M.R.O. 14—13,000—27-9-24

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 798 — Press ~~Mis.~~

178. 179

Dated 12 — 4 — 1865.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
12th April 1865.

No. 178. Read the following Memorial from Messrs. T. COELHO, M. FERNANDEZ, and other inhabitants, Renters of Government Farms in British Cochin, to His Excellency the Honorable Sir W. T. DENISON, K.C.B., Governor in Council, Fort Saint George, dated Cochin, 31st March 1865:—

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Memorialists take the liberty to submit herewith, in triplicate, a Memorial to the address of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, and solicit your Excellency in Council will be pleased to transmit the same to England at an early opportunity.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

No. 179. ORDER THEREON, 12th April 1865, No. 798.

Land Revenue.

Ordered that one copy of the Memorial be forwarded to the Collector for early report.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,
Acting Under Secretary to Government.

To the Collector of Malabar.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

T. M. Fernandez

P 12 of 65
3 Encl

To,

His Excellency.
The Honorable Sir W. P. Denison. K.C.B.
Governor in Council.
Fort St George.
Madras.

The Memorial of the undersigned inhabitants, Renters of Government Farms in British Cochin,

Humbly Sheweth,

That your Memorialists take the liberty to submit herewith, in Triplicate, a Memorial to the address of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, and solicit your Excellency in Council will be pleased to transmit the same to England at an early opportunity.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound,

Shall ever pray.

Cochin,
31st March 1865.

Thomas Coelho

Daniel Lloyd
John Joseph
P. R. Fernandez
P. Fernandez
M. Fernandez
J. Fernandez
J. A. Fernandez

Triplicate

6

To

The Right Honorable
Sir Charles Wood, Baronet G.C.B.
Secretary of State for India
&c &c &c
London

The Memorial of the undersigned
inhabitants, Renters of Government
Farms in British Cochin.

Humbly Sheweth,

That the principles on which the redemption of the land tax in certain parts of the District of Malabar has been recently determined to be carried out, and which your Memorialists understand are about to be applied to the Farms in their own possession, being incompatible with the justice and liberality that have generally characterized the policy of Her Majesty's Government of India, and calculated to involve many hundreds of families in this Town and its environs in utter ruin, your Memorialists humbly crave the kind and favorable consideration of your Excellency to the following representation.

2. That the Farms in the occupation of your Memorialists were originally barren

wastes, swamps or dense jungle, and were brought to their present highly cultivated condition by an enormous expenditure of labor and capital on the part of successive generations of settlers consisting not of wealthy capitalists but of the industrial classes who were content to earn a scanty return after seven or eight years, and who were encouraged by the well founded hope that so long as they paid the regular assessment to Government they would be secure in the peaceful enjoyment of the fruits of their toil and industry

3. That the rent paid to Government by your Memorialists upon trees is much higher than that paid by ryots in the adjoining territories of Travancore and Cochin. For, whereas the assessment on each cocoanut tree in those States held on Verumpatom (a tenure similar to that of the Farms in the possession of your Memorialists) does not exceed 2 annas and 11 pies, the rate paid by your Memorialists is eight annas.

4. That when the question of converting the Government Farms in Malabar into freehold property was first raised, a few years ago, your Memorialists were led to expect that the present annual assessment would be commuted to a single payment equivalent to a certain number of years' purchase; but this principle appears to have been abandoned for one contrary to the plainest dictates of equity and tending to deprive your Memorialists of their means of subsistence.

5. That according to present information, your Memorialists are to be required to purchase their Farms at the full value of the ground and trees, with a prospective annual payment of 3 annas per tree — a tax equal to the prevailing rates in the neighbouring territories — under pain of deprivation, and the absolute sale of the property by public auction. — As a preliminary step, a survey of the Farms is now in progress; and the Officers appointed for the purpose have appraised the Cocoanut trees at 20 to 25 Rupees each, and other cultivation in proportion; although the Jenmom value of Cocoanut trees according to the rule which obtains with the Cochin and Travancore Circars, and private landlords in those Countries, is only 52 Rupees for 20 trees — and although trees situate in Chowghat, Chetwye and and other places in this District, north of Cochin, were valued at no more than 8, 10, and 12 Rupees each.

6. That the people of these territories can by no means be said to be possessed of wealth and affluence; for, with the exception of the European Firms which represent the resources of British enterprise, the generality derive at best, but a rare subsistence from the produce of their industry. The great majority of holders at Cochin are not in circumstances that will enable them to redeem their Farms by the payment of the excessive valuation fixed upon them; and as a natural consequence, they will pass into the hands of wealthy landlords, the Devassoms and other endowed institutions in the neighbouring territory, who can well afford to purchase estates that have already

been brought to a high state of perfection, at even double the valuation set upon them; as they are spared all the labor and expense incidental to the process; and moreover they would gladly embrace the opportunity for a remunerative outlay of capital which now lies idle and unproductive— It is natural to suppose that these purchasers will, either summarily eject the present occupants and their families, or impose such exorbitant and oppressive conditions as will prove a source of general hardship; so that whilst the sale of your Memorialists' Farms will tend further to enrich the wealthy with the command of an unlimited capital, it will prove the utter ruin of the industrial population.

7. That according to universal experience, no one would improve land of which he has no security of tenure, or build houses from which he might be ejected at the will of another— That even in the case of private landlords, the law does not permit them to resume their land without equitable compensation for the improvements made by the tenant; and your Memorialists humbly submit that it is neither fair nor just that the property created by their own capital and industry, should now be unconditionally confiscated by the State, and, failing the purchase thereof by your Memorialists at its extreme value, transferred to those who had no share in the toil.

8. That on the faith that the Estates upon which your Memorialists had incurred so much labor and expense, extending over a long series of years, would be permanently secured to them, several subsidiary rights, titles, and interests have been created in many instances; and should the holders be now ousted from the property, either those liabilities must be absolutely ignored, or a heavy incumbrance would still rest upon the farmers who had already suffered irreparably by the loss of their property.

9. That the course now contemplated by the authorities in Macabar is wholly repugnant to the spirit of Her Majesty's Proclamation on assuming the direct charge of the Indian empire, and the assurances it conveyed that the rights and privileges of the people would be scrupulously maintained; and if the measure in question be carried into effect, it will tend to establish the belief that greater security and protection is accorded to private enterprise in the Native States than under Her Majesty's Government.

10. That however desirable and advantageous it may be that the existing tenure of the Farms in this District should be converted into freehold, with full hereditary and transferable right, your Memorialists humbly submit that those benefits would be completely neutralized if they could only be secured by the purchase of the fruits of their own labor at such an exorbitant value.

11. Your Memorialists, therefore, earnestly solicit that orders might be issued to the local Government with a view that the redemption of the assessment might be regulated on just and equitable principles; and that it should

not be obligatory, but optional to all holders of Government land to secure the advantages of permanent tenure and reduced tax, by a present payment.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound.

Shall ever pray.

Thomas Coelho

Cochin,
31st March 1865.

Daniel Lloyd

John Lloyd

P. R. Fernandez

P. Fernandez

M. Fernandez

H. Fernandez

J. H. Fernandez

D. W. Brechin

B. Chellow Shetty

Manacoosatty Monahy

Checkoony

Chelleyladil Mirthay Kutty
Mohammedkutty

the said authority.

Ordered that one copy of the Memorial be forwarded to the Collector for early report.

F. W. L.

No. 798.

Fort St. George
12th April 1865

To the Collector of Malabar in the Copy of the Memorial Dec 20th April

178-179

165 - Vet. Pte
Pro. of Govt. No. 1949.
No. 812 of 1865.

From J. Jove A. M. Fernandez & other inhabitants & Renters of Govt. Farms in British Cochin.

Dated 31st March
Recd 6th April 1865

With 3 Enclosures

No. 798-12 April

One Seal to the Collr of Malabar

Submitting herewith a Memorial in triplicate addressed to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India touching the redemption of ~~land~~ assessment on the lands in their Districts pray for the transmission of the same to

With Order