M.R.O 1—33,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1218 Press Mis.

64-65

Dated 4 th May 1869

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 4th May 1869.

No. 61. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 12th April 1869, No. 2,161:—

Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Revenue Department, dated 22nd July 1868, No. 2,013.

In their Order, dated 23rd November 1866, Revenue Department, No. 3,213, Government remarked that "in most districts the duty of keeping the roads in repair is almost entirely thrown on the Public Works Department, and as in the largest number of cases no professional skill is required in executing them, they do not understand why the greater portion of the repairs cannot be superintended by the Revenue Department, the professional department being thus relieved of petty work, and having more leisure for important works requiring professional skill". The Board were directed to attend to this point in future, and issued instructions accordingly.

Paragraph 30.

2. The Government reverted to the subject in paragraph 11 of their Order, dated 12th February 1868, No. 395, on the Budget of 1868-69, and remarked that little improvement was apparent in this respect in the arrangements of the year. The Board reiterated their instructions to Collectors, and desired that the Budget might be revised with a view to carrying out the wishes of Government.

3. On the 22nd July following, Government communicated to the Board copy of a Despatch, No. 12 of 1868, from the Secretary of State, expressing his cordial concurrence in the views of Government, and desire that they should be carried out to as great an extent as practicable.

4. But in the interval between their Orders of February and July above referred to, Government on a representation from the Superintending Engineer of the 3rd Division, desired the Board to consult Collectors, and report on "the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road Works entirely to the Department of Public Works".

Government Endorsement, dated 18th April 1868.

5. The Board accordingly made a reference to Collectors, and as the Order seemed to indicate a change in the policy of Government, did not press the transfer of repairs to Collectors, where it had already been arranged that the Public Works Department should undertake them.

6. Before entering upon the Collectors' replies, the Board would point out that the course now followed is in accordance with the Road Fund Rules.

7. Rule XVI. prescribes that "the execution of all works shall, as a rule, be conducted by the Department Public Works".

8. Rule XVII. declares that "the Collector, with the concurrence of the Superintending Engineer, may himself undertake the execution of repairs and

ordinary works not requiring professional skill". The principle on which these rules are based is, the presumption that such work will be best performed by the professional department, and that it is only expedient to call in unprofessional aid when the professional department finds such assistance necessary or desirable.

9. Of the Officers consulted by the Board, Messrs. Carmichael, J. H. Master, W. Wilson, J. A. C. Boswell, H. E. Sullivan, F. B. Molony, T. A. N. Chase, G. Thornhill, G. VansAgnew, C. W. Reade, G. L. Morris, A. Wedderburn, H. S. Thomas and G. A. Ballard, are all in favor of the transfer of District Road Works to the Public Works Department.

10. Mr J. I. Minchin holds the same views, save as respects the opening out of rough communications in the Jeypore country and other Hill tracts of the district, as he thinks that in such localities the Department of Public Works would find it difficult to procure labor.

11. Messrs. C. T. Longley, J. R. Arbuthnott, and C. N. Pochin, are opposed to the transfer, while Mr. R. K. Puckle would make it the rule, reserving power to the Revenue Department, to retain such lines as they chose in their own hands.

12. It will thus be seen that the weight of opinion is overwhelmingly in favor of making over all District Road Works to the Department of Public Works.

13. The Board are of opinion that the procedure prescribed in the Road Fund Rules is the best that can be adopted under present circumstances.

14. In their Order of the 21st April 1868, Revenue Department, No. 1,050, Government ordered the entertainment of a Petty Establishment comprising an Overseer and two Maistries for each range at the expense of the Road Fund. In a later Order, Government remarked that this establishment was to be available also for works undertaken by Collectors, but, as under Rule 24, the control over these servants, their entertainment, and dismissal, rest with the Superintending Engineer, the Collector's authority over them is practically nominal. This consideration doubtless has had its influence in deterring Collectors from undertaking work so freely as Government desire. The object of relieving the Department of Public Works from unimportant work has, in fact, been removed by giving it a Special Establishment, costing nearly a lac of Rupees annually.

15. The Board deprecated the entertainment of this kind of establishment, and still venture to think that in the infancy of the fund it was better in the generality of the districts to employ extra establishments for each large work in progress, and so gain experience of the nature and cost of the fixed establishment which would eventually be necessary. They regret, too, that the experiment proposed by the Collector of Tanjore, which had the advantages of economy and of facilitating the transfer of the fund to the management of the people themselves, was not allowed a trial, but as Government have decided otherwise, there can be little doubt that the establishment will work better without the Collector's interposition. They, therefore, request permission to leave the present Budget arrangements as they are, more especially as it seems to them advisable to await the result of the deliberations of the Public Works Commission now sitting.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 4th May 1869.

No. 65. ORDER THEREON, 4th May 1869, No. 1,218.

Local Funds, No. 2.
Accounts.

ORDERED accordingly that the Board's Proceedings above recorded do lie over, pending the submission of the report of the Public Works Commission now sitting.

(True Extract.)

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

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

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

No. 3,910.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 27th May 1868.

Read the following letter from Major A. S. MOBERLY, R. E., Superintending Engineer, Third Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Camp at Ramandroog, talook Hospett, Bellary district, 4th April 1868, No. 28:—

In continuation of paragraph 14 of my letter, No. 3,364, of the 14th ultimo, I have the honour to forward an original letter* from Captain Hunter, with survey of the road from the Adoni and Gooty road, at the Jonnagherry tank, to the Kurnool and Gooty road near Piapully, which I beg may be returned with the orders of Government. This is the road regarding which a good deal of correspondence has passed between the Collector of Kurnool and myself, and in which I endeavoured to point out the mistake of intrusting works to the Revenue Department. In a letter from the Superintending Engineer of the sixth Division, which was communicated with Government Order, No. 996, of 27th ultimo, that officer has so clearly and forcibly shown the mistake of intrusting the execution of Local Fund works to the Revenue Department, which has no Professional Establishment, that I need add nothing except that I quite agree with Captain Oakes, and would respectfully urge on Government the advisability of letting each Department carry out its own duties. I have had Tahsildars ask me how they could be expected to know everything; that they had been obliged to pass the Revenue and Judicial tests, and that, if they were to look after roads, it would be necessary to study the Civil Engineering test.

* No. 663, dated 24th March 1868.

ENCLOSURES Nos. 1 and 2.—Letters.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.—Survey.

Transferred to the Revenue Department.

(Signed) C. A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

17th April 1868.

To the Revenue Department.

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1. Referred to the Board of Revenue.

2. The Board will submit, separately, their opinion as to the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works. The opinions of the Collectors should be obtained and submitted.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

18th April 1868.

To the Board of Revenue.

Communicated to all Collectors, who will submit their opinion as to the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) A. MacGREGOR,
Acting Secretary.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. T. MAYNE,
First Assistant.

To all Collectors.

Fxd. J. Wright.

From H. E. SULLIVAN, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Camp at Gooty, 6th June 1868, No. 136.

1. In reply to the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 27th ultimo, No. 3,910, I have the honour to state briefly that under the present conditions of the service I am in favour of the entire transfer of District Road works to the Department of Public Works. My reasons were stated at length in my letter to the Board, dated 29th April last, No. 92.

2. The only work I should like to have the power of taking over from the Department, if necessity arose, is the clearance of channels. But even with this I would not interfere so long as the convenience and interests of the ryots received due consideration at the hands of the officers of Public Works.

Ed. T. Cartledge.

No.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

To all Collectors.

Dated 27th May 1868.

Received

No. 3,910.

Requesting opinion of Collectors as to advisability of transferring execution of District Road works entirely to Department of Public Works.

From J. H. MASTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Golavery district, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Cocanada, 6th June 1868, No. 141.

I have the honour to acknowledge the Proceedings of the Board, No. 3,910, dated 27th May 1868, and in reply to state that the execution of District Road works in this district is left entirely to the Department of Public Works, and, in my opinion, it is best that it should remain so.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 6th June 1868, No. 164.

1. In reply to the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 27th May 1868, No. 3,910, I have the honour to state that I have on several occasions expressed an official opinion that the execution of District roads should be entirely transferred to the Department of Public Works.

2. In the first place the execution of a road, simple though the operation, in appearance, may be, requires a certain degree of professional skill, forethought, and natural talent. By a road I mean one which will stand traffic, and the effects of the weather, not two parallel trenches, with a bank of earth thrown in the middle. It is not every Engineer who is a good road-maker, far less an unskilled and untaught Tahsildar.

3. I know of no country where road-making is not a Special Department, or where it is supposed to come by nature to those invested with authority in other matters.

4. A good road is a costly work, and it is more costly and less effective in proportion to the want of science evinced in its execution.

5. The tracing of a road is a science in itself. The selection of materials and their application are also matters, not to be learned by intuition.

6. If Tahsildars are to be road-makers, they should pass the Civil Engineering Test.

7. One has only to compare the old bridle-paths cut on the Neilgherries by the Revenue Department, where each becomes in its turn a water course, with the scientific and lasting traces made by the Department of Public Works, to be certified on this point.

3. But it is not obvious what will be gained if roads be made by unprofessional persons. The time of the Revenue and Magisterial Officer is more occupied than that of the professional Engineer, who has not to collect revenue and to decide Magisterial cases. The work supervised by a non-professional man, cannot be reasonably expected to be as good as that under professional supervision; the one might be incompetent in Engineering without prejudice to his other qualifications. The Engineer, if incompetent, would be altogether useless. One could not dismiss a Tahsildar who has made a mess of a road.

9. If the work be not scientifically superintended, there can be no economy in transferring it from its own, to the Revenue Department.

10. The Tahsildar cannot perform the joint offices of Overseer and Maistry; the cost of supervision would, therefore, not be less.

11. All the Superintending Engineers whom I have consulted, are in favour of having roads made by their own Department. I have never heard a complaint that they have more funds to work out than they could supervise.

12. There is an economy in the labour market by the absence of a second department competing for labour.

13. The Engineering Department has a staff of trained Supervisors and Coolies, who ought to execute work better than untrained people.

14. The trouble I had in explaining the simplest principles of road-making, when I had to employ famine labour in the Bellary district, seemed to me to prove that road-making is not the easy matter it is assumed to be, unless a road is well made, the expenditure is a dead loss; the expenditure is a recognized fact, but if trade be not facilitated, the work would have been better not undertaken.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From W. WILSON, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector in charge of the Kistna district, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Masulipatam, 6th June 1868, No. 185.

In reply to Board's Proceedings, No. 3,910, dated 27th ultimo, I have the honour to subjoin extract from my letter, No. 335, dated 26th September 1867, to the Board on the question of the transfer of all public works whatever from the Revenue to the Special Department.

* * * * *

"I pointed out to the Superintending Engineer how objectionable it was, in my opinion, that "the execution of public works should be intrusted to the Revenue Department. There is wanting to "its officers in the first place, special knowledge, and in the next, time for supervision. The former "might be acquired were the latter available; but fully occupied as Revenue Officers are already, "supervision by them must in a great measure be a nullity, and supervision in name only. Divisional "Officers must depend very much upon their local subordinates, and it is unnecessary to recount to "the Board those multifarious duties which keep Tahsildars, Sub-Magistrates, and Inspectors fully "occupied from morning till night. Supervision of even mud work to be effectual must be pretty "constant, and for a Revenue Officer to attempt this would be equivalent to his neglect of some other of "his duties. Public works can only properly be supervised by men whose sole duty it is. When super-"vision is lax or imperfect, work cannot in reason be expected to be good, and the money expended "upon it is so much thrown away. The transfer to the Revenue Department of certain public works "was probably intended to relieve the Department of Public Works. The relief could at best be "but partial, and could extend only to the labour of execution and supervision. The plans, estimates, "and lining out of the works still remained with the Department of Public Works, who, having so "much to do with them, might not unreasonably be regarded as the proper department for their execu-"tion. The relief which was designed for the Department of Public Works would have been more "effectually rendered by an increase to its permanent establishment. Lieutenant-Colonel Winscom "has, considering the large sums to be expended, and the variety and distribution of the works, pro-"posed an increase of two per cent. for petty establishment in his department, and on condition of "an allowance of twenty-five per cent. for establishment would undertake the execution of all Local "Fund works whatever. This seems high; but the Superintending Engineer considers effectual super-"vision, that is, good work, not procurable for less. Not from any desire to shirk work, but from the "conviction that the execution of public works by this department is a mistake, would I counsel the "re-transfer of all works whatever to the Special Department."

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Exd. J. Wright.

From J. A. C. BOSWELL, Esq., Acting Collector of Nellore, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 6th June 1868, No. 1,679.

1. I have the honour to reply to the Board's Proceedings, dated 27th May 1868, No. 3,910. I have already on several occasions expressed to the Board my very strong opinion as to the advisability of transferring the execution of all District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works. In this opinion the Superintending Engineer of the Second Division entirely agrees with me, and as funds have now been allotted to meet the cost of Range establishments, there will be no difficulty whatever in carry this out.

2. Without any competent agency it is impossible for the Revenue Authorities to have proper plans and estimates prepared. These can only be very roughly prepared at all, and without skilled supervision the works will probably be indifferently executed. Again, it is most undesirable that two departments should compete for labor in the same field in carrying out similar works. I am convinced that the works will be both better and cheaper executed by entrusting them entirely to the Public Works Department.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From T. A. N. CHASE, Esq., Collector of Kurnool, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 8th June 1868, No. 216.

1. I have the honour to inform you, in reply to Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, No. 3,910, dated 27th May 1868, that I am decidedly of opinion that all works connected with the District Road Fund should be carried out by the Public Works Department.

2. The Board will observe that such is the case now as regards all original works, as provided for in the Budget for 1868-69.

3. The only works which are to be executed by the Revenue Department are repairs such as require no professional skill.

4. These also I would recommend to be transferred to the Department of Public Works, and my only reason for entering them in the Budget, for execution by the Revenue Department, was the only manifest desire expressed by Government and the Board, that such should be the case.

5. But I consider the Revenue Department has as much work to do as is possible for it to undertake, and when the superintendence of the repairs of the Local Fund Roads is added, it is unreasonable to expect that the work can be properly performed, and I should be glad to see the Local Fund repairs placed in hands more competent to execute them, than the Tahsildars and their subordinates throughout the district.

6. I think too the employment of two Departments, on work which clearly belongs to one, objectionable, and apt to cause, and has caused, a great deal of misunderstanding.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From J. R. ARBUTHNOTT, Esq., Acting Collector of Madura, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Camp at Periacolum, 9th June 1868, No. 156.

1. With reference to the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 27th May 1868, No. 3 910, I have the honour to submit my opinion that it is not advisable entirely to transfer the execution of road works from the Revenue Department to the Department of Public Works.

2. In many cases these works do not require much professional knowledge, and they are economically carried on in the superintendence of Talook authorities.

3. I think, however, that in all cases when road work is intrusted to Revenue Officers, competent professional assistance should be employed to aid them, so that they would be responsible for the prompt execution of the works and the economical outlay of public money; but not for the knowledge, or ignorance of engineering shown in their construction.

Exd. J. Wright.

From G. VANSAGNEW, Esq., Acting Collector of North Arcot, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chittoor, 10th June 1868, No. 191.

With reference to the Board's Proceedings, No. 3,910, of the 27th ultimo, calling upon Collectors for their opinion on the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works, I beg to refer the Board to my letter No. 149, of the 6th ultimo, in which I stated the opinion now sought.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From R. K. PUCKLE, Esq., Collector of Tinnevelly, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 10th June 1868, No. 270.

1. In reply to the Board's Proceedings, No. 3,910, dated 27th ultimo, I have the honour to state that I think it much better that the Department of Public Works should undertake the construction and repair of all roads that the Revenue Officers do not wish to keep under their management. The Revenue Officers have now so much to do that they would be sure to keep no road under their management except for particular reasons: these reasons might be, that it was very advantageous to take a road through certain villages or along certain tank banks, and thereby gratify the ryots and add to the revenue at the cost of a slightly more circuitous route; or by making some small concession to the village community, to induce them to do the earthwork, if the Government build the tunnels, thereby connecting two villages cut off from each other by an impassable tract of wet land, etc., etc. It might so happen that the advantages of such a line would not strike the Engineer Officer, or that he would feel himself debarred from adopting it by some department rule.

2. Under ordinary circumstances, however, I think all advantage should be taken of the supervision of the skilled officers of the department, and that amateur Engineering should be restricted as far as possible.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From G. L. MORRIS, Esq., Collector of Tanjore, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Point Calimere, Tritrapundi talook, 11th June 1868, No. 128.

1. I have the honour to reply to the Board's Proceedings, dated 27th May 1868, No. 3,910, in which I am requested to state my opinion as to the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works.

2. In my letter to the Board, dated 6th November 1867, No. 213, I stated the difficulties under which the Revenue Department labours in this district with regard to the execution of Local Fund works, but I omitted to state particularly how it was that the greatest of these difficulties had only arisen very lately.

3. On the 1st January last, the Nat Curnum establishment in Tanjore was done away with, and each Tahsildar thus lost the services of some fifteen to twenty men, who were persons of great experience in out-door work of every kind, and had been accustomed to it from their first entertainment in the public service.

4. These Nat Curnums were the men who always in old times helped the Tahsildars in executing public works, and lately in those carried out from Local Funds: but now that they no longer exist, Tahsildars have literally no one to aid them in looking after such works, but three Revenue Inspectors, a class of persons totally unfit for such duty, even if they had time to superintend them, which they have not.

5. I was never in favour of the Revenue Department being engaged in executing public works, even when the Nat Curnum establishment existed, for I felt that they knew nothing professionally as to how such works should be done, and the chances were ten to one in favour of their being executed badly: but as the Government have, during the last three or four years, laid so much stress on the Revenue Department undertaking the execution of the greater part of the Local Fund works, I have tried my best to meet their wishes in this matter.

6. It was under these circumstances, and because I knew not only that the Nat Curnum establishment was going to be abolished in less than two months, but that it was impossible for my Department to go on superintending Local Fund works as they had been doing without special aid for that purpose, that I wrote my letter of the 6th November 1867, No. 213, and in it proposed a special establishment for the executive superintendence of all works to be carried out from the District Road Fund.

7. As the Government have, however, not approved of my scheme, but have, on the contrary, given a special establishment very similar to what I ask for, to the Department of Public Works; and as, moreover, I am convinced that the Revenue Department has quite as much of its own regular work as it can perform at all properly, I have no hesitation in stating that I think it very advisable that the execution of District Road works should be left entirely to the Department of Public Works.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From C. N. POCHIN, Esq., Collector of Salem, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 12th June 1863, No. 156.

1. I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Board's Proceedings, dated the 27th ultimo, No. 3,910, communicating the Order of Government, dated 18th April 1863, No. —, requesting Collectors to submit their opinion as to the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works.

2. The Order of Government has emanated from a letter from the Superintending Engineer of the Third Division, who refers to a letter of Captain Oakes, Superintending Engineer, Sixth Division, as showing the mistake of entrusting the execution of Local Fund works to the Revenue Department.

3. Captain Oakes's reasons for arriving at the conclusion at which he has, are given in paragraphs 2 and 3 of his letter of the 11th March last, No. 1,739. Paragraph 2 apparently refers to new *works*, and paragraph 3 to *repairs*. In regard to the latter, the only reason assigned, as far as I can see, is the execution of repairs "without any regard of times and seasons." There are so many theories on the matter of time to carry on road repairs, that it would be difficult to attempt to follow them. One holds that repair should be done just before the rain, whilst another directly after. Again Captain Oakes (in paragraph 3) refers, I fancy, to the roads in Tanjore, where no other material is to be had besides "mud and sand." The roads in Salem are formed fortunately of better substance than that, and are consequently passable in wet weather. Perhaps in Kurnool, the Superintending Engineer of the Third Division has seen the roads *repaired*, and in some instances *made* with no better material than black cotton soil; when such is the case, it would not be difficult to imagine what would be their state during the rains. The Nundial and Chagulmurry road is very likely of this description. No Engineering skill, I take it, is required to keep a *made road in repair* so long as good material is at hand. The chief requisite is *constant supervision*, and I think this might be as efficiently done by the Revenue Department as by the Department Public Works. I do not say that the roads in this district, the repairs of which are carried on by the Revenue Department, are perfect, but they will stand inspection against any of the roads undertaken by the Department Public Works. If all these repairs to local roads are to be done by the Department Public Works, I suppose we might take as a specimen those that are now under their control; and if the Government were to sanction a Maistry and a few Pygusts for each talook, all of whom, I presume, would be unskilled hands, to a great extent, I cannot see that any advantage would be gained by handing all maintenance repairs over to the Engineering Department. But further I think that a greater amount of repairs are obtained by the Revenue Department than by the Department Public Works for the same amount of money, and it would stand to reason, therefore, that it would be more advantageous if all the repairs were carried out by the former, rather than by the latter. On the present footing that the Department Public Works are, can the supervision that is required be conducted by it I would ask ? I would merely mention one instance to show that it is next to impossible. There is the Executive Agent of the Ahtur range. He has three large and very important talooks under his charge, and is assisted by an Overseer in each. The distance from one end of his charge to the other is about eighty-five miles. He has, besides the Cauvery channel, several tanks and irrigation channels which constantly require supervision. He has also two imperial lines, besides several *new lines* of local roads. How could this officer be expected to inspect constantly the works on local roads which are no less than twenty-six. From what I have seen, he seldom visits the talooks of Ahtur and Trichengode more than twice a year. I do not say the fault is entirely his. His charge is too large. And it is to be remembered that besides inspection of roads, tanks, etc., he has to prepare and render accounts and returns. As regards supervision, this is on a side. On the other hand, each talook has got three to five Revenue Inspectors, their duty requires of them constant movement in their talook. They have thus every facility of supervising the repairs constantly, and of reporting upon them to the Tahsildar. The Tahsildar's duty too allows him, very frequently, opportunities of inspecting the works and reporting to Divisional Officers.

4. The nature of the Divisional Officers' (three or four in the district) duties also require their making at least four tours through their divisions in a year, and during every such tour, they inspect and report to the Collector on the state of the road works in their division. Thus it will be seen, that

From G. THORNHILL, Esq., Acting Collector of Madras, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 12th June 1863, No. 198.

1. With reference to Board's Proceedings, 27th May 1863, No. 3,910, requesting the opinion of Collectors as to the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works, I have the honour to state that, after much consideration, I have come to the conclusion that it is desirable that District roads should be placed entirely under the Department of Public Works Officers, for the following reasons:—

Firstly.—The Revenue Establishments of talooks are too small to admit of their undertaking any additional work; Tahsildars are already overburdened with works; and if another department, requiring so much supervision as the making or even repairs of District roads, be placed under them, they must either neglect the roads or some other branch of duty.

Secondly.—The work, even of repairing roads properly, requires a certain amount of practical training, if not any special skill; Tahsildars are, as a rule, wanting in such experience, and even with good Maistries and subordinates the responsibility would still rest with the superior officer, and he could scarcely exercise a proper check over work with the details of which he was ignorant.

Thirdly.—A great argument in favour of carrying out works under the Revenue Department is found in the supposed superior influence of Talook officials in procuring village labour. There is much truth in this as regards agricultural works, but hardly as regards road work. Villagers take little or no interest in road-making and repairing, except where any great obstacle to traffic exists near their own villages. They are altogether unacquainted with the work, and would require constant supervision. The roads, too, now in progress, it must be remembered, are not village roads, and are planned for the general convenience of a district rather than for the benefit of individual villager.

Fourthly.—The duties of the officers of the Public Works Department compel them constantly to be on the move, and they must of necessity traverse the country far more frequently than Tahsildars can possibly do; they have, therefore, better opportunities of supervising the subordinates.

2. There may be special cases in which it will be advisable to entrust the roads in a particular locality to Revenue Officers, as, for instance, where a District officer or Tahsildar has a special aptitude for work of the kind, and is willing to undertake it, in such cases arrangements might always be made with the Superintending Engineer for placing funds at his disposal for the purposes.

3. Now that so large an annual sum will always be available for road-making and repairing, it is more than ever necessary that precautions should be taken to ensure that sum being spent in the best possible manner; to entrust any part of the work to persons altogether ignorant of the art of road-making must, I think, lead to wasteful expenditure and inefficient work, and I, therefore, deprecate placing it under the Revenue authorities; at the same time I venture to point out that, even in the Department of Public Works, there is not that systematic training in this particular branch, which the interests of the country require.

4. The Superior Officers of the Department are of course acquainted with the general principles of road-making, but, in many parts of the country where roads have not hitherto received much attention, owing to the Engineering Staff being fully occupied with other works, Officers have had but little practical experience, and there are no subordinates really well qualified for the duties.

5. I would respectfully suggest that steps might beneficially be taken to establish some school for training subordinates in the art of road-making, and that it is also very desirable that the whole system of roads in the country should be brought under the inspection of one Superior Officer.

6. The District Road Fund will not amount to less than twenty-five lacs a year, and the sanctioned expenditure in Imperial Fund for 1863-64 exceeds twenty-one lacs, total forty-six lacs of Rupees. Upon the judicious expenditure of this and similar sums year after year, the efficiency of the communications of the country will depend, and I venture to express a doubt whether the present system of supervision is calculated to secure that end.

Encl. T. Cartledge.

From J. I. MINCHIN, Esq., Collector of Vizagapatam, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 25th June 1868, No. 550.

1. With reference to the Board's Proceedings, dated 27th May 1868, No. 3,910, I have the honour to report that it appears advisable in this district that the execution of District Roads should be entirely transferred to the Department of Public Works.

2. There are only two Government talooks under Tahsildars, and the Sub-Magistrates employed throughout the greater portion of the district are not competent to superintend Engineering works.

3. This opinion is shared by Mr. Hutchins, the Acting Principal Assistant, in whose charge the two Government talooks are comprised, and by Major Grove, the Senior Assistant, who has some experience in the district, and was at one time himself in the Department of Public Works.

4. The opening out of rough communications in the Jeypore country, and other Hill Tracts of the district, are on a different footing, and can best be carried out by the Civil Officers, as the Department of Public Works would probably altogether fail in procuring labour there.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Acting Collector of South Canara, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Mangalore, 25th June 1863, No. 593.

1. With reference to the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated the 27th May last, No 3,910, I have the honour to state that I am of opinion that the execution of District Road work of all sorts had best be made over to the Department of Public Works, and the subordinate Revenue officers relieved of such anomalous duties.

2. Reasons for such a view seem scarcely called for.

3. Though the transfer might be the general rule, I do not know that it would be wise to make it altogether exclusive and imperative. Occasions may occur again as they often have before, for Collectors or their Assistants being in a position to carry out minor works to advantage. It might be well to leave room for such special cases being arranged for between the Superintending Engineer and Collector.

Exd. J. Wright.

From G. A. BALLARD, Esq., Collector of Malabar, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 25th June 1868, No. 189.

1. Adverting to the Board's Proceedings, No. 3,910, dated the 27th ultimo, calling for my opinion as to whether it is advisable to transfer the execution of District Road works entirely to the Public Works Department, I have the honour to state that I think such course is certainly desirable, when the Public Works Department is so organized and arranged as to be able to undertake the execution of the works efficiently.

2. The Revenue Department have had little to do with public works in this district of late years.

3. In my letter, dated 21st December 1866, No. 334, paragraph 5, which I quote for easy reference, I proposed arrangements to relieve the Public Works Department, as they seemed to require relief, but with the petty establishment* now sanctioned, I think that the assistance of the Revenue Department will be unnecessary, save in exceptional cases, which will be dealt with as they occur.

> "To relieve the Department of Public Works, who would hardly be able to expend the increased District Road Funds efficiently, I propose that the Revenue Department should undertake the expenditure of *all* maintenance allowances on roads that have been traced, and put in order of late years on regular estimate, by the Public Works Department, as well as other annual mileage maintenance allotments *under Rupees 55 per mile* on roads which have not yet been regularly traced, or on which work is not actually being executed by the Public Works Department."

* Vide Board's Proes., dated 23rd May 1868, No. 3,818.

Exd. J. Wright.

From C. T. LONGLEY, Esq., Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 20th July 1868, No. 138.

1. Adverting to the Board's Proceedings, No. 3,910, dated the 27th of May 1868, I have the honour to state that I am not prepared to advocate the transfer of the execution of *District Road works* entirely to the Department of Public Works.

2. The irregularities complained of in Captain Oakes's communication, embodied in the Board's Proceedings as per margin, can, I think, be efficiently checked if proper care and attention is enforced; and with the aid of the Range Establishments recently sanctioned, I have no doubt that the estimates will be strictly followed, as this establishment will be able to explain the estimates correctly, point out the proper season for their execution, and see that the original designs are not departed from. I am, therefore, of opinion that the Revenue Department can safely be intrusted with the execution of works of ordinary description, whilst the Department of Public Works should as heretofore undertake such projects as require professional skill to execute.

23rd May 1868, No 3,818.

Exd. J. Wright.

From F. B. MOLONY, Esq., Acting Collector of Cuddapah, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 20th July 1868, No. 143.

1. The Board in their Proceedings, No. 3,910, of 27th May 1868, having called on Collectors for opinion regarding the advisability of transferring the execution of District roads entirely to the Department of Public Works, I have the honour to inform you that all such works have up to this time been invariably done by that Department in this district. The Revenue Officers have not time to superintend such works, their hands are perhaps too full already, and I would much deprecate more work being thrown upon them. As regards the relative cost and quality of simple works undertaken by the Revenue and Public Works Departments, I will offer no opinion, as I think on other grounds it would not be at all advisable to depart from the rule that has always been followed here.

2. Of course I presume that a staff sufficiently large and efficient for the construction and maintenance of these works will always be kept up by the Public Works Department; but if they were to fail in that respect, it would be better that the works should be carried out by the Revenue Authorities than not be done at all.

Exd. J. Wright.

From D. F. CARMICHAEL, Esq., Collector of Ganjam, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chetterpore, 10th July 1868, No. 659.

In reply to the Board's Proceedings of the 27th May last, No. 3,910, I beg to state that I am in favour of intrusting, as a rule, to the Public Works Department, the construction and repairs of Local Fund Roads, as required in Section 16 of the District Road Fund Rules now in force, subject to the condition contained in Section 17, namely, that whenever necessary the execution of a work may be made by the Revenue Department, or by the community interested in the work.—*Vide* page 50 of Board's Standing Orders Volume.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

From C. W. READE, Esq., Collector of South Arcot, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Parembay, 14th July 1868, No. 164.

1. In their Proceedings of the 27th May, No. 3,910, the Board, at the instance of Government, request my opinion on the advisability of transferring the execution of District Road works entirely to the Department of Public Works.

2. In this district it has not been the practice for the Revenue Officers to interfere with the expenditure of the Local Funds, or, except very occasionally, to undertake the execution of works of any kind defrayed from those funds, and I have so fully realized the advantage of leaving to the Public Works Officers the duty of looking after District Roads, that I have never held but one opinion on the subject; and in my belief it would be a very great evil if works of the kind which must more or less require professional skill and some Engineering experience, were entrusted to Revenue Officers who have not the time, even if they possessed the requisite qualifications, (which ordinarily they do not,) for their control and execution. I, therefore, agree in the main with all that has been put forth so strenuously by Major Moberly and Captain Oakes, in advocacy of the advisability of retaining the execution of all Local Fund works in the hands of their Department. At the same time, I am quite assured that these Officers do not mean to inhibit suggestions and projects from Revenue Officers for opening up the country or for carrying out improvements; and I conceive that what they contend for in the interest of Government and the public is merely that on the professional Department should alone devolve the task of execution.

3. The practice in this district having all along been as just stated, to leave everything to the Department Public Works, I have only to urge that, so far as my district is concerned, matters may be allowed to remain as they are, as I cordially concur in the recommendation that the execution of all District Roads and other works of public utility from Local Funds be entirely left to the Engineer's Department, the Officers of which, I submit, are alone competent efficiently to do what is required.

4. My Sub-Collector has enlarged on the objections which oppose the Revenue Department being made the Executive of Local Funds, and as the matter is still as it were *sub judice*, and has not received the final fiat of Government, I think it of value to append to this letter what Mr. Hathaway has written, and I consider that many of the points from which he has viewed the question are important, and may reasonably have weight in arriving at a decision. The Superintending Engineer of the Sixth Division has, I think, clearly shown that the experiment of entrusting Local Fund works to the Revenue Department, has practically been a complete failure.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

Extract of a letter from the Sub-Collector, to the Collector, dated 10th April 1868, No. 150.

* * * *

Proposal to transfer to Revenue authorities.

Paragraph 6. As to the proposal to give over any of the Local Fund Roads to the Revenue authorities, I think it inadvisable in every way. The Engineer Officer has a Department and an organization that are accustomed to the work, and qualified to do it without much trouble. His office is accustomed to the forms of returns and the keeping of accounts. With the Revenue authorities there is nothing of the sort, and the same work to them would be an insuperable labour. Indeed I do not know who is meant by the term "Revenue authorities." There is no one except the Divisional officer and his Tahsildar, and neither of them could in any way themselves superintend. I suppose a Revenue Inspector, of whom there are four to each talook, would be the real person to conduct all the work; but I should greatly hesitate to entrust so much to him. If he were appointed for the work, it would be necessary to appoint an additional man in his place for superintending the village officers, and the revenue work in the talook of disposing of durkhasts during the cultivation season, inspecting waste and shavi before, and giving information about it at the Jummahbundy, and I do not see after all what the result would be. There seems an idea that the Engineers' Department represents a large amount of skilled labour, wh[illegible] paid for at a very high rate, and

that this would, therefore, be economized by making use of unskilled labour. But it is a mistake to suppose that the Revenue Department really represents any unskilled labour. It is unskilled in that particular Department, but from its conversance and experience in its own branch of work, it is equally skilled labour in that branch, and is paid *highly* accordingly. I cannot see that it is any economy to employ the skilled labour of one Department in the work of the other, merely because it is ignorant of it, nor why it is cheaper to employ a Tahsildar who receives a large salary on account of long revenue experience and a good acquaintance with the Penal Code, in work that is usually done by a Talook Overseer. He represents unskilled labour it is true in the one Department, but equally skilled labour in his own, and there would be no more saving in thus diverting his abilities into another branch, than there would be in putting the Public Works Overseer in charge of the Talook Cutcherry. Each is skilled in his own, though unskilled in another Department, and there is no such thing as absolute unskilled labour anywhere. Even the Revenue Inspectors are possessed of large experience in their own particular work, as it is no mean accomplishment to be able to work up successfully a difficult case of fraud in the revenue accounts committed by a clever Curnum. Besides these, I do not know who else is aimed at, as it could hardly ever have been proposed seriously to employ the village authorities or the Tahsildars' peons, and these are the only Revenue subordinates that remain.

7. Further, the whole extent of the Local Fund Road work would have to be transferred, if any were given; since otherwise there would be hopeless confusion in the accounts if the Divisional officer did some, and the Range officer did the rest, and there would be a double establishment of Superintending Overseer and Maistry. So that if the whole were transferred, the Public Works Officer would be left with nothing but the two or three Imperial roads that might happen to be in his Range and the Irrigation Works. It would be one way of separating these from the Road repairing Department, but a very strange one, and would resolve itself in course of time into their being two Public Works Departments in a district, one under the immediate, the other under the more general superintendence of the Collector. There would also be a difficulty from the double demand for labour. At present the Range officer can keep his different works in harmony: a contractor who has just supplied gravel for an Imperial road is then ready to take the same contract for a Local Fund. Bricklayers, after working out an estimate on one, are all ready for employment on the other; and generally there being but one employer, he is able to employ the labour to the best advantage. But with a double expenditure there would be nothing of the sort. If labour were scarce in one particular part, the Tahsildar would be drawing away coolies wanted by the Engineer Department; the Engineer would forbid his contractors to waste their time by taking contracts for the Revenue authorities, and the two sources of employment for labour would be perpetually clashing, the result of which would be not only great trouble, but above all (according to the inflexible laws of Political economy) a general rise in the price of labour owing to the increased competition.

8. I will not dwell long on the inevitable waste and loss that *must* result from expenditure by ignorant persons. It may seem theoretically a simple thing to repair a road, but I know that unless such simple work is done with care and skill, an enormous amount may be expended with very little result. Not to dwell, however, on this point, I do not see what check there will be as to the nature of the work executed. The money will be spent, no doubt, but who is to know how? At present the Revenue authorities form a sort of check on the Public Works Department, but I doubt whether it will be the same when the money is spent by the Revenue authorities themselves. Few Range officers would be found to give their honest opinion on what had been done, and none would like to criticise too severely, or investigate too minutely, the results of this ignorant and unskilled labour.

* * * * *

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. W. READE,
Collector.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

Entries in the Pro of the Board of Revenue to the Govt = or D dated 12 April 1869 No. 2464

Rev-1276/69.

Pros 4th May/69 & L 64.

File of Collectors replies.

Rc 4 March/69 No. 58
" 23 Jan/68 - 577—A
" 12 Feb/68 - 233—4
" 18 March/68 - 302 - 3
" 21 Apr 4/68 - 439-443.
" 22 July/68 - 384—5

Revenue. 1869. Dept.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

Rv.-1276.

PROCEEDINGS, 12TH APRIL 1869, No. 2,404.

Encl. 1

Despd 19-

Received 21st.

Recd 12th Apl/69 & Bray/69

APRIL.

No. 2,404.

Repair of District roads—Permission of Government requested to adhere to present Budget arrangements for—, under which execution of all works is, as a rule, conducted by Public Works Department.

64.

Revenue Department

G.O. 1218.

Proceedings of the Madras Government under date the 4th May 1869.

Read the following Pro: of the Board of Revenue.

Requesting permission to adhere to present Budget arrangements for Repair of District roads under which execution of all works are conducted by P.W.D. — (R. & 12th Apl/69 No: 2464)

Ordered accordingly that the Board's Proceedings above recorded do lie over, pending the submission of the report of the P.W. Commission now sitting. —

List

11 Copies to the Bd of Rev Dept 5
1 Copy — Do Commissariat
20 Copies — Do Despatch

Extract