

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper :—

From Dr. J. BURGESS, LL.D., Archæological Survey, Southern and Western India, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Edinburgh, 26th February 1885.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of G.O., No. 205, Public, of 23rd ultimo, with reference to Mr. H. C. Black's estimate for conservation work at Hampi, and in reply would refer to my letter to Government, No. 76, of 2nd April 1884.

2. Mr. Black's estimate as printed in G.O., No. 2516-A, of 22nd November last, appears to me in every way unsatisfactory. Mr. Black even seems to forget what his proper duties are: (1) The "underground passage" for which he wants Rs. 400 sanctioned, is nothing more than a small buried temple of which the roof has been destroyed; and if Mr. Black will go down through the hole, and creep along the dark passage round the chamber and into one at the back of that again, it may perhaps satisfy him without more expense to Government, but I do not approve of spending money on freaks like this which do not belong to conservation. (2) His next item of Rs. 213 for examining 61 inscriptions is equally out of place: estampages or impressions can be made at a fraction of his estimate, and it is my duty to attend to these.

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5. Under present circumstances I regard Mr. Black's proposal to remove the roof of the adytum of the Vithalasvámi temple, as one to be specially deprecated. It may be in a dangerous condition, but it has been in that condition for at least a century, and until some satisfactory arrangements can be made for properly preserving it if possible, I would avoid any further meddling which can only lead to much more destruction than is anticipated.

6. Without entering into further details, it may be suggested that no part of the estimate be now sanctioned, and the official year being now so near its close, it is undesirable to undertake anything further, and Mr. Black might at once be withdrawn from Bijyanagar.

7. For the future, it may perhaps be found a more practicable system to entrust the executive of all conservation work to the Public Works department as is done in other provinces. The District Chief Engineers have charge of the buildings and report to the Archæological Superintendent what buildings require attention; he inspects them if necessary, and the Engineer submits to him detailed estimates which he modifies as he thinks desirable, and when approved they are sent to Government for sanction. In this way, at a minimum of cost, most of the finer buildings in Gujarat have, within the last fourteen months, been taken in hand and are being put in a creditable state of repair. Both the Bombay Government and the Public Works Engineers have accorded to my proposals the most cordial support, and the expenditure is economical. It may be worth consideration whether some similar mode cannot be arranged for Madras. If my experience can be of any service I shall be happy to advise with Government in this matter.

8. I note that in the resolution of the Government of India, Home department, No. 6—218-30, of 18th December last, a grant of Rs. 5,000 has been made to Madras for conservation during the current year. When the lists of Architectural remains are ready and estimates can be obtained from the different districts, it might be possible by an early application to obtain a somewhat larger grant-in-aid for 1885-86.

9. May I request that copies of Government orders relating to conservation might be sent to Mr. A. Rea, my First Assistant, for his office file and to facilitate any reference I may have to make to him for information?

ORDER—dated 27th March 1885, No. 780, Public.

Communicated to the Public Works department with reference to G.O., 19th June 1884, No. 1338, Public.

2. The request in the last paragraph will be noted.

(True Extract.)

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Chief Secretary.

To the Public Works department.
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„ Mr. A. Rea.

Exd. J. Wright.

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Recd.

Encl.

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B/B 869. Way 10 April/85
Recorded, with
reference to G.O. 1602-W
dated 26 June 1884.

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1.4.85

W.S.

2.4.85

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