

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1877 Press
~~Mis.~~

Dy. 6-6-1878

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
6th June 1868.*

Read the following papers :—

No. 138. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 20th February 1868,
No. 1,235.

Read the following letter from the Superintending Engineer, 4th Division, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Camp at Vellore, 17th February 1868, No. 5,238.

1. In paragraph 8 of their Proceedings, dated 14th December 1867, the Board named certain roads which they deemed it advisable should be opened up in view of the threatening distress, and in addition to those roads, they adverted to "many others which are the avenues by which grain will enter the district."

2. One of the Members of the Board (Mr. Sim) was good enough to hand me a pencil Memorandum, in which was included the road from Arnee to Wandiwash, and which, looking upon it, (in connection also with paragraph 2 of your Memorandum, No. 1,298, dated 19th December 1867,) as one of the "many other" roads above alluded to, I ordered for execution in a Memorandum, dated 20th December, (the same date that I received the Board's Proceedings from Government,) forwarding on the same date a copy of that Memorandum to the Collector of North Arcot for information. The Collector then must have been aware of the selection of this line on the 22nd December, and as no exception was taken to it by him, the work on it steadily progressed. Fully six weeks after the receipt of my Memorandum, Mr. J. D. Robinson penned the enclosed letters, Nos. 69 and 70, desiring to know from the Assistant Engineer "on what authority the road from Wandiwash to "Arnee had been undertaken," and adding "I know nothing whatever of any such "project." In his letter, No. 7, reiterating expressions similar to the above he adds, "I have made no allotment for the project in question, simply because it has "to me no existence;" and, judging rightly that the line is to pass by the Cheyar anicut, he concludes with a sneering remark that "money can be more usefully "spent than in making the anicut a pleasant morning drive from the present head-quarters of the Range." I enclose a copy of my letter in reply to Mr. Robinson, wherein the Board will observe that I have shewn good reasons why the road should be taken over the Cheyar anicut, with which reasons I trust they will be satisfied.

3. Mr. Assistant Engineer Bevan has complained all along of the great difficulty he has experienced in obtaining allotments of funds from the Collector, although paragraph 6 of the Assistant Engineer's letter, No. 620, (enclosed,) shews that the Collector appeared to be in earnest as regards their execution, inasmuch as he directed the transfer of 1,800 tank diggers, who were employed on the large works in the west of the range, to the famine roads.

4. I will only observe, in conclusion, that I have for some time noticed the unpleasant and domineering style in which Mr. Robinson is pleased to address some of my Range Officers—a style which I consider very unbecoming on the part of an Officer, dressed, under exceptional circumstances, in a little brief authority, over the subordinates of another department.

From the Collector of North Arcot, to the Assistant Engineer, Polur Range, dated on Circuit at Banavaram, 6th February 1868, No. 69.

1. With reference to your letter, No. 595, dated 1st instant, to the address of the Superintending Engineer, original forwarded to me with his endorsement, No. 4,992, dated 3rd idem, I

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kept without their money; I, therefore, earnestly request that you will be pleased to take some measures, so that money may be placed at my disposal, in order that the work-people may be paid regularly, or that you will give me authority to discontinue the works at once, placing the money, already due, at my disposal for disbursement.

4. With the present number of people at work, I should require about Rupees 16 or 18,000 per mensem.

No. 5,709.

Enclosure, one Statement.

Transferred to the Collector of North Arcot, with a request that he will be good enough to disburse, at once, to the Assistant Engineer, Polur Range, the sum that he requires, or that he will stop the works.

A copy of Mr. Bevan's letter will be sent to the Board of Revenue for information.

MADRAS,
19th March 1868.

(Signed) A. J. M. BOILEAU, Colonel, R. E.,
Superintending Engineer, 4th Division.

No. 5,735.

Copy forwarded to the Board of Revenue for information.

The tardiness exhibited by the Collector in issuing the requisite funds for carrying on the famine works, has been a great source of annoyance and perplexity to the Range Officer, Polur Range, and it is considered a great injustice to the poor people employed.

MADRAS,
20th March 1868.

(Signed) A. J. M. BOILEAU, Colonel, R. E.,
Superintending Engineer, 4th Division.

1. Forwarded to the Collector of North Arcot for any observations he may wish to offer.

2. The Board presume that the Collector will have complied with Superintendent Engineer's request before these Proceedings reach him, as obviously the object of Government in providing labor for the able-bodied poor will be entirely defeated if unnecessary delay takes place in the disbursement of funds.

No. 140. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 1st May 1868.
Read the following letter from the Acting Collector, North Arcot, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chittoor, 23rd April 1868, No. 139.

1. The Proceedings of the Board, dated 8th instant, No. 2,695, only reached me by yesterday's post. I had hoped ere this to have been in a position to address them definitely on the subject of Mr. Dalycell's letter, No. 2,334, of the 30th ultimo. I regret that I cannot do so even now, for I am still awaiting, though in daily expectation of the receipt of a report promised me by the Sub-Collector, which must largely influence the ultimate determination at which I may arrive.

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2. I appreciate the full weight of the responsibility imposed upon me in regard to the control of the expenditure of Special Funds, and the Board may rely upon me that no considerations of the general utility of works, with applications for the sanction of which from Special Funds, I am inundated, will influence me in granting one Rupee, where absolute necessity is not satisfactorily shewn to exist, either for giving employment to the poor, or for providing drinking water for man and beast. Where these conditions really exist, and the latter, I regret to say, is gaining in prominence day by day, the requisite funds are and shall be promptly supplied.

3. With reference to the Polur Range grain roads, the interior position is this. Large bodies of laborers are congregated on these works, which are in full progress at an expenditure of from Rupees 15,000 to Rupees 16,000 per mensem, and I have as yet received no information that would justify me in suddenly throwing these people, or any proportion of them, out of work. Mr. Bevan, the Range Officer, speaks of the "rush of coolies for work," and assures me that, in conducting these works, he has not been influenced by any desire to complete them rapidly from a professional point of view.

4. I am not disposed, nor have I any ground to doubt Mr. Bevan's judgment; and, as I have not considered it fair to keep him without definite instructions, I have assumed the responsibility of authorizing him to continue the progress of the roads, so long as he does so on principles properly applicable to relief works, pending his receipt of further definite instructions from me.

5. As the sum of Rupees 12,463-3-2, which I disbursed to him under the orders of the Board, only met his expenditure up to the 15th ultimo, I have paid him Rupees 5,957-4-7, being the balance due as per his Progress Report for the fortnight ending 31st ultimo, and I have further already put him in funds for the current month by a payment of Rupees 5,000. Mr. Bevan has estimated his probable expenditure during this month at Rupees 16,000, and I am prepared to make him an immediate further remittance, so as to meet his actual expenditure.

6. I may mention that Mr. Bevan has furnished me with a statement, shewing that, allowing for the employment of the present number of laborers, all these roads would be completed by the end of July at a cost, from the beginning of this month, of Rupees 53,800. A fall of rain, he thinks, would reduce the number to one-third.

7. I trust that my proceedings may meet with the approval of the Board, and I have only to add that, should Mr. Comyn's expected report prove to me that these expensive operations can with safety be reduced, I am prepared at once to instruct Mr. Bevan accordingly.

1. The Board authorize the Collector to continue the present rate of expenditure on these roads.

2. They await the report promised before submitting the matter to Government.

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No. 141. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 20th May 1868.
Read again letter from Colonel BOILEAU, R. E., recorded in Board's Proceedings,
dated 20th February 1868, No. 1,235.

Do. do. dated 23rd March 1868, No. 2,089.
Read also the following:—

From the Collector of North Arcot, dated 19th March 1868, No. 93.

Do. do. " 27th " " 113.

Read again letter from the Collector of North Arcot, dated 23rd April 1868,
No. 139, recorded in Board's Proceedings, dated 1st May 1868.

Read also letter from the Collector of North Arcot, dated 1st May 1868, No. 145.
Do. do. " 4th " " 147.

1. Submitted for the orders of Government.
2. The difficulty in this case has arisen from the circumstance that the sum of 50,000 Rupees, which was placed at the disposal of the Board of Revenue under G. O., 17th December 1867, Revenue Department, No. 3,005, and was allotted by them for the construction of certain roads, has been regarded by the Collector, and by the Acting Member of the Board on special duty, as available for general purposes of relief works, and incorporated by Mr. W. Robinson in his Budget of special works, in which only small allotments are made for the works in question.
3. It will be as well to recapitulate here the arguments adduced by the Board in support of their application for the 50,000 Rupees.
4. After stating that there was reason to expect that the local agricultural losses could be met by supplies brought into the district by rail from elsewhere, they observed, "timely preparations should be made to meet any crisis which may occur," "the Government have already authorized the Collector to commence any works which he may find necessary, for the relief of the poor, in any particular locality, but the Board would suggest that attention should be directed to the immediate completion of those lines of road by which grain will reach those parts of the district not in immediate vicinity of the Railway."
5. The Government approved the proposition, remarking "that the improvement of these lines would confer a permanent advantage in the district, even should the present threatening scarcity not prove eventually so serious as now seems probable."
6. Acting on instructions from the Board, in accordance with the spirit of the G. O. above stated, the Superintending Engineer has been rapidly pushing on the works, and expending more on them than, viewed as mere famine relief works, the Collector was prepared to allot, or than Mr. William Robinson had allotted.
7. The Board are decidedly of opinion that this was the proper course. Since the G. O. was passed the harvest has been got in, and from all accounts, a sadly deficient harvest it has been. It was not probable that actual distress would exist during harvest, or within several months after harvest, but the fact that pressure had been begun to be felt previous to harvest, coupled with the known deficiency of the out-turn, is sufficient to cause grave apprehension of serious distress during the two or three months preceding the next harvest.

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8. It is true that prices are low, and have remained stationary, but there is every reason to believe that large imports by rail are the cause of this to some extent.

9. Another reason may be found in the fact that, during the last two or three months, the heaviest instalments of revenue have become due, and have naturally stimulated the local disposal of grain stocks.

10. The fact that already large imports of grain are being made into the district goes to confirm the conclusion that the out-turn was very scanty.

11. This known deficiency of the harvest renders it of imperative necessity that the main roads by which grain will flow in from extraneous sources should be completed without delay.

12. Under these circumstances, the Board are not prepared to acquiesce in the proposed stoppage of some of the works; on the contrary they would continue them vigorously. On receipt of the Acting Collector's report that he had ordered operations to be suspended on three roads, they directed him to continue them until the reference was disposed of. What is desired is that the sum of Rupees 50,000 asked for by the Board as a suitable sum to begin with, shall be declared to have been a separate sum, independent of the amount sanctioned in Mr. W. Robinson's proposals, and that a further sum of Rupees 50,000 be now allotted.

13. From the list of roads in progress, the Board would select the lines noted in the margin as coming within the description of roads alluded to in paragraph 8 of their Proceedings, dated 14th December 1867; and should Government accede to the proposal now made, the Board will arrange for the allotment or adjustment of the funds, with reference to these particular lines of communication. All the other lines in progress will be considered as purely famine works, to be suspended or carried on, solely with reference to the necessities of the people in the localities through which they pass.

P. S.—Mr. W. Robinson's Budget allotments were not communicated to the Board.

No. 142. ORDER THEREON, 6th June 1868, No. 1,577.

Miscellaneous.

1. The Government find nothing in the several orders passed by them on Mr. W. Robinson's proposals for the relief of distress in parts of North Arcot to warrant the supposition that the expenditure on relief works, sanctioned at his recommendation, was intended to take the place of the grant of Rupees 50,000 for "grain" roads in the parts of the district more remote from the line of rail, which was made in G. O., 17th December 1867, No. 3,005. The sanctions are separate and distinct, and the Accountant General will be informed accordingly.

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2. The Government also authorize the Board to allot a further sum of Rupees 50,000 for the continued improvement of this class of roads as particularized in the concluding paragraph of their Proceedings.

3. They consider that the Board's view of the pressing necessity for facilitating the importation and distribution of grain into and through the parts of the district indicated, is fully justified by the facts of the case, and that it is essential that this necessity be promptly met. The charge will be debited to the special head of account for relief measures.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
" the Accountant General.
" the Department Public Works.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Rev. Secy
22-1577.

Pro: of the M. Govt.

Under date the 6th June/68

Read the fol-
-lowing Pro: of the
Bd. of Revenue

Stating for reasons
assigned why the ^{Special} works
in progress in N. Arcot
should not be stopped

Here enters 20 May/68

R.
W. H.

The Govt. find
nothing in the several
orders passed by them
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grant of Rs. 50,000 for
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parts of the district
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which was made
in G. O. 14th Dec/67
N^o 3005. The sanction
are separate and
distinct and the
Acct. General
will be informed
accordingly.

The Govt. also
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They consider
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special head of
account for relief
measures -

L.A.D.

No 10 of Rec. Depts &
to the Act. Sec. 6
21, D.P. work - S

Ed. J. Cole

Reported to England
21/19 June No. 32 of 1868 etc.

Geo. no. 222-24
17/12/67

Revenue 1868 Deficit
No of Foot on June

20:1544

No of the teachers Foot
of 6 June 1868.

1/10

No. 1380/42