Pension (1099) Department

Government (1899) of Madras.

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
30 OCT. 1899
PENSION DEPARTMENT

G.O., No. 1200, 23rd October 1899.

OCTOBER.

Secretariat Reforms.

Directing that the Government of India be addressed on the subject of the suggestions made by that Government for the conduct of business in the Secretariats, and that a copy of the letter to that Government be communicated to all departments of the Secretariat.

List

Order 4th Nov. 1899 No 783.

Recorded.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From A. H. L. FRASER, Esq., C.S.I., Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department (Public), to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, 17th July 1899, No. 1563.

I am directed by the Government of India to send you a copy of a memorandum on the subject of Noting in the Departments of the Government which has been written by His Excellency the Viceroy, and also a copy of the revised Secretariat Instructions which have been drawn up in consequence by the Secretaries to the Government of India, and which will in future be enforced in all the Departments of Government at Calcutta and Simla.

2. I am to submit these papers for the consideration of the Governor in Council and to express a hope that His Excellency in Council may find in the enclosed procedure suggestions which may be of use in the conduct of official business in the Local Government and which may tend to bring about the same results in the Local Secretariats for the sake of which they are about to be introduced into the Departments of the Supreme Government.

3. It will be obvious that these reforms can only produce the desired effect of curtailing the volume of official writing, noting and printing in the conduct of Indian Administration in general, if they are made of wider application than in the Departments of the Supreme Government alone. They should as far as is possible, or as is compatible with differing local conditions, be made of universal application throughout India. Nor, after the whole or any portion of these rules have been accepted in the Departments of a Local Government, will the desired results, in economy of time and labour, be secured, unless a resolute and unremitting attention be paid by the superior officers of such Government, to their consistent observance in the daily routine of office work. In view of these considerations, the Government of India will be glad to hear to what extent the Government of Madras proposes, after due examination, to incorporate the reforms already accepted by the Government of India in their future procedure.

Enclosure.

Memorandum on the System of Noting in the Departments of the Government of India.

I desire in this Note to invite the attention of my Colleagues and of the Secretaries of Departments to the manner in which business is conducted in the various offices of the Government of India, to the excessive noting and writing which are the characteristics of that system, to the delays involved in inter-departmental communication, with its complicated chain of reference and annotation, to the method in which the record of our proceedings is printed and kept, and to the effect which these features of the Indian practice are demonstrably exercising upon the despatch of business and the efficiency of Government.

It is in no academic spirit that I initiate this discussion, but with the definite and practical object of suggesting alterations and improvement which shall bring the Indian system more into harmony with the results of administrative experience elsewhere, and with the exigencies of Government in India itself. Not even the most confirmed adherents of the existing system, who have been brought up under its influence, affect to deny the exaggeration by which some of its best features have been defaced.

It is, however, so powerful, and has established so masterful a hold over the faculties of its victims that all previous attempts at reform have failed or have been abandoned: while the whole of the Civil Service of India, trained up in a method to which they know of no alternative, and which is repeated, with very slight modifications, in every Presidential or Provincial Government throughout the country, is thus engaged in stereotyping the worst anomalies of an anomalous system. If for these reasons the stimulus of outside criticism, and of experience acquired in different schools of Government, may be useful, as tending to apply an independent test to the Indian practice, the advocates of the latter will at the same time be enabled, by the procedure which I am about to suggest, to enter any defence that there may be of a procedure which has presumably not been founded on caprice, but has grown up, however unscientifically, in response to definite requirements, and for which it is conceivable that pleas are capable of being urged, that would not at once suggest themselves to a critic from the outside world. It has been with the view of ascertaining some of these pleas and of escaping the dangers of a premature judgment, that I have refrained from raising this question until I have seen the machine at work for five months. I dare not wait any longer; lest like previous would-be reformers, my senses become dulled by the routine of every-day contact, and I end by being merely an additional cog in the machine itself.

I have alluded to previous but abortive efforts at reform. The last of these was made in 1894–95. The question was raised by a Note in the Home Department in August 1894, and after being referred by the Viceroy (Lord Elgin) to the Departments, meandered peacefully through them in the normal fashion for several months, eventually emerging in September 1895. A Committee of Secretaries then met in order to arrive at a common agreement upon the desirable points of reform and to formulate orders thereupon. These orders were finally issued in November and December 1895.

I have carefully studied the whole of these proceedings; and without any disrespect to the labours of the Committee, or to the opinions placed on record in the Notes that preceded it, I have formed the conclusions (1) that the enquiries made and views expressed barely touched the fringe of the subject; (2) that the recommendations agreed upon did no more than tinker instead of reforming the system; (3) that no serious attempt has been made to carry out the most important of these suggestions, or to obey the orders that were framed for their enforcement. For instance, strict regulations were issued as to the number of Office Notes, as to the character of précis, and as to the elimination from the final record in print of all purely routine references. The fact that these orders have been, and are every day being complacently infringed, has sharpened my anxiety to re-open a case which I should anyhow have taken up on its own merits.

The procedure which I now have in view, and in which I solicit the co-operation of my Colleagues is as follows. In this Note I propose to detail the anomalies of the existing system, as they have presented themselves to me from the experience of the past five months; and to make certain tentative suggestions as to their modification or removal. I do not propose that this Note should then itself inaugurate that perambulatory process through the departments of whose length and delays I am complaining; but that the Member and the Secretary of each Department either independently, or if they prefer to do so in collaboration, should favour me with their views upon the question at issue, both in its general aspect, and with special reference to the experience of their own Department. After collating these views, I will either submit a scheme of proposed regulations applicable to all the Departments to my Colleagues, or, if it seems preferable, will convene a meeting of all those whose opinions have been given, at which we can discuss, and, I hope, decide upon a plan of common reform. Should we be of opinion that our plan is capable of a wider application than in the offices of the Government of India, I would then propose to send it round to all the Local Governments with a request to them to embody it, so far as practicable, in their own official and departmental procedure.

Before advancing further I should like to say that I am conscious of one great and ineradicable difference between the Indian system, and the practice of those English or foreign departments with the working of which two of my Colleagues as well as myself are familiar. In Great Britain the offices of Government are manned

from top to bottom by clerks or Secretaries, all of whom have passed a severe and often a special competitive examination, whose life-service will be devoted to the department, and who acquire early and carry with them through their careers the traditions and a great deal of the unwritten knowledge of the office. Here the case is widely different. The lower grades of the departments are filled with non-gazetted officials of a class and attainments not comparable with those of the corresponding ranks in the English offices. These clerks in India carry on with great fidelity the ministerial work of the department, but without sharing, or ever hoping to share, any of its larger responsibilities. The responsible officers at the upper end of the scale are few in number, and—what is far more serious—are constantly changing. This system has a double consequence. In the first place, it throws upon the administrative officers a labour of which they cannot expect to be relieved by their subordinates to the same extent as in English departments. Secondly, owing to the fluctuating nature of the gazetted establishment, there is much greater need for a permanent record of what may be styled the inner history of cases than there is in England. There such a record is to a large extent preserved in the inherited memory of the department. Here it requires to be perpetually put into print for the use of novices at a later stage.

There is also another difference inseparable from our Indian system of government (though as I think absurdly exaggerated in practice) which must be borne in mind. I allude to the necessity for inter-departmental reference, so much greater in the case of an administration which undertakes many functions not ordinarily associated with Government, *e.g.*, the building and management of railways, than it is in the case of a Government organised like that in England. These references and counter-references cannot be dispensed with here, although I think it can be shown that they are at present pursued with needless prolixity and delays. Nevertheless they are a feature inseparable from the Indian system, for which due allowance must be made.

I will notice only one more difference, which is not without its effect in adding to the circumlocution of the existing system; *viz.*, the somewhat indefinite subdivision of responsibility in the Government of India between the Member of Council, who represents a Department, and the Secretary of the Department itself. In England a Department speaks only with one voice, and that the voice of the Secretary of State who is its Parliamentary Chief. In India the loyalty of the service, and the traditions of administration, have as a rule prevented anything like schism. But in theory there are two voices— that of the Secretary and that of the Member—in the case of any disagreement between whom the Viceroy is called upon to decide (a condition of affairs that has no parallel in England). Whether this position be ideally right or the reverse, it is one that does not tend to the contraction of official noting upon cases, but rather to the reverse.

Of similar effect is another feature of the Indian system, unknown at home, and, in my judgment, susceptible of reform here, viz., the practice by which Members of Council, largely owing to conditions of accommodation, &c., for which they are not responsible, frequently do their business and write their Minutes at a distance from the office of which they are the responsible heads. This means in nine cases out of ten a Note from the Secretary and a subsequent Note from the Member, a certain amount of time being consumed while the file is being conveyed from the one to the other, and while the two Notes are being written. In England where a Secretary of State is daily in his office, this stage is constantly dispensed with by a few minutes conversation between the two parties. I should like, as is known, to see a further development of this most sensible practice in India.

There is one alleged difference between Indian and English standards which I only note in passing, in order to dispute the value of the pretensions which are based upon it. It is said that Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Under Secretaries, and Assistant Secretaries in India must write in order to prove their mettle: that only by so doing can they vindicate their abilities to the Secretary of the Department and in the last resort to the Viceroy; and that if they did not thus exercise their faculties, the faculties themselves would remain untrained, and their owners would not qualify for the higher positions which they may hope at a later stage to fill. There is some plausibility in this plea. But I decline to accept it on more grounds than one. Firstly, official noting is designed as a help to the authority finally called upon to decide, not as a drill ground for raw recruits. Secondly, the promotion of the latter

in due ratio to their abilities and deserts, will not, in any properly organised system, depend upon the facility or even the acumen with which they may have written, but upon the opinion formed and recorded of them by their official superior, the Secretary of the Department. Thirdly, the Secretary will, under the system which I shall presently explain and recommend, give as full an opening as is required by the circumstances of the case to the young lions of his department. Fourthly, writing is not the main or final test by which we promote our young men in England; nor is there any reason why it should be or have become so here. A young man is far more likely to learn the formation and the expression of sound judgments by studying the performances of his seniors than by prematurely experimentalising himself.

With these remarks on the differences between the English and Indian systems, which must not be forgotten in any attempt to deduce conclusions from the experience of the one for the advantage of the other, I pass to an examination of the Indian system as it has so far come under my notice.

I.—*Method of keeping and circulating papers.*

The Government of India has only arrived at its present system after trying and discarding several others. The history, as traced from the practice of the Foreign Department, has been as follows:—

(1) Originally all papers were kept in MS. and were folded in four, and docketed on the outside back. During this period there seems to have been very little noting. What there was appears to have been appended in separate covers or little books.

I may mention that this system of folding is still adopted in the Foreign Office in London. The MS. despatch, invariably written upon a light blue foolscap sheet, is upon arrival folded into four, docketed, noted upon on the back of the sheet by a clerk or Under Secretary (unless a note of unusual length requires to be written—in which case minute paper of corresponding shape and size is employed, and the Note is appended), and is then submitted to the Secretary of State, who initials the Note if he approves, or writes his own instructions if he does not.

Each paper or despatch therefore carries upon its own back the orders passed upon it. The despatch itself is subsequently printed on a single sheet, as one of a series, and these are bound up yearly, or more often, into volumes. None of the Notes or orders issued upon the despatch are ever printed. Should reference to them be necessary, to illustrate or to explain the history of a case, the particular folded despatches are picked out from the file, placed together in an elastic band, and submitted for perusal. Whereas in India we preserve the humblest effort of a clerk: the order of a Secretary of State and even of a Prime Minister in England are not recorded in print.

I do not propose to advocate the re-introduction of this system of folding in India, nor the introduction of this system of quasi-marginal and unprinted noting; the former, because paper perishes more quickly in the Indian climate, and a folded document soon becomes frayed along the folds; the latter, for the reason already mentioned, namely, that, owing to the *personnel* of our departments, printed records are more necessary here than in England. I may, however, say that both for the expeditious discharge of business and for ease of reference, it seems to me the best system that I have so far seen.

(2) The next stage in the evolution of our papers was from 1863 to 1869. During this period they were for the first time printed, but still folded in four.

(3) From 1870 to 1882 folding in two (the papers being folded longitudinally down the centre) was the practice. During this period the Notes (called, at least in the Foreign Department, K-W. or Keep-with) were separately printed; and the sheets containing them were, as now, prefixed to the Official Proceedings, when the latter were bound together. During this simple and Saturnian age however (for it is only since then

that corruption on a large scale has set in), there were four particulars in which the system differed materially from that which now prevails, greatly to the discredit of the latter. (A) No one noted, or at least the Note of no one was finally printed, except a Secretary of Department, a Member of Council, or the Viceroy. The new criterion of Government, according to which men can only qualify for promotion by writing, had not then been discovered. (B) These Notes were of the briefest and most business-like dimensions. (C) What are now treated as demi-official communications, and separately collected, were included in the K-W., with the Office Notes. (D) Office numbers, figures, hieroglyphics, précis, paraphrases, dockets, were unknown. In one section of the print were the Proceedings duly numbered. In the other or K-W. were the printed Notes with corresponding numbers. The Notes had no connecting link with the Proceedings, beyond the numbers. This was slight, but sufficient.

(4) From 1882 onwards the Flat File system was adopted, under which the papers were laid, unfolded, upon each other, both as originally received in MS., and as ultimately bound up in print. This was a salutary change, and one which is not now likely to be departed from. Unfortunately, at the same time or soon after, were sown the first seeds of that fatal malady that has ever since increased and tightened its hold upon its victim.

The Flat File system is that adopted in the India Office and Colonial Office (and I believe in the majority of the Offices) in London. But there is this difference. The Notes upon each paper are in the London Offices written in the first place, and subsequently either typed or printed, upon sheets corresponding in size to the paper received, and are affixed to it by a tag. Each paper therefore carries its own Notes or instructions, not actually upon its back, as in the case of the Foreign Office papers, but attached to it. This I believe to be the best system where an office is independent and self-sufficing. I understand that the main drawback to its adoption here is that we send home from time to time our Official Proceedings to the India Office, and that there is convenience therefore in keeping them, both in MS. and in print, separate from the Notes or K.-W. There is also perhaps some convenience in our system, for the rapid tracing of the departmental history of any case that has extended, as do most Indian cases, over a long period of time.

As regards the method of folding and preserving papers here, I do not recommend any departure, in main principles, from the existing system. But I think that it would be to the convenience of the Departments, and certainly of Members of Council, if in circulating the files attention were paid to the following points, individually insignificant, but collectively providing a perceptible relief:—

(i) All files should have a board at the bottom (as generally supplied).

(ii) The tapes attached to these boards should not be of the flimsy and breakable type in use in most of the Departments, but the stouter sort, in use in the Public Works Department.

(iii) When a file attains any size or weight a strap should be employed to hold it together for submission. This strap should be of better make, less stiff and coarse, and with shorter and sharper prongs to the buckle, than that in common use here. A sample, as employed in the India Office, London, will be sent round to each Office.

(iv) A despatch sheet or card with the title of Department concerned printed at the top, and the subject-matter written legibly across the sheet, must be placed upon the top of every file, immediately inside the tape or strap, so that the Viceroy may see at a glance, without undoing the tape or strap, what are the Department and the subject concerned. Copies of those in use in Foreign Department can be procured.

(v) Blank sheets for noting by the Viceroy should invariably be attached to the MS. Notes or K.-W. Cases are constantly occurring, in which

owing to departmental carelessness, no such sheets are attached. The Department, after expanding itself over pages of MS., only leaves the Viceroy room to give dumb witness by his initials to their lucubrations.

(vi) The system of Linked Files is (though in rare occasions necessary) a cumbrous system, and has been greatly abused. I am constantly having enormous Linked Files submitted to me which, having perhaps started from different points, have gradually converged, until both contain the same papers, and discuss the same problem. This is perhaps inevitable, *e.g.*, in a case where the Military and the Foreign Departments are engaged in discussing a case which may have a military as well as a political aspect. But in the majority of cases the separation and linked presentation of the files are only a nuisance which a little forethought might avoid. An intelligent selection of the papers required from both files by the Deputy Secretary, and their submission with an explanatory Note, would probably save the Viceroy many a quarter of an hour of valuable time.

(vii) Similarly, with reference not only to Linked Files but to any file, there is no necessity to submit to the Viceroy, or I should imagine to any Member of Council, prodigious files which start almost from the commencement of time. Such a system would bring the work of the Foreign Office in England to a standstill in 24 hours. When I was Under Secretary there, I frequently had in the course of a single day to read from 50 to 100 despatches or papers relating to different subjects. These came round to me in boxes, with the few previous papers, required for the understanding of each, attached to them by elastic bands. Had each paper carried upon its back, like a snail, its entire official history and tenement, a regiment of porters would have been required to carry to and fro, between the Foreign Office and the House of Commons, the preposterous burden. Why cannot a similar intelligence, in selection and in reduction of burden, be exhibited here? Why cannot the vast mass of the file be left in the Department, and the necessary papers alone be sent? Of course the Secretary would be held responsible; and if he omitted essential papers, the blame would fall upon him, or upon the particular subordinate to whom had been delegated the selection. But such a responsibility is after all only a feature of any and every departmental system. I remember a case here in which there was circulated to Members of Council, prior to its being mentioned there, an Inland Steam Vessels Act. The papers constituted a file nearly a foot high, with which *chuprassis* struggled about Calcutta for a week.

II.—*Noting on cases in the Departments.*

Here I come to the main abuse and scandal of the present system. I have already pointed the contrast between the practice now in vogue, under which everybody from a clerk to a Member of Council paraphrases, initials, notes, or recommends, and is handed down to posterity in print—and the sensible system that prevailed in the days of Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook. The present system has the following obvious drawbacks. Firstly, people write who have no business to write. Secondly, a case is delayed for days and sometimes for weeks in a department (and *á fortiori* still longer in cases of inter-departmental reference), while it is passing through this dismal ordeal of irresponsible loquacity. Thirdly, in the wilderness of diverse opinions, its original proportions and point are eventually lost to view, until no one is able to say what is the issue, or at what stage it has arrived. I have myself had to pick out unsolved cases, which have been literally buried under the superincumbent mass of writing, and would, unless disturbed, have lain mummified in the departmental tomb, until one day accidentally unearthed by a later generation. Fourthly, all these opinions, disquisitions, trivial departmental stages, and even initials of clerks, preserved as they are in print, swell the volume of our official records to a point at which the Notes far exceed the Official Proceedings in bulk and length; and must, in the long run, require a library like that of the British Museum to contain them. I

will give, before passing on, an illustration of the prolixity of the existing system. A Despatch from the Secretary of State arrived in one of the Departments of the Government of India in my predecessor's time. It covered 3½ pages of print. After being somewhat gingerly touched by a few clerks, it was taken in hand by an Under Secretary who paraphrased it (with glosses and readings of his own) in 1¾ pages of print, and then added a Note recording his own opinions in 4½ additional pages of print. This brave example was eagerly followed by his colleagues in an ascending scale; and by the time the Viceroy and Members of Council had noted upon it the recorded Notes amounted to 28 pages of small print, as compared with the 3½ pages of large print from the Secretary of State which had provoked this lamentable effusion. I need hardly add that no final decision was arrived at; and that the case was one of many left over to me for settlement. I am glad to think that we settled it with less than half a dozen more pages of print, followed by an hour's discussion in Council.

I now turn to the remedies. They are based upon the old practice of the Indian Government, upon the practice of the London Departments, and upon what I should imagine to be the practice of every sensible Government in the world. This practice rests upon the simple principle that the Head of the Department (here styled Secretary, in England Permanent Under Secretary) is officially responsible for the presentation to his Chief (in India a Member of Council and ultimately the Viceroy, in England a Secretary of State or other Minister, and ultimately the Prime Minister) of the case upon which the latter is required to decide. In the preparation of the case, he may employ at his own discretion the industry or abilities of his own subordinates, be they clerks or Under Secretaries; he may even delegate his responsibility to one or other of them, signifying his own assent by appending his initials.

But this discretion must have obvious limitations. There must be a limit to the number of subordinates who are permitted to note, the selection being determined not by their grade in the official scale, but by their aptitude to deal with the particular question under notice. Secondly, the reference to the ultimate authority must not consist of a jumble of heterogeneous and discordant opinions, out of which he is called upon to pick one for himself. The manner in which I would apply this principle to our Indian practice is as follows:—

(i) When the question of noting was discussed in 1895, a great deal turned upon the question as to the side of the page upon which clerks or gazetted officers should sign their initials, and as to whether the higher officials should sign their initials or their names. The principle that I would desire now to establish is this; that from the Office there should come up to the administrative ranks but one Note. Let the Superintendent select which clerk he pleases to write it. If he approves of the note, let him pass it on with his initials. If he disapproves, let him have it revised or modified, or let him substitute for it a Note by himself. When the paper has passed to the gazetted officials, as a general rule not more than two of them (including the Secretary) should note upon it before passing it on to the Hon'ble Member. The Secretary will doubtless select whichever of his subordinates he pleases to write the preliminary Note, or the selection will be made automatically by the sub-division of labour in the Department. I have said 'as a general rule,' and I think that it should be of almost universal acceptance, but I would not exclude the possibility in exceptional cases of three Notes, though I hope that such a contingency may very rarely occur.

(ii) Précis and paraphrases should only be adopted on a very limited scale. If the letter or despatch under examination is one of a character and importance that are certain to require its perusal by the higher officials and ultimately by the Viceroy, it will, in nine cases out of ten, be unnecessary to précis or paraphrase it at all. The subject-heading will indicate the general character of its contents. Only in the event of the document being one of great length or complexity, may a précis of its proposals or contents, for sake of convenience, be required. Occasions will also occur from time to time when a précis, either of the facts or of the previous history of a case, may be useful in order to avoid much

reference to old files, and to create, so to speak, a fresh starting point. Similarly, with regard to paraphrases, no higher official requires a paraphrase, much less a sequence of paraphrases, by subordinates, of a letter which he is bound to read himself. Still less does he want to know (though he is often now invited to read) what his subordinates think was, or may have been, in the mind of the original writer. He requires references to precedents, to former papers, and so on, and suggestions for action. Another vice of the present system is the habit of reproducing verbatim in the Notes entire extracts from the letter or despatch under discussion. This is entirely unnecessary and should be discontinued.

(iii) The rule should be of universal acceptance, that when at any stage an official agrees with the preceding Note or recommendation, he should append his initials (and date) and nothing more.

(iv) Cases are constantly occurring in which, even without superfluity or delay in noting, a paper will take several days in passing through a department, simply owing to a want of elasticity in the interpretation of the existing system. An official who is seated in one room, will keep a file lying on his desk one or two days, and then initial it, and pass it on by a *chuprassi* to another official seated next door, who will treat it in similar fashion. I was asked the other day by a Local Government whether I would sanction the journey of a Native Prince to Europe. The application reached the Department on May 12th. The Chief proposed to sail on the 20th. The file, after a leisurely and uneventful procession through the office chambers, reached me on the night of the 18th, too late to make permission of value, or refusal possible. If the officials of the departments would only remember that they live in the same building, and would in cases demanding early decision (and I may add in many others) substitute a few words of conversation with each other for the pedestrian procession of the files, they would greatly expedite the despatch of business.

III.—*Inter-Departmental reference.*

(i) The last remark applies with even greater force to the references that, under our complex system, are inevitable from one department to another. In the event of any difference of opinion between the two, each is disposed to act as if it were the inhabitant of a separate planet, firing off its missive to another world; whereas the offices, from which this interchange of former compliments proceeds, are usually within a few yards of each other, which might be traversed in a few moments by the rival correspondents, who might in a few minutes settle a matter that otherwise drags its weary course along for months. I will give an illustration that has occurred in my time. There was a question as to whether a Colonel W. was or was not deserving of promotion, and whether the unfavourable comments of the Provincial Government upon his capacities should or should not be communicated to him. It entered the Departments in December 1897. It came up to me for decision in February 1899. In the interval the departmental Notes had amounted to 53 pages of print.

The same sort of official pedantry appears to prevent a settlement, by meeting and conversation, of any question upon which an acute controversy has arisen between two Departments, or between their official heads. I have more than once, in commenting upon these displays, employed the simile of Lawn Tennis or Badminton, and I repeat it here. When once the Departments have, so to speak, got their flannels on and the game has begun, they appear to lose sight of all other considerations but that of keeping up the ball or the shuttle cock (and as a rule, the latter is the fairer parallel) over the net, while the faithful official marker calls out the strokes and records them (in print) for the admiration of later ages. I had a case the other day, in which the Secretary

of State had, in June 1897, invited the Government of India to express an opinion as to a change in the marking of their confidential maps. From that date until May 1899, the rally was heroically sustained, and might, but for an accident, have gone on till the crack of doom. Can we not in our Departments abandon this system? In England if the Foreign Office disagrees with the Colonial Office, the Permanent Under Secretary of the one puts on his hat and walks across the quadrangle to discuss the matter with the corresponding official of the other. If they fail to come to terms, the two Secretaries of State meet and talk it over. They do not pursue for months an exchange of vocal amenities from the rival house-tops.

(ii) The rules that I have already suggested for the conduct of any one Department, in respect of noting, will of course equally apply, but with increased economy of time and space, in cases where more than one Department is involved. I had a case before me concerning the supply of winter great coats to the Khyber Rifles. After the usual departmental formulas had been gone through, I referred it back for some additional information to the three Departments who were affected. It was returned to me with fourteen separate and distinct opinions! There is a further abuse in the same connection which is capable of easy correction. Where a case is being bandied to and fro between different departments, after the officials of the first have had their say, and the officials of the second have commented upon the opinions of the first, the papers frequently go back to the latter, who then begin in the same old order commenting again upon the comments of the second; until presently the chain of argument and repetition reminds one of the nursery rhyme about the "house that Jack built." I suggest that in such cases the Secretary of the original Department alone should note upon the papers after they have been returned to his office.

IV.—*Arrangement and Printing of Proceedings and Notes.*

(i) The papers of the Government of India (I believe in every Department) consist of two sections; the Official Proceedings, and the Office Notes. These are, under our system, kept distinct from each other, both in MS. and in print. I would not propose to interfere with this distinction. Some offices print the Notes first and the Proceedings afterwards, others *vice versâ*. I think that a uniform system should be adopted; and, unless any good reason can be shown to the contrary, I would propose that the Notes should be printed first, since they are, in the majority of cases, a prelude to, rather than a sequel of, the official decisions recorded in the other section.

(ii) The Notes, when printed, are in many departments called Keepwiths, and are designated as K.-W. This is part of the barbarous jargon that has grown up *pari passu* with a barbarous system. I see no reason why in the Government of India we should call ordinary things by any other than their ordinary names. I would therefore propose in future to designate K.-W. simply as Notes. In the Foreign Department I have further found the Index or Table of Contents of the separate volumes of papers, when bound up, variously designated as "Brief Subject," "List of Papers," and "Précis-Docket." As I see no reason for calling it by any other than its proper name, I have ordered this Index-page in future to be headed "Table of Contents."

(iii) As each fresh letter, despatch or telegram, comes into the office, and is added to the MS. file, the heading or docket under which it is entered in the MS. Notes, prior to noting, is in the Foreign Department written in red ink. I dare say this is done in other offices. If not, I recommend it as a useful system of distinguishing the various stages of a case, as well as each stage in turn, from the MS. Notes upon it.

(iv) I now come to a peculiarly malignant abuse of the present system, which is itself the outcome of a further, and equally culpable abuse, *viz.*, the extent to which official correspondence (I speak particularly of the Foreign Department) has become supplemented, and almost in many cases superseded, by private or demi-official communications. The privilege of private correspondence between officials in the Department and officers or persons outside is a valuable one, inasmuch as it places the former in possession of information which may be essential to the due comprehension of a case, but which it may be impossible, for various reasons, to include in the official letters or telegrams. But it is a privilege which is capable of being, and has been, greatly abused; and hence has arisen the question of how to deal with this sort of communications in the records of a Department. It has been solved by constituting a separate branch or sub-head of the K.-W.'s for demi-official papers. This branch requires again a separate index of its own. Accordingly, it has happened to me in studying a case, in a printed volume of our Proceedings, that in order to preserve the chronological sequence of discussion and decision, I have had to keep my fingers in three or four different places in the same volume, and to dart backwards and forwards, from one to the other, at what a cost of time and temper I need hardly say.

I lay down the proposition therefore, which cannot, I think, be disputed, that a demi-official, personal, or private letter, differs only from an office note in the fact that it is written by an official outside the Department and often at a distance, instead of by an official inside the Department at his desk. It must as a consequence be similarly treated; *i.e.*, it must, if printed at all, be placed not in a category apart, but in the Notes in the order of its arrival. The decision whether it should be printed, and if so how much of it should be printed, must rest with the officer concerned, subject of course to the decision of the Secretary. By this method there will be in every printed collection of papers in every Department, three sections only, (*a*) Table of Contents, with References to former and latter cases; (*b*) Notes; (*c*) Proceedings. There must be no extras of any description.

(v) In printing both the Notes and Proceedings, it is possible to avoid a good many sources of subsequent confusion by always using the same type for the same thing, *i.e.*, one type for Notes, another for Proceedings, and again in each class, one type for headings, another for contents, and so on. At present all kinds of type are used promiscuously, according to what may be handy in the printing press at the moment. Similarly, in printing both the Notes and the Proceedings, all numbers, alphabetical letters, and purely departmental hieroglyghics, except such as may be essential for subsequent reference, should also be omitted. Too often a printed volume of our records is more of a puzzle than it is of a guide.

(vi) I now come to the main cause of the plethora of print, as distinct from writing, from which our records suffer in so marked a degree. This is the preservation in print of any and every Note, mark, sign, date, or even initial—in a word of the inevitable but worthless ministerial routine of the Department.

In the conduct of all business there must be an immense amount of such surplusage. Under the Indian system, it is swollen at every point by the abuses which I have been describing. But its main and differentiating feature is this, that here alone, as I conceive, of all Governments in the world, is it accorded the honour of print. The Notes of our official volumes are augmented to three or four times their needful dimensions by long columns—I have often seen entire pages—of initials and dates, by the record of the passage of the case from Department to Department, by the questions asked by officials of their subordinates

(which ought to be sent round on a slip of paper instead of officially recorded upon the Notes) and by *banalités* of many and various types.

The reduction of this abuse was one of the questions that was only perfunctorily dealt with by the Committee of Secretaries in 1895. They recommended a strict enforcement of Rule XIV in the Rules of Business, which ran as follows:—

"References of no permanent importance, such as requests for former papers, should be made on separate slips, which should not be filed, but destroyed when done with."

In the revised Secretariat instructions which were issued in August 1898, this rule re-appeared as No. 5 (3) in the following form:—

"References of no permanent importance such as requests for former papers, calls for proofs or drafts, orders to print, &c., shall be written on separate slips and destroyed without being filed."

But it is obvious that this went neither far enough nor in the right direction. For what is wanted is not merely the destruction of routine slips such as those alluded to, but orders to prevent the printing of matter, which must appear upon the files, but which is not worthy of being printed. All that is wanted is that in every Department, some officer, responsible to the Secretary, shall, before the MS. file goes to the printer, run a blue or red pencil through the stuff that does not require reproduction in print. In this way we shall find that the bulk of our printed Notes will speedily be diminished by more than one half. I circulate for inspection an ordinary Foreign Department file, prepared under the existing system; and a revised proof of the Notes or K.-W. of the same as amended under the process that I am about to introduce. The length is thereby reduced from 11 printed pages to 4.

V.—*Other aids to despatch.*

I should like to invite the aid of my Colleagues and of the Secretaries in respect of any suggestions that they may care to make under the above heading, in addition to, or in corroboration of, the remarks which I am about to submit. Some check appears to me to be wanted in order to prevent the interminable delays that now occur, and the complete oblivion that is apt to overtake Departments as to the whereabouts, or fate, or future of cases in the course of their departmental career. These delays and this carelessness occur—

(1) in the cases of answers to communications from the Secretary of State—concerning which I am continually receiving telegrams, couched in the following terms: 'When may I expect an answer to my telegram or despatch of such and such a date?'

(2) in the case of questions that are pursuing their weary pilgrimage through the departments;

(3) in the case of questions that have been referred to a Local Government but have not returned therefrom. Let me give an illustration of the latter. I was called upon not long ago to give a decision affecting certain canal rates in one of the Provinces. The question had originally been referred to the Government of India in October 1892. It had then been sent to the Local Government with whom it had remained, without reminder, or rebuke, for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. After returning from this long holiday, it had then wandered like an uneasy spirit through the Departments of the Government of India for another 3 years, until at length in April 1899 it came up to me to be exorcised and laid.

Now in all these cases, there ought to be some practical, and not merely illusory, check. I know that in each Department some sort of statement is drawn up quarterly, or perhaps at other intervals, of the cases in the Department, of the orders that have been issued upon them, and of the present stage of their wandering. But clearly this check must at present be what I call an illusory check, since it does not prevent cases like that which I have just mentioned, and which is only one among many that

have come under my own notice. My impression is that these quarterly statements, which are drawn up by clerks and are, I believe, divided into classes for submission to the Secretary and Deputy, Assistant, and Under Secretary, severally are either only glanced at or are completely ignored by them, a convenient initial being substituted for a *bonâ fide* scrutiny. I cannot dogmatise upon such a question as this; but having indicated what I believe to be the evil, I shall be grateful to the Secretaries if they will submit to me what their experience suggests to them as the remedy.

I have now completed what I have to say upon this branch of the question. At a later date I shall submit another Memorandum to my Colleagues upon an abuse, equal in intensity and even more pernicious in its results than over-writing inside the Secretariats, upon which I have here been commenting—*viz*, over-writing, not of Notes but of reports, in every branch of the Local and Imperial Governments. But for the moment I confine myself to the Departments of the Supreme Government with which we are here officially connected. This is a long Note; but a long Note has been required to deal with an abuse of such long standing; nor if one long Note from a single Viceroy has the effect of saving many scores and hundreds of long notes from hardworked subordinate officials in the future, will its length have been wasted. The reforms that I have indicated, I can undertake to carry out—in fact most of them are already in successful operation—in my own, *i.e.*, the Foreign Department. While I could impose them by a ukase, it is obvious that it would be out of my power to supervise their enactment, still less to ensure their ready acceptance, in the other Departments of the Government of India, without the cordial co-operation both of my Colleagues and of the present and future Secretaries of those Offices. I invite this co-operation, in the interests, not merely of Members of Council whose work may be somewhat lightened by more reasonable and business-like methods; nor merely of the Departments themselves, though I believe that when a better régime has once been fairly started, it will prove to be of incalculable relief to them; but for the sake of the efficiency of British administration in India, in which from the Viceroy to the humblest clerk, we are all engaged, and which is being seriously and detrimentally affected by a continuance of the existing indefensible system.

May 24th, 1899. CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

SECRETARIAT INSTRUCTIONS.

Duty of Secretary to see that cases are complete.

1. It shall be the duty of the Secretary in the Department to which the subject belongs, to submit every case which he is not, by the practice of the Department, competent himself to dispose of, in a complete form, ready for orders, to the Governor-General or the Member in charge of the Department, as the case may be.

Explanation.—For the purposes of these Instructions the expression "the Department to which the subject belongs," has the same meaning as in the Rules of Business made under section 8 of the Indian Councils Act, 1861. (24 & 25 Vict., c. 67.)

Power for Secretary to call for further information.

2. If a case is received in the Department to which the subject belongs, in an incomplete form, the Secretary may call for the information necessary to complete it before submission to the Governor-General or the Member in charge, as the case may be.

Method of keeping and circulating cases.

3. (1) All cases shall have a board at the bottom.

(2) The tapes attached to these boards shall be of the prescribed stout pattern.

(3) When a case attains considerable size or weight, a strap of the prescribed pattern shall be employed.

4. When cases are sent to the Viceroy, a despatch sheet of the prescribed pattern, with the title of the Department concerned printed at the top and the subject-matter written very briefly in large legible characters across the sheet, shall be placed on the top of every file between the tape and the flaps of the file board; and sufficient blank sheets for noting shall be attached to the Notes.

5. The linking of cases shall, as far as possible, be avoided. Linked cases may occasionally be necessary. But cases should be consolidated, whenever practicable, into one bundle by an intelligent selection of papers and arrangement of Notes.

6. In submitting cases, only such previous papers shall be placed in the file as are relevant to the question under discussion. The office may put up any papers which they think it likely that officers may wish to refer to; but the Secretary shall arrange that at some stage before any file is sent to the Viceroy or the Member of Council or to another Department, all papers not really required are removed.

7. (1) The previous papers put up with a case should be chronologically arranged, the latest being at the top and the earliest at the bottom of the file.

(2) Lettered or numbered slips may be pinned on previous papers referred to in the Notes, the letter or number being quoted in the margin in pencil. But not more than one slip shall be attached to the same collection or volume: the reference to any particular part being made by quoting the record number in, or page of, the collection or volume.

8. Above the previous papers shall be placed the current correspondence, which should be strung together in chronological order upwards, the latest letter being at the top. With this arrangement it will not be convenient to assign serial numbers to the pages of the whole correspondence; but a serial number will be entered on each paper, as received, in pencil or chalk, and each paper will have its pages numbered separately, also in pencil or chalk. These numbers are required for reference only while the file is current. Above the current correspondence shall be placed the Notes.

9. The subject of the first current paper in a file shall be entered in red ink on the form used for the first sheet of the Notes: the subject of any subsequent paper (receipt or issue) shall be entered in red ink, not on a separate sheet in that form, but in chronological order in the Notes.

Noting on cases.

10. (1) Every Note shall be legibly written upon paper of foolscap size, with a quarter margin, and only on one side of the page.

(2) Merely "Routine Notes," such as requests for previous papers, calls for proofs or drafts, orders to print, &c., shall be written on separate slips to be destroyed without being filed.

(3) In every case referred by one Department to another, the Notes written in the Department referred to shall be on separate sheets from the Notes written in the referring Department.

11. All Notes shall be temperately written and free from personal remarks. If apparent errors in the Note of a Member in charge of another Department have to be pointed out, special care must be taken that the observations are courteously expressed, and do not extend to the criticism of the opinions he has expressed as apart from the facts.

12. When a case is submitted for orders, it shall not contain more than one Note from the office, the Superintendent of the Branch or Section re-writing or modifying the Note of the clerk if he cannot accept it. The office Note may be similarly treated by the first officer to whom the case is submitted, if he thinks fit.

13. When the case has passed to the gazetted officers, not more than two of them (including the Secretary) shall, as a general rule, note upon it before passing it on to the Honourable Member. In the case, however, of Departments with several Branches through which a case must necessarily pass, this limit cannot be enforced; but only one Note, as a rule, shall be recorded in each Branch.

14. It shall always be assumed that the paper under consideration will be read by the officer to whom it is submitted. Consequently no paraphrases shall be permitted in the Notes. A précis of the contents of a single paper shall only be made when it is of great length and complexity, and neither such a précis, nor a précis of the contents or history of a file, shall ordinarily be prepared without the orders of an officer.

15. In some cases perusal of the paper under consideration will be sufficient, and nothing is required beyond a brief suggestion for action. When a Note is required, it should be a statement of the case showing, more or less in detail, according to the importance and stage of the case, the question for consideration, the circumstances leading up to it, the rules and precedents bearing upon it, and suggestions for action. The reproduction in a Note of verbatim extracts from the letter or despatch under consideration should ordinarily be avoided.

16. When an officer agrees with the preceding Note or recommendation, he shall append his signature and nothing more. Marginal Notes, or Notes to emphasize special points, may, however, be made.

17. To facilitate the rapid passing on of cases, and especially in cases of emergency, full use shall be made of personal communication between officers of the same Department. The Secretary in each Department should encourage his subordinate officers to bring up cases for advice, discussion or disposal. Formal registration to show the transmission of cases from one officer to another within the same Department is unnecessary.

18. A draft despatch, letter, resolution, notification or telegram, as the case may be, may be prepared at any stage of a case if it appears that the consideration and disposal of the case would be facilitated by submitting it with a draft.

Inter-departmental reference.

19. In cases of inter-departmental reference the Department of origin shall state, with as much precision as possible, the specific point or points in respect to which reference is made; and the Department referred to shall avoid unnecessary repetition in its Notes of anything sufficiently stated in the Notes of the Department of origin.

20. When a case has been referred to and returned from another Department, and a difference of opinion between the Departments is disclosed, personal discussion shall, if possible, be substituted for further noting; and in any circumstances no more than one further Note shall be recorded in either Department.

Personal references to Members.

21. If a Member desires to refer a case in the Department of which he is in charge, to another Member personally, for formal opinion, he shall obtain the consent of the Governor-General before doing so.

Notes sent to another Department not to be referred outside Secretariat without consent.

22. (1) Notes written in one Department and sent to another shall be treated as confidential and shall not be referred to any officer outside the Secretariat except with the general or specific consent of the Department to which they belong.

(2) Where a general consent has been given to the reference of Notes to an officer outside the Secretariat, such consent shall not be construed to cover such a reference when the papers are marked "Confidential," or in cases—

(*a*) affecting the excepted officer personally, or in which his official conduct is under consideration; or

(*b*) in which the emoluments or allowances of any sudordinate of the excepted officer are discussed.

(3) The officers, in regard to whom a general consent to the reference of Notes by the Departments hereinafter indicated has been given, are the following:—

(*A*) *Home Department.*

(i) General Superintendent of Operations for the Suppression of Thagi and Dakaiti; and
(ii) Chief Inspector of Explosives.

(*B*) *Revenue and Agricultural Department.*

(i) Inspector-General of Forests;
(ii) Surveyor-General of India;
(iii) Inspector-General, Civil Veterinary Department; and
(iv) Meteorological Reporter and Director-General of Indian Observatories.

(*C*) *Foreign Department.*

(i) General Superintendent of Operations for the Suppression of Thagi and Dakaiti; and
(ii) Inspector-General, Imperial Service Troops.

(*D*) *Department of Finance and Commerce.*

(i) Comptroller-General;
(ii) Comptroller, India Treasuries;
(iii) Director-General of the Post Office;
(iv) Commissioner, Northern India Salt Revenue; and
(v) Director-General of Statistics.

(*E*) *Military Department.*

(i) Adjutant-General in India;
(ii) Quarter Master General in India;
(iii) Principal Medical Officer, Her Majesty's Forces in India;
(iv) Director-General of Ordnance in India;
(v) Director-General of Military Works;
(vi) Commissary-General-in-Chief;
(vii) Director, Army Remount Department; and
(viii) Director, Royal Indian Marine.

(*F*) *Public Works Department.*

Director-General of Telegraphs.

(*G*) *Any Department.*

(i) Director-General, Indian Medical Service, and Sanitary Commissioner;
(ii) Advocate-General, Bengal;
(iii) Standing Counsel to the Government of India; and
(iv) Government Solicitor, Calcutta:

Provided that no Notes shall be referred to the Advocate-General, the Standing Counsel or the Government Solicitor except on the order of an officer not below the rank of Secretary, and that no Notes, other than those of the referring Department, shall be so referred without the consent of the Department to which they belong.

Record and printing of Proceedings and Notes.

23. When papers are recorded in Proceedings, a "Table of Contents" shall be added to the record. This may, however, be omitted in cases which are not recorded in A. Proceedings, if there are only one or two papers. Each recorded collection will thus ordinarily contain in the order named—

(*a*) a Table of Contents, with references to former and later Proceedings;
(*b*) the Notes on the case, with appendices to the Notes should they be found necessary in exceptional cases; and
(*c*) the official Proceedings.

The record numbers of the official correspondence shall be entered in the margin of the Notes opposite the statement of the subject of each paper.

24. Précis and Notes shall not be entered in the official Proceedings of the Government of India, save by the express direction of the Governor-General.

25. (1) There shall only be one set of Notes, though occasionally it will not be convenient to run all the Notes into one set, and appendices containing Notes or information on subsidiary points may be necessary. Demi-official communications, when not ordered to be brought on the official record, shall, if preserved at all, be treated as Notes and incorporated therewith.

(2) When Notes are printed either after the disposal or during the currency of a case, much matter referring to the routine progress of the case may be omitted as unworthy of print. All Notes and initials of a routine nature, dates and numbers of unofficial references and the like shall be struck out before sending to Press.

(3) Before printing the Notes for permanent record, they shall be carefully edited by some official appointed by the Secretary of not lower standing than the Superintendent of a Branch or Section, who will see that everything not of permanent value is omitted. This official may also, under the general or special orders of the Secretary, cut out considerable portions of the Notes, substituting, if necessary, a short explanation showing the course of the case at that stage.

26. (1) The printing of the different parts of a collection of Proceedings shall be in the different kinds of type prescribed by the Financial Department.

(2) In the printed Notes attached to the collections of Proceedings, the name of the Governor-General, Member or Secretariat officer, as the case may be, shall be printed in full at the foot of each Note written by him. In the case of a Note written by the Governor-General or by a Member, the letters after the first letter of the surname shall be enclosed in brackets, so that such Notes shall be readily distinguishable from minutes.

27. (1) Where a paper, which has been printed, is required for information or reference, a printed copy, and not the original, shall, in the absence of orders to the contrary, be submitted.

(2) Where a paper, which has been printed, concerns more than one Department, a sufficient number of copies shall be sent by the Department, by which it was printed, to each of the other Departments concerned.

28. Every Department shall maintain lists—

(*a*) of unanswered communications from the Secretary of State;
(*b*) of unanswered communications sent to other Departments, persons or Local Governments; and
(*c*) of unofficial references which have not been returned.

Additional aids to despatch.

Such lists shall be submitted periodically for orders, to a gazetted officer, at convenient dates to be fixed by each Department.

29. In the case of both Local Governments and other Departments reminders shall take the form of a distinct inquiry as to the cause of delay and the prospects of the case; and the reminder shall be returned with the information required within a time to be specified thereon.

Council cases.

30. (1) The Secretary in each Department shall be responsible that no case, the subject of which belongs to the Department, shall be brought before a meeting of Council without having been previously seen by all the Members:

Provided that this rule may be relaxed in cases of special urgency at the discretion of the Secretary, such discretion being exercised with due regard to the inconvenience likely to be occasioned by any ill-considered departure from it.

(2) Where time permits and the case is of sufficient importance, printed copies of the papers and Notes connected therewith shall, prior to the meeting of Council before which the case is to be brought, be distributed by the Secretary to the Governor-General and all the Members, and the copies so received shall ordinarily be returned to the Secretary by the Members as soon as the Order in Council on the case has been made.

Telegrams to, and despatches to and from, the Secretary of State.

31. (1) Every telegram to the Secretary of State shall, unless it relates only to matters of routine or matters of fact, be submitted to the Governor-General before issue. A copy of every telegram to the Secretary of State shall be sent after issue to the Private Secretary.

(2) Every despatch to the Secretary of State shall be submitted in draft to the Governor-General or the Member in charge of the Department to which the subject belongs, as the case may be, unless the Secretary is, by the practice of the Department, competent himself to order the issue of the draft.

(3) The circulation for signature of every despatch to the Secretary of State shall, except in cases of urgency, commence, if possible, six days before the departure of the mail, in order that each Member may have leisure to study it and the papers connected therewith. Such papers, if the subject is one of importance or interest and has not been brought before a meeting of Council, shall be circulated along with the despatch.

(4) Every despatch to or from the Secretary of State issuing from, or received in, the Foreign Department shall be circulated as promptly as possible, first, to the Governor-General for signature or perusal, as the case may be, and, then, to all the Members in the most convenient order with regard to their places of residence.

(5) Every despatch to the Secretary of State issuing from any Department other than the Foreign Department shall be circulated for signature, first, to the Member in charge, then to the other Members in the order aforesaid, and, finally, to the Governor-General.

(6) Every despatch from the Secretary of State received in any Department other than the Foreign Department shall be circulated as promptly as possible, first, to the Member in charge, then to the Governor-General, and, finally, to the other Members in the order aforesaid.

Secret despatches to Secretary of State.

32. Every despatch to the Secretary of State issuing under section 28 * of the Government of India Act, 1858 (21 & 22 Vict., c. 106), shall be enclosed in double covers, the inner cover being marked "Secret" and addressed to the Secretary of State by name.†

Enclosures to despatches to Secretary of State and Gazette publications.

33. (1) The Secretary in each Department shall be responsible for the correctness of the enclosures to every despatch to the Secretary of State issuing therefrom, and for the correctness of all papers sent therefrom for publication in the Gazette.

* The section referred to is as follows:—

"28. Any despatches to Great Britain which might, if this Act had not been passed, have been addressed to the secret committee of the Court of Directors, may be marked 'secret' by the authorities sending the same; and such despatches shall not be communicated to the members of the Council, unless the Secretary of State shall so think fit and direct."

Section 20 of the East India Company Act, 1793 (33 Geo. 3, c. 52), took power for the appointment of a secret committee of directors, and section 22 provided that—

"When any of the governments or presidencies in India shall be of opinion that any of their despatches to Great Britain concerning the government of the said territories and acquisitions, or the levying of war or making peace, or negotiations or treaties with any of the native princes or states in India, shall be of a nature to require the same to be kept secret, it shall be lawful for the said governments or presidencies respectively to address their despatches requiring such secrecy under cover, sealed with their seals, unto the said secret committee of directors of the said company for the inspection of such committee, and that immediately upon the arrival of such despatches so addressed, the said secret committee of directors shall deliver the same or copies thereof to the said board" (*i.e.*, the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India)."

Section 36 of the Government of India Act, 1833 (3 & 4 Will. 4, c. 85), subsequently provided for the despatch by the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India through the secret committee of communications on matters which seemed to the board to require secrecy.

† Secret despatches to the Secretary of State are transmitted from the Department to which the subject belongs, even in cases where, if they had not been secret, they would have been transmitted from the Department of Finance and Commerce.

(2) The enclosures to every despatch to the Secretary of State shall be numbered and a correct list of them prepared; and either the enclosures themselves or the list shall be signed by the Secretary or, under the Secretary's instructions, by an officer not below the rank of Assistant Secretary.

(3) All papers sent for publication in the Gazette shall be signed by the Secretary or, under the Secretary's instructions, by an officer not below the rank of Assistant Secretary.

Copies of legislative despatches to be sent to Legislative Department.

34. A copy of every despatch to the Secretary of State respecting intended legislation in the Council of the Governor-General shall, when issued by an Executive Department, be forwarded to the Legislative Department for record.

Letters to Ambassadors, etc., to be signed by Secretary.

35. Every letter addressed to an Ambassador or Minister of Her Majesty or to a Foreign or Colonial Government shall be signed by the Secretary in the Department to which the subject belongs.

Differences of opinion in Council not to be disclosed without consent of Governor-General

36. Where papers are communicated to Local Governments or to the public, all matter indicating the existence of a difference of opinion in Council shall be removed, unless the consent of the Governor-General to its retention is first obtained.

Secretary responsible for observance of these Instructions.

37. (1) The Secretary in each Department shall be responsible for the careful observance therein of these Instructions.

(2) Where a Secretary considers that there has been any departure from these Instructions, he shall personally bring the matter to the notice of the Governor-General.

Joint and Deputy Secretaries.

38. For the purposes of these Instructions, the expression "Secretary" shall be deemed to include a Joint Secretary, and any of the functions of a Secretary, other than those referred to in the proviso to Instruction 22 and in Instructions 35 and 37 may, with the approval of the Governor-General or the Member in charge of the Department concerned, as the case may be, be discharged by a Deputy Secretary.

(Signed) A. H. L. FRASER,
Offg. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

The 10th July 1899.

Telegram from the Government of India (Home Department), dated 14th September 1899, No. 2067.

Telegram from the Government of India (Home Department), dated 11th October 1899, No. 2318.

Order—No. 1200, Public, dated 23rd October 1899.

The Government of India will be addressed and a copy of the letter to that Government will be communicated to all departments of the Secretariat for information.

[Here enter letter No. 1201, Public, dated 23rd October 1899.]

(True Extract.)

for *Chief Secretary.*

To all departments of the Secretariat (with copy of letter).

(Pension)

Exd. A F. Eccleston.

Government {1899} of Madras.

PUBLIC.

Recd. } 1899. *Enclosures*

Regd. } *Spare copies*

Letter, No. 1201, 23rd October 1899.

OCTOBER.

Secretariat Reforms.

Addressing the Government of India on the subject of the suggestions made by that Government for the conduct of business in the Secretariats.

Government {1899} of Madras.

PUBLIC.

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Letter, No. 1201, 23rd October 1899.

OCTOBER.

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Addressing the Government of India on the subject of the suggestions made by that Government for the conduct of business in the Secretariats.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

Letter—from

The CHIEF SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of FORT ST. GEORGE,

To

The SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Home Department.

Sir,

I am directed to reply to your letter No. 1563, dated the 17th July last, in which you request to be informed as to how far this Government proposes to incorporate in its future procedure the reforms already accepted by the Government of India in regard to the conduct of official business in its Secretariats.

2. The Memorandum by His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretariat Instructions which accompanied your letter under reply have been carefully examined in all departments of the Madras Secretariat, in view to ascertain whether any reforms on the lines indicated can be introduced in the conduct of business by this Government. The appendix to this letter contains in a convenient tabular form a brief account of the procedure in Madras on such points as have been alluded to in the Memorandum and in the Instructions. It is clear from this that the systems followed in the Government of India Secretariats as regards noting and record-keeping differ considerably from those in force in the Madras Secretariats.

3. As regards noting and the general conduct of business, the reforms proposed by His Excellency the Viceroy are unnecessary in Madras, as the evils which they are intended to remove do not exist.

4. The Madras system of record-keeping, which is known as the "disposal number" system and a history of which is contained in the foot-note at page 89 to Macleane's Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency, Vol. I, has been found to be at the same time the simplest, the most economical as regards the question of the establishment required and the most complete for the purpose of recording the proceedings of Government. This system, which has received special attention during the last thirteen years, has been built up and has been improved upon from time to time as the necessity for alterations or changes has arisen. Its adoption has resulted in greater expedition in the disposal of work and has also been found of very great service in the maintenance of records.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

Fort St. George,
23*rd October* 1899.

G. STOKES,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. A. F. Eccleston.

[Appendix.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY'S MEMORANDUM ON THE SYSTEM OF NOTING IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE SECRETARIAT INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
I.—*Method of keeping and circulating papers.*	
* * *	
(4) From 1882 onwards the Flat File system was adopted, under which the papers were laid, unfolded, upon each other, both as originally received in MS., and as ultimately bound up in print. This was a salutary change, and one which is not now likely to be departed from. Unfortunately, at the same time or soon after, were sown the first seeds of that fatal malady that has ever since increased and tightened its hold upon its victim.	The Flat File system was introduced in Madras in 1896; and the records from 1895 are now kept flattened out.
The Flat File system is that adopted in the India Office and Colonial Office (and I believe in the majority of the Offices) in London. But there is this difference. The Notes upon each paper are in the London Offices written in the first place, and subsequently either typed or printed, upon sheets corresponding in size to the paper received, and are affixed to it by a tag. Each paper therefore carries its own Notes or instructions, not actually upon its back, as in the case of the Foreign Office papers, but attached to it. This I believe to be the best system where an office is independent and self-sufficing. I understand that the main drawback to its adoption here is that we send home from time to time our Official Proceedings to the India Office, and that there is convenience therefore in keeping them, both in MS. and in print, separate from the Notes or K.-W. There is also perhaps some convenience in our system, for the rapid tracing of the departmental history of any case that has extended, as do most Indian cases, over a long period of time.	In the Madras Secretariats notes or orders are written either upon the dockets of the papers or on a separate sheet attached thereto. The Madras Government sends to England and to the Government of India its proceedings volumes and the difficulty referred to in His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum has not been felt here. In Madras, notes are sometimes but not always printed. In the case of proceedings, the notes of which are not printed, the notes are stitched with the originals of the proceedings, and in the case of proceedings the notes of which *are* printed, a certain number of copies of the notes are stitched to a like number of the proceedings—these are for office use only.
. . . . I think that it would be to the convenience of the Departments, and certainly of Members of Council, if in circulating the files attention were paid to the following points, individually insignificant, but collectively providing a perceptible relief:—	

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
(i) All files should have a board at the bottom (as generally supplied).	Boards are used with tapes attached to them and the Department is printed in bold letters both on the flaps as well as on the back of the board.
(ii) The tapes attached to these boards should not be of the flimsy and breakable type in use in most of the Departments, but the stouter sort, in use in the Public Works Department.	No difficulty is experienced as regards tapes. Strong tape is used. Fresh tapes can easily be inserted as often as desired, as the boards have loops.
(iii) When a file attains any size or weight a strap should be employed to hold it together for submission. This strap should be of better make, less stiff and coarse, and with shorter and sharper prongs to the buckle, than that in common use here. A sample, as employed in the India Office, London, will be sent round to each Office.	Straps are not used and no necessity has ever been felt for their use. Under Secretaries, Secretaries and Honourable Members are supplied with books of reference and the files do not generally attain such dimensions as to necessitate the use of straps. Files of all sizes are circulated in boxes and it is a rule that each bulky file or a file on an important subject should have a separate box allotted to it.
(iv) A despatch sheet or card with the title of Department concerned printed at the top, and the subject-matter written legibly across the sheet, must be placed upon the top of every file, immediately inside the tape or strap, so that the Viceroy may see at a glance, without undoing the tape or strap, what are the Department and the subject concerned. Copies of those in use in Foreign Department can be procured.	The title of the Department is printed on the boards (cases) and the subject-matter of the file is written at the top of the first sheet of the note or draft order in every file. The Department and the subject-matter of the file are thus seen at a glance without undoing the tape. Further, the subject of every file in a non-confidential circulation box is specified on a card placed outside (in an opening on the left side).
(v) Blank sheets for noting by the Viceroy should invariably be attached to the MS. Notes or K.-W. Cases are constantly occurring, in which owing to departmental carelessness, no such sheets are attached. The Department, after expanding itself over pages of MS., only leaves the Viceroy room to give dumb witness by his initials to their lucubrations.	Notes and drafts are written on half-margin and spare paper is, where necessary, added for the entry of notes by Honourable Members and His Excellency the Governor.
(vi) The system of Linked Files is (though in rare occasions necessary) a cumbrous system, and has been greatly abused. I am constantly having enormous Linked Files submitted to me which, having perhaps started from different points, have gradually converged, until both contain the same papers, and discuss the same problem. This is perhaps inevitable, *e.g.*, in a case where the Military and the Foreign Departments are engaged in discussing a case which may have a military as well as a political aspect. But in the majority of cases the separation and	Files are linked only on rare occasions.

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
linked presentation of the files are only a nuisance which a little forethought might avoid. An intelligent selection of the papers required from both files by the Deputy Secretary, and their submission with an explanatory Note, would probably save the Viceroy many a quarter of an hour of valuable time.	
(vii) Similarly, with reference not only to Linked Files but to any file, there is no necessity to submit to the Viceroy, or I should imagine to any Member of Council, prodigious files which start almost from the commencement of time. . . . . Why cannot the vast mass of the file be left in the Department, and the necessary papers alone be sent? Of course the Secretary would be held responsible; and if he omitted essential papers, the blame would fall upon him, or upon the particular subordinate to whom had been delegated the selection. But such a responsibility is after all only a feature of any and every departmental system. I remember a case here in which there was circulated to Members of Council, prior to its being mentioned there, an Inland Steam Vessels Act. The papers constituted a file nearly a foot high, with which *chuprassis* struggled about Calcutta for a week.	Unnecessary papers are removed before files go in circulation and it is a well-understood rule that irrelevant papers should not be put up with a file.
II.—*Noting on cases in the Departments.*	Circulation boxes are not as a rule carried by peons, but are taken round in a circulation cart. If a file requires it, it is separated into two or more portions.
* * *	
. . . . the Head of the Department (here styled Secretary, in England Permanent Under Secretary) is officially responsible for the presentation to his Chief (in India a Member of Council and ultimately the Viceroy, in England a Secretary of State or other Minister, and ultimately the Prime Minister) of the case upon which the latter is required to decide. In the preparation of the case, he may employ at his own discretion the industry or abilities of his own subordinates, be they clerks or Under Secretaries; he may even delegate his responsibility to one or other of them, signifying his own assent by appending his initials.	These principles are observed in the Madras Secretariats.
. . . . There must be a limit to the number of subordinates who are permitted to note, the selection being determined not by their grade in the official scale, but by their aptitude to deal with the particular question under notice. Secondly, the reference to the ultimate authority must not consist of a jumble of heterogeneous and discordant opinions, out of which he is called upon to pick one for himself. . . .	

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
(i). . . . The principle that I would desire now to establish is this; that from the Office there should come up to the administrative ranks but one Note. Let the Superintendent select which clerk he pleases to write it. If he approves of the note, let him pass it on with his initials. If he disapproves, let him have it revised or modified, or let him substitute for it a Note by himself. When the paper has passed to the gazetted officials, as a general rule not more than two of them (including the Secretary) should note upon it before passing it on to the Hon'ble Member. The Secretary will doubtless select whichever of his subordinates he pleases to write the preliminary Note, or the selection will be made automatically by the sub-division of labour in the Department. . .	No more than two notes are written before a file goes up to Honourable Members or to His Excellency the Governor. In some Departments the plan is even simpler; there is only one note to deal with.
(ii) Précis and paraphrases should only be adopted on a very limited scale. If the letter or despatch under examination is one of a character and importance that are certain to require its perusal by the higher officials and ultimately by the Viceroy, it will, in nine cases out of ten, be unnecessary to précis or paraphrase it at all. The subject-heading will indicate the general character of its contents. Only in the event of the document being one of great length or complexity, may a précis of its proposals or contents, for sake of convenience, be required. Occasions will also occur from time to time when a précis, either of the facts or of the previous history of a case, may be useful in order to avoid much reference to old files, and to create, so to speak, a fresh starting point. Similarly, with regard to paraphrases, no higher official requires a paraphrase, much less a sequence of paraphrases, by subordinates, of a letter which he is bound to read himself. Still less does he want to know (though he is often now invited to read) what his subordinates think was, or may have been, in the mind of the original writer. He requires references to precedents, to former papers, and so on, and suggestions for action. Another vice of the present system is the habit of reproducing verbatim in the Notes entire extracts from the letter or despatch under discussion. This is entirely unnecessary and should be discontinued.	Précis and paraphrases are only adopted on a very limited scale. It is only when a paper is of great length and complexity that a précis of its proposals or contents is made for the sake of convenience. Entire extracts from a letter or despatch under discussion are not reproduced verbatim in notes, unless absolutely necessary.
(iii) The rule should be of universal acceptance, that when at any stage an official agrees with the preceding Note or recommendation, he should append his initials (and date) and nothing more.	This has been the Madras practice for a long time.

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
(iv) Cases are constantly occurring in which, even without superfluity or delay in noting, a paper will take several days in passing through a department, simply owing to a want of elasticity in the interpretation of the existing system. An official who is seated in one room will keep a file lying on his desk one or two days, and then initial it, and pass it on by a *chuprassi* to another official seated next door, who will treat it in a similar fashion. . . . If the officials of the departments would only remember that they live in the same building, and would in cases demanding early decision (and I may add in many others) substitute a few words of conversation with each other for the pedestrian procession of the files, they would greatly expedite the despatch of business.	There is no danger of any such delay occurring according to the system prevailing in the Madras Secretariats. As soon as papers are received they are scrutinized, such as are urgent are so marked, and the papers are passed on for Registry. The papers received for registry are further scrutinized by the Assistants, who also mark any papers which are urgent and should be taken up first. The papers so marked have precedence over all others in the matter of registry, reference and disposal. In all cases of real urgency personal consultation between Secretariat officers is the usual practice. This procedure is also adopted in cases in which personal conferences are likely to expedite the disposal of any question.
III.—*Inter-Departmental reference.* * * * The same sort of official pedantry appears to prevent a settlement, by meeting and conversation, of any question upon which an acute controversy has arisen between two departments, or between their official heads. . . . In England if the Foreign Office disagrees with the Colonial Office, the Permanent Under Secretary of the one puts on his hat and walks across the quadrangle to discuss the matter with the corresponding official of the other. If they fail to come to terms, the two Secretaries of State meet and talk it over. . . . * * *	The delays involved in a formal reference to other departments are now lessened by the unofficial reference system lately introduced. In many important cases Secretaries and Members of Government decide questions after personal consultation with Heads of Departments.
IV.—*Arrangement and Printing of Proceedings and Notes.* (i) The papers of the Government of India (I believe in every Department) consist of two sections; the official Proceedings, and the Office Notes. These are, under our system, kept distinct from each other, both in MS. and in print. I would not propose to interfere with this distinction. Some offices print the Notes first and the Proceedings afterwards, others *vice versâ*. I think that a uniform system should be adopted; and, unless any good reason can be shown to the contrary, I would propose that the Notes should be printed first, since they are, in the majority of cases, a prelude to, rather than a sequel of, the official decisions recorded in the other section.	The rule in Madras is that the notes are stitched with the proceedings, whether manuscript or print, and that they are placed between the papers disposed of and the orders disposing of those papers. When notes are printed, only a limited number of copies are printed and these are stitched with a corresponding number of spare copies of the proceedings, occupying, whenever possible, the position indicated above, and being placed in the spare copy bundle with other spare copies of the proceedings without notes.

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
(ii) The Notes, when printed, are in many departments called Keepwiths, and are designated as K.-W. This is part of the barbarous jargon that has grown up *pari passu* with a barbarous system. I see no reason why in the Government of India we should call ordinary things by any other than their ordinary names. I would therefore propose in future to designate K.-W. simply as Notes. In the Foreign Department I have further found the Index or Table of Contents of the separate volumes of papers, when bound up, variously designated as "Brief Subject," "List of Papers," and "Précis-Docket." As I see no reason for calling it by any other than its proper name, I have ordered this Index-page in future to be headed "Table of Contents."	When notes are printed, it is customary to print on the top of the first page the words "Notes connected with G.O., No. , dated ." The designation of "Table of Contents" has been in existence in Madras for very many years past.
(iii) As each fresh letter, despatch or telegram comes into the office, and is added to the MS. file, the heading or docket under which it is entered in the MS. Notes, prior to noting, is in the Foreign Department written in red ink. I dare say this is done in other offices. If not, I recommend it as a useful system of distinguishing the various stages of a case, as well as each stage in turn, from the MS. Notes upon it.	Letters and telegrams are added to a particular manuscript file only when they relate to the same subject, and as the subject-matter of the file is written on the first sheet, it is not necessary that the subject of each paper should be repeated in the note in red ink.
(iv) I now come to a peculiarly malignant abuse of the present system, which is itself the outcome of a further, and equally culpable abuse, *viz.*, the extent to which official correspondence (I speak particularly of the Foreign Department) has become supplemented, and almost in many cases superseded, by private or demi-official communications. The privilege of private correspondence between officials in the Department and officers or persons outside is a valuable one, inasmuch as it places the former in possession of information which may be essential to the due comprehension of a case, but which it may be impossible, for various reasons, to include in the official letters or telegrams. But it is a privilege which is capable of being, and has been, greatly abused; and hence has arisen the question of how to deal with this sort of communications in the records of a Department. It has been solved by constituting a separate branch or sub-head of the K.-W.'s for demi-official papers. This branch requires again a separate index of its own. Accordingly, it has happened to me in studying a case, in a printed volume of our Proceedings, that in order to preserve the chronological sequence of discussion and decision, I have had to keep my fingers in three or four different places in the same volume, and to dart backwards and forwards, from one to the other, at what a cost of time and temper I need hardly say.	Demi-officials are not read in the proceedings of Government nor are they indexed. If any officer writes a demi-official on which an order has to be passed, he is told to write officially. Except those relating to mere routine matters, which are destroyed periodically, demi-officials are generally stitched with the originals of the proceedings concerned. The Demi-Official Register serves well as an index.

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
I lay down the proposition therefore, which cannot, I think, be disputed, that a demi-official personal, or private letter, differs only from an office-note in the fact that it is written by an official outside the Department and often at a distance, instead of by an official inside the Department at his desk. It must as a consequence be similarly treated; *i.e.*, it must, if printed at all, be placed not in a category apart, but in the Notes in the order of its arrival. The decision whether it should be printed, and if so how much of it should be printed, must rest with the officer concerned, subject of course to the decision of the Secretary. By this method there will be in every printed collection of papers in every Department, three sections only, (*a*) Table of Contents, with References to former and latter cases; (*b*) Notes; (*c*) Proceedings. There must be no extras of any description.	Notes are never kept separately. If notes are printed (and this is done only in important cases), the printed notes are kept with the spare copies of the proceedings in the bundle and a certain number of copies of the notes stitched with a like number of the proceedings (for office use only). The *original notes* are always kept with the original *proceedings*.
(v) In printing both the Notes and Proceedings, it is possible to avoid a good many sources of subsequent confusion by always using the same type for the same thing, *i.e.*, one type for Notes, another for Proceedings, and again in each class, one type for headings, another for contents, and so on. At present all kinds of type are used promiscuously, according to what may be handy in the printing press at the moment. Similarly, in printing both the Notes and the Proceedings, all numbers, alphabetical letters, and purely departmental hieroglyphics, except such as may be essential for subsequent reference, should also be omitted. Too often a printed volume of our records is more of a puzzle than it is of a guide.	The type used for notes, proceedings, &c., is not generally of any particular kind. Notes are printed on yellow paper to distinguish them from the proceedings. Alphabetical letters, references to flags, &c., are omitted in printing.
* * *	
. . . What is wanted is not merely the destruction of routine slips . . . but orders to prevent the printing of matter, which must appear upon the files, but which is not worthy of being printed. All that is wanted is that in every Department, some officer, responsible to the Secretary, shall, before the MS. file goes to the printer, run a blue or red pencil through the stuff that does not require reproduction in print. In this way we shall find that the bulk of our printed Notes will speedily be diminished by more than one half	References of no permanent importance, such as requests for former papers, calls for proofs or drafts, orders to print, are written on separate slips and are destroyed. Clear instructions are given to the Press as to which portions should be printed and which should not.
V.—*Other aids to despatch.*	
. . . Some check appears to me to be wanted in order to prevent the interminable delays that now occur, and the complete oblivion that is apt to overtake Departments as to the whereabouts, or fate, or future of	

His Excellency the Viceroy's Memorandum.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
cases in the course of their departmental career. These delays and this carelessness occur— (1) in the cases of answers to communications from the Secretary of State—concerning which I am continually receiving telegrams, couched in the following terms: 'When may I expect an answer to my telegram or despatch of such and such a date?' (2) in the case of questions that are pursuing their weary pilgrimage through the Departments; (3) in the case of questions that have been referred to a Local Government but have not returned therefrom. . . . . Now in all these cases, there ought to be some practical, and not merely illusory, check. I know that in each Department some sort of statement is drawn up quarterly, or perhaps at other intervals, of the cases in the Department, of the orders that have been issued upon them, and of the present stage of their wandering. But clearly this check must at present be what I call an illusory check, since it does not prevent cases like that which I have just mentioned, and which is only one among many that have come under my own notice. My impression is that these quarterly statements, which are drawn up by clerks and are, I believe, divided into classes for submission to the Secretary and Deputy, Assistant, and Under Secretary severally are either only glanced at or are completely ignored by them, a convenient initial being substituted for a *bonâ-fide* scrutiny. * * *	In the Madras Secretariats there are call books and arrear lists. The former are concerned with Government proceedings and letters to which replies are due. After the issue of a proceedings the call clerk notes in the call book full particulars of all proceedings and letters which require replies from outside offices or other Governments. Reminders issue if these replies are not received either by the due date if a date is fixed for the reply, or within a reasonable time when no date is fixed. The call books are periodically and regularly submitted for the scrutiny of higher officers. The arrears list shows the papers that have been in the office for two weeks or more and which have not been disposed of by an order or a letter. These lists therefore include all papers pending in the Secretariats and those awaiting replies due from outside offices to references which do not issue in the form of a proceedings or of a letter, and which do not therefore find a place in the call book. The arrears lists are submitted once a week to the Secretary and are carefully scrutinized. When a reply is overdue, the fact is at once apparent and orders for the issue of a reminder are entered in the arrears list itself. In addition, lists of periodical reports and returns due in the Secretariat are maintained and watched, reminders being issued whenever such a report or return is overdue. A separate check-register of telegrams to which replies are due, and a register of despatches from the Secretary of State which require an answer are also maintained and periodically brought under review. The maintenance of call books, of arrear lists and of the lists and registers mentioned above and the scrutiny exercised over them serve as a practical check to prevent delays in all cases, and in this respect there can, it is considered, be no better method than that now prevailing.

Government of India Secretariat Instructions.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SECRETARIAT INSTRUCTIONS. * * *	
7. (2) Lettered or numbered slips may be pinned on previous papers referred to in the Notes, the letter or number being quoted in the margin in pencil. But not more than one slip shall be attached to the same collection or volume: the reference to any particular part being made by quoting the record number in, or page of, the collection or volume.	Lettered or numbered slips called flags are affixed to previous papers by means of clips; they are not pinned. If reference has to be made to different portions of a Government Order, more than one flag is sometimes used for the sake of convenience. In the case of volumes and printed books flags are not used, but the portion referred to is marked by a tape.
8. Above the previous papers shall be placed the current correspondence, which should be strung together in chronological order upwards, the latest letter being at the top. With this arrangement it will not be convenient to assign serial numbers to the pages of the whole correspondence; but a serial number will be entered on each paper, as received, in pencil or chalk and each paper will have its pages numbered separately, also in pencil or chalk. These numbers are required for reference only while the file is current. Above the current correspondence shall be placed the Notes. * * *	The current correspondence is strung together in chronological order *downwards* so that the latest letter may be at the bottom. Each current is *preceded* by its enclosures arranged chronologically, and the latter are in their turn preceded by the docket sheet of the current, and the pages of the whole correspondence are then numbered in pencil or chalk to enable it to be read like a book.
10. (1) Every Note shall be legibly written upon paper of foolscap size, with a quarter margin, and only on one side of the page. * * *	Notes are written on half-margin and on both sides of the paper. This system leaves space for Honourable Members and His Excellency the Governor to write their remarks opposite to the notes.
10. (3) In every case referred by one Department to another, the Notes written in the Department referred to shall be on separate sheets from the Notes written in the referring Department. * * *	The U.O. system has been interpreted to require that each departmental note should be in continuation of the previous note or notes. In many cases the initials of the Secretary of the Department referred to are all that is required, and very frequently a single sentence embodies his views. The use of a separate sheet would therefore be productive of great waste of stationery, besides increasing the bulk of files unnecessarily.
16. When an officer agrees with the preceding Note or recommendation, he shall append his signature and nothing more. Marginal Notes, or Notes to emphasize special points, may, however, be made. * * *	Officers append their initials only and not their signature when they agree with the preceding note.

Government of India Secretariat Instructions.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
21. If a Member desires to refer a case in the Department of which he is in charge, to another Member personally, for formal opinion, he shall obtain the consent of the Governor-General before doing so.	When a Member desires to refer a case to another Member for formal opinion, it is not usual to obtain the consent of His Excellency the Governor. This system would be very undesirable in Madras.
* * *	
22. (3) The officers, in regard to whom a general consent to the reference of Notes by the Departments hereinafter indicated has been given, are the following :— (*A*) *Home Department.* (i) General Superintendent of Operations for the Suppression of Thagi and Dakaiti; and (ii) Chief Inspector of Explosives, &c., &c.	There is no such fixed rule. The only officers ordinarily referred to U.O. are the Accountant-General and the Heads of Departments under each Secretariat.
* * *	
23. When papers are recorded in Proceedings, a "Table of Contents" shall be added to the record. This may, however, be omitted in cases which are not recorded in A. Proceedings, if there are only one or two papers. Each recorded collection will thus ordinarily contain in the order named— (*a*) a Table of Contents, with references to former and later Proceedings; (*b*) the Notes on the case, with appendices to the Notes should they be found necessary in exceptional cases; and (*c*) the official Proceedings. The record numbers of the official correspondence shall be entered in the margin of the Notes opposite the statement of the subject of each paper.	This rule is inapplicable to the "Disposal Number" system which obtains in the Madras Secretariats.
* * *	
27. (1) Where a paper, which has been printed, is required for information or reference, a printed copy, and not the original, shall, in the absence of orders to the contrary, be submitted.	Only printed copies are put up; but if the originals contain notes which are not printed, those originals are put up.

Government of India Secretariat Instructions.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
29. In the case of both Local Governments and other Departments reminders shall take the form of a distinct inquiry as to the cause of delay and the prospects of the case; and the reminder shall be returned with the information required within a time to be specified thereon.	The reminder forms simply request that the reply may be expedited. With Call books and Arrear lists properly worked, it is an easy matter for a Secretary to decide whether or not the reminder should ask for date on which reply may be expected. To do this with every reminder would multiply correspondence unnecessarily.
* * *	
31. (1) Every telegram to the Secretary of State shall, unless it relates only to matters of routine or matters of fact, be submitted to the Governor-General before issue. A copy of every telegram to the Secretary of State shall be sent after issue to the Private Secretary.	Copies of telegrams to the Secretary of State are not sent, after issue, to the Private Secretary; but drafts of the same are submitted to His Excellency the Governor.
* * *	
(3) The circulation for signature of every despatch to the Secretary of State shall, except in cases of urgency commence, if possible, six days before the departure of the mail, in order that each Member may have leisure to study it and the papers connected therewith. Such papers, if the subject is one of importance or interest and has not been brought before a meeting of Council, shall be circulated along with the despatch.	All despatches *to* the Secretary of State are submitted for signature first to His Excellency the Governor, then to the Honourable Members in the order of seniority. Despatches *from* the Secretary of State are received first by His Excellency the Governor and passed on to the Secretariat. They are then sent to Honourable Members.
(4) Every despatch to or from the Secretary of State issuing from, or received in, the Foreign Department shall be circulated as promptly as possible, first, to the Governor-General for signature or perusal, as the case may be, and, then, to all the Members in the most convenient order with regard to their places of residence.	
(5) Every despatch to the Secretary of State issuing from any Department other than the Foreign Department shall be circulated for signature, first, to the Member in charge, then to the other Members in the order aforesaid, and, finally, to the Governor-General.	
* * *	
(6) Every despatch from the Secretary of State received in any Department other than the Foreign Department shall be circulated as promptly as possible, first, to the Member in charge, then to the Governor-General, and, finally, to the other Members in the order aforesaid.	
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Government of India Secretariat Instructions.	The practice in the Secretariats of the Madras Government.
33. (1) The Secretary in each Department shall be responsible for the correctness of the enclosures to every despatch to the Secretary of State issuing therefrom, and for the correctness of all papers sent therefrom for publication in the Gazette.	It is an axiom that the Secretary is responsible for all the work of his office and Government recognises no one but the Secretary in such matters. The Secretary is left to make his own arrangements and such as he thinks best.
. . .	
33. (3) All papers sent for publication in the Gazette shall be signed by the Secretary or, under the Secretary's instructions, by an officer not below the rank of Assistant Secretary.	Papers are marked for *Gazette* on the draft orders. No separate signing is required.
. . .	
36. Where papers are communicated to Local Governments or to the public, all matter indicating the existence of a difference of opinion in Council shall be removed, unless the consent of the Governor-General to its retention is first obtained.	This principle is observed in Madras.