

Public (1898) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 2657-8

Dated 14-5-88

[Despatch Abstract.]

Requesting the Govt to
state if it is intended that the
buildings now in progress in
connection with the observatory
Kodakanal and which are
required for work already decided
upon, should be stopped.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
CIR. 1825/98 (942)							

Public (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 1540

CHIEF
-3 MAY 1898
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Am. care.

V. E.

From

The Govt Astronomer.
Madras.

No. 87.

For Order S.

Submitted that the S. of S.'s
telegraphic instructions ~~must~~ must be attended
to until further advice is received.
The Govt Astronomer will then be in a
better position to criticize the reasons,
which will probably be given, for stopping
the building of the Kodakanal Observatory.

Dated 2^d May 1898.

Received

Registered

Enclosures -

Spare copies -

SUBJECT.

Submitting remarks on
the telegram from the Govt of
India, Res. Dept regarding
the advice from the Secretary of
State that building of Observatory
at Kodakanal
be stopped.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
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FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

No. 87

THE OBSERVATORY,
NUNGUMBAKUM.

Madras, 2nd May 1898.

FROM

THE GOVERNMENT ASTRONOMER,

Madras.

TO

The Honble Mr. A. J. Arundel,
Chief Secretary to Government.

SIR,

With reference to G.O. No. 60, dated 29th April 1898, Public, I have the honor to submit the following remarks.

2. I am not aware whether or not the "advice" of the Secretary of State is to be considered as an order, but if not I would venture to protest as strongly as possible against the stopping of the work at Kodaikanal.

3. The telegram is apparently founded on an entire misapprehension unless the Astronomer Royal and Sir Norman Lockyer have both completely changed their minds since they left Madras. At that time there was no divergence of opinion as to the work that was to be done in the building now under construction but there was a serious difference of opinion as to further work for which no buildings have as yet even been designed. It is probable

probable that the mistake arises from this.

4. The building, which is now under construction, is built specially to suit the instruments long ago sanctioned and which are now all completed. All except one of the instruments are now in Madras and the remaining one is somewhere between Dublin and Madras. The design of the building is such that any work, for which these instruments are suited, can be done in it and to stop the work now could ^{only} be taken as a declaration that a blunder had been made in ordering these instruments or that I am incapable of doing the work for which I have been appointed.

5. As regards the format of these, I need only refer to G.O., 2^d September 1895, no. 726, Public, in which it will be seen that the equipment of the Observatory was decided upon only after full consultation with, and with the approval of, the leading home authorities. As regards my fitness to carry on the work, I can only refer to the work that I have already done and to the fact that the Madras Government, which is in the best position to judge in the matter, has so far expressed no want of confidence in me.

6. If the work of building is now stopped, it will add considerably to the cost of the Observatory and

and will probably cause a whole year's delay, as the best season for building will be lost.

7. That the building of the two domes is to go on seems to indicate that Sir Norman Lockyer is trying to force upon me a series of disjointed buildings or "shanties" as he called them, such as he employs at South Kensington. I pointed out to him that such buildings were not suited for work in this country and that the designs of ^{the} building for Kodaiakand had been decided upon only after a careful consideration of all the special conditions of climate ^{as} of which he knew little. [Had he not been in my own house, I would have added that many astronomers considered that the unsatisfactory nature of his own work at South Kensington was in no small part due to his failure to appreciate the advantages of suitable instruments and suitable buildings.]

8. The design for the Observatory, I may add, was examined most carefully on the spot by the Astronomer Royal, whose opinion on such matters must have great weight. He made various suggestions, which I gladly accepted and the present plans embody the whole of these.

9. I would venture to suggest, that even if the Government does not see its way to allow the building to go on as a whole, it will at least permit

the spectrograph room and the path joining the two
doors to be pushed on. Under no conceivable conditions
can these paths be abolished as they are absolutely
necessary if any work is to be done, and if these
were built I could set up the chief instrument which
must deteriorate if left here unused.

To. As the question is one which affects my
scientific reputation most seriously, I venture to
appeal to the Government to take such steps as may
seem to it best to defend me against this undesigned
attack.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

C. Michie Smith

Govt Astronomer

for it. The stopping of the
work is simply a piece of
spite.

I ~~accepted~~ ^{accepted} all Christie's
suggestions because I thought
them good & he, I know,
was quite satisfied with
the plan.

I don't see what action
I can take officially but
if you can do anything
for me I will be
very thankful

Yours sincerely
Christie Smith

The Observatory,
NUNGUMBAKUM,

Madras, 1st May 1898.

My dear Arnold
What's in this? Do

You know my ~~with~~
commitment! It is the
Observatory is under
Review will you
please pass on to
Forbes -

Yours

2/5/98
WV

My dear Blip

P I have just received a copy of
a telegram from the Secretary of
State stopping all work at the
Kodankanal Observatory (except
on the two domes) pending the
decision on the report by the
Astronomer Royal & Lockyer.
Now this means probably a
whole year's delay & a very
considerable increase
to the cost of the work.
I feel quite sure that
A+ it is all due to Lockyer
J who threatened, when here,
that he would stop the
work because I would

not agree to certain proposals
which he made & which I thought would be
ruinous. Is it possible
to delay acting on this order
pending a further reference
to the Secretary of State?
The foundations are now
down & if the domes are
to go on the rest of the building
is essential. If I could
even get permission to
go on with the Spectrograph
room I would not care
much as that is the
chief instrument & it
must have a room
such as I have designed

C. 12. 5. 98

[G.]
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1,0 -22-11-97.

Public DEPARTMENT
G.O. No. 609 d 19/11/98
C. No. 1540

SUBJECT.

3. HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR. ✓
1. THE HON'BLE SIR HENRY BLISS, K.C.I.E. ✓
2. THE HON'BLE MR. GROSE, C.I.E. ✓

Stoppage of work at the Kodai-
kanal Solar Physics Observatory *under*
the Secretary of State's instructions telegraphed
by the Govt. of India.

FOR ORDERS.

Public G.O. No. 940, dated 21st
Nov. 1893, flagged 2³ contains the cor-
respondence relating to the commencement
of the Kodaikanal Solar Physics Observa-
tory.

2. With reference to the Secretary
of State's Despatch No. 111, (Rev.) dated
10th Nov. 1892, India on Mr. Eliot's ad-
vice, proposed Kodaikanal^a as the best site
for a new observatory on the high country
in the South of India, and recommended
Mr. Michie Smith for the post of Super-
intendent of the new Solar Physics Obser-
vatory. The Secretary of State in para.
2 of his Despatch No. 117 (Rev.) dated
31st August 1893 flagged 7³ sanction-
ed India's proposals. Mr. Michie Smith
was then directed to arrange for the pre-
and
paration of the budget, estimates and
plans for the new observatory. India was
informed in G.O. No. 941, Pub., dated
21st Nov. 1893, that this Govt. had no
objection to the transfer of the con-
trol of the Madras Observatory and the

X³

funds connected with it to the Supreme Govt. from 1st April 1894 ~~to~~ to place the organisation and management of the new observatory at Kodaikanal under ~~the~~ Meteorological Reporter to the Govt. of India.

3. The Indian Observatories Committee approved generally of the plans Mr. Michie Smith laid before it on 17th July 1895 and considered them well adapted for the work to be done. In particular it approved of the proposals regarding the Solar Spectroscope vide

Go. 725 Pub. dated 2nd Sep. 1895 flagged R.

4. The plans and estimates for the Kodaikanal Observatory were forwarded for India's approval by the P.W.D. in their order No. 2382 ¹¹ dated 19th Sept. 1895, vide G.O. 1097, Pub. dated 5th Oct. 1895 flagged S³. No. 35030 ^{was} sanctioned by India for the construction of the ^{Solar Physics} ~~Solar~~ Observatory at Kodaikanal, vide G.O. 284, Pub. dated 18th March 1897 flagged P³. India was informed in G.O. No. 324 Pub. dated 2nd May 1897 flagged V³ that the building of the observatory had been permitted to be proceeded with at the urgent request of the Govt. Astronomer without waiting for the completion of the Astronomer's residence^{ce}. In G.O. No. 934, Pub. dated 19th July 1897 flagged M³ India requested that the building of the observatory might be pushed on as rapidly as possible as scientists in England were waiting

with keen interest the setting on foot of the Solar Spectra observation in India.

The Secretary of State now advises that the building should be stopped until the nature of the work to be done there is decided. That Solar Spectra observations are to be conducted is however already ^{settled} ~~settled~~ ~~settled~~, and it is for that purpose that the buildings and instruments have been decided upon. It will be seen from Mr Christie's letter in G.O. No. 20, dated 5th January 1898 that the ^{only} ~~only~~ question which has yet to be decided is whether India's reorganisation scheme in G.O. No. 1543, Pub., dated 21st December 1893 should be carried out in its entirety. The question whether any postponement of the work is necessary on account of this reorganisation scheme has already been ^{considered} ~~answered~~. Mr. Michie Smith has pointed out in his letter on G.O. 284, Pub., dated 18th March 1897 (flag P) that the Magnetical Dept. if taken to Kodaikanal will require a separate building, and that no postponement is necessary. It is therefore not clear why the Secretary of State wishes now to stop the work.

This Govt. has however little locus standi in the matter. It has agreed that both the Kodai and Madras Observatories should be Imperial. At the same time Govt. may reasonably object to the inconvenience and

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dislocation of work caused by these changes. At present this Govt. has all the responsibility of supervising the work and examining of and forwarding the indents, without ^{any} real voice in the arrangements. It would be better if India were to take on the whole arrangement itself.

Orders are solicited as to the step to be taken now. Mr. Michie Smith's official protest against the slur cast upon his professional reputation may perhaps be forwarded to India. Para. 7 is however somewhat out-spoken and will not improve matters. Perhaps for that reason a D.O. to the Secretary to the Govt. of India would be the simpler, as as it would probably be the quicker, course. Meanwhile the Secretary of State's advice, which comes really as an order from India, must if it is submitted be accepted.

Mr. M. Smith's letter (after the excision above noted) may be forwarded to India with a covering letter by telegraph. A request to be informed whether with ref. to paras 3 & 4 of his letter, the building now under construction should be stopped. if so advised. Meanwhile the work will presumably go on - i.e. for another week or ten days. The Sec. of S. seems to be under a misapp.

I think we should strongly protest agt. stopping the work. Unlikely increased expenditure will certainly result, pointing out that, whatever work has been taken in hand, the buildings now in progress are required for the work already decided on.

10.5.98

G
24
1/20-18-9-07.

C. 72. 5. 98
Rt. 13. 5. 98

Public DEPARTMENT.

Papers to be read in proceedings:—

Again G.O., No.	, dated	189 .
Again G.O., No. 605	, dated 28/4/98	189 .
Current No. 154	of 1898, dated	, from <i>Mrs. Ashmore</i>
" "	" 189 , "	" "
" "	" 189 , "	" "

Stoppage of work at the Kodaikanal Solar Physics observatory.

H. K. J. J. J.

(Letter to India)

ORDER. No. 657, of 14th May 1898.

The Govt. of India will be addressed.

LETTER:- No. 658, of 14th May '98.

To
The Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Rev. & Amr. Dept.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram No. 1011, dated 25th April 1898 communicating to this Govt. the advice of the Secretary of State that the building of the observatory at Kodaikanal should be stopped until the nature of the work to be done there has been finally settled.

In reply I am to forward for the consideration of the Govt. of India

P

10.5.98

a letter from the Govt. Astronomer in which he points out that the buildings now in progress are intended for the reception of instruments which have already been obtained or ordered. From Mr. Sly's letter No. 3771-33-12, dated 30th December 1897 it would appear that the reports of Sir Norman Lockyer and the Astronomer Royal mentioned in your telegram, have reference only to the scheme for the reorganization of Indian Observatories, described in Mr. Ibbetson's letter No. 3341/11-6, dated 13th November 1896. The adoption of this scheme will in no way affect the work for which provision has already been made in the buildings now in course of ~~erection~~ ^{erection} at Kodalkanal. If it should be decided to transfer to Kodalkanal the work of the Magnetical Dept. additional and separate accommodation will be required. H.E. the Governor in Council is inclined to believe that the advice of the Secretary of State has been given under a misapprehension. I am accordingly to request that this Govt. may be informed by ^{telegraph} ~~if~~ it is intended that the buildings now in progress, which are required for work already decided upon, should be stopped. I am to add that the stoppage of the work ^{will} ~~will~~ inevitably not lead not only to grave inconvenience but also to increased expenditure, and that H.E. the G. in C.

is strongly of opinion that the existing arrangements for the completion of these buildings should not be disturbed.
 12/5/98
 RA 12.5.98

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 Examined _____
 Signed _____

189

G.O. No. _____, DATED _____
 1898

No.

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of Government

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