M.R.O. 14—5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 642 Press ~~Mis.~~

282. 283

Dated 18 — 3 — 1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
18*th March* 1867.

No. 282. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department:—

Passing orders on report of the result of the Controller's examination of the accounts of the several Ranges which he recently visited in the Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Coimbatore Districts. (Here enter 13th March 1867, No. 759.)

No. 283. ORDER THEREON, 18th March 1867, No. 642.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,

Under Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue, with Proceedings Public Works Department, No. 759.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

No. 269. Read the following letter from the Controller of Public Works Accounts, to the Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Madras, 26th February 1867, No. 3,891 :—

One Enclosure.

1. I have the honor to report, for the information of Government, that on the 8th instant I proceeded by steamer to Negapatam *en route* to examine the Executive Engineers' Offices at Trichinopoly and Wellington.

On the 9th I landed at Negapatam, and met Mr. O'Donaghue, the Range Officer, and proceeded with him at once to Papercoil, to look at his books and records. I found his cash-book neatly kept up, and the balance in the chest for the day, Rupees 276, correct; most of the required forms are regularly kept, but the Register of works will have now to be maintained from the 1st January 1867, and in future the Contractor's Ledger should be sent in; Station books and vouchers are kept in good order, and Mr. O'Donaghue appears to check his works before making payments, but not by measurements. Under the head of "Stock purchase," there are in these accounts three items:—

Timber valued at Rupees	73	14	0,	worth about Rupees	15.				
Bricks	,,	,,	20	0	0	,,	,,	,,	0
Gunny Bags	,,	,,	40	12	0	,,	,,	,,	0

It would be as well to have these items correctly valued, and the balance written off to "profit and loss." In the cash-chest of this Range there is a sum of Rupees 19-4-2, as per Memorandum herewith sent, which has been lying there for some years; of this sum Rupees 8-4-8 belong to Captain Makgill, R.E., and should be made over to that Officer, and the balance paid into the treasury to the credit of Government, to relieve the Range Officer of the responsibility of this charge; it does not appear in any of his accounts, and is therefore kept at his own personal risk.

11*th Tanjore.*—Here I met Mr. Walton and Mr. Seton. The cash-book of the former was in good order, and the balance, Rupees 306-0-2, correct. I compared the treasury pass and cheque books, these were quite correct, as were the Contractor's certificates and ledger. Mr. Seton's cash-book was in good order, and his balance, Rupees 207-1-0, correct, the books and vouchers of both these Range Officers appear to be kept up with the greatest care and attention, and they were quite prepared to furnish every information regarding details when applied to.

12*th Trichinopoly.*—With Colonel Greenaway. I went into all his books and accounts, the balance in hand, Rupees 47-15-7, was correct, but the form of his cash-book was not quite so, as the column for heads of charges had not been kept up, and consequently this had given them great difficulty in preparing the abstracts of receipts and disbursements, however this has now been altered, and the difficulty removed; all other books and vouchers in this office appear to be in perfect order.

In this Range a sum of Rupees 100 appears to have been paid for materials, under the head of Civil Buildings, in April last, and charged for in that month's accounts; in the following May when the materials were used they were charged for again, but in another official year; there has thus been a double debit of the same item, but in two different years; this should now be treated as a recovery from the current year's expenditure.

13*th Caroor.*—Mr. Wiffen was not at his head quarters on my arrival, but I sent for and saw his Writer and some of his books, &c., these appear to be well and carefully kept, he had taken most of the others with him, into his Range, but as far as I was able to judge his office duties seem to be performed very well indeed.

14*th.*—I dawked into Errode and by rail to Coimbatore. Nothing can be worse than the road between Caroor and Errode, it is dangerous for any vehicle of better construction than a Wudder's cart to go on it at all.

15*th Coimbatore.*—I went into Mr. K. D. Roberts' accounts with the Accountant, as he was away on a few days' casual leave. Cash-book in good order, and the balance, Rupees 23-13-4, correct, all the other books and forms of accounts, as well as vouchers, appear now to be well and carefully kept up in this office. I then dawked into Metapolliam.

16*th.*—Marched into Coonoor.

18*th.*—At the Lawrence Asylum works I met Major Farewell and Captain Hankin. In this office every book and paper was forthcoming on demand, and all well and most carefully kept in the fullest detail; check measurements are personally made by Major Farewell of every work, and there is nothing to be desired here except to relieve him as much as possible of his very onerous office work; this, as far as I have been able to do, I have already attempted, but the peculiar position of his Range, where few Contractors can be obtained, makes it necessary for him to give all details himself, and as his expenditure is very large, and distributed over many works, it requires very hard work to keep up these details up, and short the labor of fair copying all this work, registering it in his office, transmitting it here to the Superintending Engineer, and in part to the Collector of the district, as also to the Major General Commanding the Division, is as heavy as anything well can be, and as far as I can see, can only be reduced by employing additional hands.

19*th.*—I waited at Coonoor to meet Captain Law. On the 20th I saw his books, &c., these are exactly the same as those directed to be kept up by a Taluk Overseer, and were quite correct; the arrangement which prevails here for submitting accounts to this office, I would beg to recommend, should be adopted in the Wynaad, in the next official year—that is, for Captain Kennedy to send in one set of accounts for the Wynaad, and thus relieve his officers of a good deal of office work. I marched and dawked on to Coimbatore.

21*st.*—I returned by rail to Madras.

2. In this tour, Range Officers complained to me very much of the want of printed forms; as far as this office has been able to supply these, they have been sent; but it would appear this has not been sufficient to meet their requirements, and on my enquiring why they did not employ the district printing presses, the reply was they had no funds to meet the charges for stationery and printing; but if these could be provided for, a great deal of time, labor, and expense, would be saved, the charge for printing might be traded as one for contingencies, but I was quite at a loss to know how to provide for the other item; but I beg to bring it to notice, in the hope Government will be pleased to direct the manner in which this should be met, *for the present*, as much time would be lost in obtaining this now from Madras.

3. I think the office work in all Ranges might be much reduced, by Range Officers being called upon to furnish to the Civil and Military authorities only

copies of the abstract of their Progress Reports; this furnishes all the information required regarding the amounts of the grants, both for Imperial and Local Fund works, the progress of the expenditure both in the month and up to the month; and if it should appear this was unsatisfactory, the matter could be taken up and brought to notice with a demand for explanation, in full; I cannot see what more can now be obtained by the prevailing arrangements. As regards the Local Funds, I have already undertaken to furnish these abstracts to the Revenue Board at the request of one of the Members, who was quite satisfied with the information they contained when I explained it.

4. The form of Inspection Report at present in use is a very cumbersome document, and, as far as the purposes of this office are concerned, columns 11 to 14 might be omitted, the remaining columns containing all the information required for the purposes of audit; the Progress Reports now show the dates of inspection of all works in them, and the details of expenditure on works of importance in each month. I therefore think Superintending Engineers can, from these papers, obtain a very good idea of the rate of progress in a Range, but if this should be considered insufficient, Range Officers might be called upon to furnish them with diaries of their proceedings for the month; but to support their claims for travelling allowance, it is very useless sending into this office the bulky documents we now receive, which is at least three or four times as heavy as need be for any use it is here.

5. In conclusion, I trust it will not be considered I am going beyond the sphere of my duties, if I venture to mention the great complaints made by the officers of the Neilgherry Range of the heavy expenses they are put to in maintaining horses on the hills, whilst, according to the rules in force, they are unable to make any claim for travelling allowance; for instance, an officer may go for many miles amongst those hills any day in tracing a road or visiting a work, without being five miles from his head quarters, and so not entitled to any allowance, but, in the meanwhile, he must keep at least two horses, the nature of their duties requires this; and as in other instances Government have been pleased to relax the rules in force for special considerations, I would beg to submit this matter again for further orders, and in doing so I believe I have the full concurrence of the Superintending Engineer.

Deposit Account of No. 4 or Koopatoor Range, Tanjore District.

			Rs.	A.	P.
31st March	1863.	Amount handed over by Mr. Watt in excess of his balance on the 17th March 1863 ...	4	15	11
3rd April	,,	Found in cash-chest a balance unaccounted for	1	0	6
16th May	,,	Found among pay of different Overseers and Office pay unaccounted for	1	0	0
10th September	,,	Recovered from Overseer Kupuswamy Rajoo, the price of a spare drawing pen broken by him	2	12	0
14th	do.	,, Amount found among Local Funds unaccounted for	1	3	1
21st	do.	,, Pay for 17 days to Minor Establishment Lascars	*3	4	8
31st December	1863.	Contingent charges due to Lieutenant J. Makgill for July, August, and September 1863	5	0	0
		Total ...	19	4	2

(True copy from Records in 4th Range Office.)

(Signed) W. O'DONAGHUE,
Supervisor, D.P.W.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
13th March 1867.

No. 270. ORDER THEREON, 13th March 1867, No. 759.

ACCOUNT, No. 42.

1. The Government are glad to learn from this report that the result of the Controller's examination of the accounts of the several Ranges which he recently visited in the Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Coimbatore Districts has, on the whole, been satisfactory.

2. The Superintending Engineer of the 6th Division will instruct Mr. O'Donaghue to adjust, in the manner suggested by Captain Fischer, the items aggregating Rupees 134-10-0 which stand under the head of "Stock purchases" in the Negapatam Range accounts, and the sum of Rupees 19-4-2 reported to be in deposit in the cash-chest of that Range. Captain Oakes' attention will also be drawn to the error pointed out in the Trichinopoly Range accounts, and he will take steps for rectifying it.

3. Captain Kennedy will report on the suggestion with regard to his submitting one set of accounts for the expenditure in Wynaad in order to relieve the Range Officers of their Office work.

4. The Government have no objection to the cost of printing forms being charged to "Contingencies," and the stationery required should be indented for specially by the Superintending Engineers.

5. It is very desirable that the Office work of Ranges should be reduced as much as possible, and, as the abstracts of Range Progress Reports will be quite sufficient to answer every useful purpose, the Government approve of their being substituted for the copies of the Reports which are now furnished to the Civil and Military authorities.

6. The Superintending Engineers will report on the proposal in paragraph 4, and state the manner in which they consider the present form of Inspection Report might be modified with the view of reducing its bulk without practically diminishing its value. If Range Officers, however, are to be called upon for Diaries of their proceedings, it is not clear what labor will be saved or what object gained by the change of form which the Controller advocates.

7. The Government do not consider the reasons adduced in paragraph 5 to be sufficient to warrant any special concessions in favor of the officers of the Neilgherry Range as regards travelling allowance. They have advantages of climate, which officers serving in the plains would cheerfully sacrifice much to enjoy.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineers.
" Revenue Department.
" Military Department.
" Controller of Public Works Accounts.
" Accountant General.
To Captain Kennedy.
To the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.