tax, Rents, Service Fund Subscriptions, etc., are examined with the Remittance book, in order to ensure all monies thus realized being promptly paid into the treasury. The payments noted in the cash book are minutely gone over, and care taken to see that the correct head of account is recorded against each item, and that the postings are accurately and promptly made from the cash book into the cash abstracts of Receipts and

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
20th April 1871.*

Disbursements. As regards payments, vouchers are called for in support of some of the items, and care is taken in these cases to see that the disbursements noted in the cash book are properly vouched for. The stock accounts, if any, Schedules of Advances, Contractor's Ledger, and Work Registers are also examined, in order to see that they are kept in the authorized forms, and that they are brought up to date. The books containing the monthly accounts are always produced, and measures taken to see that corrections required to be made by the clearances issued by this office are duly attended to. The cash in hand is finally counted, and compared with the cash balance exhibited in the cash book. Examinations of the character which I have described, while ensuring a clear and methodical record of the transactions of Range Officers, the maintenance of such books and returns as are required by the Manual, and the support of outlay by vouchers in the authorized forms, afford no check whatever upon "irregularities," either in the way of excess payments intentionally made to contractors, or of overcharges for materials furnished by suppliers. Such a check as that indicated is possible only by an examination of the work on the spot, and rests, not with this office, but with the local Public Works authorities. To return to the subject of the examination recently made by the Senior Auditor of this office, I am not aware that he, at any time, stated that he was "perfectly satisfied" with the result of his inspection. Moreover, on enquiry, I learn that the cash book of the 1st Range Officer, containing his receipts and disbursements in connection with the special outlay of Rupees 45,946-0-1, above referred to, was not produced on the occasion of the Senior Auditor's examination. This, no doubt, was owing to the Range Officer not being directly responsible to this office for the expenditure, which, having been incurred upon advances made to Civil Officers, had to be adjusted by them, to whom doubtless, under the irregular arrangement adopted on the supposed emergency, the Range Officer furnished separate accounts.

12. An impression seems to prevail in some quarters that the Account branch of the department under my control should be able not only to detect, but to prevent fraud. Such an impression cannot but be based on an erroneous view of the duties of this office, which, as one of Audit and Account, can deal with expenditure only as brought before it upon paper. If a Range Officer's books are correctly and methodically kept, so far as can be ascertained by inspection, and his accounts of expenditure are supported by the vouchers required by the Manual, this office has no means whatever of detecting overcharges, or charges made for work never performed. Such detection can follow only upon a personal inspection of the work or materials charged for, and inspection duties of that character devolve, as already stated, upon Superintending Engineers, to whom, as the chief supervising officers of the Public Works Department, the Government look for the due performance of all works sanctioned for execution from Public Works funds. Assuming that this duty is not lost sight of, and that the inspections of Superintending Engineers afford a guarantee that a fair return in work is obtained for all monies expended by Public Works Officers, it is the business of this office to see that the expenditure is properly accounted for, and that each payment is supported by such documentary evidence as the rules require.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
20th April 1871.*

From the Controller of Public Works Accounts, to the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, dated Madras, 25th January 1870, No. 2,037.

ADVERTING to the orders of Government No. 230, dated 20th January 1870, and in supersession of my letter No. 265, dated 13th December 1869, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to inform me to what extent up to the latest date, and in what ranges, you have drawn for outlay by Public Works Officers against the sanction of Rupees 50,000 given in the Proceedings of Government in the Revenue Department, No. 3,058A., dated 26th November last.

2. On obtaining this information I will be prepared to grant you a letter of credit for the amount you have drawn from the Civil Department, and which should, immediately on receipt of the credit, be refunded to that department.

3. It is presumed that the receipts from the Civil Department have been credited to Deposits. The refund, when made, should therefore, in order to close the account, be debited to that head, and the outlay be charged against the works on which it has been incurred.

4. I have further to request that you will be good enough to apply for credits for February and March against the balance available of the 50,000 Rupees, after taking into account any sums from that amount which may have been expended in this official year by officers other than those of the Public Works Department.

5. It should be remembered that the outlay by the Public Works and Civil Departments combined from this source should not, without the special sanction of Government, exceed the sum sanctioned, namely, 50,000 Rupees.

No. 271. ORDER THEREON, 20th April 1871, No. 1,104.

ACCOUNT, No. 28.

COMMUNICATED to the Magistrate of
Tinnevely.

2. The explanations of the Controller of Public Works Accounts regarding the charge of having passed bills for expenditure incurred in the 1st Range of that District without subjecting them to sufficient examination and without requiring the submission of the usual Completion Certificates, are, in the opinion of Government, entirely satisfactory. As respects the alleged inefficiency of the manner in which the accounts of that range were lately examined by a member of the Controller's Office the Government presume that the accounts in which serious discrepancies are reported to have been discovered during their scrutiny in the course of Mr. Colquhoun's trial, are those which, relating to expenditure under "Advances to Civil Officers" were in the keeping of the Collector, and were consequently not produced by the Range Officer for Mr. Newbigging's inspection.

3. The whole arrangement by which, as explained by the Controller, it was settled by the Collector and the Superintending Engineer that the expenditure in Mr. Colquhoun's range from the lac of Rupees sanctioned for the emergent repair of the irrigation works which had been injured by the cyclone of November 1869, should be treated as outlay under "advances to Civil Officers," while, in reality, the money was handed over to Mr. Colquhoun for disbursement and to be accounted for direct to the Collector, was irregular in the extreme, and the Government learn with surprise that it should have been entered into contrary to the rules of the Public Works Department which distinctly lay down that, although required to give aid and professional advice under certain circumstances to Civil Officers in carrying out works, a member of the Public Works Department is on no account on

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
20th April 1871.

such occasions to have any connection with the disbursement of money or with the preparation of the accounts. These, in such cases, are under the immediate control of the Collector, or other Civil Officer concerned, who must be held responsible for their correctness, and that the bills finally furnished to the Controller are duly supported by vouchers.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Magistrate of Tinnevely.
Controller of Public Works Accounts
Revenue Department.

*Judicial Office
Tinnevely 8-5-71*

Ed. S. T. Augustin.

134
Tinnevely 6 April 1871
From R. R. Tucker Esq
To The Magistrate
The Secretary to Government
Department Public Works
Fort Saint George
Sir,

I am requested by the Revenue
Inspector to bring to the notice of Government
that the Controller of Public Works
accounts has passed bills for emergency
works executed in the 100 p range of this
District without a completion certificate
in any one instance that he has passed
a bill for Rs 144-7-0 over and above
the amount of the estimate for one work
in that range, viz the Akkur channel
and that an accountant attached to the
Controller's office has visited the 100
range of this District and has made
a cursory examination of the accounts
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I have the honor to be
Your most Obedt Servt.

W. A. Puckle,
Magistrate

On obtaining this
information, I will be prepared
to grant you a letter of credit for
the amount you have drawn
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and which should, immediately
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It is presumed that
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I have further to request
that you will be good enough
to supply for credits for February
and March against the balance

45
available of the 50,000 Rupees,
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ded in this fiscal year by
officers other than those of
the Public Works Department.
5.

It should be remem-
bered that the outlay by the
Public Works and Civil
Departments could not from
this source should not, without the special sanction
of Government, exceed the
sum sanctioned, viz.
50,000 Rupees.

I have, &c.
J. S. Hook.
Controller of Public Works and
Public Works.

J. S. Hook

Recd

Controller of Public Works and
Public Works.

Office of the Controller of
Public Works Accounts
Madras 15th April 1871.

N^o 104

From,
The Controller of P.W. Accounts,
To,
The Secretary to Government,
Public Works Department,
Fort Saint George.

Sir,

I have the honor to
acknowledge the receipt of
your endorsement on the
enclosed letter from the
Magistrate of Tinnevely
underdate the 6th Instant,
N^o 134.

2. In that letter, the
Magistrate

Enclosed in
letter from the
Magistrate of Tinnevely,
dated 6th April 1871,
to the Controller of P.W. Accounts,
Madras.

15th April 1871

Magistrate represents (1) That this Office has passed bills for emergent works executed in the 1st Range without a completion Certificate in any one instance.

(2) That expenditure on the Attur Channel in excess of the sanctioned Estimate by Rupees 4¹⁴-7¹¹ was unauthorizedly admitted by me.

(3.) That the Senior Auditor and Manager of this Office recently made a cursory examination

of the Accounts of N^o. 1 Range, and that he expressed himself "perfectly satisfied" with the state of those Accounts, while a judicial enquiry was going on, which has shown that there were "serious discrepancies."

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on those Statements, the matter is not lost sight of by me, I have only to invite attention to the enclosed Returns (marked A) for the twelve weeks ended 3^d April 1871. These Statements are a faithful record of the Completion Certificates due and received, and I am convinced that nothing more can be done to ensure a rigid adherence to rule in this respect.

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^x
G.O. No. 3058A,
dated 26th Novem-
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G.O. No. 11, dated
5th January 1870.

^x
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^x Letter etc., 1874,
dated 3rd January
1870.

of the outlay in the Tinnevely District should be covered by an allotment from the funds at the disposal of the Public Works Department. I requested that such an appropriation might be made, or, in the event of this being found to be impracticable, that such orders might be passed as would guide this office in the adjustment of the expenditure. In their Proceedings of the 20th January 1870, No. 230, the Government, promising to adjust the outlay, if possible, by specific

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Letter No 2528
dated 29th Jan
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of money placed at his disposal by the Collector, which money was not brought to account in the Public Works Books, but disbursed "as on the part of the Collector, and to be adjusted by bills furnished by him." When the second advance of Rupees 50,000 was authorized by the Revenue Department, the Acting Superintending Engineer stated that the distribution of the money was arranged by the Collector and himself, "all disbursements being made as in the Revenue Department, and the Public Works forms not

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as follows:

"I thus think it will be"
"best now, if the adjustment"
"of expenditure be made as"
"had been intended, and if"
"I repay to the Collector, in"
"one lump, in the month of"
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"Civil Officers."

5. In accordance with
the Superintending Engineer's
proposal, the sum of one
lac of Rupees which was
provided from the Public
Works grant in the order
of the 8th March 1870, No. 734,
was paid to the Collector of
Tinnevely for the adjust-
ment of the advances made
"out of the usual routine",
and debited in the ac-
counts of the 1st Range
Officer

Officer to the head "Advances
to Civil Officers." In due course,
the Collector furnished this
office with the enclosed
Abstract of Receipts and
Disbursements accounting
for the advance, and bills
have, up to date, been
received for Rupees 96,262-2-9,
and passed by this office.
The grant sanctioned in
the Public Works Proceedings
of the 8th March 1870 just
quoted was made in a
lump sum, and no speci-
fic appropriation for such
work, upon a regularly
sanctioned estimate, having,
under the exceptional
circumstances

*Marked B.

circumstances of the case,
been authorized by the Super-
intending Engineer, this
Office had no alternative
but to accept the Estimates
and Appropriations as noted
in the Collector's Abstract.
Against the total expendi-
ture (Rupees 4,59,46-11-6) by the
1st Range Officer, bills
have been received for
Rupees 44,203-11-10, and Ru-
pees 1,742-4-3 have still to
be accounted for in the
same way. Of the bills
received (93 in number),
seven, amounting to Rupees
4046-6-0 were sent to the
Magistrate of Tinnevely
on

on the 18th February and 6th March last, and the remainder are herewith for ^{*Marked C} awarded. - Every one of these bills for actual work done, signed by a Contractor, ~~con-~~
~~signed~~, has on its reverse, the following Certificate by the Overseer. -

"Certified that the above claim is correct, that the measurements have been made by me, and that the work has been satisfactory performed."

6. This certificate is countersigned by the Range Officer, who adds the remark "Completed". - That remark, it will be observed, is repeated in the Collector's abstracts

Note - In two cases in which ~~works~~ were unfinished the remark "Incomplete" is inserted by the Range Officer -

abstract, and the Auditor in this Office in special charge of Civil Officers accounts, bearing in mind the fact that the adjustment of the expenditure was being made by the Revenue Department, accepted the foregoing Certificate, countersigned by the Range Officer, as the Completion Certificate, which purpose it was doubtless intended to serve. -

7. The whole procedure in connection with the expenditure under notice was out of the ordinary course, but had it been possible to abide by regulation, each Range

Range Officer who made dis-
bursements should have ac-
counted to me directly for
his portion of the expendi-
ture. In that case, the
authorization of appropria-
tions, on specific Estimates
sanctioned by competent
authority, would have been
communicated by the Su-
perintending Engineer to this
office, which would then
have insisted on a strict
adherence to rule, with
respect to vouchers, the enter-
tainment of Establishments,
and the submission of regular
Completion Certificates in the
prescribed forms. Looking ^{forward} to
the extraordinary emergency
which

which rendered the outlay
necessary, the means by
which the money was
provided, the mode of
making payments, and the
various agencies by which
the repair of the works was
undertaken, it was impossi-
ble to look for ~~that~~ ^{such} close
conformity to rule in the
accounts of expenditure sub-
mitted to this office. In a
very similar case, the Govern-
ment will observe, on refer-
ence to their Proceedings of
the 1st May 1868, No. 1350,
that the Controller was allow-
ed considerable latitude in
the audit of expenditure
having to be accounted for
by

by Civil officers, and was required to bring to notice "only very glaring cases of irregularity". -

8. On several occasions, I have urged upon the attention of Government the absolute necessity of restricting Range Officers, in the matter of funds, to their regular Drawing account, and the orders which have from time to time been issued upon this subject have had a most beneficial effect. Nevertheless, there are still cases in which Range officers take upon themselves the responsibility of making irregular

irregular and unauthorized advances to Civil officers, and of receiving money direct from the Civil Authorities without the knowledge of this Office, and I have only to refer to para 9 of my report N^o 41, dated 5th April 1871, in support of this statement. - If advances are, on the one hand, made to Civil officers according to rule, and under proper authority, as well as upon specific allotments, and Range Officers, on the other, restrict their expenditure to the credits placed at their disposal in the regular way, not only is the work of this office simplified

simplified, but the expenditure is adjusted in a manner which is at once satisfactory to the Disbursing Officer and to the office of Account and Audit.

9. In reference to the Atthoon Channel, referred to in the second of the representations made by the Magistrate, I have to explain that two Estimates for work in connection with this Channel, amounting respectively to Rupees 9,800 and 1,900, were sanctioned by the Local Authorities in the year 1869-70.

10. No excess over either of those Estimates would have been

been passed by this office, except under authority. That such authority was given will be apparent by a perusal of the accompanying "Abstract of Receipt and Disbursements" marked B, on page 6 of which Rupees 414-7- are entered by the Assistant Collector in charge of the Treasury as the amount of the "Sanctioned" Supplemental Estimate for the Atthoon Channel. Against this supplemental estimate, the excess of Rupees 414-7-, referred to by Mr. Puckle, was passed. If the excess in question be taken as against the Estimate of Rupees 9,800, no special sanction.

Sanction was necessary for
the admission of the outlay,
the excess expenditure being
within 5 per cent. If, on the
other hand, the excess be
regarded as having occurred
in the smaller Estimate,
there was the distinct intima-
tion given by the Collec-
tor's Department of the fact
of a supplemental estimate
of Rupees 414-7- having been
duly sanctioned. —

11. With respect to the
recent examination of the
accounts of No. 1 Range
by the Senior Auditor of this
Office, whose report is now
before Government, I beg to
point out that the object of
these

these examinations, whether
conducted by myself, the
Deputy Controller, or the
Head Auditor, is to check
and bring to notice defects
or irregularities in the record-
ing of the transactions
of Range Officers, and to
aid the latter in the manage-
ment of their accounts, so
that those accounts may be
prepared in a clear and
methodical form, and at
the same time, kept free
from useless redundancy.
In the course of our ex-
aminations, all receipts
from the Treasury are
compared with the counterfoils
of

of the Cheque Books and with the Pass Book, and all extra receipts, such as Income Tax, rents, Service Fund subscriptions, ^{Yca}, are examined with the Remittance Book, in order to ensure all monies thus realized being promptly paid into the Treasury. The payments noted in the Cash Book are minutely gone over, and care taken to see that the correct head of account is recorded against each item, and that the postings are accurately and promptly made from the Cash Book into the Cash Abstracts of Receipts and

and Disbursements. As regards payments, vouchers are called for in support of some of the items, and care is taken in these cases to see that the disbursements noted in the Cash Book are properly vouched for. The Stock Accounts, if any, Schedules of Advances, Contractors Ledger, and Work Registers are also examined, in order to see that they are kept in the authorized forms, and that they are brought up to date. The books containing ^{the} monthly Accounts are always produced, and measures taken to see that corrections required to be made

made by the Clearances issued by this Office are duly attended to. The Cash in hand is finally counted, and compared with the Cash balance exhibited in the Cash Book.

Examinations of the character which I have described, while ensuring a clear and methodical record of the transactions of Range officers, the maintenance of such books and returns as are required by the Manual, and the support of outlay by vouchers in the authorized forms, afford no check whatever upon "irregularities", either in the way of excess payments

payments intentionally made to Contractors, or of overcharges for materials furnished by suppliers. Such a check as that indicated is possible only by an examination of the work on the spot, and rests, not with this Office, but with the local Public Works authorities.

^{To return to the subject.}
~~the examination recently~~
made by the Senior Auditor of this Office, I am not aware that he, at any time, stated that he was "perfectly satisfied" with the result of his inspection. Moreover, on enquiry I learn that the Cash Book of the 1st Range officer containing his receipts and disbursements

disbursements in connection with the special outlay of Rupees 45,946 - 11 - 1 above referred to was not produced on the occasion of the Senior Auditor's examination. This, no doubt, was owing to the Range Officer not being directly responsible to this Office for the expenditure, which, having been incurred upon advances made to Civil Officers, had to be adjusted by them, to whom doubtless, under the irregular arrangement adopted on the supposed emergency, the Range Officer

Officer furnished separate accounts. - 53

12. An impression seems to prevail in some quarters that the Account Branch of the Department under my control should be able not only to detect, but to prevent fraud. Such an impression cannot but be based on an erroneous view of the duties of this Office, which, as one of Audit and Account, can deal with expenditure only as brought before it upon paper. If a Range Officer's Books are correctly and methodically

methodically kept, so far as
can be ascertained by in-
spection, and his accounts
of expenditure are supported
by the vouchers required by
the Manual, this office
has no means whatever of
detecting overcharges, or
charges made for work
never performed. Such
detection can follow only
upon a personal inspection
of the work or materials
charged for, and inspection
duties of that character de-
volve, as already stated,
upon Superintending Engineers,
to

to whom, as the Chief super-
vising Officers of the Public
Works Department, the
Government look for the due
performance of all works
sanctioned for execution
from Public Works funds.
Assuming that this duty is
not lost sight of, and
that the inspections of
Superintending Engineers
afford a guarantee that
a fair return in work is
obtained for all monies
expended by Public Works
Officers, it is the busi-
ness of this Office to see
that

that the expenditure is properly
accounted for, and that each
payment is supported by
such documentary evidence
as the rules require. —

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

V. Hoef

Controller of U. S. Accounts.

Prova

1870 May 1881 19-10
 " 8 October 1881 24-25
 " 12 January 1881 404-405
 " 17 " " 662-663
 " 8 March 1881 180-
 " 27 April 1881 163-164

1870 Dec 21
 1871 17/6

From,
 The Controller of
 P.W. Accounts.

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

Dated 15th
 Recd. 15th } April 1871.

N^o 104 Encls: 5

Offering explanation
 on letter from the Ma-
 gistrate of Tinnevely
 relative to the accounts
 of the 1st Range officers
 of the Tinnevely District.

N^o 1104 20th April 1871

1870

1104

Communicated
 to the Magistrate of
 Tinnevely.

The explanations
 of the Controller of Public
 Works Accounts regarding
 the charge of having passed
 bills for expenditure
 incurred in the 1st Range
 of that District without
 subjecting them to
 sufficient examination.

N
 A
 J. O. S.

and without requiring
the submission of the
usual Completion
Certificates, are, in
the opinion of Gov^t,
entirely satisfactory.
As respects the alleged
inefficiency of the man-
-ner in which the
accounts of that range
were lately examined
by a member of the
Controller's Office the
Gov^t presume that
the accounts in which
serious discrepancies
are reported to have
been discovered

during their scrutiny in
the course of Mr Colquhoun's
trial, are those which
relating to expenditure
under advances to Civil
Officers were in the keeping
of the collector, and were
consequently not pro-
duced by the Range
Officer for Mr. Bowditch's
inspection.

The whole arrange-
-ment by which, as
explained by the Controller,
it was settled by the
Collector and the Capt
Eng^r that the expenditure
in Mr Colquhoun's Range

from the lac of Rupees
sanctioned for the emer-
gent repair of the irri-
gation works which
had been injured
by the cyclone of 1899,
should be treated
as outlay under "advances
to Civil Officers" while,
in reality, the money
was handed over to
Mr Colquhoun for disburse-
ment and to be accounted
for direct to the collector,
was irregular in
the extreme, and the
Govt learn with surprise
that

that it should have
been entered in the con-
trary to the rules of
the Public Works Dept.
which distinctly lays
down that, although
required to give aid
and professional ad-
vice under certain cir-
cumstances to Civil
Officers in carrying
out works, a member
of the Dept. is on no
account on such
occasions to have
any connection with
the disbursement of

Oct 11 1871

PUBLIC WORKS

The Magistrate of
Connally

2

Admitted 1104

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