

G.O., No. ^W2912 **Marine**

DATED 18th Nov 1899.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Administration Report of the Indian
Telegraph Deptt.

Govt of India review of the ———
for 1898-99, commd to the Revenue
and Public Deptt.

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.
2365	28.11.11. E8
	4/11/11

FURTHER PAPERS

No.	Date.

Date.

No. 1037 C. W. T.
 GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.
 CIVIL WORKS.
 Telegraph.

Simla, the 6th October 1899.

Review of the Administration Report of the Indian Telegraph
 Department for the year 1898-99.

READ—

Letter from the Director General of Telegraphs, No. 77 T., dated the 16th August 1899 and its enclosure, being the Administration Report of the Indian Telegraph Department for the year 1898-99.

CAPITAL OUTLAY.

The capital outlay of the year amounted to Rs. 22,78,971 and was distributed as follows :—

	Rs.
Lines	17,27,264
Buildings	91,472
Apparatus and Plant	95,785
Stores and suspense	3,84,246
	22,98,767
Less—Receipts on Capital Account (including interest on Workshop Capital)	19,796
Total	22,78,971

Six new river cables aggregating 7 miles were laid during the year and others lengthened, in addition to which, 4,981 yards of cable across the Hooghly river between Barrackpore and Serampore, which had been abandoned when the crossing of the river was effected over the Jubilee Bridge, were again brought on to the accounts, as the cables are still serviceable.

2. The progress that has been made in extending public telegraphic communication during the five-year period ending the 31st March 1899 is shewn in the following statement :—

	Capital expenditure.	Miles of line.	Miles of wire.	Miles of cable.	OFFICES OPENED.		
					Departmental, ordinary and postal combined.	Railway and canal.	TOTAL.
Up to beginning of 1894-95.	Rs. 5,66,00,989	42,707	134,255	274	1,224	1,511	2,735
During 1894-95 ...	7,83,307	1,941	4,001	—3	138	10	148
" 1895-96 ...	13,84,286	1,727	4,670	—8	99	12	111
" 1896-97 ...	17,30,812	2,209	5,210	6	102	73	175
" 1897-98 ...	24,37,040	1,722	6,688	—5	71	62	133
" 1898-99 ...	22,78,971	1,463	5,826	11	85	101	186
To end of 1898-99 ...	6,52,15,405	51,769	160,650	275	1,719	1,769	3,488

TRAFFIC.

3. The total number of paid telegrams sent in 1898-99 amounted to 5,448,600 as compared with 5,713,227 in 1897-98, showing a decrease of 264,627 or 4.63 per cent. The corresponding decrease in value was Rs. 20,03,976, or 22.09 per cent. The falling off was mainly in Inland state messages, but the expansion of this class of traffic in 1897-98 was wholly abnormal on account of the military operations on the north-west frontier and the earthquake of June 1897. Compared with the figures of 1896-97 the Inland state traffic of the year under review shows an increase of 9.9 per cent. in number and 21.11 per cent. in value.

4. The growth of the Inland traffic since the present tariff was introduced in 1882-83 is clearly exhibited in the following table which is reprinted from paragraph 26 of the report.

Inland traffic.—This table includes State and Private (including Press) messages, and shows the growth of both since the present tariff was introduced.

Inland traffic.—This table includes State and Private (including Press) motor traffic.														
YEAR.	STATE INLAND.					PRIVATE INLAND.					TOTAL INLAND.			Number of departmental and combined offices remaining open at the close of each year.
	Number.	Value.	PERCENTAGE OF VALUE COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEAR.		Number.	Value.	PERCENTAGE OF VALUE COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEAR.		Number.	Value.	PERCENTAGE OF VALUE COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEAR.			
			Increase.	Decrease.			Increase.	Decrease.			Increase.	Decrease.		
1882-83	253,731	Rs. 6,09,818	3.21	12.69	1,189,437	Rs. 13,86,630	14.90	5.30	1,443,168	19,96,448	12.66	...	93	314
1883-84*	226,840	4,71,232	...	22.73	1,236,140	14,15,754	3.92	2.10	1,462,980	18,86,986	1.37	...	5.48	349
1884-85	286,966	6,63,649	26.50	40.83	1,364,814	15,04,653	10.40	6.27	1,651,780	21,68,282	12.90	...	...	521
1885-86	382,732	9,24,415	33.37	39.29	1,527,990	16,38,165	11.95	8.37	1,910,722	25,62,610	15.67	...	...	634
1886-87	452,277	16,20,626	18.17	75.30	1,683,758	18,17,798	10.19	10.96	2,136,035	34,38,424	11.79	...	34.17	699
1887-88	537,193	16,45,797	18.77	1.55	1,860,390	19,81,814	10.49	9.02	2,397,583	36,27,611	12.24	...	5.50	745
1888-89	441,375	9,26,391	...	43.71	2,115,863	22,31,514	13.73	12.59	2,557,238	31,57,905	6.65	...	...	797
1889-90	493,442	9,46,586	11.71	2.18	2,191,645	22,78,300	3.58	2.10	2,685,087	32,24,886	5.00	...	2.12	880
1890-91	552,436	10,56,108	11.96	11.57	2,365,028	24,53,288	7.91	7.68	2,917,464	35,09,396	8.65	...	8.82	949
1891-92	661,904	14,54,770	19.81	37.74	2,627,408	26,95,428	11.09	9.87	3,289,312	41,50,198	12.74	...	18.25	1,001
1892-93	604,124	11,99,419	...	17.56	2,837,513	28,88,565	7.99	7.16	3,441,637	40,87,984	4.63	...	...	1,100
1893-94	598,226	10,99,003	...	9.12	3,031,993	30,32,291	6.85	5.66	3,630,219	41,42,294	5.48	...	1.32	1,224
1894-95	585,571	11,52,852	...	5.76	3,231,555	32,15,974	6.58	5.36	3,817,126	43,68,826	5.14	...	5.46	1,362
1895-96	603,366	12,61,667	3.03	9.43	3,491,571	34,75,116	8.04	8.06	4,094,637	47,36,983	7.28	...	8.43	1,461
1896-97	599,890	11,23,509	...	5.57	3,786,938	37,38,421	8.45	7.57	4,386,828	48,61,930	7.12	...	2.63	1,501
1897-98†	860,382	29,08,173	43.42	158.84	4,107,270	39,53,590	8.45	5.75	4,967,652	68,61,763	13.24	...	41.13	1,634
1898-99	659,304	13,60,785	23.57	...	4,036,510	36,73,722	...	1.72	4,695,814	50,34,407	...	5.45	...	1,719

* Postal Telegraph combined office system introduced.

* Postal Telegraph combined office system introduced.

† All deferred messages delivered by hand, instead of by post, the general rule hitherto.

5. The Inland private traffic shows a decrease of 1.72 per cent. in number and 7.07 per cent. in value compared with the figures of the previous year, whereas if the comparison is made with the figures of 1896-97, a normal year, there is an increase in number of 6.59 per cent. but a decrease in value of 1.73 per cent. resulting from the greater general use of the deferred class of telegram since the arrangement made in April 1897 for delivering deferred messages by hand came into force. There is every indication of a progressive increase in the number of these messages, and it is probable that the temporary contraction of revenue, due to a measure of which the practical effect has been to give to the public a cheaper class of message, will disappear during the current year.

6. The total Foreign traffic, as measured by the number of chargeable words transmitted (Foreign State messages being included), shows an increase of 648,299, or 8.3 per cent. over the figures of 1896-97, and of 145,623, or 1.76 per cent. over those of 1897-98; but with a rising exchange the receipts, which are based on tariffs calculated in gold, do not, as shown in rupees, necessarily correspond with the increase of work done. The receipts show a decrease of Rs. 1,41,282, or 6.50 per cent., when compared with those of 1896-97, and Rs. 1,76,619, or 8.00 per cent., when compared with the receipts of 1897-98.

Foreign Private telegrams including transit messages show an increase of 1.00 per cent. in number but a decrease of 7.04 per cent. in value.

The Private traffic (including Press) between India and the West shows decrease in volume of 69,512 words, or 3.24 per cent., and Rs. 73,298, or 8.66 per cent. in value (Indian share only), as compared with 1897-98, when there were exceptional circumstances, which induced a large amount of private (especially Press) telegraphic correspondence: but when compared with that of the normal year 1896-97, there is an increase of 135,659 words, or 6.99 per cent., with a decrease in value of Rs. 54,642, or 6.60 per cent. only, and this decrease in the receipts is mainly due to a rising exchange, as explained above.

The local traffic between India and Ceylon shows a decrease of 54,715, or 4.02 per cent., in the number of words, and of Rs. 8,236, or 4.99 per cent., in the receipts. Between India and the East, including Australia, the traffic shows an increase of 10,299, or 2.54 per cent. in the number of words, but a decrease of Rs. 11,616, or 6.75 per cent., in the receipts. In transit messages of all kinds, the number of words transmitted increased by 312,770, or 7.59 per cent., but the receipts decreased by Rs. 20,093, or 2.129 per cent.

7. Inland Press Telegram traffic, as compared with that of the previous year, shows an increase of 2,434 in number, and Rs. 4,377 in value, or 6.77 and 3.15 per cent., respectively. This development is remarkable considering the stirring events which gave such an abnormal stimulus to telegraphic traffic in 1897-98.

The Foreign Press Traffic, however, shows a decrease of 1,025 in number, and of Rs. 11,737 in value (Indian share only), or 19.42 and 35.51 per cent., respectively as compared with the previous year which, as mentioned above, was an exceptional one; but a comparison with the four preceding normal years shows a satisfactory progressive increase.

WORKING EXPENSES.

8. The working expenses amounted to Rs. 64,13,237 equivalent to 71.30 per cent. on the gross revenue, or 86.03 per cent. if receipts from State and *pro forma* messages be deducted, against the corresponding percentages of 57.35 and 80.35 in the previous year.

The increase in working expenses is due to a smaller share of establishment charges having been transferred to Capital, consequent on a small outlay on works, to the growth in the operations of the Department, and to the greater length of wire mileage maintained.

FINANCIAL RESULTS.

9. The revenue receipts of the year were as follows:—

	Rs.
Message revenue, including State Messages ...	70,64,757
Rent of lines, etc., on railways and canals ...	15,41,916
Rent of private lines, etc., ...	1,91,789
Sale of books, gazettes, etc. ...	21,101
Miscellaneous ...	53,930
Total ...	88,73,493
News-free and other <i>pro forma</i> revenue ...	1,21,225
GRAND TOTAL ...	89,94,718

The total receipts fell below those of the previous year by Rs. 19,30,959, the decrease in the net revenue amounting to Rs. 20,77,621.

The revenue receipts include Rs. 14,18,757 on account of State messages, and Rs. 1,21,225 on account of news-free and other *pro forma* revenue; including the former and excluding the latter the net receipts amounted to 3.77 per cent. on the capital outlay.

The financial results of the working of the Department for the last five years were as follows:—

Year.	Gross receipts excluding <i>pro forma</i> revenue	Charges.	Net receipts.	Percentage of net to gross receipts.	Return on capital.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Per cent.	Per cent.
1894-95 ...	79,25,103	56,93,218	22,31,885	28.2	3.89
1895-96 ...	88,60,723	57,83,731	30,76,992	34.7	5.24
1896-97 ...	88,40,492	62,15,068	26,25,424	29.7	4.34
1897-98 ...	1,07,92,957	62,66,575	45,26,382	41.94	7.19
1898-99 ...	88,73,493	64,13,237	24,60,256	27.73	3.77

SPEED OF TRANSMISSION.

10. The average time taken in the transmission of telegrams (excluding *deferred*) over some of the principal main routes during the last five years is tabulated below. The mean of the average time intervals was slightly lower than in the preceding year:—

Section.	Number of miles.	1894-95.		1895-96.		1896-97.		1897-98.		1898-99.	
		H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.
Calcutta to Karachi ...	1,750	0	27	0	22	0	25	0	32	0	26
Karachi to Calcutta ...		0	15	0	11	0	12	0	13	0	14
Calcutta to Bombay ...	1,283	0	26	0	21	0	24	0	33	0	31
Bombay to Calcutta } <i>via</i> Nagpur.		0	27	0	21	0	25	0	24	0	22
Calcutta to Madras ...	1,181	0	23	0	22	0	25	0	30	0	31
Madras to Calcutta ...		0	19	0	19	0	23	0	17	0	22
Madras to Bombay ...	796	0	21	0	19	0	16	0	17	0	22
Bombay to Madras ...		0	25	0	21	0	33	0	23	0	23
Bombay to Karachi ...	840	0	23	0	19	0	21	0	21	0	16
Karachi to Bombay ...		0	11	0	9	0	11	0	10	0	11
Rangoon to Calcutta ...	1,003	0	35	0	55	0	28	0	53	0	41
Calcutta to Rangoon ...		0	26	0	28	0	22	0	41	0	25
Mean of averages ...		0	23	0	22	0	22	0	26	0	23

The Director General of Telegraphs explains that in previous years it has been the practice to calculate the maxima on messages transmitted by the direct routes only, whereas from the beginning of the year under review, those on messages transmitted by alternative routes on account of pressure of traffic on direct routes, have also been taken into account. Taking this into consideration the speed of transmission compares on the whole very favourably with previous years.

GENERAL.

11. The Telephone Companies at Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi, Madras, Moulmein, Rangoon and Ahmedabad continue to extend their business. The number of subscribers was augmented by 117 and the number of exchange connections by 92 in 1898 while the number of private lines increased from 229 to 244. There was a small increase in the number of exchanges and exchange connections under the control of the Telegraph Department.

12. Communication with Europe *via* Suez was maintained uninterruptedly during the year by the Eastern Telegraph Company. The Teheran route was interrupted for 151 hours in all, as compared with 232 hours in the previous year, while the total duration of the interruptions on the Turkish route between Fao and Pera in Asia Minor was 453 against 1044 hours in 1897-98. The cable between Bushire and Fao was cut for repairs on the 12th and 13th October and closed to traffic for 9 and 12 hours respectively. The percentages of the traffic between India and the West carried by these three lines were:—

	Per cent.
Red Sea <i>via</i> Suez	47.65
Indo-European <i>via</i> Teheran	50.83
Indo-European <i>via</i> Turkey.	1.52
	100.00

The bulk of the transit traffic was as usual carried *via* Suez.

13. As regards communication with the East, traffic with the Straits Settlements was not interrupted during the year. The Moulmein-Bangkok line *via* Kanburi continues to improve, but the Saigon-Bangkok route was interrupted for periods aggregating 83 days as compared with 46 days in the previous year. A great improvement is shown in the working of the land route to China *via* Bhamo, though it is still far from satisfactory. The interruptions occur almost entirely in the province of Yunnan and are said to be due more to the neglect of the Chinese Telegraph Clerks than to the break down of the lines.

14. Amongst the "Telegraph events of interest" given in paragraph 34 of the report it is stated that a new cable was laid between Porthcurno and Alexandria, the first section between Porthcurno and Gibraltar being opened in August 1898 and the two last sections between Gibraltar and Malta, and Malta and Alexandria in January 1899.

15. Mr. C. H. Reynolds, C.I.E., who had held the post of Director General of Telegraphs in India for nearly four years, retired from the service on the 14th January 1899. The Government of India take this opportunity of placing on record their appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Reynolds during his long career in the Telegraph Department and of his able administration of the Department as Director General.

16. The Administration Report was received from the Director General of Telegraphs on the 17th August 1899. It has been carefully prepared and contains much interesting information and a record of satisfactory results which reflect credit on the general administration of the Department of which Mr. C. E. Pitman, C.I.E., assumed the control on Mr. Reynolds' retirement in January 1899.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Review be forwarded to the Director General of Telegraphs for information.

Also that copies of the Review with Report be forwarded to the Secretary of State, the Home Department of the Government of India, the Local Governments and Administrations noted on the margin, and to the Government of Ceylon, for information.

Ordered also that the Review be published in Part I of the Gazette of India.

J. Williams

Joint Secy. to the Govt. of India.

To The Secy to the Govt of Madras,
P. W. Department.

6 copies of Review with Report per packet post