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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 337

Press
Mis.

Dated 24. 2.

1871.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Inams Commission - Final report
Reviewed

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
24th February 1871.*

Read again Proceedings of Government, under date 13th June 1870, No. 869 :—

Read also Proceedings of Government, under date 11th October 1870, No. 1,539.

No. 268. ORDER THEREON, 24th February 1871, No. 337.

Miscellaneous.

With the first Proceedings above noted the final report of Mr. W. T. Blair upon the operations of the late

Inam Commission is recorded. The Government deferred passing it in review until they were put in possession of statements bringing the disposal of Inam cases up to the present date.

2. The required information has now been partially submitted in Mr. Robinson's letter, under date 1st July 1870, printed with the second Proceedings above recorded, whence it appears that more than nine-tenths of the Inam cases were disposed of before 1866, and that to give the full details entered into in the elaborate statements appended to Mr. Blair's report for the comparatively few cases disposed of after that date would involve considerable cost and labour. It seems that these latter amount to only 29,388 out of a grand total of 396,815 Inam cases disposed of by the Commission, and that the Inams concerned occupy an area of 115,483 acres out of a total area of 6,092,788 acres. Supposing then that the proportion of the various classes of Inams has remained the same since 1866, it would only be necessary to increase the total number of cases referred to by Mr. Blair as being comprised under each class by about seven per cent., and to increase the area by about two per cent. to make his statements approximately represent the whole operations of the Commission.

3. It appears then, that for all practical purposes Mr. Blair's statements are sufficiently accurate, and there is, therefore, no reason for any further delay in the review by Government of his valuable and highly interesting report.

4. Mr. Blair commences by sketching the origin of Inam tenure in this Presidency. He alludes to the religious merit attached among Hindus to the grant of land to the sacerdotal class ; to the facility afforded by the period of anarchy which followed the overthrow of the native dynasties for irregular alienations by inferior authorities ; to the acceptance, by the Mahomedan rulers, of the existing state of things ; to the further opportunity for irregular grants which was given, owing to the political confusion occasioned by the struggle between the English and French for Indian supremacy during the latter half of the last century ; and to the system of rewarding meritorious service by alienations of Government revenue, either in perpetuity or for a stated number of lives, which was in force during the earlier years of British rule in this Presidency.

5. He then explains that the enormous sacrifice of State-revenue involved attracted the attention of the administration at a very early period, and caused a recognition of the importance of a general inquiry into titles to rent-free lands, causing the enactment of certain laws, and the issue of several orders on the subject, which, however, led to no practical results. Steps were, however, taken to prevent

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the diversion of Inams from the purposes for which they were granted in 1831, but it was not until 1845 that active measures were adopted to assert the reversionary rights of Government in property of this description. The devolution of Inam property by adoption, unless due notice to Government had been given, was then prohibited, and it was proposed to limit the continuance of charitable grants to the lives of the then holders, as it was considered objectionable, in principle, that a portion of the land-revenue should be set apart for the maintenance of a class of persons who had no legitimate claim on the State.

6. Mr. Blair ascribes the more liberal policy, which was afterwards adopted in dealing with these tenures, to the discussion regarding the impolicy of disturbing long existing rights in landed property, which arose out of the insurrection of Nursimha Reddi in the Cuddapah District. He explains that the rules at first laid down for dealing with claims to succeed to Inam lands resulted in overwhelming the district officers with innumerable investigations of a complex and difficult character, which they found it almost impossible to deal with concurrently with their regular duties; that the state of uncertainty in which this description of property was placed gave rise to a feeling of irritation and insecurity on the part of the holders; and that the initiation of the general survey and revision of the assessment eventually led to definite proposals being made to the Home Government for the appointment of a special Commission to deal with all tenures of this description.

7. The principles on which the Government proposed to deal with these tenures were somewhat less favourable than those finally adopted by the Home Government, which were formed into a definite scheme by Sir Charles Trevelyan on his assuming the Government of Madras. The basis of this scheme was that possession for fifty years was to give a good title, no matter what its origin of the possession might have been. This being established Religious Service Inams were all to be confirmed on existing tenures and to be resumed only when the object for which they were held had ceased to exist; other Service Inams were to be continued on the same terms when such services were still required; but when they could not be made available for any useful public purpose, the value of the public claim upon the land was to be added to any existing quit-rent payable thereon, the owner being thus enfranchised from service, and all other Inams, held for personal benefit, were either to be retained on existing tenure, subject to liability to lapse and without power of alienation, or, at the option of the holder, to be converted into an absolute property by the imposition of a quit-rent representing the annual value of the reversionary right of Government in the property. This reversionary right was estimated in terms most favourable to the Inamdars in order to induce them to take advantage of the privilege offered.

8. The operations of the late Inam Commission were conducted strictly on these principles. Full information was prepared regarding the Inams of each village by the taluq and village officers, and the Deputy-Collectors of the Commission inspected documents and took such further evidence as seemed proper, recording full details in an English Register in which the rate for enfranchisement was calculated and the acceptance or refusal of the Inamdar recorded. These registers were then forwarded to the Commissioner for review, confirmation, and the issue of a Title-deed.

9. The progress of the work was at first somewhat impeded by the ignorance and mistrust of the people, as the imposition of the additional quit-rent was viewed as merely a step in the direction of the full assessment of all Inam property; but when the really liberal character of the settlement became generally known, all opposition ceased, and the operation of the Commission proceeded with a rapidity hitherto altogether unknown in the investigation of Inam titles.

10. Mr. Blair divides the Inam tenures into nine general classes; but he attaches to his report a very useful glossary containing the name and description of every kind of Inam holding in the Presidency.

11. The first three classes are Inams for religious and public service or convenience. These Inams consisted of grants for the support of Pagodas, Muttums, Village Headmen, Mosques and Durgas, Kazis, Christian Churches, Chuttrums, Water Pandals, Topes, Tanks, Wells, Anicuts, Schools, and miscellaneous works of utility. Up to 1866 the Commission had recorded 91,734 cases of this description, with an area of 1,639,854 acres, assessed at Rs. 28,71,094, but taxed with a Jodi of only Rs. 1,58,404. This Jodi was raised to a quit-rent of Rs. 1,84,423 when the titles were confirmed.

12. The 4th, 5th, and 6th classes are Inams for the personal benefit of the holders, and consisted chiefly of grants to the religious classes, to the families of chieftains, and to their dependants and followers. Up to 1866 there were settled of these classes no less than 254,473. These Inams included an area of 3,694,394 acres, assessed at Rs. 54,89,928, but only charged with a Jodi payable to Government of Rs. 6,06,844, which, on confirmation of title, was raised to Rs. 12,97,197. For Police service discontinued there were in the Northern and Central Districts 14,860 Inams, forming Class VII. with an area of 304,931 acres, assessed at Rs. 3,44,101, but charged with a Jodi to Government of Rs. 40,780, which it is proposed to raise on enfranchisement to Rs. 1,75,824. In Class VIII. Mr. Blair places the Village Revenue and Police Service Inams, and in Class IX. the Inams of the Village Artizans. No particulars of the extent and assessment of the Inams of these two latter classes are given by Mr. Blair, though it appears that the grants were duly recorded by the Commission. In the Kurnool District, however, the Revenue and Police Service Inams have been enfranchised from service and confirmed to their holders as absolute property, the proceeds of enfranchisement being credited to the local Village Service Fund, whence the village servants are now paid. The same course is, under recent orders, now being carried out in the Trichinopoly and Godavery Districts, and the enfranchisement of the Village Service Inams of Bellary and Cuddapah only await the submission of schemes for the revision of the Village Establishments in those districts. The enfranchisement of the Kattubadi Inams of Class VII. is also deferred, pending the re-organization of the Village Police.

13. It thus appears that, excluding the Police and the Village Service Inams of the Presidency, there were 346,207 cases settled by the Inam Commission up to 1866, and, including those settled since that date, the total number is raised to 375,595. These Inams comprise an area of 5,449,731 acres, with a nominal assessment of Rs. 86,23,038, but were only charged with a Government quit-rent of Rs. 7,82,265, which, however, under the operations of the Commission has been raised to Rs. 15,37,309. The Commission has also fully assessed a further extent of 112,820

acres of nominally Inam land with a recorded assessment of Rs. 1,41,220; but as a large proportion of this quantity is land which has become useless and unprofitable from inaccessibility, from the over-growth of jungle, and from the over-flow of tanks and rivers, it cannot be held to represent a gain to the revenue of this amount.

14. In addition to dealing with Inams proper, the Commission has investigated and disposed of a large number of anomalies which disfigured the revenue system of the Presidency, as detailed in paragraphs 57 to 64 of Mr. Blair's report. These measures have greatly tended to simplify the revenue administration of the several districts, and the discussion and final decision of many long disputed rights between the Government and Zemindars, between Zemindars and Inamdars, and between Inamdars and their tenants, has facilitated the revenue procedure of district officers in no small degree.

15. The general success which has attended the proceedings of the Commission can best be judged by the very large proportion of those interested who accepted the terms proffered by Government. It appears that only in 6,588 cases were these terms declined, and that these rejections involved the temporary annual loss to Government of only Rs. 35,885, being the quit-rent fixed for enfranchisement, which represents a little less than $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the whole amount of additional quit-rent imposed for this purpose.

16. The provisions in the rules authorizing the conversion of the absolute tenure on enfranchisement into a freehold by the redemption of quit-rent at twenty years' purchase was taken advantage of to a most trifling extent, only Rs. 666 of quit-rent having been so redeemed. No other result was to be expected as twelve per cent. may be viewed as the ordinary rate of interest procurable among natives of the country for money lent on undoubted security. They would hardly, therefore, be likely to invest largely in redemption of quit-rent which would return but five per cent. on the capital sunk.

17. Mr. Blair observes in paragraph 73 of his report that "a long pending question, which was a source of perplexity to every successive Government, a cause of much irritation among a very influential section of the community, and an ever increasing burden on the energies of the local officers, has been now set at rest. The just claims of Government have been peacefully vindicated, and the prescriptive right of the people in a vast mass of valuable property has been scrupulously respected and confirmed in perpetuity." The Right Honourable the Governor in Council has much pleasure in endorsing this succinct statement of the settlement made by the Inam Commission which may now be said to have been brought to a close, though a few cases have still to be dealt with by the Second Member of the Board of Revenue.

18. His Excellency in Council believes that, though of late years, owing to a variety of causes, the work of the Commission has been somewhat retarded, it has, on the whole, been executed with as much celerity as was practicable consistently with due efficiency. Mr. G. N. Taylor and his successor, Mr. W. T. Blair, have presided over the operations of the Commission with tact and judgment, and they have been ably seconded by their Assistants at head-quarters and their Deputy-Collectors in the districts. As observed by Mr. Blair, his predecessor was

singularly fortunate in the selection of those officers; and it is a satisfaction to the Government to be aware that one* of them now holds a distinguished official position under the Mysore Government, while a second† is employed as Special Assistant in the Inam Settlement Department under the same Government; that a third‡ is 1st Judge of the High Court in the Travancore State, and that others§ are still serving this Government in offices of high trust and emolument.

19. The total cost of the Commission since its formation will not exceed thirteen lacs of Rs.—a sum the reverse excessive when the highly satisfactory results attained are considered. Land property in which certainly not less than 2½ million persons¶ are, in some measure, interested, extending to nearly 5½ millions of acres in area, which was lately held on defective and doubtful titles, and which paid to the revenue less than one-tenth of the regulated land assessment, has now been confirmed to the holders on indefeasible Government titles, and the measure has resulted in a clear gain to the revenue of about eight lacs of Rs. per annum. The alienation of State revenue has been considerably reduced, and at the same time contentment has been diffused throughout the whole body of the Inamdars—a class which numbers probably upwards of a million individuals in this Presidency.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Inam Commissioner.
To W. T. Blair, Esq.,
„ the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 24th February 1878

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Read also Pro^d of Govt under
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R.

J. D. L.

A. A.

Comm. of 1871

REVENUE.

THE INAM COMMISSIONER.

Secy. to Govt.

Dated February 24th.

Recd.

Secy.

G. O., 2166 February 1871, No 907

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No. 908.

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19 The total cost of the
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x Nimgachar

x Gopalaya

is employed as Special Agent
 in the Mysore Govt. - This is
 the same Govt. - This is
 the same Govt. - This is

A. S. Sanyal, District
 Magistrate, Mysore

I marked out one or
 two more names.

G. Anthesami Sanyal
 District Magistrate, Mysore

G. Anthesami Chetty
 District Magistrate, Mysore

and Eight Throas
 of the Mysore Govt.
 in the Madras Presidency

375,000 cases probably
 at least 500,000 shares,
 with families, 2 1/2 million.

at present of the High Court
 in the Madras State

Q. A. Sanyal
 District Magistrate

there 2 1/2 million persons
 are in some measure
 interested, extending to
 nearly 5 1/2 millions of acres
 in area, which was lately
 held on defective and
 doubtful titles, and which
 paid to the revenue less
 than one-tenth of the regular
 land assessment, has
 now been confirmed
 to the holders on indefeasible
 Govt. titles, and the
 measure has resulted
 in a gain to the revenue
 of about eight lacs of
 rupees per annum. The
 alienation of State revenue
 has ~~in fact~~ ^{considerably} been reduced
 by ~~a half~~ ^{at the same time}, and content-
 ment has been diffused
 throughout the whole
 body

body of the Inauders,
a class which ^{numbers probably}
upwards of a million individuals
~~be estimated at nearly~~
~~one-tenth of the whole~~
population of this
Presidency. —

a statement
the number
could be better
of some small
the whole to
be. Some

8 To the Indian Commissioner, Dec 25 Feb
1 4 to J. O. Davis, Esq.
14 The Board of O. S.

H. J. P. B.

17 $\frac{9}{05}$ S.7

57
70 8/65
H1031
RA105
H585
RA105

Another part of
 paper left by
 a friend from
 you with some
 of the old
 and I have
 a few more
 of the old

No 21, July 77 B. No 268

27. Aug 30 12 23' Aug 71