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(2) Date of repair

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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.

755

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1937

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 114. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Secretary to Government, Financial Department, dated 12th February 1877, No. 344 :—
From the Hon. P. MACFADYEN, Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, to the Hon. W. HUDLESTON, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 10th February 1877.

"The members of the Chamber desire me to invite the attention of the Madras Government to the pressing need that exists for increasing the means of transport of grain on the North-West Line of the Madras Railway. A very large portion of the grain now imported into Madras is, as you are aware, destined for the districts bordering on this line, and it is only necessary to compare the enormous stocks now lying in Madras (estimated at about 150,000 tons) with the comparatively small amount despatched weekly by the Madras Railway into the interior, to see that unless some considerable augmentation of traffic can be ensured the affected districts cannot enjoy the advantages of plentiful supplies of food, and the interests of private traders, who have been largely importing grain for consignment to those districts, must be prejudicially affected.

2. The Chamber urge the consideration of this subject all the more earnestly because they observe that while, as one result of Sir Richard Temple's visit to Madras, a laudable effort has been made to increase supplies of grain by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the very measures taken to effect that end have resulted in weakening the resources of the Madras Railway at a point where, it seems to the Chamber, they should be applied to the utmost of their power. Probably at no place in India is there, at the present moment, such an accumulation of grain as is now stored in Madras. The beach from Royapooram to the Fort is crowded with grain bags, to the inconvenience of ordinary traffic and to no little detriment, it is believed, of the health of the city; every available godown is stored with grain, and the Salt Cotaurs Station is stocked with sufficient supplies to keep the Railway employed for several days. It seems to the Chamber a self-evident proposition that, Madras being the chief source of grain supply, the efforts of the Railway should be directed almost exclusively to clearing away the stocks accumulating in Madras. The interests of the affected districts, of the local Government, of the local Railway, and of the local trade alike require that this should be done without delay. Apart from these considerations the Chamber submit that in the event of a sudden fall of rain there would inevitably be a large quantity of unsheltered rice rendered unfit for food, to say nothing of its being calculated to make the city more unhealthy than it is already, unparalleled as the present rates of mortality are. Any measure, therefore, tending to decrease the outflow of grain from Madras must be regarded, in many ways, as threatening the most serious consequences. With grain imported by sea at the rate of from 18,000 to 20,000 tons a week, and exported by the Railway at the rate of only 7,000 to 8,000 tons a week, it is not difficult to foresee that there must soon be a block of traffic in Madras which the Railway will be utterly powerless to control.

3. On consideration of the above circumstances, the Chamber do not understand how the recent withdrawal of three engines from the southern portion of the Madras Railway, where there is more traffic than can be provided for, to Raichore, where a grain traffic from the Bombay side is only being developed, as it were, can be justified on public grounds. The Chamber understand from the Railway authorities

that if the three engines which have been transferred to Raichore were retained on the section between Cuddapah and Gooty the grain traffic north of Cuddapah could be increased to the extent of 22 wagons or, say, 170 tons daily, no inconsiderable addition to the supplies of the affected districts. They are aware that the same locomotive power would represent a larger traffic over the shorter lead between Raichore and Adoni, but they venture to submit that there may be circumstances under which, in spite of the greater railway facilities, the supplies of food grains from the Bombay side could not be relied on with the same certainty that they could be from Madras. In Madras the enormous stocks, already referred to, have but one outlet, one market; they represent purchases that have been exclusively made for the famine districts, and their destination could only now be altered with ruinous loss. The supplies available in the Bombay Districts may be as great, they may perhaps be even greater, but they are not in the same position; they do not represent stocks that have but one outlet, or supplies that have already been drawn from their natural channel. They are still within reach of the markets that have been accustomed to absorb them, and can only be drawn to the distant famine districts of this Presidency by prices being maintained at a sufficiently high level to tempt them.

4. If the thousands of bags now owned by Madras merchants had never been bought and were still in Calcutta, the Bombay supplies might have competed with them though the Chamber are not prepared to admit it, their opinion being that railway facilities being equal the Calcutta and Madras route is the natural channel of supply.

5. However that might be, there can be no doubt now about the result of the present traffic arrangements. The stocks of rice in Madras though almost unable to reach the up-country markets at all will influence prices there. Blocked and held back in a place where they were never expected to rest, open and liable to all descriptions of damage and robbery, incurring heavy storage charges and representing a huge lock-up of capital, it cannot but be expected that a large percentage of the accumulations will be forced on the market for sale, and be realised only at prices far below those now ruling.

6. Should this expected fall in prices take place to the full extent indicated it will have a most serious effect on the up-country markets. The bazaar dealers of Bellary, Kurnool, and Cuddapah, and of the hundreds of smaller markets surrounding are all more or less in communication with Madras, and when they hear of the steadily falling prices in the Presidency town they will naturally curtail their operations, buy only such quantities as they can promptly realise, refuse to store to any appreciable extent, and gradually offer less for the supplies from Bombay until at last the prices they will be prepared to pay will not be sufficiently high to induce further importations.

7. If the low prices which would then be ruling in the districts were the natural result of over-supply on the spot, it would be but a matter of congratulation to both the Government and the Chamber; but if it were caused by the unnatural influence of a comparatively adjacent market with insufficient means of communication, it could only, unless the Government are of opinion that the stock already up-country is sufficient for future wants, be a matter of the gravest anxiety.

8. Prices would no doubt recover in time when the bazaar dealers understood that the supply in the country was insufficient and found their own stocks running low.

There would then be violent upward fluctuations in price which would tend to attract fresh importations, but by that time, which would probably be at the period when the famine will be at its height, the crops in the Berars may have been considerably reduced by local consumption, and importation from Calcutta in face of the low prices in Madras may have ceased. The introduction of sufficiently large supplies may then be difficult; must under any circumstances take time, and may not perhaps be accomplished before the Government have to record a lamentable loss of life.

9. The question now submitted for the consideration of Government is not one of inter-Presidency trade or interests; the main point to be considered is where the energies of the local Railway can be most advantageously applied to the public good during the present crisis. Regarded from this point of view, the Chamber unhesitatingly assert that the first duty of the local Railway is to relieve the Presidency town from the enormous stores of grain now accumulated here. The Chamber would, therefore, urge upon Government the necessity of making such arrangements as will permit of the traffic from Madras being very considerably increased, even if the traffic from Bombay must in consequence be considerably reduced. It would surely be better to see prices in Madras sufficiently supported to allow of a smaller but regular importation from Bombay, than to allow prices to fall to a point which will probably put an end to importation altogether.

10. The Chamber would also take this opportunity of reminding the Government of the inconveniences which local traders suffer from finding themselves competitors with the Government in transporting grain by railway. The Chamber freely admit that the Government must transport their own purchases of grain to districts where it is most wanted; but they trust the Government will not take advantage of their position in regard to the Railway to shut out private traders from the means of transport. The Chamber submit that Government grain should be placed on the same footing, as regards transport by railway, as private grain.

Finally, the Chamber desire to recommend the Government to consider again the pressing necessity that has arisen for opening the Royapooram terminus to the grain traffic. It is needless for me to point out to what an extent the streets of Black Town would be relieved of this Station, instead of the Salt Cotaurs, could be made the goods terminus of the Railway. The Chamber understand that some expenditure would be necessary to convert Royapooram into a goods terminus; but it seems certain that this expenditure must be made some day, and the Chamber cannot help thinking that a portion of it could now be profitably laid out by making Royapooram the receptacle of a good portion of the present grain traffic.

TRANSFERRED to the Public Works Department, (Railway.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Chief Secretary.

No. 114-A. From Major-General M. K. KENNEDY, R.E., Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Public Works Department, (Railway,) to the Joint Secretary to the Government of Madras, Public Works Department, (Railway Branch,) dated Bombay Castle, 17th February 1877, No. 241.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 432, dated 7th instant, the subject of which is dealt with in my letter No. 178, dated 6th idem; and

to state that although the unrestricted through booking of grain for Madras stations was resumed by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company about the 8th instant, the quantity since consigned has, up to this time, not been in excess of what the Madras Company have been able to remove from Raichore. It is not improbable that this quantity will again increase, but as His Excellency in Council understands that arrangements are being made by the Madras Railway Company for obtaining more engines, he presumes they will soon be prepared to deal with any quantity that is likely to arrive there from the Great Indian Peninsula line.

No. 115.

ORDER THEREON, 6th March 1877, No. 755.

RAILWAY, No. 14.

THE object of the Government has been from the first to make those arrangements which would allow the largest influx of food to the distressed districts. The engine-power of the railway has been apportioned with that view; and the Government, while they have declined to allot more engines to the Raichore end, are not of opinion that there is any engine-power there which could be properly transferred to Madras. The additional engines which the Government have reason to expect will be almost immediately received, will, it is hoped, enable the daily loads from Madras to be increased largely.

2. Government grain is only despatched in small quantities, not exceeding 100 tons a day, and subject to the same contingencies as private trade.

3. The question of opening the Royapoorum terminus for receipt of grain has been carefully considered by Government, but the Railway authorities have urged strong reasons against it, and it is not established to the satisfaction of His Grace the Governor in Council that its use would enable any additional quantity of grain to be carried.

(True Extract.)

Lieut.-Colonel, R.E.,

Joint Secretary to Government.

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.
" Chairman, Chamber of Commerce.
" Financial Department.
" Revenue Department.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

Spare Copies

Submitted for orders.

The three measures which the Chamber of Commerce urge upon the Government are,

(1) The necessity of making such arrangement as will permit of the traffic from Madras being very considerably increased, even if the traffic from Bombay must in consequence be considerably reduced.

(2) That Government grain should be placed on the same footing, as regards transport by railway, as private grain.

(3) The reconsideration of the necessity that has arisen for opening the Royapoorum terminus to the grain traffic.

With

With regard to the first point, it does not appear that any case has been made out for interfering with the present distribution of engine power. The quantity of grain available for delivery at Paichere by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, would seem to be at least equal to what is now stored at Madras. It is understood to consist for the most part of chalum, and other similar grains; - while that stored at Madras is almost exclusively rice. Chalum is believed to be a more nourishing food than rice; - it is certainly cheaper, and it is the accustomed food of the bulk of the population in the Ceded Districts.

In virtue of their Contract with the Madras Railway Company, the Government have full authority,

authority to distribute the locomotive power as they may see right; and in the opinion of the undersigned the only principle upon which that authority should be exercised is so to distribute the available engines as to insure if possible the conveyance to the distressed districts of the best food, at the lowest rates, in the shortest time.

If this be admitted as a general principle, it is submitted that the Chamber's recommendation to transfer engine power from Paichere to Madras, must be rejected.

The Government are aware that additional engines are very shortly expected both from Bombay and from Calcutta, and instructions are requested as to the general principles upon which they should be distributed.

With regard to the second and

and third points brought forward
by the Chamber, instructions are
solicited. The question of making
the Royapuram terminus availa-
-ble for grain traffic has already
been before Government. The
"Railway Officials are strongly
opposed to the proposal. In
the opinion of the undersigned,
the difficulties are not such as
to absolutely prohibit the measure,
provided that the advantages
resulting are likely to be sufficient.
It must however be borne in mind
that the opening of Royapuram
for receipt of grain will in no
way add to the carrying power of
the Madras Railway. When the
proposal was first before, the
chief arguments in its favour were
understood to be the distance of
the Salt Works station from the
Beach, and the limited number
of

of carts available. Of course the
first of these difficulties still
exists, but it is believed that a
sufficient number of carts is now
available.

Menthornt

Madras
16th February
1877

Joint Secretary to Government
Railway Department

Then papers accidentally escaped
notice until this day -
I would reply to the Chamber that
the object of the Govt. has been from the
first to make these arrangements
which would allow the largest influx
of food to the distressed districts -
that the engine power of the railway
has been apportioned with that view
and the Govt. while they have
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The Nainore end
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from this which could
be properly transferred
to Madras -

That the additional
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have been to expect
will be almost
immediately recouped. with
it is hoped small

The daily load from
Madras to be increased -
slightly -

That last grain is
only despatched in small
quantities - not exceeding
100 tons a day -
is subject to the same
contingencies as private

Trade -
That the Naga persons
stationing themselves
are completely covered
but the N.W. Co's officers
~~substantially~~ have urged
strong reasons against it
and it is not established
to the satisfaction of the
Govt. that it will
enable any additional
quantity to be carried

M. 24/2

Sincerely yours
/ M

No 241 of 1877
P. W. Depart. (Railway)
Bombay Castle 17 February 1877
From
The Secretary to the Government of
Bombay

To
The Secretary to the Government of
Madras
P. W. Dept. (Railway)

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No 432, dated 7th Instant, the subject of which is dealt with in my letter No 178, dated 8th Idem; and to state that although the unrestricted through booking of grain for Madras stations was resumed by the G. S. P. Railway Company about the 8th Instant, the quantity since consigned has up to this time, not been in excess of what the Madras Company have been able to remove from Raichore. - It is not improbable that this quantity will again increase, but as His
Excellency

No 344
13 FEB 77
P.W.D.
12 February 77
To the Public Works (Railway) Department
C. M.

1877
Financial Department
(General Relief)
From the Secretary of
the Madras Railway
Company
No 688
Demandy attention
to the pressing need
that exists for increasing
the means of transport
of grain in the North
West line of the Madras
Railway

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357 of 2.2.77
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7.2.77 431
" 432

No 114 -

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16. 2. 77

Excellency in Council understands that arrange-
-ments are being made by the Madras Railway
Company for obtaining more Engines, he presumes
they will soon be prepared to deal with any
quantity that is likely to arrive there from
the G. I. P. line. -

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

W. V. V. V. V.

Major General R. R.

Secretary to Government.

D.W.
197377
No 176

From

The Secy to Govt of Bombay

Dated 17th February 1877

8-211

Genl Secy

File

Transmitted
and sent to the
Secy to Govt of Bombay
for his consideration

N^o 1148

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No 755

Public Works Department.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the

1st March 77

Read the following:—

From

The Chairman,

Chamber of Commerce,
Thirdrd the First Report.

From the Govt of Bombay

(H.E. No. — a 10th Feb. 1877)
(H.E. No 2417/17 — do.)

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RM 3/3

R.E.

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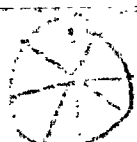
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W.

C. E. M. R. 31
Chambers C. of L. 5
T. M. Sept. 17
R. E. Sept. 17
E. I. 17
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Code of 1877 Madras

PUBLIC WORKS.

To *The Comdant of the*

Dated

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G. O. *for* 1877, No. 755

Nos. 114 - 115

201

*Grain traffic orders
on the subject of the
expedient transport of grain
on the North West line
of the Madras Railway,
and the opening of the
Royapuram terminus for
receipt of grain.*

Comdant of the

Recd. 1/3. 3-77