

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	927	Press Mis.
277-78		
Dated	23. 6. 1870	-19.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 277. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 12th May 1870, No. 3,206:—

Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of Tinnevely, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Trichendur, 1st April 1870, No. 133.

I HAVE the honour to bring to the notice of the Board the serious falling off in the salt-sales at Tuticorin during the last three months as shown in the enclosed statement, the sale for the current month being only 30 Maunds, and to request the sanction of the Board for reducing the establishment at Tuticorin pan, and, for the reasons set forth by the Salt Deputy-Collector in the accompanying letter, to retain the Tuticorin pan, as proposed by Messrs. Clarke and Puckle, simply as a depôt for *export*.

2. It may perhaps be urged that if the Tuticorin pan is closed, the people of Tuticorin will have to go four miles to Arasadi, instead of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to Tuticorin, to buy salt for home-consumption; but, in truth, Arasadi is more *accessible* though somewhat further than Tuticorin pan, to which the road has never been made, and to reach which a back-water has to be crossed; but it is the fact that the inhabitants of Tuticorin do now resort to Arasadi in preference for their salt, it being of better quality and the place more easily accessible.

3. In anticipation of the Board's orders I have ordered the services of the Superintendent, one Clerk, and four Vettyans, to be dispensed with from this date, effecting a saving of Rupees 85 per month. The persons thus temporarily thrown out will be re-employed again as opportunity offers.

4. The Police Guard has also been reduced.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From the Deputy-Collector in charge of Salt, to the Acting Collector of Tinnevely, dated Coilpatam, 29th March 1870, No. 32.

WITH reference to the Standing Circular Order, No. 219, of the Board of Revenue, I beg leave to report on the present state of the salt-pans at Tuticorin.

2. There are now on hand 116 heaps and 8 garces, or 1,76,160 Indian Maunds of salt, manufactured and stored in the years 1866-67.

3. The manufacture in this year as well as in the two preceding years (1868-69) is discontinued, as the stock on hand is very large and more than two years' ordinary consumption, including the average quantity required for export.

4. The salt made here never finds a fair sale. It is not only very inferior both in colour and quality, but is of very small grains, and never measures well.

5. The pans are situated in an unfavourable locality to purchasers, and at great distance from the town of Tuticorin; and so the salt-traders prefer going to Arasadi, which is in a very favourable situation to them, and where the salt is of very good quality. From the beginning of last year a boat was also provided for the convenience of the traders for crossing the inlet of the sea and the deep swamp between the town and the pans, but it has not induced them to make large purchases.

6. There is hardly any sale here at present, and since three months the sale has been fallen down very much.

7. I beg to enclose herein a statement showing the quantity sold in retail and that exported during the last twelve months, from which it would clearly appear that the sale has been very

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slack : only two Maunds of salt were sold for Rupees 4 during last month. There has been no export for ten months out of the twelve, and the average sale per month is only 208 Maunds.

8. If a heap of Salt is opened for sale it takes from four to six months for selling the whole of it ; and by keeping it open longer and exposing it to the weather more the salt gets very dry, and becomes very much damaged. The wastage in consequence increases from 10 to 15 per cent.

9. This scanty sale is not even made every day continuously but once in a week or fortnight, and sometimes once in a month.

10. The cause of the small sale here is well explained by Messrs. Clarke and Puckle in their able reports* to the Government and the Board, respectively, and that being quite sufficient, I have now refrained from giving any more.

* Mr. Clarke's report on the salt-works of the Tinnevely District, dated 12th June 1865, and the Government Proceedings on it, dated 2nd October 1865, No. 2,379. Mr. Puckle's report, dated 12th April 1867, No. 191, and the Board's Proceedings on it, dated 10th June 1867, No. 3,531.

11. While the case thus stands this division has as large establishment as any other good division in the district.

12. I have been observing this state of things since last year, i.e., from the time I joined the district, and I think now the establishment can be very much reduced, and the retail-sale closed with great advantage. The present establishment has not sufficient work to do, and I consider what has been hitherto paid to it was for little or no work received from it.

13. I beg leave therefore to recommend that the present establishment be at once reduced, the retail-inland-sale closed, and the pan retained for export only. I submit also a statement of the present establishment and that proposed to be retained for your favourable consideration.

14. The cost of establishment as it now stands is Rupees 144 monthly plus Rupees 56 for Police Guards, and if the proposed reduction be made, it would be reduced to Rupees 64 plus Rupees 29 for Police, and thus there would be a saving of Rupees 107 per mensem, or Rupees 1,284 per annum to Government.

15. In the proposed scale I have retained such officials whose services are indispensably necessary at the time of export, and whose services may be required at the time when the manufacture may have to be resumed. A few years after, or as soon as the present stock has been exported, or otherwise consumed, it may become necessary to manufacture certain quantity of salt for export annually, when it will be impossible to superintend it satisfactorily if the establishment be still reduced. I thought of dispensing with the services of the Shroff also ; but a person next in rank to the Assistant Superintendent being required at the time of export for assisting the latter in measuring and shipping salt, watching boatman, etc., while being carried, receiving money from purchasers, and preparing and keeping the accounts connected with it, I have not proposed to abolish his office. He will be useful both as Clerk and Shroff, as the office of the former is to be abolished.

16. The present salary of the Assistant Superintendent is Rupees 20, which I consider is very inadequate for securing the services of an efficient and trustworthy Assistant Superintendent for the place like Tuticorin, where the provisions and other necessities of life are very dear. I have therefore proposed to raise his salary from Rupees 20 to Rupees 25 per mensem. The salary of the other minor officials retained is just the same as it was hitherto.

17. The present Police Guard is divided into two sets : one, consisting of three Constables, guards the Salt Treasury, which is kept in the Sub-Magistrate's office in the town of Tuticorin ; while the other, of the same number, is guarding the platform at the pans, where the salt-heaps are placed. The Deputy-Constable is at the head of the two. If the sale for inland-consumption be closed, then there will be no necessity for having any Salt Treasury or any guard for it.

18. The money paid by the purchasers of salt for export, which may be once or twice in a year, can be received by the Shroff and paid into the Bank at Tuticorin very safely on the very day of its receipt, and should it happen on any day by any unavoidable causes for keeping it in the salt station, it may be kept there on that day under the same guard at the platform and sent to the Bank on the following day, or the purchaser might be easily made to pay it at once into the Bank, and produce its receipt to the Salt Superintendent.

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19. I think therefore that the Treasury Guard and the Deputy-Constable may be removed and a 1st-class Constable and three 2nd-class Constables retained for guarding the platform and the pans.

20. On referring to paragraph 28 of Mr. Clarke's report, and paragraph 27 of the Government Proceedings above referred to, I observe that the Government have already approved of the recommendation made by Mr. Clarke, that Tuticorin should be retained as an exceptional station for exports, and I see no reason why the sales for inland-trade should still be continued when it is not intended for doing so, and can be closed without injury to any one.

21. Mr. Puckle has also expressed his opinion (*vide* paragraph 19 of his letter above alluded to) that the inland-trade might be closed, but said at the same time that if a direct road from Tuticorin to Arasadi be made, the inland-sale at the former place will cease itself.

22. As this proposal of making road has not been hitherto carried out, (and there being no likelihood of its being carried out for some years to come under the present state of financial agency,) and the inland-trade at Tuticorin being fallen very much, I would now beg leave to urge the closing of the inland-sale and to reduce the establishment, if possible, from the beginning of the next official year, should this meet with your approval.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

ABSTRACT.—Statement of salt sold in retail and exported from the Salt Division of Tuticorin in the district of Tinnevely from March 1869 to February 1870.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

ABSTRACT.—Statement showing the present and proposed establishment of the Salt Division at Tuticorin in the district of Tinnevely.

THE Collector's proceedings are approved and sanctioned.

2. The Board observe that from paragraph 27 of their Order, No. 2,379, of the 2nd October 1865, Government appear to have contemplated the retention of Tuticorin as an export station only, and it does not appear why the reduction was not made before.

3. A copy of these Proceedings will be submitted to Government.

No. 278.

ORDER THEREON, 23rd June 1870, No. 927.

Separate Revenue, No. 20.

Salt.

THE Board will be requested to call for an explanation on the subject of paragraph 2 of their Proceedings and submit it to Government.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

#927.

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call for an explanation on the
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23rd June/70.

14. To the. 170 of Rule with 2. 2nd. 24.

Govt. of 1870: 24.

REVENUE.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated June, 23rd.

Recd.

Ind.

G. O., 23rd June 1870, No. 927.

JUNE.

nos. 277-278.

Reduction of establishment at Tuticorin
Call-papers.—Board of Revenue requested to sub-
mit explanation regarding the contemplated reduc-
tion of establishment as an export station.