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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 547.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 6th March 1875.

Read the following papers:—

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, dated 30th October 1873, No. 203.

Read the following letter from Colonel A. STEWART, R. A., Inspector-General of Ordnance and Magazines, to W. HUDLESTON, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Fort St. George, 29th September 1873, No. 164-G.

I HAVE the honor to annex the following remarks of the Superintendent of Stationery, Fort St. George, for submission to, and consideration and orders of, Government with reference to Proceedings* of the Board of Revenue relative to the supply to Collectors of sealing-wax for cash-chests and money-bags:—

* No. 3,672 of 5th September 1873.

"*1st.*—The Madras Government, upon the recommendation in the Report of the Commissioner for investigating public establishments regarding the Stationery Office, directed, in the Order in their Proceedings† that inquiries be made regarding the local purchase of stationery articles, and for all officers, who were heretofore purchasing them locally, to forward a sample of each article to your office with their average prices.

† No. 1,577 of 28th November 1861.

"*2nd.*—The result of the above inquiry was the issue of Government Order,‡ prohibiting stationery articles being purchased locally, and directing that the supplies should be obtained hereafter by open contract from the Stationery Office only.

‡ No. 1,295, of 3rd November 1862.

"*3rd.*—From the very introduction of this change of system, which effectually closed the door against the abuses mentioned in paragraphs 25 and 26 of the Commissioner's Report, there have been complaints of the inferiority of articles supplied from this office which were heretofore purchased locally, and there were also endeavours to revert to the old system of departmental purchases locally, but this open manifestation was confined to the Revenue Department.

"*4th.*—As regards the sealing-wax, it was all along admitted that a better article could be obtained from the market at a larger cost, but that it was doubtful whether the Stationery Department would be justified to issue a more expensive article as a public charge when the cheaper description answers equally as well all the public purposes for which it is required, and is also equal in quality to the sample furnished to this office for supplies to public departments. The article issued was fully equal to that which was specially approved of by the Revenue Board on the 3rd June 1864. The unfavorable opinion expressed as regards the supply of this article was brought specially to the notice of Government,§ and no authority was given for the expensive article to be issued from this office.

§ Proceedings of Government, No. 741, of 26th June 1872.

"The sealing-wax complained against, I must add, is very largely used in this office, and there has been no difficulty at any time to seal the bunghy parcels despatched from this office almost daily.

"In no single instance was there any complaint of parcel seals received broken, nor any parcel returned by the Postal Authorities on account of defective sealing. The suitability or otherwise of the article for sealing cash-chests and money-bags must depend upon the description and quality of the article to which the seals are affixed. It, however, seems questionable whether a superior expensive article should be used for such ordinary purposes, when all that appears necessary is for some adherent matter to receive impressions for detective purposes. The difficulties which this office has to contend against as regards supplies will be understood when such contrary opinions are given on the same article as are recorded by the Revenue Board and Collectors, and to the present suggestion of the Revenue Board after intimation of their approval of the article obtained by contract for the current year recorded in their Proceedings.‖

‖ No. 1,395 of 4th June 1874.

"*5th.*—As regards supplies from this office, the Stationery Department has no alternative but to act implicitly in accordance with instructions issued by Government for its guidance, and if wax of a better quality was actually needed, the remedy was with the Revenue Board, simply to conform to the Order* of Government to furnish a sample of the article wanted.

* Revenue Department, No. 137, of 28th January 1868.

"*6th.*—A sample article has not yet been furnished to the Stationery Office, although efforts were made without success to obtain this for years past before inviting tenders for the supply by open contract. It was as far back as in 1869 that the Revenue Board were asked for information whether sealing-wax is readily procurable in the Bellary District and at what rate, and for a sample of the article itself to be sent to this office. Again, on the 6th January 1871, the Board were informed that this office was still open to any suggestion which the Revenue Board, from their experience, considered would be advantageous to Government, so as not to reopen the door to the irregularities brought to notice by the Commissioner in his report above referred to.

"Again, on 28th March 1873, the Revenue Board were informed that the sealing-wax supplied to the Collectorates was the same in quality and from the same stock as the article issued to their office and other public departments, and that it would be satisfactory to the Stationery Department to be furnished with a sample of the article which the Board, in their opinion, consider best suited for the requirements of the Revenue Department, so as to remove all doubt as regards the quality and description to be supplied. This sample article has not yet reached this office.

"There has not been wanting, for several years past, a wish to revert to the old system of local purchases by the several departments, and this procedure itself would not, in my opinion, be objectionable if it can be guaranteed that the cost will not hereafter greatly exceed the present favorable rates at which it is purchased, or for any inferior article being substituted for one of better description contracted for.

"The remedy that suggests itself against these abuses would be that wherever this and other articles are manufactured locally in any public institution such as jails, &c., that these articles be obtained from these institutions instead of Public Departments competing against one another for their purchase in the market."

Transmitted to the Revenue Department for disposal.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Chief Secretary.

5th October 1873.

Ootacamund, 30th October 1873, No. 203.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue, who should lose no time in supplying the Superintendent of Stationery with a sample of the country-wax required by Collectors for sealing cash chests and bags.

2. The English sealing-wax supplied by the Stationery Department is very inferior, and the Superintendent's remarks on this subject are invited.

(True Extract.)

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

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, dated 1st December 1873, No. 13.

Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel N. G. CAMPBELL, R. A., Officiating Deputy Inspector-General of Ordnance and Magazines, in charge of Ordnance Office, to D. F. CARMICHAEL, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Fort St. George, 20th November 1873, No. 226-S.

In accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 of Order of Government, I called on the Superintendent of Stationery for explanation relative to the supply of sealing-wax to Collectors for sealing cash-chests and money-bags.

* No. 143 of 3rd October 1871.

2. The Superintendent writes as follows:—

"In returning the enclosed Proceedings* of Government received for report with your Office docket,† I have the honor, in reply, to state that the sealing-wax issued from this office is of country manufacture, and not English as mentioned in paragraph 2 of the said Order.

* No. 203 of 30th October 1873.
† No. 218 of 10th November 1873.

"2. The wax is of the description and quality according to the sample sent to this office in 1862 agreeably to Government Order,‡ and corresponds also with that issued to public departments during the last 30 years.

‡ No. 1,577 of November 1861.

"3. Although the present contract rates§ are much below those at which the article was obtained before, varying from 15 Annas to 1¼ Rupees per pound, it is notwithstanding of the same description as that heretofore purchased at higher prices. This great reduction is owing to the change of system in obtaining supplies by open contracts, and for the supplies for the use of the several public departments being obtained, as ordered‖ by Government, by the Stationery Department only; there is a tendency to increase the prices on account of the Revenue Department going into the market as competitors against the Stationery Department for the same article. I am told by one of our contractors that 40 lbs. red and 20 lbs. black sealing-wax of the quality heretofore supplied by this office and complained against was purchased for the Huzur Treasury at Sydapett at 11 Annas per pound for the red and 6 Annas for the black against our contract rates at 6 and 3 Annas respectively.

§ Red at 3 Annas, Black at 3 Annas per lb.

‖ No. 1,295 of 3rd November 1862.

"4. In all previous correspondence on this subject it was admitted that a better quality of wax was obtainable in the market at a higher price than our contract rates; this was specially alluded to in my annual Report recorded in Government Proceedings,¶ wherein I stated that the result was to unnecessarily charge Government for the more expensive article when the cheap kind will answer public purposes equally as well; there was no authority given to supply the expensive article. I mentioned also that, if the supply of the expensive article was sanctioned, it would be necessary to increase the Budget Estimate on this account, unless the quantities heretofore supplied on indents be considerably reduced, as there will not be so much wastage when using the better and more expensive article.

¶ No. 731 of 26th June 1872.

"5. Herewith accompanying are two samples of red and black sealing-wax which Contractor A. Narrainsew offers to sell for an extended contract of, say, 2 or 3 years at 11 Annas per pound for the red, and 5½ Annas for the black wax.

"6. I am of opinion that in country-manufactured articles it will be advantageous to extend the contracts for a longer period than one year, because native dealers are more likely to combine together, instead of that fair competition which should exist in all trade transactions; these dealers will not risk maintenance of stock beyond actual demands, and as their limited means are unequal to sudden large demands, they too readily combine with others of the trade to keep down competition and sublet a portion of their contract, so that no loss should incur by any remains of stock after the expiration of the contract.

"7. To revert to the old system of consumers purchasing the articles to be used by them will certainly reopen the door to the abuses referred to in the report of the Commissioner for investigating public establishments, and will lead to direct deliveries, by contractors, of inferior articles; instead of the stores being according to the samples tendered, there will be no check to prevent the full value of the superior kind being charged to Government for actual supplies of the inferior kind.

"8. The remedy for this would be to supply the article through the agency or intervention of some public department on behalf of Government, in order to regulate the issues to all

public departments; it would be still better if sealing-wax for all requirements in the several districts would be manufactured in the district jails at prices at which the article can be obtained from contractors."

ORDER THEREON, 1st December 1873, No. 13.

COMMUNICATED to the Board of Revenue, whose attention is called to the statement at the end of paragraph 3 regarding the quality and price of some sealing-wax said to have been purchased locally for the Sydapett Huzur Treasury.

2. It is observed that the price of black sealing-wax is but half that of red, and by bringing the former color into more general use, it will probably be possible to introduce an improvement in the quality without adding to the general charges on this account.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

THE G. O., dated 16th September 1873, No. 88, which authorizes Collectors to purchase sealing-wax in the local market removes the inconvenience hitherto experienced.

2. Collectors are requested in future to bring the black sealing-wax into more general use than at present, so that the cost on account of the article may be reduced.

3. The attention of the Collector of Chingleput is drawn to the statement of the Superintendent of Stationery regarding the quality and price of the sealing-wax purchased locally for the Treasury at Sydapett.

(True Extracts.)

Acting Sub-Secretary.

To all Collectors.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" to the Superintendent of Stationery.

Lieut. Col. [illegible]

Asst. Sec. to Govt.

Revd. J. W. Fischer.

Board of Revenue,
MADRAS.

Proceedings, 21st March 1874, No. 647.

Examined,

For Secretary.

Superintendent, Government Press.

MADRAS:
1874.