(1) Number of pages 68

(2) Date of repair 4.3.77

(3) Initials of the Referencer

# TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

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## GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

DEPARTMENT

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| G.O. No.<br>~~B.P. No.~~ | 681 | Press<br>~~Ms.~~ |
| Dated | 15. 2 77 | ~~197~~ |

*Not to b*

*or roughly handled*

## *Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,*
## *15th February* 1877.

**Famine Relief.**

No. 488. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, 10th January 1877, No. 110 :—

Read the following letter from W. S. WHITESIDE, Esq., Collector of North Arcot, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chittoor, 6th January 1877, No. 1 :—

No. 3,008, dated 27th December 1876.
Do. do. 5th January 1877.

I HAVE the honor to forward, herewith, copies of the marginally-noted two interesting letters received by me from the District Engineer. In the first of these letters Major Prendergast fully discusses the question of the mode of execution of irrigation works by the Department of Public Works out of Relief Funds placed at his disposal by the Revenue Department. He proposes that these works should be carried out according to the system which ordinarily obtains in his department, and which should be paid for by results. I fully concur with him in the advisability of the works being executed as he suggests. There can be no doubt that by so doing a large number of the coolies who now flock in unmanageable crowds to our relief works will be drawn off to the Public Works Department works, and with infinitely more satisfactory results. It is a fact that the great difficulty with us is to obtain a fair day's work from the coolies on the relief works; and the task of supervision and of payment is very serious. If the District Engineer can, as Major Prendergast proposes, carry out in the ordinary manner the repair of irrigation works for which estimates are ready, but which for want of funds have been left untouched, the State will receive a far more satisfactory return for the outlay in the shape of the increased revenue or extended cultivation, the Public Works Department establishment which just now has comparatively little to do will be fully employed, and immense numbers of cooly people who now crowd and idle (in too many instances) on the relief works will get just the same relief as they do now on works in the execution of which many of them are directly interested. This letter of Major Prendergast's was fully discussed at the meeting we held here on the 2nd instant with Mr. Puckle, the 3rd Member of the Board of Revenue, and the advisability of adopting the proposals therein contained was fully concurred in by all present at the conference.

Dated the 5th instant.

2. While writing this letter the District Engineer has placed before me his second letter, quoted in the margin of paragraph 1 *supra*, on the subject of Board's Proceedings, dated 30th ultimo. I need scarcely amplify on it, as it was written by him in consultation with me and in my presence, and the remarks therein set forth contain my own opinions on the question.

3. I have the honor to request, therefore, that you will be good enough to obtain definite and early orders of the Board of Revenue and Government on the several important points now raised by Major Prendergast. He informs me that he is prepared to set to work the moment funds are placed at his disposal, and in the course of a few days I shall lay before the Board of Revenue a list of those works which we decide on first undertaking.

## ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Major H. L. PRENDERGAST, R.E., District Engineer of North Arcot, to W. S. WHITESIDE, Esq., Collector of North Arcot, dated Vellore, 27th December 1876, No. 3,008.

IN my letter, No. 3,003, of the 26th instant, I addressed you with reference to G.O., No. 3,385, of the 12th instant, in the Public Works Department, on the subject of my obtaining from you relief funds to supplement my Budget allotments for irrigation works. I have now received G.O., No. 3,410, in Public Works Department, of the 14th instant (to be returned), on the treatment of expenditure from Famine Relief Funds on agricultural works, and I have the honor to request you will be so good as to let me know whether you approve of my views for carrying on minor new works and repairs in modification of the line laid down in this last order.

2. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the order refer to the payment of subordinates temporarily entertained for famine works and to the adjustment of the expenditure (on those works) which is shown in the Public Works Accounts. There have been no such works in this district as the relief works hitherto have been carried out in the Revenue Department. But paragraph 3 of the order lays down in Clause 2 that agricultural works are to be carried on as relief works, laborers being paid at relief rates; then, subsequently, when measurements are available, the work done is to be measured, and the value at the ordinary rates is to be debited against the works. The difference, I presume, is to be shown under some such head as "Profit and Loss." Thus, supposing Rupees 300 to be disbursed to coolies in daily pay on the repairs of a tank bund, and by measurement it is found that a contractor would have been paid Rupees 200, then, for the sake of future record, the tank is to be shown to have had Rupees 200 only expended on it for repairs in 1876-77, and the balance of Rupees 100 is to go to the general cost of the famine.

3. Now, I would propose to carry on these agricultural works as usual and only extending our operations with the additional funds to be made available. I am of opinion that able-bodied labor is to be had for the execution of work at the ordinary rates. If this is not so in the districts where the famine commenced, and if the people are reduced to that state that they can only do a small amount of work for which a bare subsistence is full remuneration, I believe that is not yet the case in North Arcot. The famine began some two months earlier in Cuddapah and Bellary than it did here, and I should say that we have therefore two months to run before we arrive at their present condition.

4. But I have noticed it mentioned in the *Madras Mail* that many people left Cuddapah because the wages on relief works were insufficient to support themselves and their families, while on the East Coast Canal they hoped to get task or contract work and in this way earn more money than they could get as daily wages. This fact tells very strongly, I think, in favor of our offering the work on departmental rates, and supposing that the condition of the people is generally worse than I believe it to be, the different nature of the works will be adapted to the circumstances; those who are strong can go to task-work for their own benefit and those who are weak can go to the other relief works for their daily hire, as that is the best they can do for themselves.

5. By paying for work by measurement in the ordinary way (1) the subordinate executive establishment will be relieved of the troublesome process of frequent payments to large numbers of workpeople and the work will be more satisfactorily done by people accustomed to it; (2) the Government will reap considerable benefit in getting the value of the money expended, and (3) the people themselves will benefit; for many of those who wish to earn more than the relief wages of 2 Annas a-day will be able to do so instead of being forced to take that sum as a day's hire.

6. I propose to ask permission from the Government to change all the additional work to the Famine Relief Funds without having recourse to the relief rates of payment. But before doing this I beg to be informed whether you find there are any objections, or if I have your

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concurrence in support of my proposal. As you have precise reports from all quarters of the
district, you have a much more intimate knowledge than I have of the actual state of the people
and their resources. You have extensive works spreading through one taluq after another, which
gather together many more laborers than we can hope to employ on sanctioned estimates; and
if such a dreadful time should come when no one is able to do a good day's work as a laborer,
it must surely be still some months off; and at any time if you find that ordinary rates of pay-
ment have become unsuitable, I can then institute the system of daily payment to all who will
work.

7. I am assuming that the orders of the Government are permissive rather than positive,
and that the orders have been issued in anticipation of the worst, but not to be immediately
operative so long as in any district the necessity for enforcing them has not yet arisen.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. S. WHITESIDE,
Collector.

## ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From the same Officer, dated Chittoor, 5th January 1877.

IN continuation of my letter, No. 3,008, of the 27th ultimo, I have the honor to observe that
if I am permitted to carry on irrigation repairs and minor new works departmentally, it will, I
think, not be necessary for me to furnish you with any other periodical returns of outlay than
the monthly progress reports which you now receive from the ranges.

2. I judge thus from the G.Os., No. 3,410,* of the 14th December 1876; for paragraph 2
says that district Engineers are to submit to
the Examiner of Public Works Accounts a list
of the famine relief works for which expenditure is shown in the Public Works Accounts and
to send monthly to the Examiner a separate list of estimate sanctioned as famine relief works.
The Board of Revenue in their Proceedings, dated the 30th December, have probably not had
under their consideration the orders in the Public Works Department referred to above, for they
suggest in paragraph 3 that a list of the sanctioned relief works might be sent monthly to the
Board (that is through the Collector) for communication to the Examiner, Public Works
Accounts. The Examiner will not require to have a separate duplicate list of works from the
Revenue Department when definite orders have been issued to him and to the District Engi-
neers that he shall have the lists direct from the District Engineers.

3. The Board have considered in paragraph 2 that the works to be paid for from Relief
Funds should be shown in the Collector's weekly statements, and in paragraph 3, again, that
the Public Works Officers should furnish punctually to the Collectors the particulars for their
weekly reports.

These particulars are the probable cost of the works, the outlay and the number of coolies
employed on the last day. That is, the Board ask for a weekly instead of monthly return of
estimates sanctioned and of expenditure incurrred and a statement of the numbers of laborers
employed. Now, where work is paid for by measurement we take no account of the individual
men and women that have been at work; and especially for minor new works, which are chiefly
of masonry, workmen are engaged in making bricks, preparing stone, carting materials, &c.;
but these items of work are only dealt with in their results, not in the daily quantity of work or
of people employed. While, then, we do not in our departmental system keep nominal rolls of
coolies, and as the District Engineers and their officers are constantly on the move, it would be
a very difficult matter to furnish with punctuality even approximate returns of the number of
people who get work from the additional funds expended on account of the famine.

4. The Board have touched upon, but not entered into, this last point in their paragraph
4, where they suggest that contracts should be given to the villagers. But if contracts are so
given, in other words, if work is paid for by measurement, double labor is incurred; if lists ar

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* In Public Works Department.

kept of the number of coolies, as well as records of the quantity of work measured, I therefore imagine your weekly returns would be modified to meet the case of works that you may give to the villagers on contract.

5. As regards the provision of money for agricultural works our demands will not be large. I should say roughly and in absence from my office accounts that Rupees 20,000 will carry us on for three months, but the usual monthly applications will be made by the Range Officers including the amounts required from the Famine Relief Funds.

6. As my views relating to the expenditure of Relief Funds have been discussed at some length between yourself and other district officers when Mr. Puckle was present, I will not write again in the Public Works Department, and the subject will come before the Government [illegible] in the Revenue Department; I will therefore mention here that, inasmuch as the Government have given authority for the execution of "as many repair and minor works as cannot be provided with funds from the Irrigation Budget grant," it follows that not only [illegible] works will be taken up, but other works will be resumed which have been commenced, but for the completion of which funds have hitherto not been available. To simplify the accounts I will, as soon as possible, appropriate the small balance that I have on hand from the Irrigation Budget grant to the works that are in progress; but it will happen that appropriations will have to be made to a work both from the Irrigation Budget grant, as already made, and again from the Relief Funds for the completion of the work. Payments will also be made from Relief Funds for work that is now due in some instances, in anticipation of funds becoming available. I have had authority from the Government to expend Minor New Works Funds on the Poorsay tank, and I shall now be able to carry on that work freely as there is no limitation to the expenditure under Minor New Works from the Relief Funds.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. S. WHITESIDE,
Collector.

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Read also G.O., dated 14th December 1876, No. 3,410, passing orders on letter from the Examiner of Public Works Accounts regarding adjustment of charges on account of famine relief works.

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WITH the foregoing letter, the Collector of North Arcot forwards copies of two letters from the District Engineer on the subject of the execution of famine relief works by the Public Works Department with special reference to the orders of Government in the Public Works Department noted in the margin. These orders have been communicated to the Board on their application, and they have, in ignorance of the second order not at the time received, addressed Government with reference to the first only.

G.O., 12th Dec. 1876, No. 3,385.
„ 14th „ „ „ 3,410.

2. The Board suggested that in order to keep the whole of the relief work expenditure together, and to secure that Government should be informed of the extent of relief being afforded, the Collectors should place the District Engineers in funds, and the latter should be ordered to furnish weekly the particulars required for the relief reports which have been prescribed. The second Government Order apparently dispenses with the preliminary placing of funds to credit of the department, and further directs that in *all* cases the outlay shall be separated, and only that portion which would not otherwise be incurred be charged to Relief Funds.

3. Writing with reference to the first order, Major Prendergast, assuming that the minor new irrigational works and repairs which the District Engineers were authorised to carry out were to be executed by contracts for measured quantities in the usual departmental way and at usual rates, shows that it will be impossible to comply with the Board's suggestion, and that Public Works Officers who take no account of individual laborers cannot possibly furnish the returns demanded. With reference to the second order, the terms of which (especially paragraph 3, Clause 2) have been taken to imply that daily payments as on relief works are to be made and contracts at usual rates dispensed with, Major Prendergast argues that as able-bodied labor capable of earning more than relief wages and giving a substantial return can still be had, it is impolitic to insist upon the execution of the works by relief gangs consisting of all comers paid at a uniform subsistence rate; that the restrictions as to the mode of execution of the work ought to be removed; and that the ordinary contract system, or rather payment for work according to measured results, should be allowed.

4. The Board are not sure that, in assuming that contract work is to be superseded, Major Prendergast has correctly apprehended the Government Order. They believe that, in speaking of the excess above ordinary cost, Government merely referred to the increased cost which must affect all works, contract as well as other, in such a season as the present. It is highly advisable that the doubt should be cleared up, and the Board entirely agree with Major Prendergast's views upon the subject. Similar views have been urged by Mr. Wedderburn in Coimbatore, and the Board are of opinion that contracts at usual rates, the work to be paid for according to quantities, should be freely adopted under precaution that the contractors employed be stringently bound down to time, so that the great object, viz., to afford present employment, be not lost. Works so given on contract should be placed under the Public Works Department whose services would thus be utilized at the present crisis. The Board are however surprised to find Major Prendergast estimating the additional outlay which the Public Works Department in the North Arcot District can undertake at Rupees 20,000 only for the next three months. This trifling outlay will not be of much use.

5. The advantages of the system proposed have been strongly urged by Mr. Puckle in his recent report to Government, and need not be dwelt on by the Board. It has however the disadvantage that the returns required by Government as to relief outlay and number of persons employed on given dates cannot possibly be furnished when contract work is in force. The Board, however, recommend Government to forego the demand for such returns, and to be satisfied with a mere statement of the number and estimated cost of such works undertaken by the Public Works Department and with a monthly or other periodical return of the sums paid away out of the grants which have been made. The Board adhere to their proposal that the District Engineers should be placed in funds by Collectors. These officers could then enter the number (or even the names) of the works in progress under the Public Works Department, and the District Engineers could from time to time inform the Collectors of money paid out. If the Examiner's accounts are to be awaited, the information wanted will be three months old; that in the Progress Reports will be on the average more than a month old.

6. The distinction drawn in the G.O., Public Works Department, of 14th December, between the ordinary and famine relief cost of all works suggests to the

Board another point for consideration. The distinction, though applied to all works, seems to have been suggested by the necessity of so showing the outlay on agricultural works as not to falsify future estimates of returns from irrigation outlay. This, of course, does not apply to road works, and the only reason for a distinction regarding them would be that it was intended to recover a portion of the outlay from Local Funds hereafter. This principle is no doubt legitimate and ought to be applied as far as possible. But as regards new roads made, even lines contemplated by Local Boards as useful projects to be carried out at some future time, the Board do not think that charge should be made. Local Funds are far from inexhaustible, and it would be unfair to the Local Fund Boards to forestall their resources and cramp their usefulness for years, which results would follow in most circles if the charge were enforced. Orders have already been issued for the transfer of allotments in Local Fund Budgets of the current year for works taken up from Famine Funds, and this will suffice in the Board's opinion as regards new works.

7. For repairs the case is different. Many roads will be put in complete order, and on others large quantities of metal and gravel sufficient for several years to come will be stored. The maintenance grants of 1876-77 have now been nearly spent, but the famine relief expenditure will in many cases obviate the necessity of any repairs in 1877-78. The Board therefore recommend that when roads are metalled or repaired from Famine Funds the ordinary maintenance grants of 1877-78 be credited to Imperial Funds on recovery, and that the market value of all metal stored on roads and used hereafter by Local Fund Boards be recovered from them.

8. To sum up, the Board's recommendations are—

(1.) That District Officers be encouraged to have relief works done on time contracts at usual rates through the Public Works Department.

(2.) That it be explained that Public Works Officers are at liberty to expend funds under G.O., dated 12th and 14th December 1876, Nos. 3,385 and 3,410, Public Works Department, in the usual way.

(3.) That funds for such works be placed at their disposal by Collectors.

(4.) That weekly returns of outlay and numbers employed on such works should not be insisted on, but Collectors should merely state the number of works undertaken and amount of funds placed at the District Engineer's disposal, and that the latter officers should from time to time, and as often as possible, intimate to the Collectors for inclusion in their next report the amount expended from such funds.

(5.) That outlay on the repair of and collection of metal for Local Fund roads be recouped by crediting the maintenance grants for 1877-78 to Imperial Funds, and by recovering the market value of metal now stored upon and hereafter used for the roads.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Acting Secretary.

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No. 489.

Miscellaneous.

ORDER THEREON, 15th February 1877, No. 681.

OF the five recommendations advanced by the Board in the Proceedings above read, the first, "that district officers be encouraged to have relief works done on time contracts at usual rates through the Public Works Department," has been disposed of by G.O. of the 5th instant, No. 520-A, which directs the adoption of the system of task-work in the execution of such works.

2. The second, "that it be explained that Public Works Officers are at liberty to expend funds under G.O. of the 12th and 14th December 1876, Nos. 3,385 and 3,410, Public Works Department, in the usual way," is disposed of by G.O. of the 18th January 1877, No. 156, Public Works Department, which lays down in paragraphs 5 and 6 the procedure to be followed by Public Works Department and Revenue Officers in accounting for expenditure on famine relief works carried out by the latter with the professional assistance of the former. On this point His Grace the Governor in Council only deems it necessary to remark that, looking to the great number of works in progress, or likely to be undertaken, in various districts of the Presidency, the paucity of professional officers and the obvious expediency of making the best possible use of their services, all relief works other than those specified in Financial G.O. of the 3rd instant, No. 390, should be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, and that District Engineers, and their Range Officers should advise and assist that Department to the best of their ability by estimating for and laying out works, and, when agricultural works are being taken in hand as famine relief works, by assessing the value of the work done in view to the subsequent adjustment of the expenditure on those works in the manner laid down in G.O. of the 14th December 1876, No. 3,410, Public Works Department. Their subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and where this is the case they should be considered as under the orders of the Collector or Divisional Officer, by whom they will be kept in funds and to whom they will submit their accounts of expenditure.

3. The above remarks dispose of the Board's third recommendation "that funds for such works be placed at their disposal by Collectors."

4. With regard to the fourth recommendation, "that weekly returns of outlay and number employed on such works should not be insisted on, but Collectors should merely state the number of works undertaken and amount of funds placed at the District Engineer's disposal, and that the latter officers should, from time to time and as often as possible, intimate to the Collectors for inclusion in their next report the amount expended from such funds," the Governor in Council directs that the number on relief works be reported by Collectors weekly as at present and be included in their Progress Reports along with a statement of the advances made by them for works, a monthly statement of expenditure accounted for being submitted to the Board and included in their next Progress Reports.

5. The fifth recommendation, "that outlay on the repair of, and collection of metal for, Local Fund roads be recouped by crediting the maintenance grants for 1877-78 to Imperial Funds, and by recovering the market value of metal now stored upon, and hereafter used for, the roads," appears fair; but His Grace in Council considers that if the cost of the collection of metal is to be adjusted by the transfer of the Local Fund maintenance grants of 1877-78 to Imperial, there will be no subsequent necessity to charge Local Fund Boards for the value of such metal when used, seeing that, unless the stones are broken up after collection, the

cost of such collection will be the full value of the metal. His Grace in Council, however, considers it is more than doubtful whether any large portion of the Local Fund maintenance grants of 1877-78 can be transferred as proposed. From the new works allotments, however, and from the balances and reserves of next year, considerable sums will probably be available for transfer, and, in adjusting the accounts between Local and Imperial Funds on account of repairs to roads and storage of metal by the sides of them, His Grace in Council directs that the value of all such repairs and metal stored be estimated by District Engineers for each Local Fund Circle at the ordinary rates, and that Local Fund Boards be called on to pay at those rates for the repairs executed from Famine Relief Funds to all the roads entered in the Budgets of the current or next year, and for so much of the metal stored on them as will suffice to put them at once into good repair, where in need of it, when famine relief works are stopped, any excess being treated as a contribution from Imperial Funds to famine relief, subject to the right of Government to dispose of any quantities not paid for, in any particular instance, in such manner as they may consider expedient. It will rest with the Revenue Board to adjust the transfers in accordance with the above principles.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Financial Department.
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

Exd. G. Freeman.

4/9/97

**Govt. of (1877) Madras.**

**REVENUE.**

To

The Board of Revenue,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated February, 15th.

Recd. Encl.

[illegible] 15th February 1877, No. 651.

FEBRUARY.

Nos. 188-189.

FAMINE RELIEF, No. 515

*Execution of Relief Works through the Public Works Department.*—Passing orders on certain recommendations of the Board in connection with the —, &c.

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No. 1

North Arcot Collector's Office
Chittoor 6th January 1877

188/6

From

W. S. Whiteside Esqre.
Collector of N. Arcot.

To

H. E. Stokes Esqre.
Acting Secretary to the
Board of Revenue.
Madras.

Sir.

No. 3008 of 27th December 1876
〃 〃 5th January 1877

I have the honor to forward herewith copies of the marginally noted two interesting letters received by me from the District Engineer. In the first of these letters Major Prendergast fully discusses the question of the [illegible] of execution of Irrigation works by the Department of Public works out of Relief funds placed at his disposal by the Revenue Department. He proposes that these works should be carried out according to the system which ordinarily obtains in his Department and which should be paid for by results. I fully concur with him in the advisability of the works being executed as he suggests. There can be no doubt that by so doing a large number of the coolies who now flock in unmanageable crowds to our Relief works will be drawn off to the D.P.W. works and with infinitely more satisfactory results. It is a fact that the great difficulty with us is to obtain a fair day's work from the coolies on the Relief works, and the task of supervision and of payment is

very

very serious. If the District Engineer can, as Major Prendergast proposes, carry out in the ordinary manner the repair of Irrigation works for which Estimates are ready, but which, for want of Funds, have been left untouched the state will receive a far more satisfactory return for the outlay in the shape of increased Revenue or extended cultivation the D.P.W. establishment which just now has comparatively little to do will be fully employed and immense numbers of cooly people who now crowd and idle (in too many instances) on the Relief works will get just the same relief as they do now on works in the execution of which many of them are directly interested. This letter of Major Prendergast's was fully discussed at the meeting we held here on the 2nd Instant with Mr. Puckle, the 2nd Member of the Board of Revenue, and the advisability of adopting the proposals therein contained was fully concurred in by all present at the conference.

2. While writing this letter, the District Engineer had placed before me his second letter × quoted × dated the 5th Instant. in the margin of para 1 supra on the subject of Board's Proceedings dated 30th Ultimo I need scarcely amplify on it, as it was written by him on consultation with me and in my presence and the

remarks

remarks therein set forth contain my own opinions on the question.

3. I have the honor to request therefore that you will be good enough to obtain definite and early orders of the Board of Revenue and Government on the several important points now raised by Major Prendergast. He informs me that he is prepared to set to work the moment funds are placed at his disposal, and in the course of a few days, I shall lay before the Board of Revenue a list of those works which we decide on first undertaking.

I have &ca
(Sd) W. S. Whiteside.
Collector

North Arcot
Collectors office
Chittoor
6th January /77

To The Secretary to the Board of Revenue
Madras.

(True Copy)
A. Elston
Ag Secretary

Compd WWS

-ings of the Board
of Revenue to the
Secretary to Govt.
P.D. of 10th January /77

Pr. 440 (P)
Rev. No. 1/14 11/189.
Copy of letter from
the Colr. of North
Arcot dd 8th January /77
No. 1 requesting to
obtain early orders
on the points remain-
-ing regarding the execut-
of Famine Relief Wor-
on Irrigation works

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No.

North Arcot District Engineer
office

Camp Chittoor 5th January /77

From

Major H. L. Prendergast R. E.
District Engineer North Arcot

To

W. S. Whiteside Esq.
Collector of North Arcot

Sir

In continuation of my letter No 3008 of the 27th Ultimo, I have the honor to observe that if I am permitted to carry on Irrigation repairs and Minor new works departmentally it will I think not be necessary for me to furnish you with any other Periodical Returns of out-lay than the monthly Progress Reports wh you now receive from the Ranges.

2 I judge this from the Governm

In P.W.D. Orders No 3410 of the 14th December 1876 for para 2 says, that District Engine are to submit to the Examiner of Public Works Accounts, a list of the Famine Relief Works for which expenditure is shewn in the Public Works Accounts and to send monthly to the Examiner a separate list of Estimates Sanctioned as Famine Relief works.

The Board of Revenue in their Proceedings dated the 30th December have probably not had under their consideration the orders in the Public Works Department referred to above, for they suggest in para 3 that a list of the sanctioned Relief Works might be sent monthly to the Board (that is through the Collector) for communication to the Examiner Public Works Accounts.

The Examiner will not require to

have

have a separate duplicate set of works from the Revenue Department, when definite orders have been issued to him and to the District Engineers that he shall have the lists direct from the District Engineers.

3 The Board have considered in para 2 that the works to be paid for from Relief Funds should be shewn in the Collector's Weekly Statements and in para 3 again that the Public Works Officers should furnish punctually to the Collectors, the particulars for their Weekly Reports.

These particulars are, the probable cost of the works, the out-lay and the number of coolies employed on the last day. That is the Board ask for a weekly instead of monthly. Return of Estimates sanctioned & of expenditure incurred and a statement of the numbers of Laborers employed. Now where work is paid for by measurement we take no account of the individual men and women that have been at work, and especially for Minor new works, which are chiefly of masonry, workmen are engaged in making bricks, preparing Stone, carting materials &c, but these items of work are only dealt with in their results, not in the daily quantity of work or of people employed. While then we do not in our Departmental System, keep Nominal Rolls of coolies and as the District Engineers

Engineers and their officer are constantly on the move, it would be a very difficult matter to furnish with punctuality even approximate Returns of the number of people, who get work from the additional funds expended on account of the famine.

4 The Board have touched upon, but not entered into, this last point in their para 4 when they suggest that Contracts should be given to the villagers. But if Contracts are so given, in other words, if work is paid for by measurement; double labor is incurred, if lists are kept of the number of coolies as well as records of the quantity of work measured. I, therefore, imagine your weekly Returns

would be modified to meet the case of works that you may give to the Villagers on Contract

5 As regards the provision of money for agricultural works our demands will not be large. I should say roughly and in absence from my office accounts, that Rupees 20,000 will carry us on, for 3 months but the usual monthly applications will be made by the Range officers including the accounts required from the Famine Relief Funds.

6 As my views relating to the expenditure of Relief Funds have been discussed at some length between yourself and other District officers when Mr. Buckle was present, I will not write again in the Public Works Department

and

and the subject will come before the Government at once in the Revenue Department I will therefore mention here that inasmuch as the Government have given authority for the execution of "as many Repair and Minor works "as cannot be provided with funds from the Irrigation Budget grant," it follows that not only fresh works will be taken up, but other works will be resumed, which have been commenced, but for the completion of which funds have hitherto not been available. To simplify the accounts, I will, as soon as possible, appropriate the small balance that I have on hand from the Irrigation Budget grant, to the works that are in progress; but it will happen that appropriations will have to be made to a work, both from the Irrigation Budget grant, as already made, and again, from the Relief Funds, for the completion of the work. Payments will also be made from Relief Funds for work that is now due in some instances, in anticipation of funds becoming available. I have had authority from the Government to expend Minor new works Funds, on the Poorsay Tank and I shall now be able to carry on that work freely, as there is no limitation to the expenditure under Minor new works, from

from the Relief Funds

I have &c

(Signed) H. L. Prendergast Major
District Engineer

(True Copy)

(Signed) W. S. Whiteside
Collector

(True copy)

W Elliston
Ag Secretary

Comd WMS

Enclosure in Boards
Proceedings to the
Secretary to Government
P. D. dated 10th January
1877

2
Rev: 446 (P))
Nos: 15 Pages 11 to 18

6/3/97

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No. 3008.

Northern District Engineer's
office Vellore 27th Decr 76.

68/15

From

The District Engineer
North Arcot

To
The Collector of North Arcot.

Sir.

In my letter No 3003 of the 28th Instant, I addressed with reference to G. No 3385 of the 12 Instant in the Public Works Department on the subject of my obtaining from your Relief Funds to supplement my budget allotments for Irrigation works. I have now received Government Order No 3410 of the 14th Instant on the treatment of expenditure from Famine Relief Funds on Agricultural works and I have the honor to request you will be so good as to let me know whether you approve of my views for carrying on Minor New Works and Repairs, in modification of the line laid down in this last order.

In Public Works Dept (Altered).

2. Paras 1 and 2 of the order refer to the payment of subordinates temporarily entertained for Famine Works

and to the adjustment of the expenditure (on those works) which is shown in the Public Works Accounts. There have been no such works in this District, as the Relief works hitherto have been carried out in the Revenue department. But para 3 of the order lays down, in clause 2, that Agricultural works are to be carried on as Relief Works laborers being paid at Relief rates; thence subsequently when measurements are available the work done is to be measured and the value at the ordinary rates is to be debited against the works. The difference I presume is to be shown under some such head as "Profit and Loss". Thus supposing Rs 300 to be disbursed to Coolies in daily pay, on the repairs of a tank bund; and by measurement, it is found that a Contractor would have been paid Rs 200. Then, for the sake of future records, the tank is to be shown to have had Rs 200 only expended on it for repairs

an

in 1876-77, and the balance of Rs 100 is to go to the general Cost of the Famine.

3. Now, I would propose to carry on these Agricultural works as usual and only extending our operations with the additional funds to be made available. I am of opinion that able-bodied labour is to be had for the execution of work at the ordinary rates. If this is not so in the Districts, where the Famine commenced, and if the people are reduced to that state that they can only do a small amount of work, for which a bare subsistence is full remuneration, I believe that is not yet the case in North Arcot. The famine began some two months earlier in Cuddapah and Bellary, than it did here and I should say that we have therefore two months to run before we arrive at their present condition.

4. But I have noticed it mentioned in the Madras Mail, that many people left Cuddapah because the wages

are

on Relief works were insufficient to support themselves and their families: while on the East Coast Canal they hoped to get task or Contract work, and in this way earn more money than they could get as daily wages. This fact tells very strongly, I think, in favor of our offering the work on departmental rates, and supposing that the condition of the people is generally worse than I believe it to be, the different nature of the works will be adapted to the circumstances: those who are strong can go to task work for their own benefit and those who are weak can go to the other Relief works for their daily hire, as that is the best they can do for themselves.

5. By paying for work by measurement in the ordinary way I the subordinate Executive Establishment will be relieved of the troublesome process of frequent payments to large numbers of work people, and the work will be more satisfactorily done by people accustomed

to

to it: II The Government will reap considerable benefit in getting the value of the money expended and III the people themselves will benefit, for many of those who wish to earn more than the Relief wages of two annas a day will be able to do so, instead of being forced to take that sum as a day's hire

6. I propose to ask permission from the Government to charge all the additional work to the Famine Relief Funds, without having recourse to the Relief rates of payment. But before doing this, I beg to be informed whether you find there are any objections or if I have your concurrence in support of my proposal. As you have precise reports from all quarters of the district, you have a much more intimate knowledge than I have of the actual state of the people and their resources. You have extensive works spreading through one taluq after another, which gather together many more laborers

than we can hope to employ on sanctioned Estimates: and if such a dreadful time should come when no one is able to do a good days work as a laborer, it must surely be still some months off and at any time if you find that ordinary rates of payment have become unsuitable I can then institute the system of daily payment to all who will work.

7. I am assuming that the orders of the Government are permissive rather than positive, and that the orders have been issued in anticipation of the worst but not to be immediately operative so long as in any District the necessity for enforcing them, has not yet arisen.

I have &c

(sd.) H.L. Prendergast Major. R.E.
District Engineer.

True copy

(sd.) W.S. Whiteside
Collector

True copy

H Elkins
Ag Secretary

Compd JWS
Chingoobury

6/9/97

Enclosure in Board Proceedings to Secretary to Govt. P.W.D. dated 10 Jany 1877.

3
Rev: 446 of 77

Copy of D. Engineer's letter enclosed in the Collector's letter.

Pros 15 Feby 1877 L. 1488.

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Revenue Department

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue
dated 10th Jany 1877

Read letter from the Collector of North Arcot dated 6th January 1877 C. No 1.
Read also G. O. P. W. D. 14 December 1876 No 3410.

With the foregoing letter, the Collector of North Arcot forwards copies of two letters from the District Engineer on the subject of the execution of famine relief works by the Public Works Department with special reference to the orders of Government in the Public Works Department noted in the margin

12 Decr 1876 No 3385 }
14 Decr 1876 No 3410 }

These orders have been communicated to the Board on their application; and they have, in ignorance of the second order, not at the time received, addressed Government with reference to the first only.

2. The Board suggested that

in order to keep the whole of the relief work expenditure together, and to secure that Government should be informed of the extent of relief being afforded, the Collectors should place the District Engineers in funds, and the latter should be ordered to furnish weekly the particulars required for the relief reports which have been prescribed. The second G. O. apparently dispenses with the preliminary placing of funds to credit of the Department, and further directs that in all cases the outlay shall be reported, and only that portion which would not otherwise be incurred be charged to relief funds.

3. Writing with reference to the first order, Major Prendergast, assuming that the minor new irrigational works and repairs which the District Engineers were authorized to carry out were to be executed by contracts for measured quantities in the usual departmental way, and at usual rates, shows that it will be impossible to comply with the Board's suggestion; and that Public Works Officers who take no account of individual labourers cannot possibly furnish the returns demanded. With reference to the second order the terms of which (especially para 3, clause 2) have been taken to imply that daily payments as on relief works are to be made, and contracts at usual rates dispensed with, Major Prendergast argues that as able bodied labour

capable of earning more than relief wages, and giving a substantial return can still be had, it is impolitic to insist upon the execution of the works by relief gangs consisting of all comers paid at a uniform subsistence rate; that the restriction as to the mode of execution of the work ought to be removed; and that the ordinary contract system, or rather payment for work according to measured results should be allowed.

4. The Board are not sure that in assuming that Contract work is to be superseded, Major Prendergast has correctly apprehended the G. O. They believe that in speaking of the excess above ordinary cost, Government merely referred to the increased cost which must affect all works, Contract as well as others, in such a season as the present. It is highly advisable that the doubt should be cleared up and the Board entirely agree with Major Prendergast's views upon the subject. Similar views have been urged by Mr. Wedderburn in Coimbatore, and the Board are of opinion that contracts at usual rates, the work to be paid for according to quantities should be freely adopted, under precaution that the contractors employed be stringently bound down to time, so that the great object viz to afford present employment be not lost. Works so given on contract should be placed under the P. W. D. whose services would thus be utilized

at the present crisis. The Board are however surprised to find Major Prendergast estimating the additional outlay which the D.P.W. in the North Arcot District can undertake at Rupees 20,000 only for the next three months. This trifling outlay will not be of much use.

7. The advantages of the system proposed have been strongly urged by Mr. Puckle in his recent report to Government and need not be dwelt on by the Board. It has however the disadvantage that the returns required by Government as to relief outlay and number of persons employed on given dates cannot possibly be furnished when contract work is in force. The Board

however

however recommend Government to forego the demand for such returns and to be satisfied with a mere statement of the number and estimated cost of such works undertaken by the P.W. Department, and with a monthly or other periodical return of the sums paid away out of the grants which have been made. The Board adhere to their proposal that the District Engineer should be placed in funds by Collectors. These Officers could then enter the number (or even the names) of the works in progress under the P.W.D., and the District Engineer could from time to time inform the Collectors of money paid out. If the Examiner's accounts are to be awaited, the information wanted will be three months old. That in the Progress reports will be on the average more than a month old.

8. The distinction drawn in the G. O. P. W. D. of 14th December between the ordinary and famine relief costs of all works suggests to the Board another point for consideration. The distinction though applied to all works seems to have been suggested by the necessity of so showing the outlay on agricultural works as not to falsify future estimates of returns from irrigation outlay. This of course does not apply to road works, and the only reason for a distinction regarding them would be that it was intended to recover a portion of the outlay from local funds hereafter. This principle is no doubt legitimate, and ought to be applied

as far as possible. But as regards new roads made, even lines contemplated by local boards as useful projects to be carried out at some future time, the Board do not think that charge should be made. Local funds are far from inexhaustible, and it would be unfair to the local fund boards to forestall their resources & cramp their usefulness for years; which results would follow in most circles, if the charge were enforced. Orders have already been issued for the transfer of allotments in local fund budgets of the current year for works taken up from famine funds, & this will suffice in the Board's opinion as regards new works.

9. For repairs the case is different. Many roads will be put in complete order, and on others large quantities of metal & gravel sufficient for several years to come will be stored. The maintenance grants of 1876-7 have now been nearly spent, but the Famine relief expenditure will in many cases obviate the necessity of any repairs in 1877-8. The Board ~~thereupon~~ therefore recommend that when roads are metalled or repaired from Famine funds the ordinary maintenance grants of 1877-8 be credited to imperial funds on recovery & that the Market value of all metal stored on roads and

[illegible]

and used hereafter by L. Fd. Boards be recovered from them.

10. To sum up the Boards recommendations are:-

(i). That District Officers be encouraged to have relief works done in time contracts at usual rates through the P. W. D.

(ii) That it be explained that P. W. Officers are at liberty to expend funds under G. O. 12 & 14 Decr. 1876 No. 3385 & 3410 P. W. D. in the usual way.

(iii) That funds for such works be placed at their disposal by Collectors

(iv) That weekly returns of outlay & numbers employed on such works should not be insisted on, but Collector should merely state the number of works undertaken & amount of funds placed at the Dt. Engineers disposal; & that the latter officers should from time to time & as often as possible intimate to the Collectors for inclusion in their next report, the amount expended from such funds.

(4) That outlay on the repair of & Collection of metal for local fund roads be recouped by crediting the maintenance grants for 1877-8 to imperial funds & by recovering the market value of metal now stored upon & hereafter used for the roads.

(True Extract)

J. Ellerms
Ag. Secretary

To The Secretary to Government R.D.
with Copy of Collector's letter & of its
enclosures

Rev: 1877 Dept.
No. 446

15-1-77

6/2/77

Proceedings of the
Board of Revenue

Dated 10 } Jany 77.
Despd 10
Recd 15
cn 3

Submitting to Govt with
remarks letter from Collr
of Kistnah forwarding
Copies of Communications
from the Dt Engineer on the
subject of the Execution
of Famine Relief works
by P.W.D.

G.O. 15 February 1877 No. 681

16.1.77 W.

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REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

No. 446

From Bd of Rev.

Dated 10. January 1877.

FOR ORDERS.

The sum Major Prendergast can spend is insignificant. But to this extent I would accept the proposal. It is difficult to draw a hard & fast rule and officers will work best in their own way.

Of course any employment of labor is good and will relieve famine works. But by Contract work we spend more than bare subsistence: we are really executing works of utility in the ordinary way and admitting 2 or 3 men's wages to

and thus employ labor profitably to a moderate extent. Where the pressure is severe. we must have minimum rates of wages & imperfect Task work

But I doubt the G. of I approving what would be really an increase to our D.P.W. Budget.

to one good (and possibly well-to-do) laborer besides Contractor's profits – and here we face a matter of principle :

As at present advised I am against Contract work on Relief Works. We are supplying supervision, task work must be executed but I do not see my way to extensive use of Contracts.

I think the G.O of the 14: Decr. has been explained in the D.P.W. My Hon'ble: Colleague will know this.

The

The Boards [illegible] should be accepted.

As regards Local Funds: they are not bound to support the starving poor or find labor for those needing employment. The Law must be observed. I would therefore direct without laying down any explicit principle that the Government do not accept the view of the Board in their entirety and that when works are under-taken outside the current provision from Local Funds for each work – whether of repair or new works – All expenditure must be debited to Famine Relief works, subject if deemed equitable, to such future adjustment as the Law admits of.

17/1.

Despite there is much force in Col Prendergasts remarks & that the question raised should be deliberately answered We suppose & probably with reason that there are a considerable number of able bodied labourers in N. Arcot wh. will work as usual for the D.P.W. if work is given them. & further he wd. continue the contract system. at wh. they will Earn more than 2as per diem giving more than 2as worth of labor. But this is spending Famine Funds in a manner not contemplated by the Govt. of India who tell us we are to give only *subsistence rates*. If we give only subsistence rates we cannot have the contract system. tho' with much trouble and expensive supervision, we can at subsistence rates exact *task work*. & we may of course order D.P.W. officers to do this. But I think the best way of using D.P.W. officers for Famine work is to put them under the Revenue officers & not confuse our accts by passing these works thro' the Examiners Office.

FOR ORDERS.

If it be not considered a disobedience to the orders of the Govt. of I. & in districts where pressure is not extreme I wd adopt Col Prendergasts proposal and assign a moderate proportion of Famine Funds to D.P.W. work

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REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

No. 431

From Bd. of Rev.

Dated 12 January 1877.

FOR ORDERS.

I would approve generally of Mr. Wedderburn's proposals.

But I think the amount approp. to works of irrigation is far too small and no advances for wells appear.

I would draw special attention to this deficiency and order the transfer of some of the sums allotted to other works to this object

Task work must be enforced with discretion and due allotment

of tasks according to
the capabilities of
laborers,

We have here again
the Contract question
raised – I would
point out the disadvantages
in increased costliness,
probability of favoritism
and exclusion of the
physically enfeebled
persons whom we
must support X

So that tho the Govt.
will not have a hand
[illegible]
the expediency of [illegible]
[illegible]
17/1 [illegible]

---

I think – proposals
for water supply, irrigation
should be held under
careful consideration
[illegible]
carry out [illegible]
[illegible] of this nature

2 That task work [illegible]
[illegible] the [illegible]
properly [illegible]

3 [illegible]
as a [illegible]
[illegible] work will be done

[illegible]

FOR ORDERS.

Relief Works in Coimbatore &c.

On Task Work v. Contract see other note. AM

J.K.G. 4/2

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No 681

Rd. P2s. of 10th Jany/77.

G.O 15th February 1877

Of the 5 recommendations advanced by the Bd. in the P2s. above read the first, "that Dist. officers be encouraged to have relief works done on [illegible] at usual rates through the P.W.D" has been disposed of by G.O of the 5th Decr. No. 5204 which directs the adoption of the [illegible] of task work in the [illegible] of such works. (P.P.) The second,

2. "that it be explained that Public Works officers are at liberty to expend funds under G.O of the 12th & 16th Decr./76 Nos. 3385 & 3410 P.W.D in the usual way" is disposed of by G.O of the 18th Jany/77. No. 156 P.W.D which lays down in Paras 5 & 6

the procedure to be followed by D.P.W. & Revt. Officer in accounting for expenditure on Famine Relief works carried out by the latter with the professional assistance of the former. On this point the [illegible] from the former in Council only deemed it necessary to remark that looking to the great number of works in progress, or likely to be undertaken in the various Dts. of the Presidency, [illegible] the paucity of professional officers and the obvious expediency of making the best possible use of their services, all relief works, other than those specified in Financial G.O. of the 3rd Decr. No. 390, should be considered as being

carried out by the Revenue Authy. and that District Engineers and their Range Officers should advise and assist them to the best of their ability [illegible] Dept. by estimating for and laying out works, and where agricultural works are being taken in hand as Famine Relief works, by assessing the value of the work done with a view to the subsequent adjustment of the expenditure [illegible] those works in the manner [illegible] in G.O. of the [illegible] 26 No. 3410 P.W.D. Their [illegible] probably be [illegible] in supervising relief works and the Exec[illegible] where the [illegible] should [illegible] under the orders of the Collector [illegible] they will be kept [illegible] whom they will submit their accounts of expenditure

3. The above [illegible] the Bd.'s [illegible] recommendation that funds for such works

4 be placed at their disposal by Collectors

4. With regard to the Forest

recommendation "that
"weekly returns of works
"and numbers employed
"on such works should
"not be insisted on but
"Collectors shd. merely
"state the number of works
"undertaken and amount
"of funds placed at the
"Ex. Engineers' disposal
"and that the latter officers
"should from time to time,
"and as often as possible,
"furnish the Collector
"for inclusion in their
"weekly reports the amount
"expended from such
"funds." The Govt. in
Council ~~[illegible]~~ directs that
the numbers on Relief
works ~~[illegible]~~ be reported
by Collectors weekly
as at present & be
included in their
Progress Reports along
with ~~the~~ a statement of
the advances made by
them for works, a
monthly statement of
expenditure accounted
for being submitted to
the Board & included

Certainly

~~fortnightly~~
Monthly

for further re-metalling

No
[illegible] part neglect

in their next Progress
Reports.

6. The fifth recommendation
"that outlay on the repair
"of and collection of
"metal for local fund
"roads, be recouped by
"crediting the maintenance
"grants for 1877/78 to
"Imperial funds & by
"recovering the market
"value of metal now
"stored upon, and hereafter
"used for, the roads"
[illegible] that
appears
The Govt. in Council
considers ~~[illegible]~~
~~[illegible]~~
of a road shd. be treated
as new works &
its cost be considered
as advances under the
rules alluded to in the 5th Para
of the 2nd Resol. & also that
if the cost of the collection of
metal is to be advanced
from the Famine [illegible] the
Local Fund Mainte-
-nance grant of 1877/78
to Imperial there will
be no subsequent
necessity to charge

Local Fund Board.
for the value of such
within those roads,
claiming that, unless
the stones are broken
up for the collection,
the cost of such collection
will be the full value
of the metal ~~[illegible]~~
[illegible] the [illegible] of
[illegible] that Local Fund
Boards sh^d. be saddled
with [illegible] of this cost
[illegible] would have been
imperial if it had been
incurred [illegible]
collected [illegible]
[illegible] circumstances
of the [illegible]. It
is also to be understood
that where in any
settled
Dist. the value of roads
repairs [illegible]
[illegible] is less than
the maintenance
allotment for
1877/78 only the equivalent
of such cost is to be
transferred to Imperial,
but where it exceeds it
the whole allotment
is to be transferred.

10/2/77

It does not seem to be
difficult to measure
the metal collected on
a given road or the quantity
required to put the road
in good order. That quantity
sh^d be charged at once to
local or municipal funds
the remainder had better
be treated as contribution
by Imperial funds to famine
relief available for
future maintenance of roads
unless previously used for any
new work –
The rate of charge sh^d be the
ordinary market [illegible]
district

15/2

His Grace in Council
however considers it is
more than doubtful
whether any portion of the
Local Fund maintenance
grants of 1877/78 can be
transferred as proposed
for there will be increased
demands on them, in
some Dist^s. [illegible],
in consequence of the
extension of the rail road
construction from Famine
funds, and in [illegible]
District is it likely
that the demands will
be much [illegible]
by reason of the repairs
effected by Relief labour
From the New Works
allotments, however,
& from the Balances and
Reserves of last year
considerable sums will
probably be available for
transfer & in adjusting
the accounts between
Local & Imperial
Funds on account of repair
to roads and [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] of them

this year in Council direct
that the value of all such
repairs & metal stored
be calculated by Dist. Engineers
for each Local Fund Circle
at the ordinary rates and
that L.F. Bds. be called
on to pay at those rates
for the repairs executed from
Famine relief funds to
all the roads included
in the budgets of the current
or next year, and for
so much of the metal
stored on them as will
suffice to put them at
once into good repair,
where in need of it,
when famine relief
works are stopped, any
excess being treated as
a contribution from
Imperial funds to
Famine Relief.
I will deal with the
Rev. Bd. to adjust the
transfers in accordance
with the above principles.

JH

[illegible] to the right of Govt to
dispose of any quantities
not paid for in any particular
instance in such manner as they
may consider expedient.

Issd copy to the Govt of India
35 P.W. Dep. 2 March
5 the Financial Dep. Dec 16 Feb
Dep. 2 March
21 the P W Dept
6 Accountt General
100
6

[illegible]

S°. 17/2/77

[illegible]ono 681 of

15 Feby/77

c 13-2-77, rd 15-2-77.