

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
17th August 1871.*

No. 131. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th July 1871, No. 3,106 :—

Read the following letter from the President, Government Farm, Sydapet, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Madras, 29th June 1871.

SOME discussion has lately arisen at the Farm as to how far cotton is a profitable crop when prices are as at present low, and the yield is so poor as the probable average yield per acre of ordinary native cultivation, I therefore requested Mr. Robertson, the Superintendent of the Farm, to institute a comparison from his own experience of the relative value of a cotton-crop and other dry grain-crops grown on the same farms.

2. The result which is given in Mr. Robertson's useful and accurate memorandum of the 20th instant will, I think, interest the Board and Government. It seems to me to be very suggestive in respect to the narrow margin on which the production of cotton in most parts of South India stands, when prices are not abnormally high, unless by improved farming the general yield per acre and the quality of the produce can be raised.

3. Cotton is an expensive crop to grow, harvest, and clean for the market, and is highly speculative and unsafe. When prices are low, it can therefore scarcely compete with fair dry grain crops which are not less remunerative and more easily raised. Indeed, it is said that cotton-growers have lost this year, and that contracted cultivation may be anticipated during the year before us.

4. It will be observed that the yield on the Farm is about 120 lbs. of clean cotton to the acre, under fair manuring and good cultivation; but the profits were small. The seed used was ordinary Cuddapah cotton.

5. I fear, however, that 120 lbs. to the acre is considerably above the average yield of ordinary native tillage throughout the country. Mr. Carnac's estimate for the Central Provinces is considerably below this; and possibly 70 to 90 lbs. would be nearer the average yield of ordinary native cultivation. It will be in the Board's recollection that in a recent Proceedings the average yield has been estimated at 75 lbs. to the acre.

6. With reference to Mr. Robertson's opening remarks I may observe that the price of cotton returned to the Board from the provinces, of which an abstract of the annual average is given in the margin, are probably not so accurate as they should be; and I think that it were advisable to call the attention of Collectors to the matter. I think also that the quantities of cotton should be stated as far as may be possible; and that these statements should be prepared in lbs., the form in which all Cotton Trade Returns are kept.

	Per Candy of 500 lbs. RS.		Per Candy of 500 lbs. RS.
Ganjam ...	162	North Arcot ...	124
Vizagapatam ...	149	South Arcot ...	107
Godavery ...	138	Tanjore ...	150
Kistna ...	115	Trichinopoly ...	119
Nellore ...	138	Madura ...	122
Cuddapah ...	127	Tinnevely ...	127
Bellary ...	120	Coimbatore ...	113
Kurnool ...	115	Salom ...	181
Madras ...	118		

7. If I might hazard an opinion on this matter, it is that the cotton-trade of India very urgently needs systematic attention to the development of agriculture in general, in which cotton will take a natural and wholesome place, say, in a rotation where mixed husbandry is adopted in districts where the soils and climate suit it. The improvement of tillage in general alone can enable the production of higher qualities of cotton and effect a more favourable average yield. And until some such result is produced, the distribution of highly cultivated and exotic seed is, I fear, of very doubtful utility in this Presidency. The general average of tillage is too low to assure success by this means.

ENCLOSURE No. 1

STATEMENT showing the prices of Cotton (cleaned) per candy of 20 maunds of 25 lbs. each, equal to 500 lbs. in the several districts during the 12 months of the official year 1870-71.

Districts.	May 1870.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	Decem-ber.	January 1871.	February.	March.	April.	Average.
Ganjam	158	172	165	165	165	154	180	154	154	158	158	158	162
Vizagapatam	162	166	158	157	144	146	152	140	150	150	134	131	149
Godavery	167	168	144	144	145	112	139	127	129	122	120	109	138
Kistna	159	155	141	117	119	112	105	103	102	90	91	86	115
Nellore	160	159	152	157	152	133	131	122	111	134	125	117	138
Cuddapah	120 to 240	120 to 180	110 to 180	100 to 160	100 to 160	100 to 160	100 to 150	80 to 160	95 to 140	80 to 140	80 to 140	80 to 140	98 to 162
Bellary	163	159	156	127	115	114	136	97	82	100	98	91	120
Kurnool	154	140	138	118	122	114	114	111	102	97	91	77	115
Madras	100	90	...	...	140	...	137	140	100	...	145	95	118
Chingleput	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
North Arcot	150	150	150	...	115	135	110	110	110	110	110	110	124
South Arcot	133	121	121	121	121	121	141	86	86	92	70	76	107
Tanjore	155	155	160	146	155	153	153	145	145	140	145	145	150
Trichinopoly	129	129	136	123	123	120	115	115	115	109	109	107	119
Madura	100	100	100	100	115	111	140	140	140	140	140	140	122
Tinnevely	153	161	149	115	125	12	125	123	120	125	105	104	127
Coimbatore	132	...	126	121	124	12	117	110	104	100	95	91	113
Neigherries	...	...	...	...	192	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Salem	193	195	190	197	192	19	183	183	164	158	160	156	181
South Canara...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Malabar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

These are not Cotton districts and no information has been furnished.

(Signed) W. ROBINSON,
President.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
17th August 1871.

No. 132.

ORDER THEREON, 17th August 1871, No. 1,390.

Miscellaneous.

THE Government trust that the Board will take measures to ensure accuracy, as far as possible, in the Cotton Price Lists.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. DE C. SCOTT, Captain, R.E.,
Under-Secy., P.W.D.,
for Secy. to Govt.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Rev 1871. Dep
Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

No 2534.

PROCEEDINGS, 25TH JULY 1871, No. 3,106.

Dep 27 Aug 71

Encl.

Received 10 Aug.

JULY.

No. 3,106.

Cotton crop—Letter from President of
Sydapat Farm Committee, forwarding with his
remarks, a Memorandum by Superintendent
of Farm showing relative value of, and other
dry grain crops grown on same farm, submitted
to Government.

No 1090. 17 Aug 1871.

17 Aug 1871

No 1390
The for. Dist. that the 18th list take
measure to ensure accuracy
for as possible in the Cotton
list. L.R.
17 Aug 71 14. To the Secy. Rev. 25 Aug 71

No 1390-131

14 Aug 71