M.R.O. 1—39,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 151 Press Mis.

304-05

Dated 28-1-1920 19

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 23th January 1870.

No. 304. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 15th September 1869, No. 6,921 :—

Read again Board's Proceedings, dated 9th April 1867, No. 2,242.
" " " 13th Feb. 1869, " 963.
" " " 22nd April " " 2,711.

Read also the following letter from the Collector of Madras, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 22nd June 1869, No. 204.

With reference to Board's Proceedings of 22nd April last, calling upon me for a report upon the relative advantages and disadvantages of certain proposals for connecting the salt stores at Madras, I have the honour to forward, herewith, a letter* from Mr. Smith, which enters most fully into the question, and which leaves no doubt in my mind but that it would be a mistake now to abandon the new platform, and substitute for it the space that could be obtained by filling up a certain ditch, or large natural depression in the ground, near the goods' station.

* Original, with enclosure, to be returned.

2. I have lately been over the ground, and quite endorse Mr. Smith's opinion as to the very unremunerative price that we would be likely to obtain for the east platform, if abandoned and put up to auction. A more filthy neighbourhood cannot be imagined, and I should say also that for building sites a more dangerous spot, in a sanitary point of view, could not possibly be selected.

3. Taking all things into consideration, I should, therefore, recommend that the new east platform be continued as our salt stores, and that the bridging the canal and leading a railway on to the platform be commenced at as early a date as possible.

Enclosure No. 1.

From the Deputy-Collector in charge of Salt, to the Collector of Madras, dated 19th April 1869, No. 125.

With reference to your Endorsement on Board's Proceedings of the 22nd April last, No. 2,711, I have the honour to submit my opinion on the proposals made for connecting the eastern platform of the Madras Cotaur with the Railway.

2. These proposals will be found enumerated in paragraph 4 of the Consulting Engineer's letter, and need not here be re-produced. On the first I shall make no remark, except to observe that, for the reasons stated by that officer in paragraph 5, it would, on the whole, be better perhaps to abandon the proposal.

3. The third proposal, which is advocated by the Railway authorities and the Consulting Engineer, involves "the abandonment of the eastern platform, the extension of the western platform by filling in the existing ditch, and the connection of this extension with the line of railway by means of a siding."

4. With all deference and respect to these authorities, I submit that the second proposal, which contemplates "the connection of the eastern platform with the line of railway by the construction of a second bridge across the canal," possesses greater advantages than the third. In the first place, the land which will be gained by filling up the ditch in the western platform, will avail for the reception of only 823,000† maunds of salt; whereas the platform which it is proposed to abandon is capable of containing one-third more than that quantity, or 1,224,000 maunds. The eastern and western platforms, therefore, as they now stand, will be sufficient for all our requirements, both present and prospective.

† Note.—The ditch, if wholly filled up, will contain a much larger quantity; but space has been set aside for the connecting rail, and for a boat-channel along its whole length, to facilitate the unlading of salt, and to afford protection to it on that side.

5. In the next place, the eastern platform, having the Black Town wall on the east and the canal on the west, admits of being guarded with greater efficiency and economy; whereas, if the *entire* space occupied by the ditch is filled up, the western side will be left altogether unprotected, and will require additional policemen to guard the salt which may be stored upon it.

6. In the last place, the second proposal involves the expenditure of only one and-a-half lacs of rupees; whereas the third not only contemplates the abandonment of an eligibly situated and well-guarded platform, constructed at a cost of about a lac of rupees, and containing space sufficient for all our requirements, but it further proposes the expenditure of upwards of two lacs of rupees upon a platform which, from the inadequate space it affords, will ultimately necessitate the selection of additional land at either A. B. or C.—sites which, from their isolation from the main platform, will render necessary a further heavy outlay over and above the expenditure now proposed, in converting the land into a platform and providing additional guards.

7. With regard to the inquiry as to the price which the eastern platform, consisting of about 15½ cawnies of land, may fetch if sold for building sites, I fear that not one-third of the sum (about a lac) that has been expended upon it will be realized by its sale. The land occupied by the Central Railway Station, now under construction, was sold for from Rupees 100 to Rupees 250 per ground; but no fair comparison can be instituted, as regards eligibility of situation, between this land and that occupied by the eastern platform. The latter has been raised by excavations from the canal and the sweepings of the town. It is flanked on the northern and southern sides by platforms for shooting the sweepings of the town into boats, and there is a parcherry on the east which is inhabited by pariahs of the lowest caste, consisting of chucklers, scavengers, etc. Worse than all, there are two latrines at the southernmost end of the eastern platforms, one within and the other without it. There are also boat-channels within and alongside of the platform which purchasers will have to fill up at their own cost; and this will form an item of expenditure which will go to reduce the value of the land already depreciated by the causes abovementioned, and the impossibility of obtaining any water for drinking or other purposes from soil impregnated with filth.

8. The only objection urged against the second proposal, which I have ventured to advocate, is contained in the 7th paragraph of the Consulting Engineer's letter, and refers to "the probability that the traffic on the canal, should it ever grow into importance, would be seriously impeded by the construction of a second skew bridge." What serious impediment this second bridge can oppose to the traffic I am at a loss to imagine. Within the length of about three-fourths of a mile, there now are the basin and Elephant-gate bridges; and there will be in the course of time, a short distance south of the latter, the skew bridge under construction. If laden boats, with sails and masts lowered, can pass with facility under these bridges, it does not appear why they should not do so under the second skew bridge proposed to be constructed. There can be no additional delay in passing under this second bridge, as there would be, if it alone did not admit of boats *sailing* under it. And as none of the existing bridges does so, and as all are passed with sails struck and masts lowered, more delay will, in fact, be experienced in passing the present skew bridge, where sails and masts of boats coming from the south must first be lowered, than in passing the second bridge with those operations already performed.

9. Under all the circumstances of the case, and looking to our present and future requirements in connection with the extension of the salt-traffic, and adverting, moreover, to the different schemes in a financial point of view, I am decidedly of opinion that the second proposal is in every respect preferable to the third, and I beg respectfully to recommend its adoption.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.—Plan.

IN 1863, the rapid development of the salt-trade at the Madras Cotaurs rendered it necessary to provide increased storage-room for salt. The old platform—the only one then in existence—is situated to the west of Cochrane's Canal, and is connected with the main railway by a branch line running through its whole length. It is capable of storing 1,569,600 maunds of salt. The new platform, which has since been made, lies on the other side of the canal between it and the old city wall. There is no direct communication between it and the old platform or the railway. It affords room for 1,224,000 maunds. The amount spent upon it up to the end of the last official year was Rupees 89,761, and Rupees 3,717 more will be spent before it is finished.

2. The average annual sales for the past five years have amounted to 1,503,438 maunds. The present rule with regard to the amount of salt which should be kept in stock is that there should be "eighteen months' supply at minor depôts with a large stock in well-selected central stations." The whole amount of storage room in the old and new platforms is not more than experience has shown is absolutely required.

3. Out of the total sales 1,168,662 maunds is the average annual amount carried by rail, and the highest amount for a single year is twelve lacs and-a-half. If the stores could be replenished as fast as they are indented upon, and if all sales of salt not intended for railway transport could be restricted to the western platform, the present arrangements would be efficient, as far as the railway supply is concerned; but this is not the case. In consequence of the want of rain and the shallowness of the canal, it is now eight months since any salt was brought to the Cotaurs, and a similar contingency or a failure of a season's manufacture might at any time interrupt storage in the same way. From the Deputy-Collector's letter, recorded in Board's Proceedings, 16th October 1867, No. 6,733, it appears that both wholesale and retail purchasers were then refusing to take any salt from the western platform, partly because it was subject to great wastage, partly because it was inconveniently situated, and partly because they thought it weighed too heavily. The same disinclination to take this salt may, of course, occur again. Moreover, the salt on the new platform is always got rid of so slowly that the wastage is very great. On these grounds it is necessary to provide means for enabling the new platform to supplement the old, and for clearing it of old salt when necessary. Where transactions are so large as they are at the Madras Cotaurs, the superiority of a tramway or railway over a chain of coolies is evident and need not be demonstrated. It may be remarked, however, that at the present time salt has to be carried across the canal from platform to platform by labourers, and that the cost of the operation is 12 annas a garce, or 2·7 annas a ton.

4. The Board have been in communication with the Collector, the Consulting Engineer for Railways, the Railway authorities, and Mr. Fraser, as to the manner in which the requisite communication should be effected.

5. The Deputy-Collector's first proposition was that a line of rail should be carried through the platform and prolonged to meet the main line somewhere near the new railway station. It is urged against this that the line crossing the Elephant-gate bridge road would be a great hindrance to traffic, especially as it would be within a short distance of the crossing of the main line, and that it would interfere with the Central Station arrangements which include a complete separation of goods from passenger traffic. This proposal seems to the Board to offer

many advantages. It is at the same time the simplest, the most efficient, and the least expensive that can be devised; but the objections urged by the Railway authorities preclude them from adopting it.

6. The Chief Engineer has made two propositions: one is that a skew bridge should be made over the canal at a cost of Rupees 1,52,679, and the other is that the eastern platform should be abandoned and additional space given to the western platform by partly filling up the ditch which bounds it on the west at a cost of Rupees 2,04,587. By the first scheme the desired object would be obtained, and though the expense would be great, it would not be incommensurate with the advantage gained. The enlargement of the western platform can only be effected at a still greater expense; it will not meet the necessities of the case, inasmuch as it will not afford the space required for the expanding trade, and it will entail increased expenditure on guards. It has been suggested that part of the expense will be recouped by the sale of the site of the eastern platform, but the Collector has clearly shown that little or nothing can be hoped for from this resource.

7. If it is finally decided that the skew bridge is too expensive, the Board consider that the following scheme is the best alternative:—A tramway of the same gauge as the railway on the western platform might be laid down the whole length of the eastern platform, and a cross line connecting it perpendicularly with the railway on the western line might be carried across the canal by a timber bridge on screw piles. There would, of course, be turn-tables at each end of the connecting line. The Board have no estimate before them of the cost of this undertaking, and Mr. Fraser is unwilling to prepare one, as the materials would have to be obtained from the railway stores and the work could be most advantageously undertaken by the Railway Engineers; but the Board believe the cost would be moderate.

8. If the Government consider this the preferable proposal, the Board hope that they will request the Railway Engineers to prepare an estimate and perform the work, the requisite funds being provided by the State.

No. 305. ORDER THEREON, 28th January 1870, No. 151.

Separate Revenue, No. 24.
Salt.

BEFORE passing orders on the Board's proposal, the Right Honourable the Governor in Council desires to know whether a screw-pile bridge of the kind recommended would not prove a serious obstruction to the canal traffic.

2. The Board are also requested to consider whether existing arrangements may not be allowed to continue for some time longer, as any heavy outlay is to be deprecated in the present condition of the Imperial finances.

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

Revenue Department

No. 157 -

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 28th January 1870.

Read the following. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue.

Submitting correspondence on the subject of connecting the Platform of Madras Salt Golaur with Railway.

} R.T. 15th February 1870. No 1921.

1. Before passing orders on the Board's proposals the Right Honble the Governor in Council desires to know whether a new pile bridge of the kind recommended would obstruct the Canal

Traffic.

2. The Board are requested also requested to consider

Cost Office

Govt. of [1870] Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated January, 28th.

Recd. *Encl.*

G. O., 28th January 1870, No. 151.

JANUARY.

Nos. 304-305.

Madras Salt Cotaur.—Proceedings Board of Revenue on the subject of connecting its eastern platform with the Railway, with orders thereon.

existing arrangements may not be allowed to continue for some time longer, as any heavy outlay is to be deprecated in the present condition of the Imperial Finances.

H. Telegram of Dec 28th with 6 Enclosures Dec 28