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Political (1899) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 146

DATED 14·2·99

INDEXED.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Communicating to the Residents in Travancore and Cochin and to the Political Agents Pudukkottai Banganapalle & Sandur proceedings, Rev Dept, accepting the views of the Bd of Revenue regarding the preparation & forecasts of the outturn of cotton in the Madras Presidency

F
14-2-99

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

CURRENT NO. 231 Fort

Government {1899} of Madras.

REVENUE.

CHIEF SECRETARIAT 9 FEB 1899 MADRAS 1899.

Recd. 9th Feby 99 *Enclosures*

Regd. 10th Feby 99 *Spare copies* 4

G.O., No. 63, 23rd January 1899.

Order thereon No 1468 dt 14-2-99 Communicated to the Resident in Travancore & Cochin & the Bishop Agents Pudukkottai, Banganapalle & Sandur for necessary action

JANUARY.

Forecasts of the outturn of Cotton.

Accepting, with remarks, the Board's views regarding the preparation of — in the Madras Presidency.

To
The Resident in Travancore & Cochin
" " Pudukkottai
" " Banganapalle
" " Sandur
Bishop's Agent
Sc 10
Desp 2 D 15/2/99

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 170, dated 5th May 1898 :—

Read—the following letter from the Hon'ble Mr. G. G. ARBUTHNOT, Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated Madras, 16th February 1898, No. *Nil*:—

With reference to the correspondence that passed between the Chamber and the Board of Revenue last year regarding cotton forecasts, I have the honour to invite your attention to the "First forecast of outturn" just issued, and dated the 10th December 1897.

The Chamber notices with satisfaction that the grouping according to varieties has been adopted.

As regards the area and estimated outturn, however, the forecast, from a mercantile point of view, still leaves much to be desired, and as it is believed to be the wish of Government that these reports should be of practical use, which in their present form they certainly cannot be said to be, the Chamber begs to offer the following remarks.

A normal crop is taken to be 50 lb. per acre, and the condition being 56 (100 being normal) the present crop is estimated to yield 28 lb. per acre. As pointed out in previous correspondence, the outturn per acre in the Tinnevelly district is much larger than that in the Bellary district, and no close approximation of outturn can ever be expected until a separate unit is adopted for each variety. Again, the Tinnevelly and the Bellary districts are far apart, and many merchants who deal in the one district are unconnected with the other district. An estimate to a Tinnevelly merchant worked out at 28 lb. per acre is of no value when the outturn is probably more like 70 lb. at the least.

The Chamber fails to see what objection there can be to taking a separate unit for each variety; but if the difficulties about it are insuperable, it appears that the present unit is far too low. Copies of the following Government forecasts are enclosed for reference :—

(*a*) Central Provinces, dated the 6th December 1897.
(*b*) Bombay, dated the 14th December 1897.
(*c*) North-West Provinces and Oudh, dated the 7th December 1897.

(*a*)	On an area of 652,120 acres gives bales	113,790	or nearly	70 lb. per acre.	As against the 28 lb. of Madras.
(*b*)	Do.	795,135	do.	127,271 or do. 64 „	
(*c*)	Do.	1,140,206	do.	168,898 or do. 59 „	

It would be interesting to know how the figures in the last column of the Madras report (representing the condition) are arrived at, since in most cases they are considerably at variance with private advices received by members of this Chamber. It is believed the condition is generally much under-estimated. During the last few weeks some deterioration has been reported, but, at the date of the present forecast, the condition of the plants is generally believed to have been most flourishing. To take only one instance—that of Kurnool—which is given as 69 (the most favourable of any district in the forecast). The normal outturn being 100, the Chamber would like to be informed what year has ever been normal. In the opinion of most merchants, the condition of the plants in the Kurnool district as a whole has very rarely, if ever, been better than it was in November last.

So large a portion of the crops which are dealt with by the merchants of this Presidency is grown in the Nizam's Dominions or in zemindari areas, that some effort should, the Chamber considers, be made to compute the yield from these sources. The Bombay Government, as will be seen from its forecast (*b*) above referred to, includes the Native States of the Deccan, and the Central Provinces' report apparently also includes the zemindari areas, except as regards the three districts mentioned last. It is certain that as regards the Madras Presidency no forecast can be of any value that does not make an effort to estimate the crops for these areas.

As an instance of what little practical utility the Madras forecast possesses in its present form, the Chamber would observe that the accepted estimates among those in the trade for the growing western crop alone this season is 85,000 bales as a minimum. The official report gives 81,641 bales for this and all the other crops of the Presidency in addition. To a cotton-buyer in Europe this would be very misleading.

In conclusion, I beg to request that the Chamber may be furnished with 30, instead of 5, copies of all crop reports (cotton and other produce) that are issued by your department, for distribution to all the members of the Chamber.

Resolution—No. 170, dated 5th May 1898.

With a view to meet the wishes of the Chamber of Commerce, the Board has again examined the data available for calculating the normal yield per acre of cotton in each group of districts cultivating a distinct commercial variety. The Chamber fails to see what difficulty there can be in the matter. The difficulty is that whereas the standard outturns (to be satisfactory) should be based on a sufficiency of careful crop experiments made by a competent, trustworthy agency and extending over a series of years in all parts of the Presidency, no such investigation has been accomplished in the past, or can now be undertaken.

2. A few years ago Collectors were called on to report what standard yield might be adopted for each taluk of their districts, and the results work out as follows :—

	Pounds of cleaned cotton per acre.
Tinnevellies	68
Salems	55
Northerns and Westerns	50
Cocanadas	49

Possibly the Chamber may be in possession of data unknown to the Board from which it may be possible to check the above estimates, or to frame better ones. If the Chamber will name the normal outturn which it would consider satisfactory for each variety, and the nature of the information on which the figure is based, the Board will be glad to frame its future forecasts thereupon. It may be well to quote, for the information of the Chamber, the definition of a normal crop as recently given by the Government of India —

The normal crop has been defined as "that crop which past experience has shown to be the most generally recurring crop in a series of years; the typical crop of the local area, the crop which the cultivator has a right (as it were) to expect, and with which he is (or should be) content, while if he gets more he has reason to rejoice, and if less he has reason to complain."

3. Exception is taken to the forecast of outturn made in the beginning of December 1897 as being far too unfavourable, and it is remarked that, at that date, the condition of the standing crop is generally believed to have been most flourishing. To this the Board must rejoin that in the beginning of December the rains of the north-east monsoon, due from October onwards, had in many parts been an entire failure, and the season had declared itself to be distinctly unfavourable throughout the cotton-growing districts. No one intelligently framing at that date an estimate of the probable yield could anticipate a normal outturn.

4. The Board has often felt doubt as to how far it would be justified in substituting a guess of its own for the guesses of the local officers, when the latter appear unduly pessimistic. On the whole it appears best to frame the forecast on the guesses of the officers who have actually seen the crop. The mercantile community must make what allowance they deem right for the undoubted tendency of the Revenue Inspectors to under-estimate outturns.

5. As regards the desire of the Chamber that the forecasts should include cotton grown in proprietary estates, the Board can only say that no cultivation accounts for these areas are at present maintained and that the desired statistics cannot be procured. If insisted upon, a wild guess might doubtless be framed, but it would probably be useless or mischievous.

6. The Nizam's Dominions are beyond the limits of this Presidency, and the Board would suggest that the Chamber should address the Nizam's Government with a view to ascertain whether any means of furnishing the desired periodical forecasts exist.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAR,
Secretary.

To the Secretary, Madras Chamber of Commerce.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" all Collectors (Divisional officers—Tahsildars).

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 421, dated 19th November 1898 :—

Read—again Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 316, dated 26th April 1897.

Abstract.—Stating that the remarks of the Madras Chamber of Commerce in regard to the official estimates of the outturn of cotton being low are unfounded.

Read—again Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 170, dated 5th May 1898.

Abstract.—Replying to remarks of the Chamber of Commerce regarding the forecasts of the outturn of cotton, and proposing modifications for the future.

Read—again the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), Mis. No. 4745, dated 5th August 1898 :—

Read—the following letter from H. K. BEAUCHAMP, Esq., Acting Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated Madras, 28th July 1898 :—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Resolution of the Board of Revenue, No. 170, dated the 5th May 1898, replying to the remarks of the Chamber regarding the forecasts of the outturn of cotton and proposing modifications for the future.

2. In reply, I beg to say that the Board's Resolution is, in the Chamber's opinion, very discouraging, because it shows that no attempt has been made to give the forecasts a practical value which, at present, they certainly do not possess.

3. While the Chamber agrees with the Board's remarks in paragraph 1 of the resolution that the standard outturns should be based on a series of careful crop returns in the different cotton-growing districts of the Presidency, it sees no reason why such investigation—although it has not been accomplished in the past—should not now be undertaken. All that the Board has to do is to instruct the District Revenue officers to prepare each year a return showing actual results of crops, as compared with the figures given in forecasts, and it would then at least have more reliable data in future as to (*a*) normal outturn, (*b*) percentage of condition.

4. With regard to paragraph 2, wherein the Board admits that, according to Collector's reports, the standard yield varies from 49 lb. per acre for Cocanadas to 68 lb. for Tinnevellies, the Chamber considers that these figures are too low, but at any rate they show that the normal outturn per acre for Tinnevellies is 36 per cent. more than for Westerns, and 38 per cent. more than for Cocanadas; yet all the districts are lumped together in the forecasts at 50 lb. per acre.

5. With regard to paragraphs 3 and 4 as to the percentage of condition so early in the season being only guess-work, as the Board says, the Chamber would remark that the guesses obtained by private Agency are always found much nearer the mark than those of the officers who have the best facilities for obtaining correct information from village authorities.

6. With regard to paragraph 5, the Chamber would remind the Board that an Act was passed in the local council two or three years ago for the express purpose of giving powers to Revenue officials to enable them to obtain statistics of the kind from the zemindari areas. The Chamber understands that rules under that Act have recently been issued. If this be so, the Chamber would urge that there should be no further delay in applying the rules in the direction specified.

Resolution—Mis. No. 4745, dated 5th August 1898.

Recorded.

2. The Board regrets that the Chamber has not thought fit to afford it the assistance asked for in paragraph 2 of its Proceedings, No. 170, dated 5th May 1898. On the best estimate it can frame, the Board resolves to adopt the following as standard rates of outturn for the future :—

	Cleaned cotton.
Cocanadas	50 lb. per acre.
Northerns and Westerns	40 lb. "
Salems	55 lb. "
Tinnevellies	70 lb. "

3. Regarding the suggestion made in paragraph 3 of the letter read above, the Board would merely remark that the reason imperceptible to the Chamber is that the Revenue establishment is already overburdened with work. If experience teaches anything, it is that crop experiments are worthless when made by low-paid overdriven native officials, or by superior officers pressed by more urgent revenue and magisterial duties; and this is particularly the case in regard to the cotton crop which is not gathered in at a single picking.

4. In reply to the last paragraph of the letter under reference, it will be pointed out to the Chamber that the rules framed under section 20 of Madras Act III of 1895 have only been quite recently published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, and that it will take a good deal of time before the village establishments in proprietary villages can be organised and trained in their duties. When this has been done, the Board will arrange for obtaining area figures from these villages, as well as from the ryotwari

villages for which such data are at present alone available. Until a general survey of proprietary villages has been made, however, anything like accurate figures of area will not be forthcoming.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) C. BENSON,
Dy. Dir. of L. Rds. and Agri.
for Secretary.

To the Secretary, Chamber of Commerce.

Read—the following letter from the Hon'ble Mr. S. R. TURNBULL, Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated 19th September 1898 :—

Since the receipt of the Board of Revenue's Proceedings, Mis. No. 4745, dated 5th August 1898, on the subject of cotton forecasts, this Chamber has been making further careful enquiries into the standards of yield for the various descriptions of the staple grown in this Presidency—enquiries which were suggested in the Board of Revenue's previous Proceedings, No. 170, dated 5th May 1898. The results of the Chamber's further investigations are as follows: It is found that in districts where Cocanadas, Westerns and Northerns are grown, the ryot expects in a normal year from 10 maunds of *kuppas* per acre of red soil, to 12 maunds per acre in black soil (Madras maunds of 25 lb.). The proportion of cleaned cotton in a maund of *kuppas* is 25 per cent., therefore the outturn of clean cotton per acre is from $2\frac{1}{2}$ maunds ($62\frac{1}{2}$ lb.) to 3 maunds (75 lb.) per acre.

In Tinnevellies, where there is a second picking, the average outturn is $14\frac{1}{2}$ maunds *kuppas* (362 lb.) per acre which gives 90 lb. clean cotton. The actual figures have been found to be as follows :—

Tinnevellies.		Westerns.		Northerns.	
Tuticorin ...	90 lb.	Adoni ..	from 50 lb. to 65 lb.	Proddatur ...	65 lb.
Sattur ...	90 ,,	Bellary ..		Jammalamadugu	62 ,,
Virudupatti ...	90 ,,	Anantapur ...		Jangalpilly ...	50/60 ,,
		Guntákal	64 ,,	Moddanoor ...	62/63 ,,
		Kurnool	75 ,,		
		Raichore	75 ,,		

Cocanadas.—As to these, reports show $62\frac{1}{2}$ to 70 lb. according to soil.

As regards Salems, from similar enquiries, the Chamber has come to the conclusion that the average yield of clean cotton in the district is about 70 lb. per acre.

The Board will observe that the above figures differ materially from the rates laid down in paragraph 2 of the Board's Proceedings of the 5th ultimo, the latter being in each case considerably below the former. The Chamber trusts that the Board will see fit to adopt the rates which it (the Chamber) has compiled and which can, the Chamber is convinced, be safely relied upon, as they have been obtained by European agents from ryots and native cotton-dealers, who are more likely to give such agents correct information than they would be to Revenue officers.

Resolution—No. 421, dated 19th November 1898.

The correspondence quoted above has reference to the method in which the reports and forecasts of the cotton crop in this Presidency should be prepared, and, amongst others, the question of fixing new average rates of outturn has arisen. In 1890 (Board's Proceedings, No. 39, dated 12th February 1890), the Board, after a careful investigation of all the information available, came to the conclusion that an average rate of 50 lb. of cleaned cotton per acre for the whole Presidency was as much as could be taken to represent a normal crop.

In deference to the wishes of the Chamber of Commerce, Madras, in 1897 orders were issued that in all future reports on the condition of the cotton crop, the area figures should be grouped in a particular manner, so as, as far as possible, to agree with the trade descriptions under which cotton is expected from Madras.

The Chamber thereupon urged, *inter alia* that it would be advisable, in order to make the forecasts of outturn more generally useful, to adopt different rates of outturn for different parts of the Presidency, and, after further correspondence, the Board resolved to adopt certain rates. To these, the Chamber now takes exception, and suggests others, based on the information at its disposal. The two scales are given below in comparison :—

Description.	Rate per acre of cleaned cotton proposed by the Board.	Rate per acre of cleaned cotton proposed by the Chamber.
	LB.	LB.
Cocanadas	50 / 40	75
Northerns and Westerns	55	70
Salems	70	90
Tinnevellies		

The Chamber requests that the rates it proposes may be adopted in future, as it is convinced that they may be safely relied on.

2. Before, however, making any further change, it is advisable to submit the rates proposed to such tests as are possible. During the five years ending 1895–96, the average areas sown with cotton in Government and whole inam villages amounted to 1,502,000 acres. A normal crop on this area would, at the rates proposed by the Chamber, yield 1,032,000 cwt. At the rates proposed by the Board, the yield would have been 671,000 cwt. In addition to this, probably 20 per cent. may be added for production on zemindari estates, and in native states included within Madras districts.

The sea-borne trade statistics show that in the five years ending in 1896–97, the exports for the Presidency averaged 570,000 cwt. In addition to this an average balance of 46,000 cwt. was exported by rail, the balance of trade in the latter case being most erratic. The gross exports would, therefore, for the five years during which the crop gathered from the areas referred to above was being dealt with, have averaged on balance 616,000 cwt.

An allowance of one-third may be added—Board's Proceedings, No. 39, dated 12th February 1890—for local consumption in spinning, which would bring the average production to about 821,000 cwt. per annum.

3. The production and consumption may now be compared —

	CWT.
Production at rates proposed by the Chamber	1,238,000
Do. do. Board	805,000
Consumption and export	821,000

It would therefore appear that the rates adopted by the Board in its Proceedings, No. 4745, dated 5th August 1898, are much nearer the mark than those proposed by the Chamber. The Board would attribute the excessive rates of that body to the difficulty that always exists in framing an estimate, in taking due notice of the proportions in which lands of good and inferior qualities exist.

4. With the information at present before it, the Board sees no reason to modify the rates it has lately adopted, for, although the reports of the local Revenue officers as to the probable yield from the crops referred to above showed that the yield would be a good deal below the normal, there is, on the whole, and taking one year with another, nothing to show that the actual yield was less than normal. As already pointed out in Board's Proceedings, No. 170, dated 5th May 1898, it is for the mercantile community to discount the reports as they deem proper. One source of error will, however, be removed in the future, in that the system of notation referred to in Board's Proceedings, No. 316, dated 26th April 1897, has been given up, and As. 12 will, in

future, be taken to represent a normal crop. On this system, the forecasts of outturn for the five years ending in 1895–96 would have averaged 80 per cent. of the normal, which is probably as far as it would be safe to go so early in the season as January when the final reports are submitted.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAR,
Secretary.

To the Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, Madras.

Copy to all Collectors (Divisional-officers and Tahsildars).
,, the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Order—No. 63, Revenue, dated 23rd January 1899.

Miscellaneous.

The Government is disposed to accept the Board's views generally.

2. No trustworthy statistics of outturn whether of cotton or any other crop are likely to be obtained for zamindaris and other proprietary estates until a land record establishment is organised for these areas. Proposals for such establishments are however being framed by the Board, and the Government hopes that some progress towards supplying this grave administrative defect in the more important estates will soon be secured.

3. With reference to the Chamber's request for statistics from native states under the political control of this Government, the Political Agents for Pudukkóttai and for Banganapalli and Sandúr will be requested to obtain and submit annually to the Board of Revenue such statistics as may be available regarding the area under cotton together with any estimate of the outturn that may seem reasonably trustworthy. The Resident in Travancore and Cochin will report whether the cotton crop in these states is of any importance and, if so, whether any useful forecasts can be furnished. With regard to the Nizam's Dominions the Chamber should be requested to address the Resident at Hyderabad.

4. As regards the improvement generally of the Government forecasts for ryotwari tracts, His Excellency in Council fears that no systematic effort in that direction can be attempted until the local agricultural department is strengthened and equipped with an expert staff competent to undertake and carry out the necessary observations and experiments. It is observed that for the future As. 12 will be taken as a normal crop and that this improvement in the notation will remove one source of error.

(True Extract.)

for Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture).
,, the Political Department.
,, the Madras Chamber of Commerce.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

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