M.R.O. 14—18,000—27-9-24

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.	1238	Press ~~Mis.~~	
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12-56 MJ

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 5th May 1868.

No. 114. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department:—

Passing orders on Proceedings of the Board of Revenue regarding the injuries recently sustained by the Sub-Magistrate's Cutcherry, Beltangady, in South Canara. } (Here enter 30th April 1868, No. 1,345.)

No. 115. ORDER THEREON, 5th May 1868, No. 1,238.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Revenue Board.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) F. BRANDT,
Under Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue, with Proceedings Public Works Department, No. 1,345.

E. J. T. Augustin.

No. 627. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 3rd April 1868, No. 2,481 :—

Read the following letter from H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Acting Collector of South Canara, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Mangalore, 16th January 1868, No. 70.

1. I have the honor to submit the full report called for in Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 10th December 1867, No. 7,989.

2. The Executive Engineer has reported* that "he can vouch for the Sub-"Magistrate's Cutcherry having been "thoroughly well built," "the mate-"rials used being good and sound, "and the workmanship excellent," "*the pillars supporting the roof* on the "monsoon sides being built of laterite in chunam, instead of laterite in mud," and that "the collapse of the building is simply owing to its having been utterly neg-"lected," whereas "the timely expenditure of two or three rupees in putting up "cadjan tatties to screen the *walls* from "rain would have kept a good building "whole and sound," because "it is absurd to imagine for an instant that a new "and high mud *wall*, with the weight "of a substantial roof of timber and "tiles resting on *it* will, if unprotected, withstand the violence of a South Canara "monsoon."

* Paragraph 9 of his letter to Superintending Engineer, 12th August 1867, No. 610.

Italics my own.

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3. Though the "because" and the italics are my own, it will be admitted, I think, that I have quoted fairly, and only put cause and effect clearly in antithesis. In short, it was because the mud walls were not protected that "the excellent workmanship" and "good and sound materials" in the "*supporting* pillars" failed to do their duty and support the roof, which, for some reason that, as an unprofessional, I cannot divine, appears the while not to have "rested" on the "supporting pillars" but on "*it*," the "new and high mud wall" that gave way. It would appear to be sufficiently clear, that the writer has unconsciously allowed himself to be a little carried away by a very common, natural, and pardonable bias for his own department, and has *currente calamo* made out for it rather too good a case—a case that involves a contradiction in terms. The mud walls, it would seem, were never meant to support the "substantial roof of timber and tiles," or rested, as I saw myself, and as of course it should have done, entirely on the "supporting pillars." Had these latter been really made of "good and sound materials," they should, I make bold to say, have done their duty, and supported a roof of so small a span, whereas they did not, one of them had given way close under the beam and half way down, and the roof still pressing on it, and it alone went with it, and strained the whole in that direction.

4. I did not expect to visit the building myself long before the date of Colonel Walker's inspection, and it was palpable to any impartial observer, though, all ordinary care may have been taken, and the majority of the materials used been "good and sound," still not a few rotten laterites had inadvertently crept in, probably from carelessness in selection on the part of the masons, rather than any subordinate of the Public Works Department. I cracked them with my

walking stick. I picked them up and broke them without an effort in my hands. It is very intelligible how half a dozen large crumbling laterite stones should sap the strength of the thin pillar in which they held large place, for the absence of one single laterite, measuring about 19× 8× 6 inches, makes an important gap in a thin support pillar.

5. I can quite understand that the Executive Engineer, knowing, as he says, the general care that had been taken, and probably the character of his immediate subordinate, should have made a favorable report thereon for want of sufficient scrutiny, not having noticed the inadvertencies to which I have pointed as of no mean importance, whereas it would have been fairer to the Sub-Magistrate, if he had only been charged with what he is really answerable for.

6. Had the Sub-Magistrate taken more care of the mud walls, they might possibly have helped the unsound pillars, and so enabled a bad building to hold together a little longer, but I cannot think that every substantial Government building is contrived to collapse in a month, if not protected by tatties. Native mud houses frequently stand without being tattied.

7. But whatever may have been the structure, the Subordinate Magistrate was equally to blame for not having taken the most ordinary precaution for its protection from the weather. He had taken a dislike to the building, which was not nearly as commodious as the one he was then using, and had, it seems, avowed his intention of never occupying it.

8. On the receipt of the Executive Engineer's first letter, announcing its completion, he was (17th May) ordered to remove to it. On the receipt of the Executive Engineer's second communication to me, the order was repeated with a call for explanation, as to why he had not obeyed his instructions. Like other Subordinate Magistrates, he was as early as February supplied with money for monsoon tatting (Rupees 9). Had he obeyed his orders, he would have removed to his new Cutcherry, and spent this money on protecting it; he, however, reported to me that he had none, and applied for Rupees 5. This was on 15th June. All the monsoon repair money, available for the talooks, having been fully allotted, there was some difficulty in providing funds, and some references and delay were necessary. It was subsequently ascertained, however, that all this while he still had the Rupees 9 in hand, and at a later date (22nd June) expended a portion of it on the building which he had been ordered to give up, and which had been made over to the Engineers, but which he was loath to quit. Furthermore, even after having wrongly expended money on the building which, contrary to orders, he was determined to hold on to, he had still an unexpended balance of Rupees 2-4-0 in hand. This, it would appear from the Executive Engineer's estimate, was sufficient to have protected and saved the new building. With the addition of a few annas more or less it must have sufficed, for the Subordinate Magistrate himself only asked for Rupees 5, as sufficient to give him a no margin.

9. The only just conclusion would seem to be that, as said to have been openly avowed by him, the Subordinate Magistrate was resolved to try every safe expedient for holding on to his old Cutcherry, and the application for money (Rupees 5) was simply an excuse to gain time, while he had all the while sufficient money at his disposal.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30th April 1868.

10. The present is not the only instance of his having neglected the Government interests for his own. He was once dismissed when a volunteer in one of the Civil Courts, and after his re-instatement, was in the Revenue Department once degraded and once fined, and eventually was only promoted because he was the only passed candidate available, and in this *ultima thule* of the natives, with its peculiar languages, peculiar castes, and dreaded monsoon, so fettered was the then Collector that he had no option but to take the only available man. Since his promotion he has consistently borne a very bad name indeed, but he is cunning and bold, and has contrived to evade actual detection in corruption.

11. Considering all these circumstances, and my own personal knowledge of his most unsatisfactory character, I have taken this occasion to remove him from an office of trust, and replace him in the same position as he held previous to his having rapid promotion, resulting from the accident of his being the only passed candidate available.

A Clerkship on Rupees 15.

12. In conclusion, it is fair to add, as my reason for not altogether dismissing him, that I do not think the Subordinate Magistrate had any idea the new Cutcherry would collapse at all, least of all as suddenly as it did; that he did not withhold tatting with the deliberate intention of ruining it, but postponed obedience to orders as long as he could with the view of gaining his own end, which was the retention of the old and more commodious office; and that though the ruin of the building was, in some measure, the immediate consequence of his neglect of duty, still he was not answerable for the defective structure which the Superintending Engineer himself seems to admit, by providing for the use of better materials in the next building, though he is pleased to assign, as the cause for his change in estimate, the necessity for avoiding "the evil consequences of future neglect" which he thus contemplates prospectively as hopelessly normal in my department, whereas had better materials been used before, the result might have been different.

13. The Executive Engineer's communications were not unnoticed; the old building was, as requested, stated to be at his disposal from the date of its being vacated, and his enclosures returned; the former at once, the latter on the day subsequent to the despatch of his letter to the Superintending Engineer.

14. The Board having called for *full* report, I have felt it my duty to lay open my whole view of the circumstances under which Government has been put to a loss, instead of confining myself, as I would have preferred, to the conduct of my subordinate only. It will be seen, that while there has been neglect on the part of the Subordinate Magistrate, which has been fully admitted and punished, the matter mainly rests on the one corner pillar, and that on the laterite slices of which it was composed, the accidental rottenness of a few of which caused the ruin of the [illegible].

15. The latter question is in itself a separate and important one, affecting many other and much more extensive public buildings than the one under [illegible] several expensive bridges at this moment under construction; but the Engineers are solely responsible for the materials used, and I am accordingly not at liberty to be concerned till, as in the present instance, my department is charged with the consequences, and I am placed on my defence.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30th April 1868.

Submitted for the information of Government, with reference to their Order under date 6th December 1867, No. 2,913.

Transferred to the Public Works Department, with reference to G. O. No. 3,719, dated 29th November 1867, in that Department.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

8th April 1868.

No. 628. ORDER THEREON, 30th April 1868, No. 1,345.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 77.

1. It appears from the foregoing report of the Acting Collector of South Canara that while the injuries recently sustained by the Sub-Magistrate's Cutcherry at Beltangady in the South Canara District were, in some measure, the immediate consequence of the late Subordinate Magistrate's neglect to take the usual precautions for protecting the structure from the effects of the monsoon, that functionary was not responsible for the inferior description of materials which are alleged to have been employed in the erection of the building. Mr. Thomas states that he personally inspected the Cutcherry, and found some of the laterite stones of which the pillars were composed so rotten that he was able to break them without an effort in his hands.

2. In Mr. Thomas' opinion, the failure of the building is primarily attributable to the "accidental rottenness" of a few of the stones which were used in the "corner pillar."

3. The Superintending Engineer of the 7th Division will call the special attention of the Executive Engineer in charge of the Mangalore Range to the Acting Collector's remarks, and he will impress upon his Executive Officers the necessity for a more careful selection of materials, and especially of the laterite stones which are largely used on the Western Coast, and which though appearing of good quality, will often be found, on closer examination, to be unsound and unsuited for building purposes.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.
Revenue Department.
Controller of Public Works Accounts.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Revenue 1868 - No 12
Pro: of Govt for May
No 1250

Proceedings of the
Govt: P: M: Office

Dated 30th April
Received 1st May 1868
No 1345

No 1238. 5th May

Papers & Order on
Pro: of the Board
of Revenue regarding
the injuries received
sustained by the Salt
Mayts Sutlebeery
at Beltinga in
South Sanind -
With Order &

1.111 & 115

Orders

No 1238

Comm^d to the
Revenue Board -

5th May 68 -

14 Copies To the Bd of Revenue with Govt Pro Dated 30th April 1345 Rec^d 1st May