

No. 222. Read the following endorsement of the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated 16th September 1871 :—

Read the following letter from the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Madura, 9th September 1871, No. 2,120.

In reference to G. O. dated 17th August 1871, No. 1,371, communicating a letter from Mr. Bliss, the Acting Sub-Collector of Madura, explaining the system of road-making by the Revenue Department under his orders in the Dindigul range, I have the honour to offer the following remarks, which appear to be the more necessary, if only to point out that the favourable impression that this report has made on the Board of Revenue, namely, that "the report from Mr. Bliss is decisive as to the excellent manner in which road-work can be managed by the Revenue Department," is not altogether borne out in actuality.

2. As it is only so recently as the 28th ultimo, in my letter No. 1,922, that I have reported upon the district roads of Madura, my remarks upon the present occasion will be of the briefest.

3. It will, I think, be admitted that in his report Mr. Bliss has shown himself no harsh critic, to say the least of his own performances, and had he not supplemented his remarks with a more recent report, namely, that forwarded with my letter just quoted, the Government might have well rested contented in the belief that an antidote to Public Works Departmental blunderings and lavish expenditure had at length been discovered.

4. Unfortunately, as you will recollect, Mr. Bliss's account of the road in question exhibits about as disastrous a state of affairs as can well be conceived. In fact, the construction of that road, which has already been three years under execution, has got into such a terrible muddle that the Collector has at length solicited my assistance to extricate him therefrom.

5. Considering the very great difficulty I experience in attaining, with the whole of my attention given to these duties, and with a special department to superintend the work in each range, any thing like satisfactory results in regard to the roads under my charge, and bearing in mind the constant worry and anxiety arising from the attempt to obtain improved material and work, I am scarcely prepared to concur with Mr. Bliss in the opinion that the casual visit of a Revenue-officer in his dog-cart is all that is needed for the execution of ordinary road-works, *vide* paragraph 12 of Mr. Bliss's report under notice. If, as he states in this report, "our bridges do not tumble down," at least as mentioned in his subsequent report, a gentle push alone has sufficed to throw down a parapet.

6. So long as an energetic officer, with a natural taste for engineering, such as that possessed by Mr. Bliss, is at the head of the Revenue Department of his district, so long, and no longer, will the system he advocates succeed. He has himself informed me that during his temporary absence on duties in another district, the Tahsildar, nominally in charge of the road-work between Butlagoondoo and Dindigul, never went near the road for six months together. And I submit that such is always likely to be the result when the Tahsildar sees that the tastes of his superior officer do not lie in the direction in question, and still

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
18th September 1871.*

more so when the superintendence of such work is positively distasteful, as is not unfrequently the case, to the head Revenue-officer concerned.

7. I am happy to state that at the last meeting of the Local Fund Board, Mr. Bliss has proposed to transfer the whole roads of the circle, of which he is Vice-President, to the charge of this department, with a promise that he will render us all the aid in his power in obtaining materials and labour when required to do so; and I have no doubt but that from his great energy and peculiar qualification in this respect, we shall derive much assistance, and I trust that, should the arrangement be approved, we shall be able eventually to get the roads of this district into a condition which shall at least enable the traffic to pass over them without difficulty, and put an end, it is to be hoped, to discussions of the kind under notice.

TRANSFERRED to the Revenue Department, with reference to the orders in that department, dated 17th August 1871, No. 1,371.

(Signed) J. CARPENDALE, Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

No. 223. ORDER THEREON, 18th September 1871, No. 1,619.

Miscellaneous.

COMMUNICATED to the Board of
Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Public Works Department.

No 2120 Superintg Engineers' Office 8 Ds
Madura 9 September 1871
From
Lieut. Colonel A. A. Roberts R.E.
Superintending Engineer 8 Ds
To
Colonel J. Carpendale R.E.
Secretary to Government P.W.D.
In reference to L.O. dated
17 August 1871 No 1371 communicating
a letter from Mr Bliss, the Acting
Sub Collector of Madura, explaining
the system of road making by
the Revenue Department under his
orders in the Dindigul Range
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more necessary if only to point out
that the favorable impression that
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"road work can be managed"

by the Revenue Department, is not altogether borne out in actuality.

2 As it is only so recently as the 28 ultimo, in my letter No 1922, that I have reported upon the District Roads of Madura, my remarks upon the present occasion will be of the briefest.

3 It will, I think, be admitted that in his report Mr. Ellis has shown himself no harsh critic; to say the least, of his own performances, and had he not supplemented his remarks with a more recent report viz. that forwarded with my letter just quoted the Government might have well rested contented in the belief that an antidote to S. P. Departmental blunders and lavish expenditure had at length been discovered.

Unfortunately, as you will recollect, Mr. Ellis's account of the road in question exhibits about as disastrous a state of affairs

the superintendence of such work is positively distasteful, as is not unfrequently the case, to the head Revenue Officer concerned.

I am happy to state that at the last meeting of the Local Fund Board Mr. Ellis has proposed to transfer the whole roads of the circle of which he is Vice President, to the charge of this Department with a promise that he will render us all the aid in his power in obtaining materials and labor when required to do so, and I have no doubt but that from his great energy and peculiar qualification in this respect, we shall derive much assistance, and I trust that should the arrangement be approved, we shall be able eventually to get the roads of this District into a condition which shall at least enable the traffic to pass over them without difficulty and put an end,

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Sir

Your Most Obedt Servant

Richd. Roberts Lieut. Col. R.E.
Superintending Engineer & D.

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No 2 28th/31 70 12 6m

27th 1871 22nd

Transferred to the
Revenue Department
with reference to the
order in that Dept.

dated 17th August 1871
No 1371

William D. [unclear]
Secy to Govt
16th Sept 71.

No 222-223

22nd 13th 1871

From ~~10th 1871~~
The ~~10th 1871~~ Engineer
To 8th Division
The Secretary to
the Government of India

Dated 9th Sept 1871
Received. 22nd 1871
No 1619-18th September 1871

reference to the
No 1371 dated 17th
August 1871 in the
system of road
making by the
Revenue Department.
Enclosed

14 Sale Order of Dec 1871
21 also Bulet 1871

1871

18th Sept 71

16th 1871.

18th 1871.