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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
24th December 1866.*

Read the following papers :—

No. 104. From the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George ; dated Madras, 30th October 1866.

I am desired by the Chamber of Commerce to bring to your notice the very serious delay which occurs in the transmission of the Mails between Madras and Bombay. The Overland Mail which arrived from England at Bombay, at 5 A. M., on the 11th instant, was delivered by Express at Madras on the 17th instant, and the time which is generally taken at present in the transmission of the ordinary Mails from Bombay to Madras is six and seven days.

2. The Overland Mail packet is made up in Madras for despatch to Bombay by ordinary Tappal 7 days, and by Express six days, before the departure of the Homeward Mail Steamer.

3. The Chamber cannot believe that all the facilities which are now at the command of the Government Officers who control the postal arrangements between Madras and Bombay are as fully availed of as they ought to be in carrying out this important public service, and it is in the hope that further efforts will be successfully made to accelerate the transmission of the Mails to this place that I now address you with the request that you will adopt such measures as you may consider advisable to accomplish this most important object. It must be a humiliating reflection to the authorities that, in the present year, with a Railway to carry the Mails so great a portion of the distance, the time occupied in their transmission should, at the best, be so little reduced below, and very frequently actually exceed, the period which was usual many years ago. So little confidence is shown in the arrangements that the Overland packets are despatched just as early as they were long ago, and even now there is any thing but certainty that they will arrive at Bombay in time for the Steamer.

4. As the new Mail arrangements will soon come into operation, whereby the Mails for all India will every week reach Bombay, it will not be considered out of place for this Chamber, representing large mercantile interests, to come forward to urge an early revision of the present postal system, which distributes the Madras Mails over several successive days for despatch. It is known what weight of Mail may be expected, and the arrangements provide for the despatch of a portion of this every day for 3 or 4 days. This plan cannot but be considered very unsatisfactory, and it results in inconveniences to the public of Madras, in the irregular arrival of home correspondence and papers, which, if multiplied under the new Mail arrangements, will be altogether intolerable.

5. The Chamber are not aware that any insuperable difficulties stand in the way of the carrying out of a better design, and, looking to the magnitude of the interests involved, they trust that the present incomplete and unsatisfactory scheme will soon give place to one better adapted for the present times.

6. The points in which improvement may be most required the Chamber do not wish to attempt to notice, but it may be stated that a very general impression prevails that the scale of pay among the Post Office employes is so low as to be a great bar to efficiency.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	<i>13/4</i>	Press ~~Mis.~~
Dated	<i>24-12-1866.</i>	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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7. Trusting that you will support the requisition made by the Chamber, I have the honor to be, &c.

Referred to the Postmaster General, for any remarks that he may wish to offer.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
1st November 1866.

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Secretary to Government.

No. 105. From the Postmaster General, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Beypore, 29th November 1866, No. 1794.

I have the honor to return your endorsement of the 1st instant, referring, for remarks, a letter from the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, Madras, representing the delay which occurs in the transmission of the Overland Mails between Madras and Bombay.

2. Inote in the margin the time occupied by the Mails in question in transit

	From Bombay.				To Bombay.			
	Express Mail.		Ordinary Mail.		Express Mail.		Ordinary Mail.	
	D.	H.	D.	H.	D.	H.	D.	H.
1866.								
January	3	15	4	17	3	15	4	15
February	2	23	4	17	3	15	4	9
March	4	...	4	7	3	21	4	15
April	4	8	4	18	3	16	4	16
May	3	23	4	17	3	15	4	16
June	4	10	5	18	4	9	5	9
July	4	23	6	2	4	...	4	14
August	5	4	6	13	4	4	6	9
September	5	...	5	7	4	4	6	3
October	5	4	5	3	4	14	5	18

With regard to the line from Bangalore to Hurryhur, I beg to state that, although the horses are not yet reduced to such miserable plight, they are still very far from what they ought to be; it is, therefore, absolutely necessary that something should be done to enable the men to keep up their stages, as this line is of vast importance, it being the route for the Overland Mails, as well as the medium of communication between the two Presidencies. Gram is now six seers per Rupee at Toomkoor, Seerah, and Herrioor; and at some of the stages, I found the horses had no gram for three and four days consecutively, in consequence of its not being procurable even at that famine price, &c."

3. To remedy this evil, sanction was at once obtained for raising the allowance to the horse owners from Rupees 20 to Rupees 26 per horse. Meanwhile, these difficulties were increased and prolonged by the rains which now set in, and it appeared to me advisable to alter the dates of despatch of the Express and safe date Mails to Bombay, by allowing one additional day for their transit, and so provide for their due arrival at that port. It is doubtless to this the Chamber refer in the concluding part of paragraph 3 of their letter, but it will be seen that the measure was necessitated by very exceptional circumstances, and intended to last while they existed.

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4. The Railway is now fully taken advantage of for the conveyance of the Mails in question, although Express Trains have not been employed for their conveyance between Bombay and Poona, and Bangalore and Madras. But, apart from the inconvenience which such a measure is likely to occasion on our single lines of Railway, it is doubtful whether the advantage would be commensurate with the great additional cost which would be entailed thereby.

5. As far as the Overland correspondence received via Bombay is concerned, the time noted above shows only that actually taken up in transit by each despatch. As a limited Establishment only is maintained on the line, a portion of it is necessarily detained at Poona for despatch on two or three successive days. This also can be remedied at very great additional cost, but I have lately had occasion to bring the subject to the notice of the Director General of the Post Office in India. I subjoin copy of my letter, No. 92, dated 30th ultimo.

6. With regard to a better scheme for the conveyance of the Mails in question, the Government are aware that a proposal for their conveyance by Steamer between Bombay and Beypore or Narakal has been disallowed by the Government of India. Some time ago, I had under notice the expediency of making use of the Railway beyond Poona to Sholapore, and diverting these Mails by the route thence to Bellary and Cuddapah; but this plan had to be put aside, as it was found that the length of line by this route between the Railway at Sholapore and Cuddapah was nearly 400 miles, and the road nearly throughout impracticable for a Mail cart.

7. Since the opening of the Railway to Cuddapah and Moodanoor, I have had this route again under consideration, but find that it would not be safe or expedient to adopt it until another instalment of the Railway is opened either from Sholapore or from Moodanoor. When this takes place, I hope to be able to arrange for their carriage, either by horse dawk or runners, over the reduced distance in less time than by the present route, via Poona and Bangalore. As a preliminary step to this end, I lately addressed the Resident of Hyderabad and the Consulting Engineer for Railways, Madras, and have been informed by the former that the next section of the Railway from Sholapore is not expected to be opened until the end of 1868, and by the latter that the section from Moodanoor to Ghooty will probably be opened by the middle of the same year.

From the Postmaster General, Madras, to the Director General of the Post Office in India, Calcutta; dated Madras, 30th October 1866, No. 92.

With reference to the complaint of the Secretary, Neilgherry Public Library, and Mr. Ouchterlony, referred to me with your communications noted in the margin, I have the honor

No. 839, dated 4th July 1866.
" 1019, " 18th " "
" 1664, " 8th Sep. "

to state that, as it appears from the letter from the Postmaster General, Bombay, to your

address, No. 406, (date not given), that the Mail from England is forwarded from Poona as quickly as the present Mail Cart Establishment can carry it, and as I learn from your letter to the Honorary Secretary, Neilgherry Public Library, No. 1017, 18th July, that the Bombay Post Office, has orders to forward the contents of the Mail in a certain specified order, I do not see that any thing can be done to remove the grounds of these complaints, unless it is determined to strengthen the Mail Cart Establishment from Poona to Bangalore to such an extent as will admit of the whole of the Overland Mail being forwarded at once; and, perhaps, considering the great

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4. As the new Mail arrangements will soon be in operation, and as they will place for the Chamber, representing the mercantile interests, to call for an early revision of the present Mail system, which distributes the Mails over several successive days for despatch. It is known what weight of Mail may be expected, and the arrangements provide for the despatch of a portion of this every day for 3 or 4 days. This plan cannot but be considered very unsatisfactory, and it results in inconveniences to the public of Madras, in the irregular arrival of home correspondence and papers, which, if multiplied under the new Mail arrangements, will be altogether intolerable.

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dissatisfaction which is felt throughout this Presidency with the present arrangement, considering, also, that the whole of the Mails for Madras will probably at no distant time be sent by Bombay, you may think it expedient that the Establishment should be strengthened.

No. 106. ORDER THEREON, 24th December 1866, No. 1314.

Copies of the letter from the Postmaster General, and of its enclosure, will be furnished to the Chamber of Commerce. It is clear that the delay of which the Chamber complain, in the transmission of Mails between Madras and Bombay, is attributable to exceptional circumstances, against which it was impossible for the Postal Authorities to provide.

Chief Secretary.

To the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce.
" Postmaster General.

*Pro 12 June 1865 No 51-52
12 April 1868
27 Sept 1868 116-117*

1866

Department.

From

The Postmaster General,

Madras.

To

The Chief Secretary to Government,

Department,

Fort Saint George,

No. 1114

Dated

Received

Answered

No 1549

CS & 105

Public Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter.
From the Chairman of } Here enter 30 Dec. /66.
the Chamber of Commerce }
" Postmaster General - 1 - 29 Nov. /66. / 1744

Order. No 1314 Dated 24 Dec 1866.

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N.
J.P.
W.D.
I would ask Mr P.M.G. to pass on with to the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce.

No. 1314

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

Dated 24th Decem^r 1866.

~~7th Feb 1868~~

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