

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
29th April 1873.*

No. 110. Read the following Endorsement of the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated 22nd April 1873 :—

Read the following letter from E. H. PRINGLE, Esq., Officiating Executive Engineer, Luckadie, to Colonel G. W. WALKER, R.E., Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, Madras, dated Goodaloor, 12th April 1873, No. 213.

I HAVE the honour to bring forward the following for your consideration:—

2. A bill, amounting to Rs. 20-8-0, for petty repairs to a tappal hut was recently forwarded to me by the Deputy-Collector, Malabar, for countersignature, under paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Board of Revenue's Circular Order No. XXVII. of 1868 (Standing Circular No. 207-3).

3. This Circular relates to "petty constructions and repairs,"—works for the most part carried out by Revenue-officers, and the paragraphs above noted call on Collectors to obtain the countersignature of Superintending Engineers (District Engineers) to bills for such works prior to these vouchers being forwarded to the Board.

4. I have the honour to submit that, in cases similar to that cited in paragraph 2, countersignature by a District Engineer is simply a farce, for, I take it, that affixing a signature involves knowledge of the accuracy of the whole document signed, or that portion or detail of it which the signature purports to attest.

5. In the bills I refer to, setting aside the fact that the amounts for individual works often fall below the sum for which Range Officers have to give Completion Certificates, there is frequently nothing whatsoever that a District Engineer could certify to : rates are not given ; quantities are not specified ; the very necessity for the work is unknown, for the matter has in no way come under the cognizance of the department.

6. Such being the case, it is absurd that the responsibility embraced by a signature should attach to those who can be in no respect liable.

7. I would respectfully suggest, in conclusion, that the Board be requested to modify their order, fixing the limit of bills requiring countersignature by District Engineers at Rs. 100 at lowest, and enjoining on Collectors the necessity of clearly specifying in all such bills the nature and amount of work actually paid for and the rates of labour, materials, etc : such a course will economise the Engineer's time and put an end to much useless office-work.

REFERRED to the Revenue Department, with remark that it does not appear to be advisable to demand countersignature by District Engineers of bills for works of petty construction and repair other than those in estimating or carrying out which the aid or advice of Public Works officers has been called for.

(Signed) G. W. WALKER, Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
29th April 1873.

No. 111.

ORDER THEREON, 29th April 1873, No. 430.

Miscellaneous.

FORWARDED to the Board of Revenue
for an early expression of their opinion.

(True Extract.)

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

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

Sp 21 October 1873 No 328-29
Lr. 110-111

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Secy to Govt
22^d April 73

Revenue Department
1873
No 114
No 2422

From.
The Offg. Ex. Engineer
Luckadie.

Waked 12th } April 1873.
Recd of 18th }
23rd 1873.
No 430-29 April 1873
Requesting
orders on the
subject of the
bills that should
be countersigned
by St. Engrs.

Referred

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C. L. 1144

N. 430

Forwarded to
the Board of
Revenue for an
early expression
of their opinion

List

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29 April 73

14 To the Board of Rev. Dr. S. May
21 Public Works Dept.