

Public Works (1895) Department.

RAILWAY BRANCH.

G.O., No. 400.R

DATED 12th June

[Despatch Abstract.]

Home Remittances.— Directing that certain foremen on the Madras Railway, may be permitted, with the Board's approval, to pay down the increased amount of their— with retrospective effect from date of application, and to continue their remittances by deductions from current pay.

half year June 1895, it would appear that in 1893 and 1894 the traffic was abnormal. The figures for June 1895 shew an increase over 1892 much on the same rates as the previous increases. I think also the figures in the table prove very clearly that the public vary very much in the length of journey.

In 1892 you have a large increase of passengers, but an equally large decrease in receipts shewing shorter journeys. Again, if we take 1894 figures they shew a large decrease compared with 1895, but I submit not in proportion to each other. These figures I conclude shew that the public sometimes travel longer distances during a half year, and 1895 appears to have been one of these periods and correspond with 1891. As you are aware there was a scarcity in the latter year when merchants appear to have gone from and to large centres where they knew there was trade instead of from and to small villages in search of a little business.

There are many little points which have assisted to decrease the number of passengers but add to the receipts. There are many more card tickets printed now; consequently Station Masters and Booking Clerks are not tempted to book passengers to large stations where they had to rebook. I believe other Companies also issued more tickets to Madras Railway stations instead of to the Junctions, particularly the South Indian Railway Company with whom I believe much correspondence has passed on the subject.

Strict orders have been issued to the Staff not to rebook at roadside stations. This, I am of opinion, has had a tendency to reduce the number of passengers, but of course it has probably swelled the receipts by preventing in some cases fraud, although possibly the chief idea with the public was to save a few pice owing to two fares being slightly cheaper than a through fare.

I have given reasons for what I believe to be the cause for a considerable falling off in numbers but still I think that the increased fare has also had some effect upon short-distance traffic but not to the extent the figures appear to shew.

Copy of a letter No. A/231, dated 8th February 1893, from W. S. Johnstone, Esq., Assistant Traffic Manager, Madras, regarding particulars of 3rd Class traffic by Ordinary and Mail trains for Board of Directors.

I beg to attach copies of letters from Station Masters of Katpalli, Tirunatur, for your information.

In looking at the figures for the half years ending June 95, '94, and 95, that of '95 shows an extraordinary increase. It is not due to the gradual growth of traffic, as is perceptible in preceding years but is due to feast, marriage and pilgrim passengers, the latter caused to a great extent by previous years of pestilence, cholera chiefly. The fulfilment of vows and the visiting of shrines was the backbone of this increase.

In reviewing half year ending June '94, we also come upon an abnormal period. In the latter end of this half year the Kolar Gold Fields line was opened for traffic. The rush to the Mines from curiosity, to see relatives, and to obtain employment was great from all parts of the line extending from Calicut to Madras and Bangalore Branch. Besides this, Hindu passengers travelled in large numbers on account of marriages. In conversation with several Station Masters, I have been told the same thing.

We now come to the next half year of June 1895, where the increase in the 3rd Class rate was started. There is no doubt we have lost some short-distance passengers, but all the decrease cannot be attributed to it. As stated in my 5th para. there was a rush to the Kolar Mines at the opening in 1894 and since then, though no rushes, the traffic has been steady with a tendency to go on increasing. It will be remembered that the monsoons of 1894 were a failure. Fearing a famine, people did not leave their villages, but reserved all they had to meet the distress. Happily, the good rains of the following half year of 1895 restored confidence.

Copy of a letter No. R1070, dated 7th March 1898, from Mr. G. E. Byron, Assistant Traffic Manager, Podanur, to the Traffic Manager, Madras, Re Particulars of 3rd Class Traffic by Ordinary and Mail trains for the Board of Directors.

In reply to your letter of 29th and 30th January 1898, I have to state that except from the statements you sent me with your letters and from your half-yearly traffic reports, I have no statistics in this office by which to compare the increase and decrease of 3rd Class passenger traffic. In looking through the half yearly reports, I find in comparing one half year with another, considerable fluctuations in number of passengers carried. Though in the course of years the number carried has greatly increased, the increase has not always been yearly, as the following figures taken from the Traffic Manager's Report for half year ending 31st December 1894 will shew:-

Year.	Number of 3rd Class passengers.
1889. ...	8,417,122
1890. ...	8,817,964 $\frac{1}{2}$
1891. ...	8,125,572 $\frac{1}{2}$
1892. ...	8,747,036 $\frac{1}{2}$
1893. ...	9,674,401
1894. ...	10,003,099

Thus both the years 1890 and '91 show a decrease on the number carried in 1890. The increase continuing again from 1892 to 1894. Consecutive half years also shew similar fluctuations. Sometimes the greater number of passengers being carried in the first half of a year, sometimes in the second. These fluctuations are no doubt from causes unconnected with the Railway Administration: such as failures or excess of monsoons, ruling prices of produce, conditions of markets, amount of demands and supply, &c.

The decrease of passengers in half year ending June 1895 I am inclined to think was owing to one or more of the above causes, and that the decrease is not permanent.

The Native Festivals attract large numbers of persons, and the passengers carried during these festivals are of all castes and grades. A great number of them being of the lowest and poorest, as Pariahs and Cherumahs, who would not take the Railway if the fares were prohibitive. In comparing the festival traffic on this Division for the half years ending June 1894 and June 1895, I find the numbers carried greatly in favour of 1895,

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