

ORDINARY, MS.

<i>Public</i> DEPARTMENT.
G.O., DATED <i>19-10-91</i>
No. <i>887</i>

INDEXED.

When given for copying

[Despatch Abstract.]

*Recording letter from Govt. of
India re. the appointment
successor to Mr Pagan*

India Office,
London, 20th August 1891.

Public (Records),
No. 63.

To His Excellency The Most Honourable The Governor
General of India in Council.

MY LORD MARQUIS,

Madras Observatory.

On receipt of your Excellency's Letter, Revenue and Agricultural Department, Meteorology, No. 3, of the 14th January last, a copy of the papers which accompanied it was transmitted to the Astronomer Royal for the information of the Indian Observatories Committee of the Royal Society, and I now transmit for your Excellency's information copies of the resolutions passed on the 2nd July by that Committee with respect to the last Report of the Director of the Bombay Observatory and Mr. Pogson's reply to the observations of the Committee in reference to the Madras Observatory.

2. I also enclose a copy of correspondence with the Astronomer Royal relative to the appointment of a successor to Mr. Pogson and to the future of the Madras Observatory. Before taking any steps towards the appointment of a successor to Mr. Pogson, I shall be glad to receive the views of your Excellency's Government on the several recommendations made by Mr. Christie.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Marquis,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,

(Signed) CROSS.

ENCLOSURES.

No. 1.

Resolutions of the Indian Observatories Committee, passed at their Meeting held at the Royal Society's Rooms on 2nd July 1891.

1. The Committee, having heard with much regret of the death of Mr. Pogson, the Government Astronomer at Madras, are of opinion that it is very undesirable to enter further on any discussion as to shortcomings in the management of the Madras Observatory in past years.

They further respectfully submit to the Secretary of State that the first duty of Mr. Pogson's successor should be to examine the records of the Observatory, and to consider, with reference to their condition and extent, the steps that should be taken for the publication of that part of them which may be held to be of sufficient value to make publication desirable. The Committee will be very willing to afford to the Government any assistance in their power in advising as to the extent and manner of any publication that may be recommended after the examination of the observations in the suggested manner.

2. With reference to the Report of the Director of the Bombay Observatory for the year ending 30th June 1890, the Committee consider the Report very satisfactory, and highly creditable to the Director and his staff. They are glad to see that the new vertical force magnetometer has been received and mounted at the Observatory.

No. 2.

Royal Observatory, Greenwich,
4th July 1891.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of 18th February last, R. and L. 238, I have the honour to forward herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, the Resolutions passed at a meeting of the Indian Observatories Committee held on the 2nd instant, to consider the last Report of the Director of the Bombay Observatory, and Mr. Pogson's reply to the observations of the Committee in reference to the Madras Observatory.

I have, &c.,
W. H. M. CHRISTIE.

The Under Secretary of State
for India.

No. 3.

R. and L. 1266.

Sir,

India Office,
10th July 1891.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, forwarding a copy of the Resolutions passed by the Indian Observatories Committee on the last Report of the Director of the Bombay Observatory and

Mr. Pogson's reply to the observations of the Committee in reference to the Madras Observatory.

Before sending out these Resolutions for the information of the Government of India, Lord Cross would be glad to be favoured with an expression of your views with regard to the Madras Observatory.

It will be remembered that, in 1867, Professor Airey expressed an opinion that the Madras Observatory might probably be eventually closed, but it was then decided that it should, at any rate, be maintained during the incumbency of Mr. Pogson. In your letter, however, of the 14th April 1883 it was remarked that since that opinion was expressed the requirements of astronomical science had changed in several important respects; and, in accordance with the views expressed in that letter and in subsequent communications on the subject of the 17th August 1883 and 22nd September 1884, orders were sent to India that the Madras Observatory should be maintained for astronomical, magnetical, and meteorological observations, the two latter holding a subordinate position.

Owing to the death of Mr. Pogson, the question as to the future of the Madras Observatory may advantageously be reconsidered, before the appointment of a successor as Government Astronomer at Madras, and I am accordingly to state that Lord Cross will be obliged if you will kindly favour him with any observations you may have to offer on the subject.

I have, &c.,
A. GODLEY.

The Astronomer Royal, Greenwich.

No. 4.

Royal Observatory, Greenwich,
22nd July 1891.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 10th instant, R. and L. 1266, requesting an expression of my views with regard to the Madras Observatory, I beg that you will state to Lord Cross that, for the reasons given in my letter of 14th April 1883, and approved by the Indian Government, I consider it is very desirable that the Madras Observatory should be maintained on an improved footing for astronomical, magnetical, and meteorological observations, the two latter holding a subordinate position.

2. As regards the future of the Madras Observatory, the first question for consideration is the status of the Government Astronomer. This will, I presume, be practically determined by his salary, and it is important that this should be fixed at such an amount as will not only induce a properly qualified man to go out, but will enable him to take his position amongst other officials at Madras. This is naturally a question on which I can only speak in general terms, but as far as I can gather from the history of the Observatory, and from inquiries I have made, Mr. Pogson's salary was not adequate for the post, and it seems to me advisable, for the efficiency of the Madras Observatory, that the salary of his successor should be fixed on a more liberal scale. I would further urge the appointment of a competent European assistant to the Astronomer, who could take his place temporarily in case of absence or illness. The necessity for this has been lately experienced in the case of the Hong Kong Observatory, where an English Chief Assistant has been recently appointed at a salary of about 400*l.* a year.

3. The question of removing the Madras Observatory to a more favourable station, which was raised in 1883, might now with advantage

be considered. If a suitable hill station could be found nearer Madras than the Palni hills, and with facilities for telegraphing time-signals to the port of Madras, it would, I think, be advantageous to move the whole of the astronomical observatory to that station, leaving the magnetical branch at Madras, but I am doubtful as to the expediency of establishing a branch observatory for equatorial observations on the Palni hills at such a distance from Madras that effective control by the Government Astronomer would probably be difficult.

4. There remains the question of the instrumental equipment of the Observatory, which may advantageously be considered when Mr. Pogson's successor has been appointed, and has had an opportunity of examining the existing instruments.

I am, &c.,
W. H. M. CHRISTIE.

The Under Secretary of State
for India.

N^o 10

Public (Records)

20th August 1891

Two Copies

Letter to the Govt of India

N^o 63 + Enclosures

La Public 2900/91.

No. 2048. Lett:
2

FROM

J. W. P. MUIR-MACKENZIE, ESQ., C.S.,

Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

TO

The Secretary to the Government of Madras,

Revenue and Agricultural
Department.

(Meteorology)

Simla, the 1st September 1891.

SIR,

In forwarding the accompanying copy of a Despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State No: 63 dated 20th: August last, with enclosures, relative to the appointment of a successor to Mr: Pogson and to the future of the Madras Observatory, I am directed to say that the Government of India do not contemplate offering an opinion on Mr: Christie's proposals until Mr: Eliot, the Meteorological Reporter to the Government of India, who has now returned to Simla has been consulted.

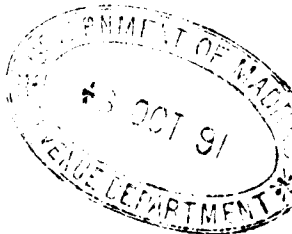
I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

J. W. P. Muir-Mackenzie

Under Secretary.



Public

2900-

3/7/91 No 20/1 Aug
3/9/91 No 747
3/21/91 No 20/1

From,

The Government of India
Rev. & Agn. Dept
2048 Met.

Dated 1st }
Recd 6th } Oct/91.

Enclo. 1.
Mr. Michie Smith has written
but has not been writing. Another
one stated by Mr. W. H. Stokes I
don't see any reason why he
should be kept out of the office
of India & they making the
arrangement for him. I think
it is better to let him go
as far as possible to ask for him
in his educational work. The
same Mr. H. H. Stokes to the
Govt. had in the same he
got some Astronomer & an
improved Observatory. He better
14/10/91
Stating that they

do not contemplate offering an opinion
on Mr. Christie's proposals with
reference to the Madras Observatory
until the Meteorological Reporter
of the Govt of India has been
consulted.

I think do - W
18 Oct.

Circulated.

No action beyond
recording the papers
seems necessary, unless
Mr. Michie Smith is
allowed to see them
officially.

IN ORDER
11/10/91
14/10/91

I think that Mr. Michie Smith
may be allowed to see the papers
unofficially.

He informs me that he finds
it impossible to continue to
carry on his college work in con-
junction with that of the Observatory
that he proposes getting out a
substitute for the college work, but
cannot do so to advantage unless
the term is specified, say a year.
He wants to get some assurance
that the appointment will not
be permanently filled up by a
considering the doubt as to the
future of the Observatory I think
it would be reasonable to ask
for some declaration of the
intention of the Govt of India
of the Govt. as desired by W. H. S.

See on back
14/10/91

READ AGAIN ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, DATED
18, No. , MISCELLANEOUS.

ENCLOSURES.

CURRENT NO.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL (not paged).

N.B.-

A = Copy in full.
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BACK PAPER, No.

OF 18

FURTHER PAPER, No. 3584 of 18
23-92