Public Works (1898) Department.

RAILWAY BRANCH.

G.O., No. 526-27 Ry

DATED 4th April 1898

Includes
No. 85 & 86 R. md 22-2-98.

100/1

30/39

[Despatch Abstract.]

Change of Gauge

Ordered that the Govt. of India be addressed recommending the adoption of a very important change of policy in regard to the gauge of a considerable mileage of the south west part of the Madras Railway, and of its projected extensions

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Recommending the adoption of a very important change of policy in regard to the gauge of a considerable mileage of the south west part of the Madras Ry and of its projected extensions

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Indexed.

BACK PAPERS.

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Railway.

Read the following papers :—

From—The Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Madras, P. W. Dept., Ry. Branch.
To—The Under Secretary of State for India.
Dated—22nd February 1898, No. 85 R.M.

I am directed to inform you that the following telegram was despatched to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India on the 19th instant :—

"Please defer execution of contract Calicut-Cannanore pending receipt of letter Government of India about altering to metre gauge to correspond with projected metre extensions in the neighbourhood."

From—The Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Madras, P. W. Dept., Ry. Branch.
To—The Secretary to the Govt. of India., P. W. Dept.
Dated—22nd February 1898, No. 86 R.M.

I am directed to inform you that the following telegram was despatched to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India on the 19th instant :—

"Please defer execution of contract Calicut-Cannanore pending receipt of letter Government of India about altering to metre gauge to correspond with projected metre extensions in the neighbourhood."

2. The above telegram was sent with reference to D.O., dated 16th February 1898, from the Joint Secretary to the Government of Madras, Public Works Department, Railway Branch, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department.

Telegram—From the Secretary to the Govt. of India, P. W. Dept.
To—The Joint Secretary to the Government of Madras, P. W. Dept., Ry. Branch.
Dated—Calcutta, 7th March 1898.

No. 313 R.C. Your letter numbered and dated as follows: 86 R.M., 22nd ultimo. Government India much deprecate your acting on demi-official correspondence without even allowing time for reply and desire all work Calicut-Cannanore be stopped except such as will not be affected by change of gauge advocated by Madras Government.

Order—No. 526 Ry., dated 4th April 1898.

The Government of India will be addressed.

[Here enter No. 527 Ry., dated 4th April 1898.]

(True Extract.)

Joint Secretary.

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. W. D'Moss.

RAILWAY.

Government (1898) of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Enclosures

Recd. 1898.

Regd. Spare copies

G.O., No. 526 Ry., 4th April 1898.

APRIL.

Change of Gauge

Ordered that the Government of India be addressed recommending the adoption of a very important change of policy in regard to the gauge of a considerable mileage of the south-west part of the Madras Railway and of its projected extensions.

No. 527 Ry., 4th April 1898.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Railway.

Letter—from

Francis J. E. Spring, Esq., c.i.e,
Joint Secretary to the Government of Madras,
Public Works Department,
Railway Branch,

To

The SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA,
Public Works Department,
Simla.

Sir,

The telegraphic and demi-official correspondence which ended with your telegram No. 313 R.C., dated the 7th March 1898, have conveyed to the Government of India the information that this Government have had it in contemplation to recommend the adoption of a very important change of policy in regard to the gauge of a considerable mileage of the south-western part of the Madras Railway and of its projected extensions. It has been a source of regret to this Government, that circumstances have rendered it impossible for them to take an earlier opportunity to invite the Government of India into their confidence on the subject, and even now things are not quite ripe to allow of its doing so as fully as it would desire. Still, His Excellency the Governor in Council thinks that it is better, even prematurely, to inform the Government of India of what he has in view, in order that meanwhile, and pending the completion of certain preliminary negociations which have necessarily taken considerable time, they may have an opportunity of considering the matter in all its bearings, and of expressing their preliminary or absolute concurrence, or otherwise, in the scheme which I am now instructed to put forward.

2. Proposals for the extension of the Madras Railway Company's system, especially in the south-western direction, have always been met by the objection that there is no trade, nor is there ever likely to be a trade, in the tracts proposed to be served by such extensions, which might not be quite sufficiently well served by metre gauge branches costing from Rs. 50,000 per mile, like the Tanjore line, to Rs. 70,000 per mile. The result has been that the Madras Railway has been crossed at several points by the metre gauge system of the South Indian Railway Company and that they have, naturally enough, been greatly dissatisfied on account of this tapping of what they have rightly looked on as their lawful territory.

3. In India, where Government has so large a degree of control over rates, and where in one way or another it can when necessary bring pressure to bear on Companies over whom such control is not absolute, there is no necessity, or ought to be none, for encouraging a new railway Company to enter a trade tract in which another Company is already in possession. It is, in this Government's opinion, for the interest of the tax-payer that separate railway agencies or Companies should take separate tracts of country whose boundaries will usually be indicated by considerations of the wonted flow of trade, of its financing, and often by physical, social or other features. If so much be conceded, it follows that it is most undesirable that, owing to the fact that while their trunk line is on the broad gauge, the demands of the south-west districts would be adequately met by the metre, the Madras Railway Company should be forced to put up with seeing their lawful territory penetrated in every direction by a rival company. The sort of competition that results from such penetration is, in the opinion of this Government, good neither for the tax-payers, nor for the district producers, nor for the shareholders of the rival Companies. No Company liable to such encroachment can fairly be expected to develop its business so as to work up to its fullest capacity.

4. Considerations such as those came strongly to the front when it fell to this Government to carefully weigh the rival claims of the Madras and the South Indian Railway Companies to make and to work the proposed Podanur-Dindigul line. The Government of India will find this matter fully discussed in my letter, No. 533 R., dated the 5th August 1897; and in your letter, No. 1746 R.C., dated the 22nd October 1897, you expressed the Government of India's concurrence in the proposal to defer consideration of this line for the present, as also their preference for the metre gauge, a preference which coincided with that of this Government. The evidence which has accumulated during the last few months tends strongly to prove that not only is the trade of the districts which this proposed line would serve already largely in the hands of the Madras Railway Company to which it is attracted by feeder roads, but also that the requirements of the producers in the tract in question will be better met by a Company whose interest it will be to encourage flow towards Calicut and westward, than by one which will try to draw it eastwards and southwards.

5. Similar considerations have come even more strongly and emphatically to the front in connection with this Government's debates as to the proper agency for constructing and afterwards working the Erode-Nanjangod line. It may be thought that it is somewhat premature to take this project into consideration just yet: but the larger problem, towards the proper solution of which this letter is intended to contribute, demands that even at this early stage as full consideration as may, under the circumstances, be practicable should be given to all lines likely to form part of the network of railways which will be affected by the suggested change of policy. Owing to the fact of the South Indian Railway coming up to Erode, and to that of the Mysore State Railways coming down to Nanjangod, both being metre gauge lines, it seemed to this Government to be essential that the link connecting these two should, whenever constructed, be the metre. And yet, as things were a few months ago, this seemed to necessitate its being made by the South Indian Railway Company. The suggestion that the latter company should make this link gave rise, and very naturally too, to a strong remonstrance from the Madras Railway Company, who represented that the result to them could be a very heavy loss of earnings. Though the amount of the loss which the Madras Railway Company claimed would accrue to them seemed to this Government to be much exaggerated, when investigated on the basis of the present agreement under which the "shortest route" principle has been adopted by the Madras, Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railway Companies, nevertheless it was felt to be exceedingly unfair, and for the interest of nobody except the South Indian Railway Company's shareholders, that the latter Company should be permitted to stretch another arm across their broad gauge rival and thereby grasp so much of the trade of Southern Mysore as desired an outlet towards Madras. Still there was the difficulty that not only would the metre gauge amply suffice to carry the amount likely to be handled, but, as already expressed, it was essential, for reasons of general facility of communication, that this particular link should not differ in gauge from that of the systems which it was designed to connect.

6. While these difficulties were forming the subject of anxious consideration it came to the knowledge of His Excellency the Governor, while on tour, that His Highness the Rajah of Cochin had a strong desire to make the projected Shoranur-Cochin branch line, out of his own accumulated capital so far as it would go, and without direct financial aid from Government. Amongst the various considerations to which due weight had to be given in connection with His Highness' proposals, was the fact that it could not be denied that the country to be traversed offers no traffic, and, even if the line should hereafter be extended to join the projected Travancore lines, it never is likely to secure any traffic, which the metre gauge cannot perfectly well carry. And yet the branch in itself seemed too short to warrant a proposal being made that it should be made on a different gauge from the trunk line, unless it should be found possible to work it in direct connection with a larger system on the proposed narrower gauge.

7. These considerations gave rise to a conviction in the mind of His Excellency in Council that, pending the mature consideration of the whole problem of the best gauge for the projected south-western branches and extensions of the Madras Railway, it would be wrong and shortsighted to allow the broad gauge to be drifted into for the Calicut-Cannanore Railway. The outcome of this conviction was the demi-official and telegraphic correspondence already referred to ending in your telegraphic prohibition, dated the 7th March 1898, against any works being undertaken on the Calicut-Cannanore Railway which would prejudice the gauge question.

8. The Government of India have already been made aware, in my letter, No. 1054 R., dated the 30th November 1897, that the Madras Railway Company have lately, and in the opinion of this Government, most wisely, expressed their readiness to make and to work metre gauge extensions and branches. Proposals in connection with the financing of the Shoranur-Cochin line are not yet quite ripe enough to be put forward, owing to certain difficulties, which will doubtless disappear, about the provision of land in the few miles of Travancore territory that the line must cross. But meanwhile His Highness the Rajah of Cochin has expressed his unreserved acceptance of the metre gauge for the line which he proposes to own and finance; and the receipt of this expression of the Rajah's wishes puts this Government in a position, for the first time, to address the Government of India on the subject of the change of gauge policy which is the main subject of this letter, and which, after the explanation offered in the preceding paragraphs, I am now instructed to put forward for the Government of India's consideration.

9. The policy to which the assent of the Government of India is asked is practically this, that sooner or later the Madras Railway and all its branches from Podanur westward should, in the near future, be on the metre gauge: and that, as soon as it is decided to make the Erode-Nanjangod link, that branch, as well as the Erode-Podanur section, should also be on the metre gauge. The metre gauge sections of the Madras Railway would then be as follows:—

	Miles.	
New branches—		
Calicut-Cannanore	62	
Shoranur-Cochin	73	
Podanur-Dindigul	118	
Erode-Nanjangod-Mysore	130	(including 15 already open).
Existing broad gauge sections—		
Erode-Podanur	60	
Podanur-Shoranur	57	
Shoranur-Calicut	54	
Podanur-Mettupalaiyam	26	
Total future metre gauge section to be worked by the Madras Railway Company	580 miles.	

This programme would involve the conversion of 197 miles of existing broad gauge line, and the construction as opportunity permits of 368 miles of new metre line.

10. I am instructed to explain that it is not desired that this entire scheme of conversion and of extension should be entered on blindly and immediately. It is perfectly well understood that two of the proposed extensions must in all probability await their turn for a place in the general railway programme for all India. Again, it is quite foreseen that even after the Erode-Mysore connection is completed it is a question for comparative estimates to decide whether it is likely to pay better to convert the Podanur-Erode section, or that the Madras Railway Company should arrange for the repairs of their rolling stock on this branch locally, with assistance when necessary from the Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railway Companies.

11. Podanur, where already there is a good deal of engine accommodation, would become the chief locomotive centre for the 580 miles of metre gauge railway, while Shoranur would become the engine-homing centre for the three runs — Shoranur to Cannanore 116 miles, Shoranur to Podanur 117 miles, and the Shoranur-Cochin branch 73 miles. The Podanur-Dindigul branch 118 miles, and the Podanur-Mettupalaiyam branch 26 miles, with its extension 32 miles further to Ootacamund, would be worked from Podanur, while the branch to Mysore would be worked from the existing engine sheds at Erode. The main line on the standard gauge between Erode and Madras would be worked as at present in two lengths of 132 and 111 miles from Jalarpet as an engine station.

12. Thus there would only be one great tranship station, viz., that at Erode; and there would be the freest possible interchange of rolling stock between the South Indian Railway, the Southern Mahratta Railway and the 580 mile metre section of the Madras Railway.

13. The considerations which have led to this proposal being put forward are so many and so complicated that some difficulty is experienced in marshalling them in such a way that they shall be as convincing to the Government of India as they have been to this Government. What I am instructed now to press for is that if the Government of India, after a careful consideration of the arguments now adduced, should concur with this Government as to the wisdom of the proposed policy, the whole programme should be laid before the Madras Railway Company through the Secretary of State, with a promise that, if they should agree to adopt it, their right to the construction and working of the Dindigul line and of the branch to Mysore would be definitely recognized; and that, conditionally of course on detailed inquiries and estimates proving that the Dindigul and the Nanjangod branches would be likely to be commercially successful, the Company would be enabled to raise the capital required for their construction on terms similar to the Calicut-Cannanore terms, as soon as it is decided that the time is ripe for including them in the railway programme for all India.

14. I am instructed to suggest that the Madras Railway Company's views should at once be sought, in the light of the information and opinions contained in this letter, and that they be pressed to agree to the construction of the Calicut-Cannanore line being at once proceeded with on the metre gauge.

15. The principles underlying the recommendations now put forward, viz., that it is wisest that means should be co-ordinated with ends, so that a railway costing 1¼ lakhs per mile should not be constructed to do the work that may perfectly well be done by a railway costing ¾ lakh per mile, and that in its turn the latter should only under very exceptional circumstances be used when ¼ lakh per mile would suffice, are the same principles which also came into prominence, and which carried great weight with this Government, when its recent letter on the subject of famine feeder railways, No. 169, dated 22nd March 1898, was under consideration; and I am instructed here to repeat that it is better, in the opinion of His Excellency the Governor in Council, that the credit of the railway Companies, backed as it is by the public credit, should be employed in securing as large as possible a mileage of a sufficiently good means of transport rather than that, for the sake of uniformity of system and of gauge, a uniformity which may easily be too dearly purchased, a comparatively small mileage of too good a means of transport should be provided.

16. The object which this Government has in view is so to utilize the credit of the railway Companies, which as just observed is practically the public credit, that in as brief a term of years and at as small an expense as are in every way consistent with economy and efficiency, as large a tract of country as possible may be brought within the area of influence of the railway system.

17. This object will, in the opinion of this Government, by the adoption of the programme now put forward, be brought nearer to accomplishment than will ever be possible if Government and the Madras Railway Company determine to continue to adhere to the policy, or absence of policy, which has heretofore been in force, and which has resulted in so serious a departure from the principle so strongly advocated by this Government, that as far as possible one trade tract should be served by one railway.

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

Francis J. E. Spring

Joint Secretary.

Fort St. George,
4th April 1898.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

RAILWAY.

Government (1898) of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

B

Recd. } 1898. *Enclosures*
Regd. } *Spare copies*

Letter, No. 527 Ry., 4th April 1898.

APRIL.

Change of Gauge

Recommending the adoption of a very important change of policy in regard to the gauge of a considerable mileage of the south-west part of the Madras Railway and of its projected extensions.

A

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

LETTER to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India.

No. $\frac{3}{526 \text{ Ry.}}$, dated 7th April 1898.

*FORWARDING copy of letter to the Government of India regarding the change of gauge on the Madras Railway and its branches and extensions.

No. $\frac{3}{526 \text{ Ry.}}$, 7th April 1898.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Letter—to

The Right Honourable the SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA.

My Lord,

With reference to our telegram of the 19th February last repeated in the margin, we have the honour to forward, herewith, a copy of our letter No. 527 Ry., dated 4th April 1898, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, which deals with the question of a suggested change of gauge from standard to metre on the Madras Railway and its branches and extensions westwards from Erode.

Please defer execution of contract Calicut-Cannanore pending receipt of letter Government of India about altering to metre gauge to correspond with projected metre extensions in the neighbourhood.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servants,

Fort St. George,
7th April 1898.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

DAR

Please have this part of note the original of G.O. $\frac{526}{527}$ Ry of 4th April 1898

I think these notes had better be printed & a copy sent here for the Metre Gauge Conversion file

(2) at Podanur and,

Consulting Engr's Current No. 209

SERIAL
No. 2

SNo 1

In the accompanying letter No. $\frac{9085}{28}$. dated the 10th. Jan. 98. from the Agent Madras Ry. to the Con. Engr. an enquiry is made whether Govt. would be disposed to sanction the making of a survey between Podanur and Dindigul by the Madras Ry. Co. and if so, whether estimates should be prepared for a standard or metre gauge line.

His Excellency and Hon. Members are aware that we have already deferred consideration of the S. I. Ry. Co's offer to make this line, on the grounds that we are not quite sure whether it ought properly to be worked by that Company or by the Madras Ry. Co.

I think that there is no doubt that the Madras Ry. Co. are already the carriers of the trade of the greater part of the tract of country to be served.

A reference to the blue pamphlet put up below will show that the Madras Ry. Co. have already made a traffic survey of the country. The important towns which it is desired to serve are so scattered about

Urgent

+ G.O. No 875 Ry 7 8.8.99

H. E. The Governor

The Hon Sir H. Bliss KCIE

" " Mr Grose CIS

I should like to know the views of Hon. Members on the proposals made in this Note, — especially ~~[illegible]~~ on the proposal to change the gauge of the Calicut Cannanore section, — before I express my own views.

A.G.H

12.2.98

Put very briefly, the Cons: Engr's idea is that all the railways North, West & South of Podanur should be on the metre gauge, which will amply provide for the requirements of the country traversed, and (ultimately) establish a through communication from South to North of the west Coast, from Trevandrum to Cannanore (~~[illegible]~~ connected with the rest of the Indian Railway system (1) at Tinnevelly (2) at Podanur and, someday or other

12.2.98

14.2.98

Cons Engr's Current No 209

SERIAL No. 2

SN 1

In the accompanying letter No. $\frac{9085}{28}$ dated the 10th Jan. 98. from the Agent Madras Ry to the Con. Engr. an enquiry is made whether Govt. would be disposed to sanction the making of a survey between Podanur and Dindigul by the Madras Ry. Co. and if so, whether estimates should be prepared for a standard or metre gauge line.

His Excellency and Hon Members are aware that we have already deferred consideration of the S. I. Ry. Co's offer to make this line, on the grounds that we are not quite sure whether it ought properly to be worked by that Company or by the Madras Ry. Co.

I think that there is no doubt that the Madras Ry. Co. are already the carriers of the trade of the greater part of the tract of country to be served.

A reference to the blue pamphlet put up below will show that the Madras Ry. Co. have already made a traffic survey of the country. The important towns which it is desired to serve are so scattered about that it is difficult to say how it would be best for a line to run. But everyone concerned seems now to agree that the best line would be from Podanur to Dindigul via Pollachi, Udamalpet, and Palni, leaving Dharapuram to be served by a branch if necessary.

There is no doubt but that near the south end of the proposed line, perhaps from Palni southward, the South Indian Railway's territory begins to be encroached upon. But they cannot reasonably object to this considering the many places where they have encroached on Madras Ry. territory already. The fact is that there is not a part of this Presidency which would not be sufficiently well served by a well equipped metre gauge system, and so long as the idea was prevalent that the Madras Ry. Co. must not touch a metre gauge railway, there was naturally nothing for it, if it was evident that a standard gauge line was not needed, but to allow the S.I.R. to take it.

Now however the Madras Ry. Co. are less shortsighted, and they will in future

in the next century, via Coorg at (3) some station in the Mysore Territory — I approve entirely; and should put the screw on to the M.R. Co. by saying that if they wanted the Podanur-Dindigul line (which they may reasonably ask for) they must assent to the metre gauge for the Calicut-Cannanore & the Shoranur-Cochin lines —

HS
14/2/98

I agree, & think the G of I should be addressed as proposed about the Calicut-Cannanore Line.

JG
14/2/98

I accept the opinion of Hon. Members.

A.E.H
14.2.98

HG
14.2.98
R
15.2.98

gladly make and work Metre gauge branches.

It will be seen that they contemplate the conversion of the Podanur Mettupollium section to the Metre gauge. Since they are about to work the Ootacamund Ry. this conversion is the right thing. From their important locomotive centre of Podanur they would, if they got the Dindigul line, work south to Dindigul with one set of engines, and north to Ootacamund with another train service (possibly, but not likely or necessarily, with the rack engines which are adapted for adhesion running also). For Calicut and Madras passengers it makes no difference whether they change into the metre gauge at Podanur or Mettupollium. The conversion of the Podanur Mettupollium length also opens the question of extension thence to Satyamangalam in connection with the access to Mysore which the Madras Ry. Co. hope to secure via Nanjangud. Thus the use of the metre gauge for the proposed Podanur Dindigul line forms part of a larger scheme, and meanwhile for long there will certainly be no more traffic than the metre gauge can handle. I strongly advise that all question of making the Podanur Dindigul line on the standard gauge be definitely set aside.

It should be recollected that in 1907, in fact only 3 or 4 years after this and other lines now approaching completion shall have become ready for working, the whole what I may call "political" situation as between the two Railway Companies will have become changed. The Madras Ry. will become the property of the State and the new Madras Ry. Co. who will work it will have entirely different interests from those of the present Company. By that time it is probable that Cochin and Ernakulam may be converted up on the metre gauge, and if the Cochin Rajah now gets his branch on the metre gauge, it will be possible to hand over to the South Indian just as large or as small a mileage as we choose of those lines which in its own interests the Madras Ry. Co. now proposes to make on the Metre gauge.

Since this important new departure about the Madras Railway Company and

I think he ought to have his line on the metre gauge. A.G.R.

metre gauge lines has come about, I am feeling rather sorry that we did not press for the Calicut Cannanore line being made on the Metre gauge. Then it would certainly have become merely a question of time to have converted the Podanur Calicut section, leaving no broad gauge line in Madras Presidency except the sections from Madras to Raichore, from Arkonam to Podanur, and from Madras to Orissa. Perhaps it may be considered to be too [illegible] late now to reopen the question of the gauge of the Calicut Cannanore line. I do not mean *actually* too late, because work has not advanced to any appreciable extent. What I mean is that [illegible] it might be thought that the Govt. of India and the Madras Ry. Co. would take so long to agree about the proposal that it would be unwise to raise it. It occurs to me however that it might be a good opportunity to raise it, if we learn from Mr. Rees that the Cochin Rajah wishes to make his line on the Metre gauge. Do His Excellency and Hon. Members desire that advantage should be taken of this opportunity before it is too late?

What suggests itself to me is that on learning the Rajah of Cochin's wishes, we should send a special letter to the Govt of India about this subject, saying that it seems a pity to drift into what may hereafter seem a mistaken policy, and that nothing has yet been done on the Calicut Cannanore that need commit us to the ~~[illegible]~~ standard gauge in any way. The Madras Ry. Co. need have no more objection to working this on the metre gauge than the Cochin line or the Dindigul line or the proposed metre gauge Podanur Mettapalaiyam Ootacamund line. I do not quite like taking the initiative in suggesting what looks so revolutionary without having previously talked it over with H.E. But on the other hand I think that to write to India, as I suggest, would be a most wise and farseeing thing to do in the interest of the Presidency, looking well ahead and all round. The metre gauge Cochin idea is so very recent a one that I have scarcely had time until now to realise all it might mean.

I do not propose to reply to the Agent Madras Ry. Co. about the proposed Survey of the Podanur Dindigul line just yet, so I ~~[illegible]~~ ask for no orders upon it just for the moment.

As H.E. is so soon going on tour, and as this matter is very urgent if it is to be dealt with at all, I would suggest that if the idea above worked out commends itself to H.E. and Hon Members, and if H.E. knows from Mr Rees that it is very likely that the Cochin Rajah will propose to make his line on the metre gauge we should address India at once somewhat on the following lines.

(a) The construction of the Calicut Cannanore line has been sanctioned on the ~~[illegible]~~ Standard gauge. But nothing has as yet been done which would commit Govt. to this gauge and it is still possible, without appreciably delaying the work, to reconsider the question of gauge.

(b) This Govt expects in a few days to get a proposal from the Cochin Rajah which may result in the entire Shoranur Cochin line being made on the metre gauge at the Rajah's own expense and with no aid of any sort, except perhaps very slight aid from Govt.

(c) The Agent of the Madras Ry. has been making enquiries about the Podanur Dindigul line, and the metre gauge has suggested itself as being amply sufficient. But owing to the fact that the country to be tapped is the Madras Ry. Co's territory, it seems certainly right that this line, if ever made on the metre gauge, should be worked by the Madras Ry. Co.

(d) The Agent Madras Ry. quite contemplates the possibility of the gauge being metre and refers to the likelihood of its being found necessary to convert the Podanur Mettupolliam section to that gauge in connection with the nearly matured arrangements for their working the Nilgiri Ry.

(e) The conversion at some subsequent time of the Podanur Shoranur Calicut section seems to follow logically on the natural development of the schemes above referred to.

(f.) But (e) is not essential, in view of the probability of the extension of the Cochin metre line to join the Travancore metre line at Quilon, which would necessitate, for the sake of symmetry of working, either the conversion of the Shoranur – Calicut section or the construction of a metre gauge connecting link from the Cochin line to the Cannanore line.

(g) In view of all these considerations Madras might be asked whether they would be disposed to reopen the question of the gauge of the Calicut Cannanore line.

I think that Mr Moore would aid us at this side by putting the thing to his Board from our point of view. I know that he fully realises that now that the termination of their existence as a Guaranteed Company is approaching, all such questions as these are really more a State matter than a Company's matter.

It might very well be made a condition of their getting the Dindigul line that the Madras Ry. Co. should consent at once to have the gauge of the Calicut Cannanore line altered. We might suggest this to India, and say that it might not to be impossible to put things in train by telegraph.

I cannot help feeling that it would have been better if this had not been sprung so suddenly on H.E. and Hon Members. But it was only since speaking to Mr Rees that I have realized that owing to the Cochin Rajah's intelligent attitude, it may at last be possible to realize what I have for some time past thought would be the right policy, though it seemed quite hopeless to put it forward.

F.J.E.S.

12/2/98

Office of Consulting Engineer for Railways,
MADRAS,

14 – 2 – 1898.

My dear Sim

Perhaps H.E. may just have time to glance through this before leaving, or you might take it with you and post it back to me when H.E. can find leisure to pass orders. I do not think I need send more than the Note itself, as the question is the suggest this to India, and say that it ought not to be impossible to put things in train by telegraph.

I cannot help feeling that it would have been better if this had not been sprung so suddenly on H.E. and Hon Members. But it was only since speaking to Dr Rees that I have realised that owing to the Bobbili Rajah's intelligent attitude, it may at last be possible to realise what I have for some time past thought would be the right policy, though it seemed quite hopeless to put it forward.

F.K.S.

12/2/35

---

very broad one of policy and not the narrow one of the Dindigul Ry. The latter can wait.

Yours sincerely

Francis K. Spring

SERIAL No. 6

The following telegram will issue to the H.R. the Sec. of State for India India Office London.

Please defer completion Calicut Cannanore agreement pending receipt copy letter to Government of India about altering gauge to metre in consonance with other projected metre extensions in neighbourhood

F.L.S.
18/2/98

Copy by post to India with reference to D.O. dated 15-2-98 from Joint Sec. P.W.D. Govt. Madras to Sec. P.W.D., India

F.L.S.
18/2/98

RM-

No. 85 R.M.
86 R.M.

SERIAL
No. 7

Government of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

To

The Under Secy: of State for India
The Secy: to the Govt: of India

22nd February 1898.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that the following telegram was despatched to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India on the 19th Instant.

Please defer execution of Contract Calicut-Cannanore pending receipt of letter Government of India about altering to metre gauge to correspond with projected metre extensions in the neighbourhood.

~~2. It was sent in reply to the following telegram from the Secretary of State.~~

2. The above Telegram ~~It~~ was sent with reference to D.O. of 16.2.98 from the Joint Secy to the Govt: of Madras P.W.D. Ry Branch to the Secy: to the Govt of India P.W.D.

22/2/98. This para is for letter to India only.

100-7-10-92.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

21/2

SERIAL No. 12

Public Works (1898) Department.

Railway

CURRENT No. 336

From

The Govt. of India

Order

Telegram. No. 313 R.C.

Dated 7th March 1898

Received
Registered 8 3 - 98

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Calicut - Cannanore. Ry

Desiring to stop all work on the — except such as will not be affected by change of gauge advocated by Madras Government.

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

The Govt of India

Telegram 313 RC

7th March 1898

Calicut, Cannanore Ry

Desiring to stop all work on the — except such as will not be affected by change of gauge advocated by Madras Government

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Print

T—14.

DS **INDIAN TELEGRAPH.** Month Local No. 138

Zrplanine From Station Calcutta

Words.	Day	Hour.	Minute.	Official Instruction.
54/5	7	11	33	fd

To (Person) Works Railway

From (Person) Works

RECEIVED 8 MAR 1898 MADRAS.

1 313 R. C. (1) applauding

W 2 86 R. M. (2) anmialing

3 government india

4 much deprecate your

5 acting on demi

6 official correspondence

7 without even allowing

8 time for reply and

9 desire all work

10 calicut cannanore

11 be stopped except

12 such as will not

13 be affected by change

14 of gauge advocated

1 by madras government.

(1) your letter numbered & dated as follows

(2) 22nd ultimo

Form No. (2.)

P.W. Ry C. 336

Af

100/1

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

RAILWAY BRANCH.

No. 526. Ry dated 4/4

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Print

READ the following

Letters to the (1) Under Secy of State for India (2) Secy to the Govt of India No. 85-86 Rev of 22-2-98

Print Telegram from the Govt: of India P.W.D. } H.E. No. 313 R.C. 27th March 189

3

The Government of India will be addressed

Also read No. $\frac{85}{86}$ R.R. dated 22nd Feb 98.

F.M.

F.J.S.

R

2/4/98

H.E. No. 527. Ry dated 4/4/98.

Please say if any more papers are to be read.

$\frac{3}{526\ \text{Ry}}$ of 4-4-98.

To

The Consg Engr for Rys

No. 527 Ry

From

FRANCIS J. E. SPRING, ESQ., C.I.E,
Joint Secretary to the Government of Madras,
Public Works Department,
Railway Branch,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,
SIMLA.

Dated Madras, 4th April 1898.

SIR,

The telegraphic and demi-official correspondence which ended with your telegram No. 313 R.C., dated the 7th March 1898, have conveyed to the Government of India the information that this Government have had it in contemplation to recommend the adoption of a very important change of policy in regard to the gauge of a considerable mileage of the south-western part of the Madras Railway and of its projected extensions. It has been a source of regret to this Government, that circumstances have rendered it impossible for them to take an earlier opportunity to invite the Government of India into their confidence on the subject, and even now things are not quite ripe to allow of its doing so as fully as it would desire. Still, His Excellency the Governor in Council thinks that it is better, even prematurely, to inform the Government of India of what he has in view, in order that meanwhile, and pending the completion of certain preliminary negociations which have necessarily taken considerable time, they may have an opportunity of considering the matter in all its bearings, and of expressing their preliminary or absolute concurrence, or otherwise, in the scheme which I am now instructed to put forward.

4/4/9

4/

5.4.98

2. Proposals for the extension of the Madras Railway Company's system, especially in the south-western direction, have always been met by the objection that there is no trade, nor is there ever likely to be a trade, in the tracts proposed to be served by such extensions, which might not be quite sufficiently well served by metre gauge branches costing from Rs. 50,000 per mile, like the Tanjore line, to Rs. 70,000 per mile. The result has been that the Madras Railway has been crossed at several points by the metre gauge system of the South Indian Railway Company and that they have, naturally enough, been greatly dissatisfied on account of this tapping of what they have rightly looked on as their lawful territory.

3. In India, where Government has so large a degree of control over rates, and where in one way or another it can when necessary bring pressure to bear on Companies over whom such control is not absolute, there is no necessity, or ought to be none, for encouraging a new railway Company to enter a trade tract in which another Company is already in possession. It is, in this Government's opinion, for the interest of the tax-payer that separate railway agencies or Companies should take separate tracts of country whose boundaries will usually be indicated by considerations of the wonted flow of trade, of its financing, and often by physical, social or other features. If so much be conceded, it follows that it is most undesirable that, owing to the fact that while their trunk line is on the broad gauge, the demands of the south-west districts would be adequately met by the metre, the Madras Railway Company should be forced to put up with seeing their lawful territory penetrated in every direction by a rival company. The sort of competition that results from such penetration is, in the opinion of this Government, good neither for the tax-payers, nor for the district producers, nor for the shareholders of the rival Companies. No Company liable to such encroachment can fairly be expected to develop its business so as to work up to its fullest capacity.

4. Considerations such as those came strongly to the front when it fell to this Government to carefully weigh the rival claims of the Madras and the South Indian Railway Companies to make and to work the proposed Podanur-Dindigul line. The Government of India will find this matter fully discussed in my letter, No. 533, dated the 5th August 1897; and in your letter, No. 1746 R.C., dated the 22nd October 1897, you expressed the Government of India's concurrence in the proposal to defer consideration of this line for the present, as also their preference for the metre gauge, a preference which coincided with that of this Government. The evidence which has accumulated during the last few months tends strongly to prove that not only is the trade of the districts which this proposed line would serve already largely in the hands of the Madras Railway Company to which it is attracted by feeder roads, but also that the requirements of the producers in the tract in question will be better met by a Company whose interest it will be to encourage flow towards Calicut and westward, than by one which will try to draw it eastwards and southwards.

5. Similar considerations have come even more strongly and emphatically to the front in connection with this Government's debates as to the proper agency for constructing and afterwards working the Erode-Nanjangod line. It may be thought that it is somewhat premature to take this project into consideration just yet: but the larger problem, towards the proper solution of which this letter is intended to contribute, demands that even at this early stage as full consideration as may, under the circumstances, be practicable should be given to all lines likely to form part of the network of railways which will be affected by the suggested change of policy Owing to the fact of the South Indian Railway coming up to Erode, and to that of the Mysore State Railways coming down to Nanjangod, both being metre gauge lines, it seemed to this Government to be essential that the link connecting these two should, whenever constructed, be the metre. And yet, as things were a few months ago, this seemed to necessitate its being made by the South Indian Railway Company. The suggestion that the latter company should make this link gave rise, and very naturally too, to a strong remonstrance from the Madras Railway Company, who represented that the result to them could be a very heavy loss of earnings. Though the amount of the loss which the Madras Railway Company claimed would accrue to them seemed to this Government to be much exaggerated, when investigated on the basis of the present agreement under which the "shortest route" principle has been adopted by the Madras, Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railway Companies, nevertheless it was felt to be exceedingly unfair, and for the interest of nobody except the South Indian Railway Company's shareholders, that the latter Company should be permitted to stretch another arm across their broad gauge rival and thereby grasp so much of the trade of Southern Mysore as desired an outlet towards Madras. Still there was the difficulty that not only would the metre gauge amply suffice to carry the amount likely to be handled, but, as already expressed, it was essential, for reasons of general facility of communication, that this particular link should not differ in gauge from that of the systems which it was designed to connect.

6. While these difficulties were forming the subject of anxious consideration it came to the knowledge of His Excellency the Governor, while on tour, that His Highness the Rajah of Cochin had a strong desire to make the projected Shoranore-Cochin branch line, out of his own accumulated capital so far as it would go, and without direct financial aid from Government. Amongst the various considerations to which due weight had to be given in connection with His Highness' proposals, was the fact that it could not be denied that the country to be traversed offers no traffic, and, even if the line should hereafter be extended to join the projected Travancore lines, it never is likely to secure any traffic, which the metre gauge cannot perfectly well carry. And yet the branch in itself seemed too short to warrant a proposal being made that it should be made on a different gauge from the trunk line, unless it should be found possible to work it in direct connection with a larger system on the proposed narrower gauge.

7. These considerations gave rise to a conviction in the mind of His Excellency in Council that, pending the mature consideration of the whole problem of the best gauge for the projected south-western branches and extensions of the Madras Railway, it would be wrong and shortsighted to allow the broad gauge to be drifted into for the Calicut-Cannanore Railway. The outcome of this conviction was the demi-official and telegraphic correspondence already referred to ending in your telegraphic prohibition, dated the 7th March 1898, against any works being undertaken on the Calicut-Cannanore Railway which would prejudice the gauge question.

8. The Government of India have already been made aware, in my letter, No. 1054 R., dated the 30th November 1897, that the Madras Railway Company have lately, and in the opinion of this Government, most wisely, expressed their readiness to make and to work metre gauge extensions and branches. Proposals in connection with the financing of the Shoranur-Cochin line are not yet quite ripe enough to be put forward, owing to certain difficulties, which will doubtless disappear, about the provision of land in the few miles of Travancore territory that the line must cross. But meanwhile His Highness the Rajah of Cochin has expressed his unreserved acceptance of the metre gauge for the line which he proposes to own and finance; and the receipt of this expression of the Rajah's wishes puts this Government in a position, for the first time, to address the Government of India on the subject of the change of gauge policy which is the main subject of this letter, and which, after the explanation offered in the preceding paragraphs, I am now instructed to put forward for the Government of India's consideration.

9. The policy to which the assent of the Government of India is asked is practically this, that sooner or later the Madras Railway and all its branches from Podanur westward should, in the near future, be on the metre gauge: and that, as soon as it is decided to make the Erode-Nanjangod link, that branch, as well as the Erode-Podanur section, should also be on the metre gauge. The metre gauge sections of the Madras Railway would then be as follows:—

	Miles.
New branches—	
Calicut-Cannanore	62
Shoranur-Cochin	73
Podanur-Dindigul	118
Erode-Nanjangod-Mysore	130 (including 15 already open).
Existing broad gauge sections—	
Erode-Podanur	60
Podanur-Shoranur	57
Shoranur-Calicut	54
Podanur-Mettupolliam	26
Total future metre gauge section to be worked by the Madras Railway Company	580 miles.

This programme would involve the conversion of 197 miles of existing broad gauge line, and the construction as opportunity permits of 368 miles of new metre line.

10. I am instructed to explain that it is not desired that this entire scheme of conversion and of extension should be entered on blindly and immediately. It is perfectly well understood that two of the proposed extensions must in all probability await their turn for a place in the general railway programme for all India. Again, it is quite foreseen that even after the Erode-Mysore connection is completed it is a question for comparative estimates to decide whether it is likely to pay better to convert the Podanur-Erode section, or that the Madras Railway Company should arrange for the repairs of their rolling stock on this branch locally, with assistance when necessary from the Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railway Companies.

11. Podanur, where already there is a good deal of engine accommodation, would become the chief locomotive centre for the 580 miles of metre gauge railway, while Shoranur would become the engine-homing centre for the three runs — Shoranur to Cannanore 116 miles, Shoranur to Podanur 117 miles, and the Shoranur-Cochin branch 73 miles. The Podanur-Dindigul branch 118 miles, and the Podanur-Mettupolliam branch 26 miles, with its extension 32 miles further to Ootacamund, would be worked from Podanur, while the branch to Mysore would be worked from the existing engine sheds at Erode. The main line on the standard gauge between Erode and Madras would be worked as at present in two lengths of 132 and 111 miles from Jalarpet as an engine station.

12. Thus there would only be one great tranship station, viz., that at Erode; and there would be the freest possible interchange of rolling stock between the South Indian Railway, the Southern Mahratta Railway and the 580 mile metre section of the Madras Railway.

13. The considerations which have led to this proposal being put forward are so many and so complicated that some difficulty is experienced in marshalling them in such a way that they shall be as convincing to the Government of India as they have been to this Government. What I am instructed now to press for is that if the Government of India, after a careful consideration of the arguments now adduced, should concur with this Government as to the wisdom of the proposed policy, the whole programme should be laid before the Madras Railway Company through the Secretary of State, with a promise that, if they should agree to adopt it, their right to the construction and working of the Dindigul line and of the branch to Mysore would be definitely recognized; and that, conditionally of course on detailed inquiries and estimates proving that the Dindigul and the Nanjangod branches would be likely to be commercially successful, the Company would be enabled to raise the capital required for their construction on terms similar to the Calicut-Cannanore terms, as soon as it is decided that the time is ripe for including them in the railway programme for all India.

14. I am instructed to suggest that the Madras Railway Company's views should at once be sought, in the light of the information and opinions contained in this letter, and that they be pressed to agree to the construction of the Calicut-Cannanore line being at once proceeded with on the metre gauge.

15. The principles underlying the recommendations now put forward, viz., that it is wisest that means should be co-ordinated with ends, so that a railway costing $1\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs per mile should not be constructed to do the work that may perfectly well be done by a railway costing $\frac{3}{4}$ lakh per mile, and that in its turn the latter should only under very exceptional circumstances be used when $\frac{1}{4}$ lakh per mile would suffice, are the same principles which also came into prominence, and which carried great weight with this Government, when its recent letter on the subject of famine feeder railways, No. 169, dated 22nd March 1898, was under consideration; and I am instructed here to repeat that it is better, in the opinion of His Excellency the Governor in Council, that the credit of the railway Companies, backed as it is by the public credit, should be employed in securing as large as possible a mileage of a sufficiently good means of transport rather than that, for the sake of uniformity of system and of gauge, a uniformity which may easily be too dearly purchased, a comparatively small mileage of too good a means of transport should be provided.

16. The object which this Government has in view is so to utilize the credit of the railway Companies, which as just observed is practically the public credit, that in as brief a term of years and at as small an expense as are in every way consistent with economy and efficiency, as large a tract of country as possible may be brought within the area of influence of the railway system.

17. This object will, in the opinion of this Government, by the adoption of the programme now put forward, be brought nearer to accomplishment than will ever be possible if Government and the Madras Railway Company determine to continue to adhere to the policy, or absence of policy, which has heretofore been in force, and which has resulted in so serious a departure from the principle so strongly advocated by this Government, that as far as possible one trade tract should be served by one railway.

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

Francis J. E. Spring,
Joint Secretary.

5/4/98

RAILWAY.

Government {1898} of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Recd.	} 1898.	*Enclosures*
Regd.		*Spare copies*

Letter, No. Ry., April 1898.

APRIL.

A.R.

draft a brief despatch to Sec of State, referring to our recent telegram to him, and sending him a copy of our letter to India about change of gauge.

FWS

1/4

Have this all ready to be signed by H.E. and Hon Members. as soon as the draft letter is settled. It is urgently necessary that it should go not later than the English mail of the 7th

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Office of Consulting Engineer for Railways,
MADRAS,

4 – 4 – 1898.

Dear Sir Henry

I am sending you a despatch for signature, though I know you are not supposed to be signing just now. But I think you would wish to sign this.

~~May I also ask you to initial the copy of the letter just up. Because H.E. and Hon Members initial ha~~

1870 ...

Govt: of India P.W. Deptt: which deals with the question of a suggested ~~the~~ change of gauge from standard to metre on the Madras Railway & its branches and extensions westwards from Erode

FW

1/4/98

Despatched on 7/4/98

Government

PUBL

[illegible]

Recd.
Regd. } 1898.

Letter, No. Ry., April 1898.

APRIL.

My dear Spring

I have signed despatch. But, before you send it off, please make sure that we are in the right in addressing the S. of S. direct on such a subject. There are distinct rules, the infringement of which makes India very angry, as to the way in which we are to correspond with the S. of S. on certain subjects, among which I think railways would be included because they affect financial questions. I am under the impression that in such a case we are not at liberty to write direct, but are bound to send our despatches through India. If you haven't the rules in your dept., please ask Public or Financial. They will know & can at once let you know. It would prejudice our

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Office of Consulting Engineer for Railways,
MADRAS,

4-4-1898.

Dear Sir Henry

I am sending you a despatch for signature, though I know you are not supposed to be signing just now. But I think you would wish to sign this.

~~May I also ask you to initial the copy of the letter just up. Because H. E. & the Members initial the~~

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of

1898 to the Secretary to the Govt: of India P.W. Deptt: which deals with the question of ~~the~~ a suggested change of gauge from standard to metre on the Madras Railway & its branches and extensions westwards from Erode

F W

5/4/98

Despatched on 7/4/98

Indexed. 18/4/98.

in the hurry of circulation, got affixed to a rough looking "galley proof" which is scarcely fit to be permanently placed on our records.

Weightman who of course had not got your wire about a chair for you, writes to day that he has arranged chairs for Lady Blair & Miss Todhunter.

Yours sincerely
Francis J. E. Spring

case to put India's back up, so for goodness' sake dont let us do so.

~~I have wired Weightman as you suggested, so I suppose we shall be a procession of chairs!~~

Yours sincerely
H. W. Bliss
4/4/98

FR Herewith reply

The Despatch may issue. VL 5/4/98

The procedure is not a contravention of the principle laid down in India Home Dept. letter No. 2546. dated 17th June 72.

FWS
5/4/98

APRIL.

No 3/526 Ry

P. W. D. Ry: Branch
Madras 7th April 1898

To
The Rt. Hon: the Secy: of State
for India

My Lord

With reference to our telegram of the 19th February last repeated in the margin, we have the honour to forward herewith a copy of our letter No 527 Ry 4th April 1898 to the Secretary to the Govt: of India P. W. Deptt: which deals with the question of ~~the~~ a suggested change of gauge from standard to metre on the Madras Railway & its branches & extensions westwards from Erode

Please defer execution of contract Calicut Cannanore pending receipt of letter Govt: of India about altering to metre gauge to correspond with projected metre extensions in the neighbourhood.

FW
5/4/98

Despatched on 7/4/98

Indexed. 18/4/98