

ORDINARY, MS.

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| <i>Public</i> | DEPARTMENT.   |
| G.O., DATED   | <i>9-2-93</i> |
| No.           | <i>108</i>    |

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**[Despatch Abstract.]**

*Recording the explanation of the Govt. names of the failures of the Ma. - dis time signal.*

CURRENT No.  
Public (1893) Department

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BACK PAPER, No. of 18  
FURTHER PAPER, No. of 18

Mr.  
Order 9 Feb 93 No 108

Recorded. Copy will  
be furnished to the Ch.  
H. J. Board with reference  
to para. 10 of G.O. of 13.8.92,  
No 291.

From  
The Govt Astronomer

D 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1903  
Adm

F.B.B.  
6/2  
Ch  
T.H.V.



Offering certain remarks  
with reference to the  
Conservator's notes about the  
failing of the Semaphore.

Govt Astronomer  
Chairman H. J. Bd  
C. 7/2  
7/2

WITH ORDER

|                                                                        |                |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| READ AGAIN ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, DATED 18, No.                          | MISCELLANEOUS. | DESPATCHED |
| ENCLOSURES.                                                            |                |            |
| CURRENT No.                                                            |                |            |
| STATEMENT WITH DITTO.                                                  |                |            |
| ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.                                                   | A              | A          |
| LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.                                                  |                |            |
| STATEMENT WITH DITTO.                                                  |                |            |
| PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL (not paged). |                |            |

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A = Copy in full.  
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of doing it. The instrument was adjusted by me at the end of May and in the following 10 months there were only 11 failures, or less than 2 percent. This I venture to submit is an extremely good record and will compare favorably with the records of time signals elsewhere; especially when it is considered under what difficulties the service is maintained. Of these difficulties it is worth while mentioning two. The first is that the wire used for dropping the Semaphore is also used for sending the time signal to the Telegraph Office at 4 P.M. daily. For this the connections at the Telegraph Office have to be changed and if the plugs in the commutator are not properly replaced after the signal has been received the connection with the Marine Office is interrupted. As a matter of fact I have been able to prove that this was the cause of the failure on several occasions and I have little doubt that it was the cause of almost the whole of them. The second difficulty which I would point out is that I have no means of testing the line or the batteries and so have no warning of anything being wrong till a failure actually occurs.

To minimise the risk from these two sources I have, after consultation with the Post authorities, since December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1892, made a change in the arrangements. The Semaphore instead of being dropped twice a day (at 8 A.M. and 2 P.M.)

as

as formerly is now dropped only once a day - at 1 P.M., and 20 minutes before the hour the continuity of the line is tested by an interchange of signals with the Marine Signaller in charge of the Semaphore. Since this system was introduced no failure has been reported, and I trust that the future performance of the Semaphore will give complete satisfaction.

3. In comparison with the results attained here I may point out that at Hong Kong in 1891 there were 21 failures and that on 21 other occasions there was an error of 1<sup>st</sup> and upwards. At the time ball there is dropped only once a day and, for most of the year, was not dropped on Sundays and holidays the failures were not less than about 14 per cent. In the year 1891-92 the time ball on the Semaphore tower Fort William failed, or was dropped wrongly on 16 days and on 22 other days it was under repair, so that the failures amounted to over 10%. Both these cases may be exceptional but they are the only ones at hand for reference and they show at least that the Madras time signal was far from being exceptionally bad. I have the honor to be,

Yours most obedt servant,  
C. Nicolson Smith  
Offg. Secy to Govt.