M.R.O. 14—13,000—27-9-24.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 30 Press ~~Mis.~~

57.58

Dated 8—1— 1918 & 19

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 57. Read the following letter from J. W. B. DYKES, Esq., Collector of Nellore, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Nellore, 21st December 1863, No. 36 :—

SIR,

1. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the orders of Government* on my letter of the 13th ultimo, on the subject of assessing the land, as if a portion only were annually cropped with the standard grain, a portion rotated, and the remainder held as fallow and pasture.

* Revenue Department 24th November, No. 2,118.

2. In this District the Natives know little about rotation. They send their cattle to the Ghâts, much the same as if Cheshire farmers were to send Cheshire stock to the Cumberland hills for the hot weather. And, as observed by Sir William Denison, they do not even give the standard crops fair play ; they crowd other crops on to the land at the same time.

3. Owing to the cramping influence of charging the land what it can only pay when a standard crop is grown, probably throughout the Presidency the Ryots will not be found more advanced than in Nellore. And, were this system continued under the new Settlement, it would be idle to look for any real advance. The Ryots would be burdened with from 10 to 30 per cent. more land than they could properly cultivate; a rotation crop would be suicide ; and *responsible* for the assessment on the whole area, they would remain in the bondage of the last sixty years. If the Collector or his Sheristadar were favorable to fallows, they would get full remissions, if not, they would be made to pay ; and the results of this system are known.

4. In the orders under acknowledgment the Government have authoritatively condemned a system, the continuance so long of which will be a wonder to the next generation. And, as regards the further proposals made by me, the Government have ruled, that Cholum, Kambu, Ragi, and Verага having been taken in rotation, and a deduction made of from 16 to 25 per cent. for vicissitudes of seasons and fallow, &c., enough has been done already to place the agriculture of the country on a sound and enlightened footing.

5. In passing this order, however, the Government have perhaps not taken into consideration the nature of the crops referred to, whether there is any thing of the restorative principle in Cholam, &c. Of course, if there is not, to rotate Cholam with Ragi and Ragi with Verага, would be to rotate Wheat with Barley, Barley with Oats, and in fact sow wild Oats in an agricultural point of view. And on this point, I beg the favor of a re-consideration.

6. Again, in allowing from 16 to 25 per cent. " for fallow and the vicissitudes of seasons," I would respectfully submit, sufficient allowance has not been made under these heads to meet what the Ryot has a right to, if the Settlement has been based on correct valuations. Some very fine land, well kept, may bear a middling crop of Cholam annually ; and Sazza being a short crop, as regards time on the ground, can also be grown annually on the same land, being rotated in the year. But this is only on the best lands. As a rule once in four years is the least that can be allowed for fallow. Some, whom I have consulted, say in ordinary cases after two years crops, the land must be allowed to lie a year dormant. And this being the case, it is obvious that the highest deduction allowed by Government does no more than meet the requirements of fallow, and leaves the Ryots no margin as regards " vicissitudes of seasons."

7. I myself believe that the results of a true valuation are so opposed to what could be entertained under the present system, that we do not get them, and shall not, till a change is made.

8. On the vital question of pasture the order of Government under acknowledgment is silent, and yet it is our most important question. What can be more miserable than to see herds of these fine Nellore cattle travelling, each hot weather, 40 and 50 miles for pasture ; to be food on the hills for Cheetas, Tigers ; exposed on the road to murrain and the diseases that are always more or less found hanging about in a cattle country ; and, with the men who herd them, away from the villages and the eyes of their owners for months ; whilst the village lands are all this time deprived of their manure ?

9. In the north of this District we have what is called the Gorti patika system, or a quarter of the area under the plough held as pasture. And for every case of a Curnum cheating in the principal Division, we have about the same proportions, or four times as many in the Sub-Division, in consequence of this irresistible temptation to fraud. And, in requesting that the Government will pass orders in respect to the course to be pursued in assessing for pasture, I earnestly beg that the Government will be pleased to treat it as fallow or any other condition of the land incidental to a sound system of agriculture. If the Ryot has the land, let him have it to do what he likes with. To give the Curnum and the host of officials authority to interfere is a curse to the Ryot and to us. And enabling the owners of stock to take up land in their village to meet the requirements of a sound agrioultural system is, with a large area waste, I need scarcely add, no loss to Government.

10. Though the Government refer to a "judicious rotation of crops" at the close of paragraph 3, in the preceding paragraph they observe that "Cholum, Kumbu, Ragi and Varagu were taken in rotation for the different soils." And I am, therefore, perhaps mistaken in supposing that the Government meant that these grains were rotated with each other. The Government permit reference to rotations practised elsewhere like the pulses here. But so far as I am aware, all these rotations have reference to crops for sale. In this District they do in some cases plant Yerra Jonna for their cattle to eat in the hot weather. These instances are, however, so very rare that it is no use taking them into consideration in considering a general question. And in requesting the Government will be pleased to re-consider their Order of the 24th ultimo, No. 2,118, I beg to base my request on the grounds, 1st that the crops referred to by Government being as standard and exhaustive crops require to be rotated, 2ndly; that whatever may be the present system of agriculture, to place the agricultural use of the country on a sound footing, it is necessary that these standard crops should be rotated with others to be eat off the land by the cattle, and for which suitable provision must be made and has not been made in the Assessment rules; 3rdly, that once in four years being the least allowance usual in the present state of agriculture for fallow, 25 per cent. is the least deduction that can with propriety be made under this head from a true grain valuation, and, therefore, further provision must be made for the vicissitudes of seasons; and 4thly, that as it is essential a man's holding should be self-contained, the Assessment should be so fixed as to provide for pasture which it does not at present. And on these several grounds I would further respectfully submit, enough has not been done already, and a departure is requisite from the present system.

11. As to the mode of that departure in my letter of the 13th ultimo I have given the basis of its being occupied as set forth in the preceding paragraphs, that is to say, I would repeat the calculations for each separately assessed field, and, supposing quarters the proportions, would endeavour to total up the value of a quarter under Cholum, a quarter under a cattle crop, what should be paid for the occupation of the fallow, and the proper charge on the quarter pasturage. But this, I beg to state, was not my intention. I would be loath to add to arrangements already microscopic; I would fix three, or at the most, four rates for Assessment ranges that should only be limited by the geological features of the country and such artificial features as were likely to be lasting. These *rates* I would calculate with reference to the basis I propose. And under one or other of these rates so calculated all fields should be entered with reference to the relative value of their soils and average outturn. We have no scales that will test the value of land to an Anna.

No. 58.

ORDER THEREON, 8th January 1864, No. 30.

1. Mr. Dykes has misapprehended the Order of the 24th November last, No. 2,118. The Government did not in that Order prescribe any course in regard to the calculation of the Assessment of the Nellore District, but pointed out that the principle which Mr. Dykes advocated was followed by the Settlement Department as was evidenced by the process adopted in the only Districts yet settled. The kinds of grain to be selected as "standard" and the rates of allowance for fallows and vicissitudes of season will necessarily vary in different Districts and will be the subject of special enquiry. The question of pasturage in grazing Districts like Nellore will be similarly treated. It is impossible for Government to pass general orders on either of these subjects without having detailed information before them.

2. It is nevertheless desirable that these questions should be discussed in time for the result to be of practical use, and the Government resolve, therefore, to instruct the Board of Revenue to take them into early consideration, in communication with the Officiating Director of Revenue Settlement and the Collector of Nellore.

(True Extract)

(Signed) J. D. SIM,

Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
" Director of Revenue Settlement
" Collector of Nellore.
Exd S. T. Augustin.

Revenue Department

No. 30

Proceedings of the Madras Government

Under date the 8th January 1864

Read the following

letter from the Collector

of Nellore.

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(Here enter 21st Decr 63 No 136)

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Collector of Salem.

J. D.

11 Copies to the Bd of Revl Capt Wilson
12 — Dr of Revl & Mr Ry
1 — Collr of Salem

Copy ma Letter to Engr
Surveyor Genl Madras

Revenue 1864 Despatch
Bg Govt for Surv.

Further letter from the Collector of Salem on Fixing of Assessment with the Residency with orders thereon.

Paper taken ou

Proofs
Miscellaneous
Routine

FOR

DEPARTME

of the Referencer.

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