M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1357	Press Mis.
Dated October 6, 1859.	

7—8

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, from 5th to 21st October 1859.

No. 7. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 17th September 1859, No. 3710.

Read Extract Minutes Consultation, under date the 21st April 1859, No. 559, Revenue Department.

(In Con. 27th April 1859, No. 1876.)

In the above Extract the Government notice certain wide differences in the prices of grain and salt in adjoining Districts as set down in the returns submitted for the months of October, November and December 1858, and enquired of the Board how far they regard the returns as reliable and whether they can furnish any explanation for these differences consistent with the idea of correctness.

2. The Board observe that on a former occasion the subject of the price returns was considered in all its bearings in their Proceedings, dated 1st May 1858, No. 1582. Some definite instructions were at the same time given as to the principles to be observed in framing the returns on an uniform plan; and they were circulated to the Collectors for their guidance.

3. When this subject had previously been under discussion, it was considered that in order to obtaining a correct average of prices, it was necessary to ascertain the actual quantity of grain sold at certain rates in each place that the calculation of prices might be based upon it; but the Collectors, who were addressed on the subject, stated their utter inability to procure any trustworthy information on the point. There is also nothing to shew that any progress has been made in the provinces towards reducing to their real value the measures used in different localities and in the several Districts in framing the calculation of prices, and under such circumstances the Board cannot consider the present returns as representing results based upon correct and uniform principles.

4. It must, however, be borne in mind that the varations of prices noticed by Government cannot be attributed entirely to these imperfections in the mode of preparing these returns. Prices are affected by numerous local and varying causes; and it is often not possible to trace these with any degree of accuracy. The demands of foreign markets, the necessities of the ryot either to meet adversities of season, or the Government demand, the presence of large bodies of workmen on public works, the season and its effects on the roads are incidental circumstances which may and do often tend to raise or lower prices, to glut or drain the markets.

Differences in the quality and comparative reputation of the produce of particular localities have also their effect both on the average of prices and on the comparison instituted in the general return. What is first sort paddy in one district may be only the second or third sort in another.

5. The want of an uniform standard of measure in all the districts is a great obstacle in the way of obtaining correct returns of prices. In one and the same district the contents of the same measure may and often do vary greatly. As an instance the Board may notice the measure used in Sydapett talook, which is very different from that in use from the talook of Conjeveram, and yet both measures pass by one and the same name. The former is 120 Rupees weight and the latter 135 Rupees, thus shewing a difference of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in so short a distance. Mr. Bayley, the late Member of the Board, has noticed this subject so fully in his valuable Treatise on Weights and Measures, that the Board think it unnecessary to enter into further detail.

6. The Board resolve to circulate these proceedings to all Collectors, and to request their special attention to the principles laid down in the Board's proceedings of 1st May 1858 to be observed in the preparation of Price returns. Mr. Bayley's pamphlet recently circulated contains valuable data which will to some extent aid the Collectors in ascertaining the correct contents of the different measures in use in their respective districts; and it is desired that after proper enquiry, the Collectors will without delay frame a table of these measures, showing their equivalents in the Madras standard measure of 120 Rupees weight, and forward it to the Board for their information. The Board request that the conversion of these measures to the Madras standard measures in framing the price returns may be entrusted to some competent and responsible officer in the Hoozoor office. The Board believe that this duty may now be safely assigned to the Deputy Collectors in charge of Treasuries; and it is hoped that these officers will pay particular attention to this important subject and see that the price returns are prepared with all attainable accuracy.

(A true Extract.)
(Signed) W. HUDLESTON, *Acting Secretary.*

No. 8. ORDER THEREON, 6th October 1859, No. 1357.

It is no doubt true, as observed in para. 4 of the foregoing Proceeedings, that prices differ materially at the same time in different Districts. This must continue to be the case while

the means of transport remain so imperfect as they now are in this country. But such differences are far from being sufficient to account for the variations and anomalies noticed in the order of Government of the 21st April.

2. With regard to the varying and uncertain contents of the same nominal measure in different places, noticed by the Board as another cause of inaccuracy and anomaly in the price lists, the true remedy would be the introduction of a uniform system of weights and measures. This, however, highly desirable as it is, is not to be expected at present; but as respects the price lists an easy corrective is even now within reach, and one which has often been pointed out, viz., that the actual contents of the local measure should be everywhere correctly ascertained, and the quantities be by that means accurately converted into terms of the Madras garce and padi.

3. If this were done, as it might and ought to be, the existence of a multiplicity of standard measures at different places in the same District need not at all present correct and reliable Returns. It is not creditable to the District Officers that this simple and easy expedient is still to be adopted in many Districts. It is justly remarked by the Board that the duty of ascertaining the actual contents of measures, and of framing Tables of conversion, may now be properly committed to the Deputy Collectors in charge of Treasuries, and the Governor in Council trusts that the Board will soon be able to report that the work has been everywhere completed. The preparation of the monthly lists on correct principles may also be properly entrusted to the same officers.

4. The Government observe that their order on this subject of April 21st was not disposed of by the Board of Revenue till the 17th September.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Pro. 21 April 1859 No 332

Revenue 1859 October
Pro. of Govt. to Bd. of Rev.
No 1357

Proceedings of the Board of Rev.
Dated 17th Sept. 1859

Read the following
Pro. of the Board of
Rev.:-

Furnishing the explanation
required by Govt., for certain wide
differences in the prices of
grain & salt in adjoining Dis-
tricts as set down in the
returns submitted for Oct.,
Nov. & Dec. 58.-

Here enter 17th Sept. 59 No 332/59

R.D. 2

No. 1357

Proceedings of the Madras Govt. —
Under date the 5th October 1859 —
Read the following
Pro. of the Board of
Rev.:-

It is no doubt
true, as observed in para
4 of the foregoing Pro.
that prices differ ma-
terially at the same
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imperfect as they
now are in this country.
But

But such differences are far from being sufficient to account for the variations and anomalies noticed in the order of Govt. of the 21st April. —

2. — With regard to the varying and uncertain contents of the same nominal measure in different places, noticed by the Board as another cause of inaccuracy and anomaly in the price lists, the true remedy would be the introduction of a uniform system of weights and measures. This, however highly desirable as it is, is not to be expected at present; but as respects the price lists

an easy corrective is even now within reach, and one which has often been pointed out, viz that the actual contents of the local measure should be ever where correctly ascertained, and the quantities be duly by that means accurately converted into terms of the Madras Garce and Padi. —

3. — If this were done, as it might and ought to be, the existence of a multiplicity of standard measures at different places in the same District need not at all prevent correct and reliable Returns. It is not

predictable to the Distt. Officers that this simple and easy expedient is still to be adopted in many Districts. It is justly remarked by the Board that the duty of ascertaining the actual contents of measures and of framing Tables of conversion, may now be properly committed to the Deputy Collectors in charge of treasuries, & the Govt. will trust that the Board will soon be able to report that the work has been everywhere ~~completed~~ ~~completed~~ - The preparation of the monthly lists on correct principles may also be properly

properly entrusted to the same officers. —

4. — The Govt. observe that their order on this subject of April 21st was not disposed of by the Board of Revenue till the 14th of Sept. —

6 Copies.
Board of Revenue — Circ. 7

B. P. = 12. papers
Letter 1
13. papers 17/apr 31

Revenue 1859 Depart.
Pro. of Govt. No 1766 21st Octr.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue.

Dated 17th
Dest. 23 } September 1859
Rect 26/5

No 3710

No 1357 - 6. Octr 1859.

Furnishing the explanation required by Government for certain wide differences in the prices of grain and salt in adjoining Districts as set down in the returns submitted for October, November and December 1858.-

R. Cons. 29th April 1859 - No 1265

No 7.

C 28 Sept. R 3 Oct.

Revenue 1859 Decbr.
Pro: of Govt 21st Octr.

No 1357

Pro: of the Madras Govt.
Dy 6th October 1859.

Respecting differences
in the Prices of grain and
Salt in adjoining Districts

No. 3710.

PROCEEDINGS of the BOARD of REVENUE, dated 17th September 1859.

Read Extract Minutes Consultation, under date the 21st April 1859, No. 559, Revenue Department.

(In Con. 27th April 1859, No. 1876.)

In the above Extract the Government notice certain wide differences in the prices of grain and salt in adjoining districts as set down in the returns submitted for the months of October, November and December 1858, and enquire of the Board how far they regard the returns as reliable and whether they can furnish any explanation for these differences consistent with the idea of correctness.

2. The Board observe that on a former occasion the subject of the price returns was considered in all its bearings in their proceedings, dated 1st May 1858, No. 1582. Some definite instructions were at the same time given as to the principles to be observed in framing the returns on an uniform plan; and they were circulated to the Collectors for their guidance.

3. When this subject had previously been under discussion, it was considered that in order to obtaining a correct average of prices, it was necessary to ascertain the actual quantity of grain sold at certain rates in each place that the calculation of prices might be based upon it; but the Collectors, who were addressed on the subject, stated their utter inability to procure any trustworthy information on the point. There is also nothing to shew that any progress has been made in the provinces towards reducing to their real value the measures used in different localities and in the several districts in framing the calculation of prices, and under such circumstances the Board cannot consider the present returns as representing results based upon correct and uniform principles.

4. It must, however, be borne in mind that the variations of prices noticed by Government cannot be attributed entirely to these imperfections in the mode of preparing these returns. Prices are affected by numerous local and varying causes; and it is often not possible to trace these with any degree of accuracy. The demands of foreign markets, the necessities of the ryot either to meet adversities of season, or the Government demand, the presence of large bodies of workmen on public works, the season and its effects on the roads are incidental circumstances which may and do often tend to raise or lower prices, to glut or drain the markets.

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6. The Board resolve to circulate these proceedings to all Collectors, and to request their special attention to the principles laid down in the Board's proceedings of 1st May 1858 to be observed in the preparation of price returns. Mr. Bayley's pamphlet recently circulated contains valuable data which will to some extent aid the Collectors in ascertaining the correct contents of the different measures in use in their respective districts; and it is desired that after proper enquiry, the Collectors will without delay frame a table of these measures, shewing their equivalents in the Madras standard measure of 120 Rupees weight, and forward it to the Board for their information. The Board request that the conversion of these measures to the Madras standard measures in framing the price returns may be entrusted to some competent and responsible officer in the Hoozoor office. The Board believe that this duty may now be safely assigned to the Deputy Collectors in charge of Treasuries; and it is hoped that these officers will pay particular attention to this important subject and see that the price returns are prepared with all attainable accuracy.

(A true Extract.)

(Sd) E. Thornhill

Acting Secretary.

To

J. D. BOURDILLON, Esq., Secretary to Government, R. D.

Copy to all Collectors.