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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public works

DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1829	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
302-303		
Dated	17. 7.	1873.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
17th July 1873.*

No. 302. Read the following Proceedings of the Government of India, Public Works Department, (Guaranteed—Railways), dated Simla, 20th June 1873, Nos. 975-81 G—R:—

Facilities for traffic.

Read—

Letter from the Secretary to Government of the Punjab, No. 56-C, dated 15th May 1873, with extract of a memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel MEDLEY, R.E., containing suggestions for promoting traffic on Indian Railways.

RESOLUTION.—The Governor-General in Council is of opinion that there is room for considerable additional facilities on Indian Railways in the issuing of tickets, in the weighing and registering of luggage, and for improvement in the management of the goods traffic, and desires that the attention of all parties concerned may be directed to these matters. The arrangements at present existing are by no means so efficient as they should be.

2. The thanks of the Government of India should be communicated to Colonel Medley for the suggestions he has offered.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution, with copy of the papers read, be forwarded to the Governments of Madras and Bombay for information.

To the Consulting Engineers to the Government of India for Guaranteed Railways at Calcutta, Lahore, and Lucknow. for consideration and report after communication with the Agencies of the Guaranteed Railways under their control.

To the Superintending Engineer, Delhi District, Rajpootana (State) Railway, for any remarks he may have to offer.

And to the Government of the Punjab for information, and with reference to paragraph 2 of the Resolution.

(Signed). A. H. VAUX,
for *Offg. Deputy Secretary.*

From Colonel R. MACLAGAN, R.E., Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, in the Public Works Department, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, dated Murrec, 15th May 1873, No. 56-C.

I AM desired by His Honor the Lieutenant Governor to forward copy of a memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Medley, R.E., Superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, Punjab, containing suggestions on some means of promoting increase of traffic on Indian Railways.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel Medley's first suggestion, that of increasing the number of Railway Ticket Offices, might, it is believed, with due attention to needful checks, be adopted with very great advantage.

3. The second, that of having uniform passenger fares, which was proposed some time ago in England, requires a good deal of consideration.

4. The other parts of the paper appear to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor to contain some useful suggestions, especially that regarding goods traffic.

Extract from a Memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. MEDLEY, R.E., containing suggestions for improving the traffic on Indian Railways, dated Rawul Pindie, 15th April 1873.

In the last Punjab Progress Report reference is made to the small amount of traffic on the lines of railway, and it is generally admitted, I believe, that, on all the opened lines in India,

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the traffic is very small in proportion to the population, and the annual increase of that traffic slower than might reasonably be anticipated, the result being that the revenues of the country are burdened by the annual payment of a large sum of money on account of the guaranteed interest.

Having lately made a short visit to the United States, it occurs to me that some of the railway arrangements of that country might very usefully be adopted in India, with great chance of success, and with a reasonable prospect of considerably increasing the traffic, and I venture to suggest a trial of them.

The first and most important suggestion I would make is to *multiply the numbers of ticket offices*, and make them readily accessible to all classes of travellers. Any one who notices the pushing, scrambling, and discomfort that are to be seen at any large station on any Indian Railway just before a train starts, and who knows the native character, will hardly wonder that natives are disinclined to travel by rail unless absolutely obliged. The hurry and confusion are so great that I believe many passengers are often left behind, and it is more than probable that many are overcharged for their fares, either intentionally or otherwise. There is no more reason, in the nature of things, that a man should have to buy his ticket at one inconvenient pigeon-hole a few minutes before the train starts, than that he should have to purchase a stamp for a letter only at the Post Office window, and just before the post goes out. In America, every large town contains several authorized ticket offices, where the traveller can at leisure and a week beforehand, if he likes, purchase a ticket for any line in the country, and at exactly the same price that he would pay for it at the Station Booking Office. These offices are either kept up and paid for by the different lines, or their owners are paid by a percentage on all tickets sold. I would have similar offices in all large towns in India, and perhaps they might be most conveniently attached to the Post Offices, so as to be under proper inspection. I would also have printed vernacular lists of the fares to different places hung outside, with clerks ready to give information to any inquiries.

I hope, however, to see the time when there may be a *uniform travelling rate* throughout the country, just as there is already a uniform rate of postage; and I believe, if we except perhaps the local traffic in the immediate neighbourhood of the great cities (say under 50 miles distance), that we might carry a passenger for the same fare, whether he travelled 50 or 500 miles. Opponents of this suggestion, which is not altogether new, seem to think that, because you are equally ready to carry the man the long or the short distance, he would go the longer distance for the sake of being carried *gratis* 450 miles, which is about as reasonable as to suppose that you would send a letter from London to Edinburgh, if your correspondent resided at Rugby, simply because you only pay a penny in either case. The real effect will be simply to induce a man to travel who otherwise would have stayed at home. What you want, in fact, is not merely to carry those who are anxious to travel, but to *induce* as many people to travel as possible, the only limit being the capacity of the line and rolling stock to carry the traffic, so long of course as there is a margin of profit on the average distance per passenger. It is needless to enlarge on the saving that would be effected in the office establishment of railways by such a system.

European travellers form an insignificant item in this country, but still whatever diminishes the trouble of travelling to them is worth consideration, and I would, therefore, suggest that the present delay caused by weighing baggage at stations might be much reduced by simply *charging by the piece*, instead of by the weight; here, too, a uniform rate per piece for any distance might be advantageously introduced.

The American system of brass checks for baggage is now too well known to require description, and its adoption out here would save time and temper.

With regard to the goods traffic, I would suggest that the Railway Company should not merely wait until the goods are brought to their line to be carried, but that they should *go off their line to get them*; by having offices in all large towns likely to use the railway, where their customers could book their goods exactly as at the railway station, the Company, of course, keeping carts or vans for the purpose of transporting them to the line. Such feeders of the main line would naturally develop in time into horse, or regular branch, railways.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
17th July 1873.*

No. 303.

ORDER THEREON, 17th July 1873, No. 1,829.

RAILWAY, No. 35.

COMMUNICATED to the Consulting Engineer for consideration and report after communication with the Agents of

the Madras and Great Southern of India Railways.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,

Secretary to Government.

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. W. H. French.

Spare Copies.

1873 Sept

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.
GUARANTEED RAILWAYS.

To *Sp. 3794*

Nos. 975-81 G—R.
Dated SIMLA, June 20, 1873.
Received *July 4.*

Sn 1

Facilities for traffic.

*Communicated to the Consulting Engineer
for consideration and report after communication
with the Agents of the Messrs and Great Northern
of India Railways.*

WMS

*The Engineer Dept
Bd. 2-25/7/73*

No 302.303.

Cp, 3794

Govt. of 1873

PUBLIC WORKS.

To The Consulting Engineer for
Railways

Date

Recd.

Encl. 1

G. O. 17th July 1829.

NO. 30243

Traffic. Pro. of the
Govt of India forwarding
~~in~~ copy of Resolution
on a Memo. by Lt Col
Medley R.E. containing
suggestions for promoting
Traffic on Indian Rail-
ways, Comd. to the Engg. Supt.
with instructions.