

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 790	Press Mis.
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Dated	8. 5. 1918

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
8th May 1863.*

No. 74. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department, dated 18th April 1863, No. 953:—

Passing orders on the report of the Committee appointed to } (Vide Public Works Proceedings, 18th April
consider and report on the best mode of reducing the cost } 1863, Nos. 300, 301.)
of superintendence in the Public Works Department.

No. 75. ORDER THEREON, 8th May 1863, No. 790.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue for information and for circulation to the Collectors:

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

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following paper from the Committee appointed to consider and report on the best mode of reducing the cost of Superintendence in the Public Works Department, to His Excellency Sir W. T. DENISON, K.C.B., Governor in Council, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 10th April 1863:—

HONORABLE SIR,

1. In conformity with the instructions conveyed in the Proceedings of Government in the Public Works Department, under date the 17th ultimo, No. 659, appointing us to consider and report on the best mode of reducing the cost of superintendence in the Department of Public Works; we have the honor to submit, for your Excellency's consideration, the conclusions at which we have arrived on the question referred to us in the 2nd paragraph of the Proceedings in question, viz., whether the control of the Department should, as at present, be entrusted to a Chief Engineer, or transferred to a certain number of Superintending Engineers residing in their Circles and reporting direct to Government; and, in the event of the latter arrangement being carried out, what number of Superintending Engineers would be required. Our instructions were that we should submit a preliminary report on this question, before proceeding to the consideration of the other points included in the scope of our enquiry.

2. At present the control of the Department is vested in a Chief Engineer, who is also Secretary to Government in the Department of Public Works, aided by three Officers of standing, under the designation of Deputy Chief Engineers, who are stationed at the Presidency in the same Office with the Chief Engineer. Up to a comparatively recent date, the Deputy Chief Engineers were little more than Secretaries to the Chief Engineer. Now, they are more independent, and their responsibilities are more defined; but owing to the great extent of their Circles and their location at the Presidency, the amount of supervision which they have been able to exercise over the works in their Circles has been very small.

3. Next to the Deputy Chief Engineers are the District Engineers, who, in practice, are Superintending Officers, and are, in fact, the only Officers who exercise a direct control and inspection over the work of the Executive; and, consequently, in this Presidency, perform the duties which devolve on Superintending Engineers elsewhere. Though nominally subject to the supervision of the Deputy Chief Engineers with whom they correspond, the District Engineers are the only really responsible Superintendents. They direct the operations of the Executive Officers, examine and check their bills, and exercise the only actual scrutiny that is practicable into their accounts and work. Upon them, too, has devolved the duty of scrutinizing all schemes of improvement, and of preparing them in all their details for submission to Government through the Deputy Chief Engineer and Chief Engineer. Hitherto, almost the sole occupation of the Deputy Chief Engineers has been the analyzing of schemes submitted by the District Officers without the advantages of local knowledge and experience possessed by the District Engineer; and their time has been for the most part employed either in the superfluous duty of putting the reports of the District Engineers before Government in a different form, or in examining the details of estimates which have already been subjected to the scrutiny (in many instances, equally competent) of the District Engineer.

4. During the past year or so, matters requiring the orders of Government have usually been submitted direct by the Deputy Chief Engineers to the Secretary to Government; and where they have passed through the Chief Engineer's Office, the intervention of this Officer has, in most cases, been little more than nominal, the estimate, or letter, or return, being forwarded with a brief endorsement or covering letter, re-echoing the recommendation of the Deputy Chief Engineer. In practice, therefore, while there are three grades of Superintending Officers, including the head of the Department, the main business of superintendence is done by the local District Engineers.

5. In January last year the two offices of Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government in the Department of Public Works were united in the same person, the Chief Engineer being appointed Secretary to Government, but retaining as well the designation and some of the functions of Chief Engineer. The object* of this change was to save the delay and expense arising from the correspondence between the Central Office and the Government. It was believed that the saving of correspondence with the Government would enable the Central Office to be reduced in strength, while the Deputy Secretary to Government and a large portion of the Revenue Secretary's Establishment would not be required. It was also argued that business would be expedited by direct and personal communication between the Members of the Government and the head of the Department.

6. The union of the two offices has not been attended with all the advantages which were anticipated. The saving of expense has not been great; two separate Office Establishments having been maintained nearly of the same strength as before. And, as regards the correspondence, although it has diminished in consequence of the Deputy Chief Engineers corresponding in many matters direct with the Chief Engineer in his capacity of Secretary, the reduction and simplification of correspondence has not been carried to the extent that was intended, owing apparently to the retention of the double Office Establishment. The Chief Engineer still writes letters to the Secretary to Government, and the Secretary to Government still issues orders to the Chief Engineer; and much, therefore, of the expense and delay which were among the chief reasons for the change, are still experienced. For instance, a Despatch is received from the Secretary of State calling for explanation of delay in the submission of a plan and estimate. An order is thereupon passed in the Public Works Department of the Secretariat calling upon the Chief Engineer to furnish explanation, the order being signed by the Secretary and afterwards received by the same Officer in his capacity of Chief Engineer. It is registered and indexed in both Offices, and two copies are required for record instead of one. On the 26th March, we found no less than five cases in which the Chief Engineer and Secretary on that day corresponded with himself.

7. It appears to us that this anomalous state of things, which however is not singular to this Presidency, has resulted from a misconception of, or at all events from a deviation from, the original intention of the Members of the Government on whose recommendation the union of the two offices was based. It is clear from the Minutes of the Honorable Mr. Maltby and of Mr. Morehead to which we have already alluded, that when advocating this measure, they did not contemplate the retention of two separate Office Establishments, nor, as far as we can gather, had they in view any definite distinction between the functions of the person holding the Office in his capacity as Chief Engineer and in his capacity as Secretary to Government. Mr. Maltby in paragraph 8 of his Minute already quoted from, speaks of the conversion of the Chief Engineer into a Secretary to Government, Mr. Morehead† adverts to the "saving of all correspondence between the Government and the professional head of the Public Works Department." The present system of double Establishment and correspondence was clearly not foreseen; and we cannot think that it ought to be continued.

8. We have said that this system is not peculiar to this Presidency. It appears to be in force, more or less, in Bengal where the two offices of Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government are united in the same person, but separate Office Establishments are maintained. It is shown in the Report of the Civil Finance Commission, paragraph 35, that there, as here, a good deal of the work is done twice over.

9. The arrangement which on full consideration we would suggest as best adapted for reducing the expense and promoting the efficiency of the Department, is as follows:—

(1.) That the Secretary to Government in the Public Works Department should, as at present, be an Engineer Officer; and that, with the exception of the allotment of funds, the preparation of the Budget, the promotion of the Subordinate Officers in the Department and the

collection of information on general questions, the duties which until of late were wholly and now are in part performed by the Chief Engineer should be entrusted to the Superintending Engineers.

(2.) That the existing grades of Deputy Chief Engineer and District Engineers should be abolished; and that, in their place, eight Superintending Engineers should be appointed; each of whom shall be entrusted with the superintendence of the works in two or more Districts, having his head quarters at some central place within the limits of his division, exercising therein, subject to the exceptions above specified, the powers hitherto vested in the Chief Engineer, and corresponding direct with the Secretary to Government in the Department of Public Works on all matters on which the orders of Government are required. We would constitute the divisions of the Superintending Engineers as follows:—

First Division.	{ Ganjam. Vizagapatam. Godavery.
Second do.	{ Kistna. Nellore.
Third do.	{ Cuddapah. Kurnool. Bellary.
Fourth do.	{ Presidency. Madras District. North Arcot.
Fifth do.	{ South Arcot. Salem, with the Cantonment of Bangalore.
Sixth do.	{ Tanjore. Trichinopoly.
Seventh do.	{ Coimbatore. Malabar and South Canara.
Eighth do.	{ Madras. Tinnevely.

On some accounts it would be preferable if the number of divisions could be increased to ten, but looking to the works at present in progress or likely to be carried out, we do not think that the divisions now proposed will be found too extensive to admit of the direction and superintendence of the works being efficiently conducted by a single Superintending Officer. The District Engineers as we have shown, are now no more than Superintendents; but though Superintending Officers themselves, and invested with no executive duties, they are checked and hampered by the necessity of constant reference to another Superintending Officer at the Presidency, the necessary result of which is delay and obstruction to the progress of work and undue division of responsibility. By the abolition of this grade the Executive Officers will have but one Superintending Officer to look to, invested with larger powers than have hitherto been entrusted to any of the local Officers. The smaller number of Superintending Officers, while, as we think, they will be numerically sufficient for the effective direction and superintendence of the executives, will enable the Government to select well qualified men for these important posts and leave a large number of useful Officers for executive work. And here we would urge the great importance of rigidly applying the principle of selection for proved and superior efficiency in the case of all appointments to the grade of Superintending Engineer, the duties of these Officers will be very responsible and will require thoroughly efficient men.

(3.) That the ranges of the Executive Officers be re-arranged in connection with the abolition of the office of District Engineer; each Executive Officer corresponding with and receiving orders from the Superintending Engineer.

10. We think it very desirable that the Secretary to Government in the Public Works Department should have the professional acquirements of an Engineer, in order that he may be the responsible adviser, as well as the organ of the Government in all matters connected with the administration of Public Works. When the proposal to make the Chief Engineer, Secretary to Government, was first made, the late Secretary Mr. Bourdillon objected to it on the ground that

the Department would thereby be deprived of its Departmental head and that such a change would be fatal to its efficiency. "It appears to me" he wrote, "that the functions of a head of a Department and of a Secretary to Government are essentially distinct. That of the former is to control the body of public servants composing the Department, to uphold discipline and keep every man up to his work, and to bring before Government special or reserved cases. That of the Secretary is to lay such cases before Government in a proper form for decision, with other cases connected with the Department coming from other quarters, and to convey the orders of the Government thereon. And these functions cannot be combined. In so extensive a Department there must be a vast mass of Departmental references and correspondence of various kinds; the Government cannot possibly attend to this, and the Secretary would certainly find his proper work sufficient fully to occupy him; and the Departmental work would either be left undone, or be done by an uncontrolled Subordinate, while the Government would lose the responsible head of the Department, since, of course, the Secretary cannot find fault with himself as Chief Engineer."

11. We cannot recognize the importance of that system of central control on which so much stress is laid in the foregoing extract. It appears to us, on the contrary, that it is this very attempt at centralization of authority and control, and the "vast mass of Departmental references and correspondence of various kinds" in the office of the Chief Engineer, which has been hitherto the most fatal bar to the efficiency of the Department. Much, if not most, of the Departmental work to which Mr. Bourdillon refers, may, we feel satisfied, be safely entrusted to it than any single Officer at the Presidency can possibly be. Nor can we see that there is any incompatibility in the several functions of reporting to Government on matters which require their orders, laying such matters before them in a proper form for decision, and putting into proper shape the orders of Government thereon. Each one of these several processes requires consideration; and if so, it is surely an economy both of time and labor that the three processes should be gone through by one person rather than by two. Moreover, cases must often arise, in which it is desirable that the writer of the Order of Government should possess that amount of professional knowledge which would enable him fully to comprehend any scientific questions that may be involved in the subject. This, it may be said, would be secured by appointing an Engineer Secretary without abolishing the office of Chief Engineer. Our view is that the latter Officer is not needed; and that, provided the Secretary be an Engineer, he can perform all those duties of control which cannot be entrusted to the Superintending Engineers, without in any way impairing his efficiency as Secretary.

12. All appointments and promotions in the Department which it may not be deemed proper to entrust to the Superintending Engineers, can be made in the name of the Governor in Council; the actual power and responsibility being vested in the Secretary, subject to such limitations as may be deemed proper. So, as regards the allotment of funds. The orders for such allotments would be recorded as orders of Government, but within certain limits, would be issued by the Secretary without the previous sanction of the Members of Government and entered in the lists which are weekly laid before Council. The preparation of the annual Budget Estimates is a duty which can be done in the Secretary's Office just as well as in the Chief Engineer's. The same may be said of the compilation of statistical returns and the collection of information on questions of general interest. Practically, much work of this description is done by the Secretaries in other Departments.

13. We have carefully considered the Establishments to be assigned to the Secretary to Government and Superintending Engineers, as well as the Controller of Public Works Accounts, and submit a Statement of those which we deem requisite and sufficient. We also submit an abstract Statement, from which it will be seen that our proposals, if adopted, will effect a saving of upwards of a lac and a half of Rupees in the annual cost of the directing and superintending agency.

Enclosure No. 3.

Enclosure No. 4.

14. In connexion with the question of Office Establishments, we enclose a correspondence which we have had with the Secretary, Colonel Birdwood, in which he objects to the Establishment we have proposed for his Office as being inadequate to the duties. We are unable to admit the validity of his objections, which, we think, are sufficiently met by the observations made in our previous letter of the 4th instant.

Enclosure No. 1.

It appears to us that Colonel Birdwood's letter and the Statements which he has furnished to us, of the duties devolving on the several servants in his Office, proceed on the assumption that much work which, in our opinion, ought to be done by the head of the Office or his Deputy, will devolve on the Uncovenanted Assistants. We are satisfied that with a proper distribution of the duties, the Establishment we have proposed will be found sufficient.

15. We went over the Audit Establishment with the Controller, who agrees with us in thinking the scheme we have suggested to be, on the whole, preferable to that sanctioned under date the 26th February last. Colonel Wilkieson, however, objects to the reduction of the salary of the Head Auditor and Chief Accountant to the original scale of Rupees 300. We think the latter scale sufficient, with reference to the nature of the duties to be performed and the scale of remuneration assigned for similar duties in other offices; and we may observe that in the Proceedings of Government under date the 31st December 1861, No. 2,483, the Government expressed the same opinion.

16. The Establishment assigned to the Superintending Engineers will perhaps be considered rather costly; but it must be borne in mind that the accounts of all works in their Divisions will have to be prepared in the Office of Superintending Engineer; and it is therefore essential that he should have an efficient Staff of Accountants.

17. We would observe in conclusion that the scheme now proposed is in our opinion equally well adapted for the administration of the Department, whether the execution of the whole of the works shall be left to it, or whether the minor works and repairs be re-transferred to the Revenue Authorities. This and the other questions referred to us in the Order now under acknowledgment will form the subject of a Supplemental Report.

We have, &c.,

(Signed) A. J. ARBUTHNOT.
(") J. D. SIM.
(") C. A. ORR.

ORDER THEREON, 18th April 1863, No. 953.

1. In their Proceedings No. 659, dated 17th March 1863, the Government appointed the Officers noted in the margin to consider and report upon the mode in which the reduction ordered by the Government of India in the cost of superintendence in the Department of Public Works could best be carried out without impairing the efficiency of the Department.

2. In the same Order, the Committee were requested to submit a preliminary report on the question as to whether the control of the Department should as at present, be entrusted to a Chief Engineer, or transferred to a certain number of Superintending Engineers residing in their Circles, and reporting direct to Government, and in the event of the latter arrangement being carried out, to state what number of Superintending Engineers would be required.

3. The arrangements proposed by the Committee are as follows:—
That the Secretary to Government in the Department Public Works should cease to exercise the functions of Chief Engineer, and should hereafter assume the former designation

only, continuing however in his capacity as Secretary to dispose of all questions relating to the Budget, re-distribution of funds, promotion of Officers and Subordinates, and to collect information which may be required by Government on general questions.

That the grades of Deputy Chief and District Engineers should be abolished, and in lieu of them eight Officers, styled Superintending Engineers, should be appointed, their charges being distributed as follows:—

First Division.	{ Ganjam. Vizagapatam. Godavery.
Second do.	{ Kistnah. Nellore.
Third do.	{ Cuddapah. Kurnool. Bellary.
Fourth do.	{ Presidency. Madras District. North Arcot.
Fifth do.	{ South Arcot. Salem. Bangalore.
Sixth do.	{ Tanjore. Trichinopoly.
Seventh do.	{ Coimbatore. Malabar. South Canara.
Eighth do.	{ Madura. Tirunelveli.

That the Office Establishment attached to the Chief Engineer be dispensed with, a small addition being made to the Secretariat Office, and a Deputy Secretary appointed. That certain reductions be made in the cost of the Audit Establishment, involving a re-arrangement of that Establishment, as sanctioned under date the 20th February last.

4. The Governor in Council approves of the recommendations made by the Committee and directs that they be carried out with as little delay as possible.

5. The Establishments attached to the Central and Audit Offices will be re-arranged at once, on the footing proposed by the Committee arranged as shown in the Statements A, B, and C, the alterations to take effect from the 1st proximo.

6. Eight Officers will be selected for the appointment of Superintending Engineer; and such of the District Engineers as may not be appointed to the higher grade, will be placed in charge of ranges as Executive Officers.

7. On the further report promised by the Committee being laid before Government, the number of Executive Officers and Subordinates, and the Establishments to be assigned to them, will be settled. Orders will also then be issued regarding the charge of the Store Department and the Lithographic Department.

8. The head-quarters of the several Divisions will be as follows:—

1st Division...	Vizagapatam.
2nd do. ...	Masulipatam.
3rd do. ...	Kurnool.
4th do. ...	Madras.
5th do. ...	Salem.
6th do. ...	Tanjore.
7th do. ...	Coimbatore.
8th do. ...	Madura.

9. The Superintending Engineers will be instructed, when organizing their Establishments, to give due consideration to the claims of such of the Subordinates of the Central Office as may lose their appointments under the arrangements now ordered.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,

Secretary to Government.

- the Chief Engineer with Statements A, B, C, & D.
- „ Deputy Chief Engineers, Northern, Southern and Central Circles with Statement B.
- „ Civil Paymaster with Statements A, B, C, & D.
- „ Controller of Public Works Accounts with ditto.
- „ Accountant General with ditto.
- „ Public, &c., Departments.
- „ Revenue Department.
- „ Military do.
- „ Honorable A. J. Arbuthnot.
- „ J. D. Sim, Esq.
- „ Lieutenant-Colonel C. A. Orr.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Wm. W. Williams 1853
" 31 Dec 1853

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Wm. W. Williams
1853

Proceedings of the
Produce Court in
the Public Works
Department

Dec 1853
Dec 1853
1853

Expanding orders on the
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