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REPORT

ON THE

PROVINCES OF MALABAR AND CANARA

Dated the 29th January 1841.

SULLIVAN.

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To

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

Fort St. George.

SIR,

It will not be necessary for me to trouble Government with any lengthened observations upon the Districts of Malabar and Canara, as it will be seen by the accompanying reports of the Principal Collectors, that their revenues and trade have been steadily increasing for some years past, and that they are now in a highly prosperous state. Nothing seems required to ensure a full development of the resources of these fine Provinces but a perseverance in the system under which they are now administered.

MALABAR.

2. From the explanations given in statement A of the Principal Collector's report it appears, that although the collections from the land in Malabar, are nominally less than they were at the beginning of the present century, there has been in fact an increase—the Revenue of the earlier years having been swelled by items which have since been, either remitted, or transferred to other heads of account.

3. The land Revenue in Fuzly 1211 amounted to Rupees 19,99,982, and in 1247, to 16,11,658, but in the former year, a sudden and great addition was made to the demand in consequence of a Ryotwar survey which was made by the then Collector (Colonel McLeod) and which was struck off in the following year. In Fuzly 1216, the demand upon the land was further reduced by the abolition of the tax on pepper vines. In Fuzly 1218, the tribute payable by the Cochin Raja which, up to that period, had been carried to the credit of the Malabar Revenue, was transferred to Travancore, and in Fuzlies 1230 and 1235, the full amount of the "Moturpha" tax was transferred to a separate head in the accounts.

4. The produce of the land Revenue in Fuzly 1236, after all these deductions had been made amounted to Rs. 15,63,906; in Fuzly 1239 it was 15,87,736, it fell in the following year to 13,49,853, and in Fuzly 1241 to 13,35,816. This great defalcation led to a change of agency. In Fuzly 1242 the Revenue again rose to 15,84,057 and under the management of the present Principal Collector Mr. Clementson, it has gradually increased in every succeeding year—the collections having (as already observed) amounted in Fuzly 1247 to 16,11,658.

5. The increase would have been very much greater, but for the peculiarly indulgent system under which the land revenue in Malabar is administered—lands yielding only certain articles of produce

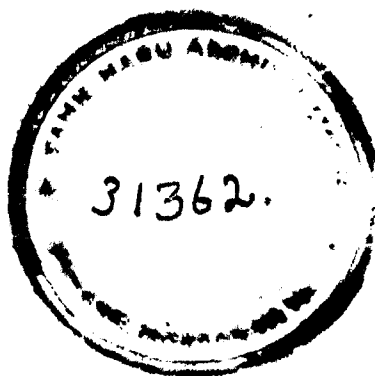
Rice, Coconut trees, Jack trees, Beetle trees,
Oil seeds, Upland Paddy.

being assessed to the Revenue. In every other District even in Canara which adjoins it, every kind of produce, on the land which bears it is liable to assessment.

6. How favourably this lenient system operates upon the landholder of Malabar will be seen from the accompanying statement, which shews that the total annual value of the agricultural produce of the District amounts to Rs. 1,08,04,254 while the land Revenue does not exceed Rs. 16,11,658—little more than one-seventh of the gross produce less than the value of that portion of the assessable produce (16,31,202) which is exported to foreign markets. This portion alone therefore, affords a fund more than sufficient to enable the landowners of Malabar to pay the

74,21,972.

land tax, and leaves them a clear surplus produce of more than 7 lacs of rupees.



7. It seems advisable to give prominence to these facts, as the Secretary to the India Society, from whom the loudest declamations against the land Revenue system of India emanates, is a considerable landed Proprietor in Malabar. From a statement which I have the honor to enclose, and which I believe to be in the main correct, it appears that Gentleman, exclusive of export duties upon his produce, pays the Government Rs. 675 (£ 67-10) for the use of land from which he draws produce of the annual value of Rs. 40,000.

8. If we take the returns at only half that amount, and allow a moiety for the expenses of cultivation, etc., the result will be such, as ought to silence all complaints of the exorbitance of the landed assessment of Malabar.

9. The forbearance which allows, the Proprietor in that Province, to raise Pepper, Coffee, Silk, Sugar, Cinnamon, etc., without paying anything direct to the land Revenue will not occasion any particular inconvenience, so long as the indulgence is confined to Malabar proper and the produce is exported by sea, because, Government may always get a fair Revenue from such articles by means of a Sea Custom duty.

But when such produce is raised at a distance from the Coast, and is brought into competition with the produce of land which is assessed—perhaps highly assessed to the land Revenue—the consequences must be mischievous to the owners of the assessed lands—and this contingency is so sure to occur—that measures should at once be devised for putting the growers upon something of an equality.

10. At this moment coffee planting is going on to a very considerable extent in "Wynad" which was annexed to Malabar in 1801 and also in that portion of the Coimbatore district which was transferred to Malabar in 1830. Coffee, etc., will be raised in Wynad land-tax free, in the other district which touches Wynad, it will pay a heavy assessment; the produce of both will probably meet in the same market, and unless the Coimbatore cultivator is relieved from the demand upon his land, he must sink under such unequal competition. Apprehensions of this result have already been expressed to the Collector by a planter in the assessed district.

To throw any obstacles in the way of the culture of such articles, by assessing the land in Wynad, now that their production in India has become an object of great national importance would be obviously impolitic, but the levy of an excise, or consumption duty upon such produce as may be raised for the home market, in districts, land-tax free, and the remission, in whole or in part, of the Sea Custom duty, upon similar produce in districts, where the land is assessed to the Revenue, would have the effect of placing the growers upon an equal footing, without in any degree checking the production of the articles for the consumption of Europe.

11. The whole fiscal system of Malabar has been so thoroughly scrutinized, and so elaborately commented upon by Mr. Græme in his valuable reports, that it would be superfluous to go over the ground again. That gentleman proposed that the assessment upon rice lands, as well as upon plantations should be revised, and in advocating the revision upon rice lands, Sir Thomas Munroe observed that "the

Minute.

"original assessment was extremely unequal, and what is a greater evil, it was in many places much too high. This

"inequality (he said) had not grown up gradually but was created at once by taking "in some cases 10 and in others 90 per cent. of the Landlords rent".

At that time there was a general desire among the Landowners themselves for a revision, numerous complaints had been made of the pressure of the assessment, and difficulty was experienced in collecting it. Recourse indeed had been had to distraint, and sales to a considerable extent had been made in satisfaction of balances. Sir Thomas was of opinion that there was no ground for the apprehension that "a revision would be considered as a violation of the rights of property, and of the faith of Government" as from the frequent changes which had been made in the assessment since the Province came under our rule—they (the proprietors) must have known that it was "always intended to equalize the rent, and they must have regulated their purchases by the probability of such an event."

12. It is to be regretted that the revision, which appeared to be so necessary, was not made at that time—an interval of 18 years, entirely altered the state of the question—much property must have changed hands during that time, and the Proprietors, from the neglect of the Government to do anything, have had reason to conclude that it was not intended to disturb the assessment. What therefore might have been done without exciting uneasiness in 1822 could not probably be done in 1840—without a serious disturbance of vested interests and an imputation upon the public faith. All wish for a change appears to have subsided, and the Revenue is now collected with unusual punctuality.

13. Great benefit appears to have been derived from the revision of the assessment of plantations, and from the annual enquiry which is made into their state. Under this inspection while the proprietors have been relieved from a demand

Principal Collector's Report para. 18.

for unproductive trees, of Rs. 11,004 a net addition has been made to the Revenue of Rs. 14,860. "Relief was thus granted

"to many who were unduly saddled with a higher assessment than they could afford to pay, while the under-assessed have been made to account for what was justly due to Government.

14. The Principal Collector states that "the price of agricultural produce has been decreasing in proportion as the produce has increased and that this difference may on an average be stated at

Para. 19.

"100 per cent." But he seems to have overlooked two facts, viz., that population has increased in an equal ratio at least with produce from 465,594 souls which was the reported number in 1802 to 1,165,489 which was the result of the census taken in 1837 and that Malabar, which in the former period did not grow sufficient grain for its own consumption, in the latter, supplied foreign markets to the extent in value of Rs. 7,35,198. The increase in produce is therefore no sufficient reason for

Statement E Collector's report.

the alleged fall in price, and from a statement appended to the letter of the acting Principal Collector it appears that the price is, in some Talooks, actually higher than the commutation price, which was fixed upon the average of prices before Malabar grew sufficient grain for its own support and which were in consequence high.

Enclosure No. 2.

15. The Principal Collector infers that the value of landed property has fallen "in proportion to the cheapness of grain" but this again supposes that produce has been stationary. Fall of price may have been compensated by increase of produce.

Para. 20.

The Collector states that "the maximum value of lands assessed to the Revenue may be stated at 40 fold of the clear net annual income derived by the Possessor the medium at 25 minimum at 15, average 26 $\frac{2}{3}$." By a return made to the Collector in 1813 of 67 actual sales it appears that in one instance only, the land fetched a price equal to 47 years purchase of the rent—while the minimum was as low as 6 years. There does not therefore appear to be any good ground for supposing that the value of landed property has much deteriorated of late years.

16. The acting Principal Collector says that "Land generally returns about 5 per cent. profit and therefore is worth 20 years purchase. In North Malabar it does not yield so much and from 30 to 40

Paragraph 4
Enclosure No. 2.

years purchase is the average". But land is much more valuable in the Northern than in the Southern Division, it cannot sell for a higher price because "it does not yield so much". What the Collector means is, that it does not yield so much interest when mortgaged that money from the superior value of the land and the better security which it affords, can be had upon easier terms upon the pledge of landed property in the Northern than in the Southern division. Since the year 1804 the official value of the maritime commerce of Malabar has increased from Rs. 17,63,426 to 56,97,310, which was the value of the imports and exports by sea in 1837-38. The extraordinary and at the same, steady increase in the value of cotton piece goods exported within the same period, viz., from Rs. 4,363 to Rupees 22,81,000, is a satisfactory proof that the cloth trade of the Southern Provinces (these goods being the manufacture of Coimbatore, Salem, Madura and Tinnevely) has not been affected to the degree that has been supposed by the competition of European manufactures or rather that, if those manufactures have superseded the country manufacture in the home market this loss has been made up by increased demand from foreign markets. It shows too, that nothing is required to restore the Indian manufacture to its original ascendancy but fair treatment, and the introduction of machinery for its fabrication.

17. When it was proposed in 1822 to raise a Revenue from pepper by means of a high export duty, the average quantity exported was calculated at 6,000 candies, the average exported during the last 10 years has nearly doubled that quantity.

Principal Collector Para. 8.

In one year 1831-32 it amounted to upwards of 15,000, in the next to 14,000 and in 1836-37 to 14,253. The sea custom duty levied in 1838-39 upon pepper, when the exportation from an unfavourable season, did not exceed 10,618 candies was 95,756. The amount which was anticipated by increasing the rate from 15 to 27 per cent. upon the tariff value was only 120,000 per annum and that amount has been pretty nearly attained under the lower rate. This result shows the advantage of moderate duties; it shows also that Government may always be sure of a fair Revenue upon articles grown in Malabar for foreign markets upon lands which are not assessed to the Revenue.

18. The value of goods imported into Malabar has increased since 1806 from Rs. 4,95,606 to 13,83,200 while the value of exports has increased in the same period from 12,67,826 to 43,14,110. It has already been stated that when Malabar was transferred from the Bombay to the Madras Presidency in 1800 it did not grow sufficient grain for its own consumption. In 1804 it exported 12,080 morahs of rice valued at Rs. 24,160. In 1837-38 the exports by sea and land

amounted to morahs 6,45,172 valued at Rs. 7,38,198, equal to nearly one-half of the land Revenue, the population having increased in the interval from Rs. 4,65,594 to 11,65,498 and the Revenue in all its branches, from Rs. 20,29,388 to 31,18,329.

19. These are incontestable proofs of the thriving condition of a Province, in which landed property is so minutely divided that a land Revenue of Rs. 16,22,883 is collected from 160,000 individuals—the average payment of each individual being little above Rs. 30 or 3£.

20. There are blots however upon the fiscal system of Malabar which have been often pointed at, but which still remain, viz.,

Thriving condition of Malabar.

Slavery.

The tobacco Monopoly.

The ferry-tax.

The inland custom duties.

Defects in the fiscal system.

21. I learn from the present acting Principal Collector, that there is reason to hope, from communications which have passed between himself, and some enlightened landholders, that the first blot which is peculiarly foul, from the nature of the slavery, might be wiped out, by the payment of such an amount of compensation, as certainly would not exceed one year's land Revenue of the Province.

Slavery.

No money could be better bestowed, for there is no race of people in India in a condition so utterly wretched as the slaves of Malabar and Wynad, and there can be no doubt whatever that their condition in every respect would be immediately improved by emancipation, as agricultural labor in the neighbouring Province of Canara is dear. If therefore the proprietors in Malabar did not give them proper wages they would emigrate to Canara.

22. Mr. Graeme has shown that the effects of the tobacco Monopoly have been—
First, to reduce the consumption of the article while the population has steadily increased;

Tobacco Monopoly.

Secondly, to extinguish, in a great measure, the trade which was formerly carried on between the districts which produce tobacco and Malabar which consumes it the Government being not only Monopolists but carriers, and wholesale dealers;

Thirdly, to demoralize both producers and consumers, by compelling them to make united efforts for smuggling an article, which both have an interest in bartering at a fair price;

Fourthly, to compel the people of Malabar to take from the Government stores a bad article at four-fold the price which they formerly paid for a good one;

Fifthly, to compel the growers to give the Government the best sorts of the article at a price fixed by the Government officers, and to retain the inferior sorts, which being fit only for the market of Malabar must either be smuggled into that Province or wasted;

Sixthly, to occupy much of the time of the public servants of both districts to engender constant disputes between them and to make the sale of tobacco a primary duty of the public servants in Malabar, their emoluments to a certain extent depending upon the quantity of tobacco which they sell.

All this might be excusable if a Revenue from tobacco could be raised in no other way but it is plain that as the consumption of the article is, after an interval of 30 years, considerably less than it was before the monopoly was established, the Revenue from the land which produces the tobacco must have been increased in the proportion that the consumption has been checked by the imposition of an excessive price.

The average consumption of tobacco in Malabar for the three years (*viz.*, from 1803-04 to 1805-06) which preceded the establishment of the Monopoly was candies 3,360, the highest amount consumed under the Monopoly was in Fasli 1248, and it had then reached only to candies 2,975. The population in 1802 was only 465,594 in 1837 it was 1,165,489: This therefore, is not a Monopoly, established, like that of France and Spain, because an adequate Revenue from tobacco can be raised in no other way, but a Monopoly which is fed from the vitals of the land Revenue. The same story is to be told of Canara. The Revenue realized from the tobacco Monopoly in 1806—when the population was 574,440—amounted to Rs. 2,84,182. In 1838-39, the population had increased to 834,874, whilst the tobacco Revenue has been stationary; the collections in that year having been Rs. 2,99,183 and in the three years preceding fluctuating between Rs. 2,79,257 and 2,49,754. If Mysore, from whence Canara derives its supplies be considered as a foreign state, then the monopoly in Canara is not open to the objection which lies against that of Malabar, *viz.*, that it is levied at the expense of our own land Revenue, but considering the heavy lien which we have upon the Revenue of Mysore, and the certainty that exists, of its falling into our permanent possession upon the death of the present Rajah, it is expedient to treat it as a portion of our own territory. But under every view of the subject, it would be better that Mysore should pay a direct Revenue to Canara than that a Revenue should be levied by a process which checks its cultivation, and turns the people of both Districts into bands of smugglers.

In all other districts tobacco is a luxury which can be purchased for a moderate price; in Malabar and Canara from the moisture of the climate it is a necessary of life, or nearly so and it is so enormously taxed, as to put it out of the power of the lower classes to consume it, except by smuggling. It is quite different from the salt Monopoly which affects the whole population of the Madras Presidency in nearly an equal degree. It may be said that as the land-tax of the western districts, is so much lighter than that of other parts of the territory it is quite equitable that the people of those districts should make up their quota of taxation by indirect payments, through tobacco and other articles. This would be a valid argument if the tax fell only upon the landed proprietors, and if there was no other way of raising a Revenue, but the burthen falls heaviest upon the lower orders, upon the agricultural labourers, upon the slaves, who though supplied by their masters, cannot be expected to receive a tythe of what they would get, if the tobacco was at a fair market price. Whether therefore the monopoly is considered with reference to morals, to police or to finance, its effects would seem to be equally baneful.

23. The ferry-tax in Malabar is in one respect more obnoxious than that of the tobacco-tax. All classes are subject to the latter but while the carriage and the Palankeen of the wealthy are allowed to pass toll free, the poor woman whose

livelihood depends upon the bundle of sticks which she is carrying cannot pass until she has paid—so hardly does this tax press upon the lower orders that lives have been lost in attempts to swim the rivers for the purpose of avoiding it.

When it was first imposed, it was upon an understanding, if not upon a pledge, that the amount, should be expended in improving the communications of the Province, but when the accumulations amounted to a large sum they were carried to the credit of the Government, and the collections now form a regular item of the public Revenue. The ferry-tax is not peculiar to Malabar but it operates with peculiar severity in that Province and in Canara, from the number and width of the rivers and backwaters, and from their being full throughout the year which is not the case in other Districts, all the rivers north and south being fordable for nearly half the year.

24. The part of the transit duty system which authorizes the levy of an additional duty upon an enhanced tariff valuation of all goods passing from the

Regn. 1 of 1812, section 13, clause 4.

eastern into the western Districts, has been frequently brought to the notice of the Board of Revenue. It is difficult to say why a man who resides 30 miles west of these Districts should be made to pay more for a piece of cloth, than one who resides the same distance at any other part of the compass, but the tariff value of a bale of piece goods at Palghat which is 30 miles from Coimbatore is 75 per cent. higher than it is at Coimbatore itself, or at any distance eastward of Coimbatore.

The merchant first pays 5 per cent. at Coimbatore, upon the tariff of that place often travelling 30 miles; his goods are unpacked, searched, and compared with the pass, in order to ascertain whether they tally, he has then to pay a second 5 per cent. upon a fresh valuation, but, if his goods are for export by sea, the two inland duties are returned to him and a sea custom duty of 2½ per cent. only upon a third valuation, is collected.

The Regulation affords no clue for the divining of their reasons which led to this singular enactment. If it was intended to make the lightly taxed people of Malabar pay more for their clothing than the people of other districts, the object is not answered; as nine-tenths of the goods so treated, are for foreign markets, the Government it will be seen, gets no Revenue by it, as what is paid in the two first instances is returned in the shape of drawback—the sufferer from first to last, is the exporting merchant.

If the transit duties are retained, it will be easy to get rid of this particularly odious feature in them, by levying at one place, either at the place of growth or at the place of export, the duty which the exporter is eventually to pay, and by requiring him to give security, that goods so dealt with are actually exported, and not retained for internal consumption. If on the other hand, those duties are abolished, and the Howlut duties, which are peculiar to Malabar and Canara, retained, it will be necessary to repeal clause 4, Section 13 of Regulation 1, 1812 as it is by virtue of that section that the Howlut duties are levied; and it is by clause 4 of the section, that the practice here animadverted upon is legalized.

25. It has been stated that the comparatively small increase in the land Revenue of Malabar is owing to the lenient system under which it is administered and which permits all but six articles to be raised without being brought within the influence of direct assessment. So long as this indulgence is confined to lands which have

now been assessed to the Revenue no great inconvenience can arise from it, but the great demand, from the state of the West Indies which has lately arisen for Coffee, Sugar, etc., and the peculiar capabilities which Malabar possesses for supplying that demand, require that timely precautions should be taken to prevent this indulgence from being extended to lands which are now assessed; for if this is not done, there is danger of the rice field being turned into a coffee plantation, and the cocoanut into a cinnamon garden—to the great damage of the Land Revenue.

26. In Malabar, land upon which oil seed, or upland paddy (assessable articles) have been grown is left fallow for three years, and until recultivated with them, it yields no Revenue. Under the peculiar system of Revenue in Malabar, and from the fact, that waste land in that Province is private property, no remedy can be had for this inconvenience. But on the Nilgiris, where a different tenure of land prevails, the remedy is in the hands of the Government should be promptly applied. The assessment there is upon the land, and all that is waste, or in other words land that is not assessed to the Revenue of the year reverts to the Government and may be given to any who may undertake to pay the assessment.

When the Nilgiris were first visited, the people were found in such a state of poverty, and the land of so little value that it was not thought expedient to disturb the practice which was found to prevail, of ryots breaking up fresh land every year for the culture of inferior edible grains, retaining their hold at the same time of fallow lands, and paying only for such as they actually cultivated.

An entire revolution has since been effected in their circumstances, the Ryots of the Hills from the superiority of their soil, and climate, and from the great demand that exists for every species of their produce, are better off, than the Ryots of any other district. Under this demand there has been a very great increase of cultivation without any increase of Revenue, not more than half the land cultivated is, I estimate, brought to account. It would be proper therefore to call upon the Ryots to take whatever quantity of land they may choose upon the payment of the fixed assessment (which is very light), the remainder being left in the hands of the Government to be disposed of upon demand.

There is now a great demand for land on the Hills, and as this demand is likely to increase rapidly, I would beg leave to recommend, that an actual measurement should be made of the agricultural surface of the Hills—a careful Geographical survey of them has been made, but no agricultural survey—the consequence is that disputes about boundaries and rights are increasing, and that the Government Revenue is extensively defrauded.

27. As connected with this subject, I beg to remind the Government that no compensation has, as yet been made to the “Toda” inhabitants of the Hills, for the tract of which they were dispossessed when the Government ordered the Cantonment of Ootacamund to be formed. I am aware that this has arisen from the Todas having neglected to avail themselves of the option which the Government gave them, to take a certain sum within a given time, or to forfeit all claim to compensation; but as this neglect arose out of a reluctance to sell their birthright, I should hope that Government would allow them to receive compensation upon other terms, viz., that an annual sum equal to the interest of the capital that was awarded by the order of Government may be paid to them for the permanent use of the land within what were the Military limits.

I beg to observe that the Todas have a valid claim to compensation for all land that may be taken from them, whether their peculiar proprietary rights to the land on the hills be admitted or not. Whatever may have been the relative rights of Government and the ryot under other Governments, under the British Government, no ryot can be dispossessed of his land upon any other pretext than that of his failing to pay the established assessment.

So long as he pays what the Government demand from him as revenue, the land is his, to keep or to transfer it as he pleases. This is proved by the prevalence of sales in all districts and by their recognition in the Courts.

It is quite a mistake to consider all land waste that is not brought under the plough. In many districts large tracts are assessed to the revenue as pasture lands. The assessment of such lands is generally lower than that of arable lands, because they are less valuable; the usual tenure upon which they are held is that the occupants shall either pay an increased assessment or resign it to others who may have preferred to pay it.

In some districts, the ryots are entitled to the use of all unoccupied land, rent-free; in others, as in Malabar and Canara, all land is private property, and the owners have an absolute property in the waste. In the extensive district of Wynaad, which adjoins the Nilgiris, this tenure prevails. The whole tract is in the hands of a few proprietors, and scarcely a hundredth part of it is assessed to the revenue.

If the Todas be considered as ordinary ryots, they are entitled to compensation for the favourite tract of pasture, of which the Government dispossessed them 12 years ago. From their profession as herdsmen and graziers they appropriated the land exclusively to pasture; and from their extensive herds and the severity of the frosts, which destroys the vegetation at certain seasons of the year, they require a great range, a portion for winter and another for summer pasturage. They had been in possession of all this range from time immemorial until we disturbed them a few years ago.

To argue against the claim of the Todas to retain possession of it, because they pay what may be considered to be little beyond a pepper corn rent, is to confound two things which are essentially distinct, viz., the Government rights of revenue and the rights of individuals to the occupancy of the soil. There is no limit, that I know of, to the former, any more than there is to the omnipotence of Parliament. The Government may virtually destroy private property in Malabar by assessing the lands of that province to the full amount of the landlord's rent, but this would not affect the proprietary rights of the landlords. I may remark too that the pepper corn rent which is paid for Wynaad is not considered to militate against the proprietary rights of the landlords of that extensive but unhealthy district, although the claims of the Todas to a property in the soil of the less extensive, but salubrious, region of the Nilgiris, appear to be viewed with extreme jealousy. They have regularly paid all that they have been called upon to pay. That the demand made upon them for revenue is so moderate is no fault of theirs, neither can it with justice be made a plea to wrest from them any portion of their rights. Whether the demand ought to be raised is a question which it is not necessary to discuss in this place. I shall content myself with stating that the rights claimed by the Todas are perfectly compatible with the full development of the resources of this rich country and of the revenue which Government is clearly entitled to expect from it.

The whole question of the Toda proprietary rights has already been so elaborately discussed and their solidity so fully admitted by the Honourable Court, that I should not consider it necessary to revive it, were it not that an antiquated claim has been recently revived by a Raja of Malabar to a proprietary right in a considerable portion of the hills; for although the rights claimed by the Todas will not interfere with the progress of the Government revenue, the acknowledgement of the rights of this Raja will do so effectually, as the Government can claim no revenue from him except upon lands which yield the six articles that are assessable to the revenue of Malabar, none of which will grow in the cold climate of the Nilgiris.

The claimant in this case is the Tiroopad of Nilambur, a petty Raja, whose Estates are situated immediately below the Karkoor pass which leads from the low country of Malabar into Wynad. This Raja claims the jenm or absolute proprietary right to the whole tract of country which lies between the Piakara river and the Nedduvattam pass, upon the strength of a decree which was made in his favour by the Zilla Court of Malabar in 1830 against the "Numblecottah Warevoor," in the schedule of whose property the tract in question was entered and attached with other landed property belonging to the "Warevoor" by the district Munsiff of Wynad, under orders from the Court.

Although this decree was passed more than ten years ago, it was only last month that the Todas, whose rights are so deeply affected by it, were made acquainted by the Collector with its purport; they entirely, in their interview with the Collector, repudiated the claim of the Numblecottah Warevoor and, by consequence, of the Nilambur Tirupad, to any proprietary right in the tract in question, and are ready to support their own rights against his, should he attempt to enforce them.

The question as between the parties must, of course, be decided in due course of law, but the Government, as I shall proceed to show, have a deep interest in it. It is necessary therefore that its merits should be thoroughly understood.

The tract of land in dispute, from its great fertility and capabilities, is able to support a large agricultural population and to furnish a considerable amount of exportable produce, instead of being appropriated, as at present, to the feeding of some hundred buffaloes. From its temperature and the salubrity of its climate, it is peculiarly adapted for the settlement of Europeans, and I need not dwell upon the important consequences that would follow from the planting of an European Colony in such a position.

I have already stated that an acknowledgment of the proprietary rights of the Todas will not, in any way, interfere with the Government rights of revenue. When the land comes to be in demand for agricultural purposes, all that is required is that the Todas should be called upon to pay whatever may be considered to be a fair assessment, or to relinquish the land to others who may be willing to pay it, that small portion of the produce only, which is now paid by the agricultural classes on the hills to the Todas, under the name of "Godoo", being reserved for them. This is now done whenever fresh land is broken up for cultivation, and would be done if the tract in dispute was brought under cultivation by the hill ryots, and might as easily be done by Europeans as by natives.

Although the Todas might suffer temporary inconvenience from having their pasture range circumscribed, there can be no doubt but that eventually their condition would be improved by the tillage of a large portion of their lands. If they should be in a condition to satisfy the Government demand for increased revenue, upon no pretext whatever could the Government dispossess these ancient occupants of the soil. No such claim is set up for them as was made for the

Mearassdar of the Carnatic, viz., "a right to derive rent from land for which he neither pays the public revenue nor finds a tenant." The Toda pays the public revenue, and so long as he pays that revenue, he has a right to keep the land against all intenders, and either to use it himself or to let it.

But if the jenm or proprietary right of the Nilambur Raja be admitted, he may use it against the Government as well as against the Todas. The Jenm is a right as absolute as can be had in property; it gives the proprietor the right to alienate it in every possible way, and to oust all the occupants of it at pleasure, all such at least as have not a lease from the proprietor; and unless, as already observed, certain articles of produce are grown upon the land, it is held free from all demands of revenue. The consequence therefore of a recognition by the Government of this claim of the Raja or of its establishment in a Court, would be not merely the ousting of the ancient occupants, the Todas, but the prohibition, except with the consent of the Raja, of any attempt to turn the land in question to profitable account. The notion, that a valuable tract of land should be the property of a few herdsmen who pay but a trifle for its use, is scouted as unreasonable by those who see nothing out of the way in the claim of an individual to have the land in absolute property. The largest portion of the surface of Wynad is in this predicament, viz., totally unproductive to the revenue; and it is not certainly for the interest of Government that this system of exemption from demand should be needlessly extended.

In proof that "the claims preferred by the inhabitants of Namblecottah to the tract of country between the Neduvattom pass and the right bank of the Piakara river, is founded in justice, and that their proprietary right thereto is completely established", the Principal Collector of

See enclosure No 4.

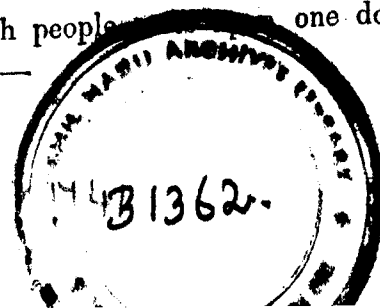
Malabar in 1830 adduced evidence to prove first, that the Piakara river had always been considered as the boundary which separated Wynad from Coimbatore.

Secondly, that the Toda inhabitants of the tract in dispute, had by deed acknowledged themselves to be "Jenm Koodians" residing on the jenm lands belonging to the Namblecottah Pagoda situated on the west side of the Piakara river.

As the Government alter the boundaries of districts, whenever the convenience of the public service may require a change, and as the boundaries of Malabar and Coimbatore have been frequently altered with this object, it is not necessary to advert to the testimony which went to show what the boundary was in 1830. The range of the "Khoondah Mountains" has always been dependent upon the Walluvanad Taluk of Malabar, but this geographical arrangement has never led to a belief that the proprietary right to the land of that range belonged to inhabitants of Malabar.

The claim therefore of the Numblecottah people, one document which for convenience of reference I transcribe—

X723. 2103



"*Pishamoor*, or Deed of Promise, executed by Todavarakarekel Manthil Kenan Todawan, Yeerootende narnad Manthil Ana Todawan, Kembalan Todawan, Yellykel Todawan, the Jenm Koodians of the Wittekaroomagan Barathewatha, residing on the jenm lands belonging to the Bharathewatha Dewassom situated on the west side of the Piakara river.

"Whereas, we, the jenm koodians of the Barathewatha, have not, during the last eight years, supplied to the Barathewatha Dewassom the 60 Guindees of ghee and 120 old fanams which ought to have been furnished by us annually, according to the custom which has obtained from time immemorial, by reason of our having been obliged to quit the country and remain absent from it in consequence of the disturbances which prevailed in it, we now promise to tender to the Barathewatha Dewassom, from and after this day, the 20th Toolam 959, according to the ancient custom, 60 Guindees of ghee and 120 fanams per annum. That we may enjoy the blessing of the Barathewatha and the favour of the Raja and that our children may prosper, we execute this Deed of promise and submit it to the Warevoor Tambooran; and to the execution hereof the undermentioned persons are witnesses, Goodaloor Attil Patten Badoogan, Charamatha Badoogan, Katari Valia Moondan and Pangan Kotten, dated 20th Toolam 959 (November 1783)."

Admitting which however is a point to be proved that the Todas whose names are attached to this document, actually signed it in 1783, all that it really proves is, that the Todas acknowledged themselves to be bound according to immemorial custom to pay a certain quantity of ghee and 120 fanams per annum, as tribute or as an offering to the Numblecotta Pagoda. It is true that they are made to call themselves "Jenm koodians" and to say that they were "residing on the jenm lands belonging to the Barathewatha Dewassom," but as the Todas are an illiterate race and unable to read or write any language, it was impossible, supposing them to have signed this deed, that they should have known how it was worded.

Or if they did sanction the use of the terms quoted, they might have merely intended to acknowledge that themselves and their lands were under the protection of the Swamy. This is a form of acknowledgment or declaration as common as the practice is of making offerings to Padgodas. Such offerings are voluntary in the first instance, but come in time to be considered as rights. Such offerings are at this moment made by the hill people to the temple at Maniyangode and by the people of the plains to "Ranga Swamy Coil" on the hills. From their acknowledgment therefore that an offering was due to the Pagoda at Numblecottah, no inference whatever, adverse to the proprietary rights of the Todas to the land upon the mountains from a particular place in the Neduvattam pass to the Pyakara river, can be drawn.

Supposing the deed to be genuine and those who signed it to have known its exact contents, it remains to be proved whether the parties to it were Todas of the hills or of the plains. There are, and always have been, Toda families residing in the immediate vicinity of the Numblecottah Pagoda, and the term used in the deed, to the "west of the Pyakara river", is too vague to admit of its being applied, without hesitation, to the Todas who live occasionally in the immediate vicinity of that river. The land below, where the Todas live, is the undoubted jenm property of the Numblecottah Warevoor, and if the deed should be proved to have reference to the Todas who depasture upon it, there would be room for dispute.

It will be seen from the evidence given in support of the deed, that its obligations were fulfilled from 1783/4 to 1788/89; that upon the retreat of the Waranon into Travancore in the latter year the contributions ceased; and that the payment

Enclosure 4.

was not resumed until 1797/8. In 1803/4 they were suspended again, but from that "year until the present period (1829) the Patta adyam thereon (a ceremony so

See as above.

called) has not been performed in the Barathacotta Temple in consequence of the minority of his successor, the present Warevoor; and owing to the want of a proper manager the Warevoor's affairs have been much neglected" and no payment has been made, except that in 1826/7 two sons of the Todas who are said to have executed the deed are stated to have made an offering "of 23 rupees for the temple with an invocation that the country might not be visited by sickness, but since that period they have paid no contribution."

These facts are perfectly consistent with the averment of the Todas that their contribution is an offering made to propitiate the favour of the Samy of the Pagoda, but they are not reconcilable with the notion that the absolute proprietary right to the land was vested in the Pagoda. The country has been in a state of profound peace since 1803, and Courts of Justice in uninterrupted operation, and yet the Waranon has never made a single effort to recover a rupee of the revenue of his land, the arrears of which have been accumulating for 37 years.

The real nature of the payment is indeed fully explained by one of the witnesses, who was examined in support of the Numblecottah claim, the witness having been asked whether "any fee or tax is paid by the party pasturing his

Enclosure No. 6.

cattle between Nedduvattom and Piakara, answers: "The Todas of Tananad and Mutanaad offered in the month of Toolam of every year to the Wettayara Mayam Bharadewatha, for the Pattah ceremony, 60 gundies of ghee and 126 old gold fanams, and when they returned after having attended the Pattah ceremony the usual present of cloth was given them. This custom prevailed until the year 1802/3, after which in consequence of the Pottah ceremony having been interrupted the offering was also discontinued. After this, owing to their neglect the wrath of the Deity being excited against the koodians of the Nilgiris, who pastured their cattle on this side of the Piakara river, some of them got sick and some of their cattle were seized and carried off by tigers. They therefore in 1879 came to Numblecottah and offered 10 Gundies of ghee, a brass band bell, and 23 rupees to the Bharadewatha, praying for its protection against any further visitation of sickness and declaring that they would continue making the usual offerings in future."

It is needless to dwell upon the distinction between such an offering, as is here described, and the rent which is due from the land of a "Jenm" proprietor of Malabar. "The inhabitants of the Mailkoondah and the Keelkoondah (says the same witness) offer every year 120 gold fanams and 120 guindies of ghee to the temple in question." These inhabitants have always been subject to the jurisdiction of Malabar. Their offerings and those made by the Todas of the western side of the Pyakara, are precisely of the same nature. If asked, they would probably acknowledge themselves to be the dependents of the Numblecottah Pagoda, using the words, in the same sense as they are understood by the Todas, but by no means admitting any proprietary right to their lands to be vested in the temple.

The utmost, therefore, that this deed, supposing it to be valid, can prove is that the Todas who reside to the westward of the Pyakara river, are bound to pay a certain sum in money and a certain quantity of ghee to the Pagoda. It is possible, however, that the Todas may be able to prove what they assert, that their contribution is voluntary; and the fact, which is admitted by the Numblecottah people, that the payments are omitted in prosperous times and only resumed when a season of calamity occurs, seems to go in proof of their assertion.

29. I have entered into this detail for the purpose of showing that Government have an interest in supporting the very moderate claims of the Todas to the tract in question, inasmuch as either from the Todas themselves or from those who may cultivate the land in default of the Todas, the Government would always be sure of their revenue, whereas if the jem or absolute proprietary right of the Numblecottah Pagoda or Warevoor is admitted, the Government for the reasons already stated, must give up all claim both to land and revenue. They must, should the land be required, purchase the right of the Warevoor of his assignee, the Raja of Nillambur, or individuals, who may be desirous of settling upon the tract, must purchase the right, and under the title so obtained, they would be exempt from all claim for revenue from the land just as the coffee planters are at this moment in Wynad.

Should the question be formally litigated between the Todas and the other party, I would beg to suggest the propriety of a local tribunal being constituted for the purpose, as death would be the certain consequence of the hill people being compelled to repair to the Court in support of their rights.

30. The only change that seems to be advisable in the present revenue arrangements of Malabar, is the postponement of the last Kist, which is now paid in 11 of the Taluks in June and July, when the ryots are without means to satisfy the demand, until the month of September and October, when it is levied in the 4 other Taluks, as proposed by the Acting Collector in his letter of the

31. I have just received from that Officer a letter on the subject of the tobacco monopoly, to which I beg to draw the particular attention of the Government. "The complaints (says Mr. Goodwyn, the Sub-Collector) of the badness of the tobacco are universal all over the northern division, and the natives say with justice that it is most cruel and unfair on the part of Government to force them to use such bad tobacco, when the Government monopoly price is about four times the original cost of the commodity in Coimbatore." The Collector states that he has lately had "a good deal of correspondence with the Collector of Coimbatore on the subject of the badness of the tobacco; that he has been obliged to order a considerable quantity to be destroyed; and that very general discontent prevails in Malabar on the subject." My own personal experience in this matter extends over a period of a quarter of a century and enables me to testify that the grievance has always been what it is now.

32. Referring to my remarks on the ferry-tax, I would beg to add that a toll continues to be levied on our bridges at the places noted in the margin, although the tax was originally raised for providing funds for building these bridges. This appears to be a very unhandsome proceeding, and it lays the Government open to an imputation of bad faith. In Fasli 1229 the produce of this tax was Rs. 23,531; in Fasli 1239 it amounted to Rs. 41,681; in 1249 it had fallen again to Rs. 32,780, not from any diminution of rates or decrease of population, but from successful attempts to evade it.

33. The acting Principal Collector has brought to my notice the great inconvenience which is produced to the public service in Malabar from the want of an efficient Engineer establishment at this moment. The presence of the Engineer of the division is urgently required to devise means to prevent the further encroachment of the sea upon the town of Ponnani, a very populous place, which contains much valuable public property, and also for superintending the construction of a dam at , upon which an annual revenue of rupees depends; but the services of that officer are required in another part of his division. Similar complaints prevail in almost every other district.

In the western division the rule, by which each division was to have a Civil Engineer and two assistants, has never been acted upon. The Engineer is without an assistant, and in the present state of the Engineer Corps there is little chance of his getting one. It has occurred to me that the best plan for improving the Engineer Department, would be to increase the number of Subordinate Officers in the Department and to file them up from the Corps of Sappers and Miners. Amongst the Non-commissioned Officers of that Corps many valuable men are to be found, and it would be easy to qualify them at Woolwich where they now receive instructions as Sappers for the office of surveyor and all other duties that are required of Assistant Civil Engineers.

The cost of increasing the strength of the non-commissioned branch of the sappers to the extent that would be required to the proposed drain upon it, would be trifling as compared with an increase to the strength of the Corps of Engineers.

34. Adverting to what I have said in a preceding paragraph, upon the defenceless state of the Malabar Coast at certain seasons, I beg to state that in the last war an American Frigate lay to off Cannanore and fired several shots into the Fort. With a secure harbour of sufficient depth of water to hold a steamer of war during the monsoon, we should be free from all danger of the repetition of such an insult.

CANARA.

35. Although the present produce of the land revenue of Canara is not quite equal to what it was in some of the earlier years of our rule, there is, upon the

Rs.
1211—17,27,778.
1247—17,23,999.

average of the last 5, as compared with the first 5 years, a trifling increase. That the increase has not been greater is owing

1st period ...	16,90,704
2nd do. ...	16,98,709
Increase ...	19,916

mainly as in Malabar to the demand being fixed upon estates in the aggregate so that revenue does not increase generally with cultivation. There has been a very considerable increase in the cultivation of every

species of land, and a great increase in the produce of land. Nothing indeed but

From Principal Collector, 8th January 1839,
Enclosure A.

the unhealthiness of the climate in certain parts along the skirts of the ghauts, or excessive assessment, could induce a ryot in Canara to leave waste any portion of rice land which he has the means of cultivating.

36. No pains are spared to convert Batt into Muzul, and Muzul into Byle land, wherever the situation admits of the change being made, by which means the value of estates is annually becoming enhanced by the cultivation being rendered more certain, and produce increased.

37. There has been a very considerable extension of cocoanut plantations, and almost all waste spots along the coast, adopted for this species of garden produce, have been occupied and planted. There has also been an increase in the cultivation of the betelnut in the Payenghat Taluks, but the principal plantations of the nut in the Balaghaut have been on the decline for the last 20 years.

38. The partial decline of this species of cultivation forms a solitary exception to the general prosperity of Canara. A great fall in price is unquestionably the main cause of this deterioration. This is stated to have arisen from diminished demand "owing to the dissolution of the large Courts and armies which were assembled in the neighbourhood of the frontier during the Maharattah Empire, and the diminution of the currency throughout India".

39. From a statement appended to the Collector's letter it appears that, comparing the prices of former and later years of the three articles grown in the gardens of the upper Taluks, viz., betelnut, pepper and cardamoms, there has been a fall of per cent. The distress arising from this defalcation in price is said to have been aggravated by "the thoughtlessness of the cultivators themselves who did not lessen their expenditure in proportion to the decrease of their income. They have thus become so embarrassed as to be often merely the labourers of their creditors to whom they assign their produce. In places where they have to contend against an inferior soil or high assessment, many of the gardens have been deserted and others are annually thrown up."

With a view to afford relief to the proprietors of these plantations it is proposed to reduce the assessment "to the rates fixed on rice fields; such a measure, it is said, would act beneficially in two ways, first, by its affording a direct remission, and secondly, as enabling the cultivators, in consequence of the diminution of demand against them, to watch the markets and dispose of their stock to more advantage".

There can be no doubt but that present relief is required by this class of proprietors, but, "as they are easily led to throw up their gardens, as their Brahminical caste ensures them a subsistence, and the Potails or principal inhabitants secretly accelerate such a result, in order that the gardens may be available as rice land which in the Balaghaut Taluk is scarce and valuable," there is danger that such a reduction as is proposed would tempt the owners of garden to neglect their garden cultivation in order to obtain the great boon of a reduced assessment.

This danger would be obviated if the reduction was made temporary or dependent upon the state of prices; and the fact, that there has been no decrease in the export of these articles and that "the prices are still sufficiently high to repay the cost of production in favourable districts", would seem to render any permanent reduction of assessment unadvisable. There is no knowing to what extent the fall in price may have been compensated by increase of produce or in what degree the abandonment of gardens may have been owing to the wish of the inhabitants to make them available for rice land; neither can we be sure that there will not be such a reaction in prices as would restore this species of property to its former value.

Acting Principal Collector, 26th November 1839,
paragraph 9.

Enclosure B.

Paragraph 11.

Paragraph 17.

Paragraph 11.

40. Before any item of revenue is given up either in Malabar or Canara, it is necessary to consider that the Government have not any fund in those districts from which they can draw an increase to the land revenue. From the very small increase which has been made to the land revenue of Malabar during the time that it has been under the Company's Government, there appears no ground for expecting that the cultivation of the six articles which are alone assessable to the revenue will be greatly extended, or rather that the revenue derivable from the land which yields those articles will be much increased.

The revenue from rice lands in Malabar has increased only in the sum of Rs. 3,050 since Fasli 1242, the increase from gardens has been Rs. 29,325 and from upland cultivation Rs. 6,094. The increase in gardens, the principal item, has been more from gardens brought to account than from new plantations.

In Canara, the future land revenue may be estimated in round numbers thus:—

	Rupces.
Present settlement	... 18,10,000.
To be brought up to the standard assessment by instalments	... 38,060.
Increase from waste	... 17,000.
	<u>18,55,000.</u>

Report of Principal Collector.

There being so little prospect of increase from this source, it seems advisable that no import which does not press directly upon the industry of the country, or which is not radically defective in principle, should be abandoned. In this category the Howlut duties appear to be included. There are duties upon luxuries, which although paid in the first instance by the growers in Canara and Malabar fall ultimately on the foreign consumer. Like the export duty on grain the Howlut must be considered as a compensation for the very moderate demand which is made on the land for rent. "As they are paid" (says Mr. Maltby) "entirely by the foreign consumer their abolition would confer no benefit on the cultivator, and it would appear to be a waste of the revenue of Government to abolish them, while other taxes which are really burdensome and injurious in their operation are retained".

What is immediately wanting in the administration of this branch of revenue is, first, an approximation at least between the tariff and market prices of the three principal articles upon which the duty is collected; the former are now nearly double the latter in the articles of betelnut and cardamoms. Secondly, an assimilation of the rates of Howlut levied in Mysore and Canara. The duty upon cardamoms in Mysore is Rs. 45-13-4 per candy, in Canara it is Rs. 112-8-0. But upon the other articles, pepper and betelnut, the Mysore duties are much higher than those of Canara. This is one amongst many proofs that all attempts to improve the fiscal system of the Madras Presidency will fail, unless Mysore is treated as one of our own provinces. Hemmed in as that country is by our own territory, it will

Betelnut, cardamoms, pepper, sandelwood.

Report 26th November 1839, paragraph 18.

See enclosure I, Collector's report.

Paragraph 16.

Paragraph 24.

be to no purpose that our ryots are relieved from the heavy burthen of the transit duties, if those duties are to be levied with ten-fold vexation upon their produce, as it passes from one district to another through Mysore.

Thirdly, an arrangement by which the Howlut duties shall be paid at once instead of as now, in the first instance, to land customs and, afterwards, to sea customs, by drawback and adjustment of account.

In Malabar out of a total of Rs. 1,08,276 levied as Howlut upon pepper, cardamoms and sandalwood in 1838-39 at the land custom house, only Rs. 2,952-5-5 was eventually carried to the credit of that branch of the revenue, the remainder, viz., Rs. 1,05,323-13-4, being brought to account as sea customs.

The chief defect in the revenue system of Malabar and Canara is the want of detailed accounts of the land revenue. In neither district is it possible to ascertain the extent of land in cultivation, and though from personal observation the Collector of Canara is able to testify that many betelnut gardens have fallen to decay, he has not the means of showing by accounts the "extent of land now occupied by gardens in comparison with former periods". There is always danger there-

Paragraph 13 and 14.

fore that in making remissions the Government may be giving up what they ought to retain.

This defect, viz., the want of detailed accounts, was pointed out by the first Collector of Canara, who suggested, as a remedy, the most effectual next to a general survey, that a register should be kept of the rent and produce of all lands that became the subject of litigation. When this proposition was made the Collector was the Judge, and what was proposed could easily have been effected. The only remedy that now remains with the Government (a very imperfect one) is to make an accurate survey and register of the lands, the condition upon which remissions of rent are to be granted. This has been the practice in Malabar for some years past, and it is desirable that it should be extended to Canara, and the rule rigidly adhered to in both districts.

41. In districts which have been surveyed, the Government need never act in the dark; information upon every point connected with the revenue is always available; and from this circumstance alone, if the seasons were as certain and as favourable as they are in Malabar and Canara, the revenue administration would be carried on with much greater facility in such surveyed districts than in others which have not that advantage.

42. Although the land in Canara and Malabar has been private property for centuries, though it sells occasionally for as high a price as can be obtained for land in England, an annual enquiry into the condition of the land-owners is still necessary, with a view to afford relief to such as may have fallen into distress. On no pretext can an increase be made upon the standard assessment, but in every year remissions are made from it to a certain extent in favour of the poorest

From Principal Collector of Malabar, 31st December 1838, paragraphs 3-18.

From Principal Collector of Canara, 8th January 1839.

classes. This indulgence is necessary even in these highly favoured districts, still more so in others less favourably circumstanced, and any attempt to withdraw the Government or great landlord from the duty of enquiring into the condition of his tenants,

by binding them to pay a fixed sum every year, whether the season be good or bad, cannot fail to end in disappointment to Government and in injury to the ryot.

The increase which has taken place in the value of land in Canara, is shown in a return of the double sale of 55 estates.

Enclosures Principal Collector's report, 26th November 1839.

The price paid at the first sale amounted in the aggregate to Rs. 13,658, at the

second to Rs. 20,067.

The proportion of land occupied by tenants in Canara is estimated at 45 per cent. In the Taluks below the ghauts 60 per cent. of the rice lands are supposed to be cultivated by tenants, and as much

Principal Collector, 20th July 1839, paragraph 8.

land has lately been purchased by the commercial classes whose mercantile avocations oblige them to employ tenants, the proportion appears to be on the increase.

Enclosure B.

The rates of rent vary from Rs. 17 to Rs. 8-8-0 (£1 14s. to 17s.) an acre. Making allowance for the difference in the value of money, these are higher than the average of rents in England.

The whole land of Malabar is the property of 45,000 individuals and is held from them by 166,000 tenants. Many of the proprietors, however, derive but a nominal rent from their property,

Principal Collector of Malabar, paragraph 16.

and others, who reside in distant provinces,

are said not to have come to any settlement with their tenants for years, so that a large portion of the property is really in the hands of the ryots. But whether the landlords derive a profit from their land or not, they cling to their rights with the same tenacity that has been remarked of this class of people under every change of Government. In both districts the revenue has been collected with extraordinary punctuality for the long period of 40 years, with the exception of one or two years, when the public tranquillity was disturbed.

43. All these are proofs that the great objects which the authors of the permanent settlement had in view, might have been attained without disturbing any private right or the order in which landed property has been distributed in all parts of India for ages. In Canara and Malabar the demand upon the land is fixed; the land is a valuable property; there is a numerous class of landlords who give up the rents of their lands; the revenue is easily and punctually collected; and yet the average assessment of the estates of both districts does not exceed Rs. 100 or £ 10 a year. If all these results are not to be found in other districts of the Madras Presidency, in which the assessment upon the land has been fixed, the reason is that except in Malabar and Canara, the seasons are so precarious as to make the land much less profitable to the owners than it is in those districts.

44. Great as has been the improvement in Malabar and Canara, two things seem still to be wanting for the full development of their resources, viz., improved communications by land and water, and a secure harbour for the reception of their shipping and trade. The benefits that have followed from the faint attempts which have been already made to improve the communications in these districts, are evidenced by a fact stated by the Collector of Malabar, viz., that "the introduction (though yet upon a small scale) of bullocks and carts has reduced the expense of conveyance of goods to more than 50 per cent. below what it was 20 or 30 years

ago. The cost of conveying one ton of goods a hundred miles by cart, is stated to be Rs. 26-8-0, by bullocks Rs. 46-8-0, by coolies Rs. 53-8-0, and by water only Rs. 2-8-0: this shows the vast importance of water communication.

Some years ago (1823) a proposal was submitted for prolonging the line of water communication (which is now open from Quilon to Chowghat) along the coast as far as Bamgeny, miles north of Calicut. This would have afforded a canal, navigable at all seasons for a distance of miles. From some mistakes in the estimates the project appears to have been dropped. It appears however to be one of great importance and to require immediate consideration.

The losses which are entailed upon commerce by the want of a secure harbour on the western coast, may be estimated by the fact that, for nearly five months in the year, the whole maritime commerce from Cape Comorin to Bombay is suspended, and the shipping to the extent of about 150,000 tons is compelled to leave the coast and to seek shelter in distant ports principally at Bombay. A considerable portion of the commerce which finds its way to the coast from Mysore, Coorg and the southern districts, is forced to that port and involved in a double charge for duties, for shipment and reshipment.

The principal cotton crop of Coimbatore which is gathered in March, and prepared for shipment in April and May, is kept on board until the month of October or November, when it is sent by the coast to Bombay, landed there and again reshipped for China and England. This cotton is principally used for the China market, and as it cannot be sent thither with safety after the month of August, a whole year is lost, whereas, if there was a secure harbour on the coast, the cotton could be sent so as to arrive there before the south-west monsoon commences, and be shipped for China in the months immediately ensuing; and cotton, which is now forced during the closing of the ports of the western coast to the eastern coast by a long and very expensive land carriage, would be sent to the near western coast, if there was a harbour from which it could be exported at all seasons of the year.

The same may be said of all other articles which are kept on hand during the whole period of the monsoon, and of goods which, during the closing of the eastern coast for three months, would also be sent to the emporium on the western coast, as the additional distance of that coast from the place of growth and manufacture, would be more than compensated by the saving of time.

A secure harbour between Cape Comorin and Bombay has long been considered a desideratum by naval men. In time of war, during a great portion of the year, the coast is protected only by the monsoon, as it affords no means of shelter for a ship of war. There are intervals in the monsoon season, when ships may approach the coast and when great damage might be done in the absence of naval protection. If the inundation which broke out in Canara some years ago, had been postponed for a month or six weeks, the succours, which came from Bombay by sea and by which it was crushed, would not have been available as the coast would then have been closed by the monsoon.

If a secure harbour could be found on the western coast, troops might be embarked and landed at all seasons. The communication between both coasts and between the western coast and Bombay might be kept up throughout the year. That portion of the Madras army, which is stationed on the western coast and aid

in stores and supplies of provisions, cattle, etc., from the fertile districts at the back of it, might be made available for service at all seasons, either in the Red sea, the Persian gulf or in Scinde. All the advantages indeed which the Bombay Presidency denies from its harbour, would be given to Madras by the formation of a secure and accessible port on the western coast.

These are some of the considerations which give great importance to the project for the formation of a harbour at Mt. Dehli Bay. For all trade except that with the gulf, Mt. Dehli Bay is more favourably situated than Bombay; it is nearly opposite to the Red sea; Aden could be reached from it in as short a time as from Bombay; and from its being near midway between Cape Comorin and Bombay, it is more conveniently situated for the general trade of the Madras Presidency than Cochin which, but for the impracticable nature of the sands at the mouth of it, would be an excellent harbour. The maritime commerce of Mala-

		Rs.
Malabar	...	56,97,310.
Canara	...	93,61,544.
		1,50,58,850.

bar and Canara alone exceeds £1,500,000 and if to this be added the commerce of Cochin and Travancore and of those parts of the line which immediately adjoin Canara,

the total value of the commerce which would be benefited by the conversion of Mt. Dehli Bay into a place of shelter during the monsoon, would not be much less than two million sterling.

45. I have already shown that the value of that proportion of the produce of the lands assessed to the revenue, which is exported from Malabar, furnishes a fund sufficient for the payment of the Government demand upon the land. The same proof of the moderation of that demand is to be found in Canara.

The estimated value of the grass produce of the land in Fasli 1248 was 67,11,280, of which the value exported was 24,52,186, the value retained for home consumption 42,59,093, the amount of the land assessment 18,20,123.

46. A large portion of the revenues of Malabar and Canara is annually sent in specie to Bombay. The average remittance from Canara amounts to 16 lakhs of rupees, and from Malabar to about 12. When a man of war can be spared for the conveyance of this Treasure the remittance is made without risk, but the exigencies of the service have occasionally been such as to require that it should be made in a country boat, when in addition to expense and other heavy inconveniences great risk is run.

This heavy drain of the precious metals which are withdrawn from circulation for many months before the remittances are made, is supplied in a great measure by imports of silver from the Red sea; but as only a small portion of this comes in the shape of current coin, there is a constant tendency towards an artificial enhancement of the value of that coin in which all revenue must be paid. That there is something radically wrong in this financial arrangement, is proved by these facts (amongst others), viz., that in Fasli 1241, while there was an export of Government Treasure from Malabar of Rs. 10,16,129 to Bombay, there was an import of private Treasure to Malabar from Bombay in the same year of Rs. 6,32,504, and that the amount of drafts from Bombay in that year upon the Malabar Treasury did not exceed Rs. 35,000. In Fasli 1243 the public remittances to Bombay from Malabar amounted to Rs. 10,10,376, the imports from Bombay to Rs. 4,27,592, and the drafts to Rs. 3,58,000.

In a letter addressed by the Accountant General of Bombay to the Madras Accountant General, relative to a balance of Chuckrums which was lying in the

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Treasury of the Resident at Travancore, that officer says, "if by any means the

balance of Chuckrums could be made available for the use of the Bombay Government, in the Malabar Collectorate, I should not find any difficulty in drawing against it to the full amount and should gladly avail myself at this time of such aid to their finances from the Madras Presidency".

A very short time before this letter was penned, 14 lakhs and a half of rupees had been shipped from Malabar for Bombay, and a further sum of 4 lakhs was then under preparation for remittance, the whole of which might have been thrown into immediate circulation in the district and the expense and risk and delay of remittance in specie saved, if the Accountant General had drawn upon the Treasury of Malabar for the amount; and still further aid to the finances of Bombay, might have been procured by drafts on the Treasury of Coimbatore for money paid into the Treasury at Bombay.

It seems to be very desirable that the Financial Officers of the two Governments should be required to take the whole subject of remittances between the Treasuries under them into immediate consideration, with a view to the adoption of such a system of exchange by water as shall save Government and individuals the expense and risk of tardy remittances in specie.

47. As the reports from the different Collectors on the revenue of their districts abound with valuable statistical information, I beg to suggest the propriety of printing them with a view to such circulation as the Government may think proper to give them.

