

692

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
29th April 1872.*

No. 306. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 22nd April 1872:—

Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of Madura, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Madras, dated Madura, 9th April 1872, No. 104.

WITH reference to the Board's Proceedings dated 26th January 1872, No. 188, I have the honour to submit a report* from the Sub-Collector on the state of the season in his division, and to request the Board to sanction the remission of assessment on dry land in 93 villages in the taluqs of Pulney and Dindigul at rates varying from 50 to 12½ per cent. of the assessment, according to the degree in which the village appears to have suffered.

2. No rain fell in the month of January, and in consequence there was an entire failure in many villages of the Pulse, Castor-oil, and other late crops, which, it was hoped, might make up for the partial failure of the more important early crops of Cholum and other principal food-grains. The garden-cultivation has also suffered severely from want of water in the wells, and I think the proposed remissions do not exceed what is necessary.

3. Other parts of the district have suffered but in a less degree, and in the southern part of the district the wet cultivation has suffered rather than the dry. The railway will soon provide work for those of the poorer classes in Dindigul and Pulney, who require it, but I am not aware that there is any scarcity of work at present. A great part of our labouring population is always in Ceylon.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From H. W. BLISS, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector, to the Acting Collector of Madura, dated Dindigul, 6th April 1872, No. 113.

I HAVE the honour to submit the report on the state of the season, called for in your footnote to Board's Proceedings, No. 188, dated 26th January 1872, and to forward herewith two statements of the villages in the Dindigul and Pulney Taluqs in which, I am of opinion, remission should be granted.

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2. These statements show the amount of unirrigated holding, cultivation, and waste in each village, the per centage of the waste to the holdings and cultivation, and the per centage of remission I would propose to grant. They may be thus summarised:—

Number of Villages.	HOLDING.		CULTIVATION.		WASTE.		PER CENTAGE OF WASTE TO				Remission proposed per cent. on holding.	Remarks.	
	Area.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.	Holding.		Cultivation.				
							Area.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.			
Dindigul.	7	16,476	20,670	11,459	14,651	5,017	6,039	30	29	44	41	50, or 8 As. in Rupee.	For facility of calculation such per centage rates of remission are proposed as will come to even numbers of Annas in the Rupee.
	8	14,290	18,014	10,529	13,550	3,761	4,464	26	25	36	33	37½, or 6 As. in do.	
	22	34,107	42,897	27,185	34,836	6,922	8,061	20	19	25	23	25, or 4 As. in do.	
	18	24,790	27,779	20,279	23,150	4,511	4,629	18	17	22	20	12½, or 2 As. in do.	
	55	89,663	1,09,380	69,452	86,187	20,211	23,193	22	21	29	27		
Pulney.	3	9,108	8,832	5,401	6,005	3,707	2,857	41	32	69	48	50, or 8 As. in Rupee.	
	13	21,003	21,972	13,398	14,795	7,605	7,197	36	33	57	49	37½, or 6 As. in do.	
	16	31,598	30,511	22,514	23,097	9,084	7,414	29	24	40	32	25, or 4 As. in do.	
	6	6,066	8,638	5,386	7,845	680	793	11	9	13	10	12½, or 2 As. in do.	
38	67,775	70,003	46,699	51,742	21,076	18,261	31	26	45	35			

Dindigul.

Pulney.

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3. The per centages of remission above given have been arrived at after a careful consideration of the waste in each village and of the outturn of the past harvest as reported by the Tahsildars and ascertained by inquiries made personally. It will be observed on reference to the detailed statements that in some instances a high rate of remission is proposed, though the per centage of waste to holding and cultivation is comparatively low. This is because in many villages the people of which are enterprising and brought a large proportion of their lands under cultivation, the crops yielded a worse proportionate return than in other villages, the cultivation in which bears a lower ratio to the waste. In such cases, considering that the people have not only got no crops to speak of but have thrown away their seed corn and labour, I think that greater liberality, if anything, is called for than in the case of those villages, the people of which left a great proportion of their land waste and made no attempt to take advantage of every shower of rain and bring as much land as possible under cultivation. Similarly in other cases where the proportion of waste is high but the crops have been fairly good, I propose low comparative rates of remission.

4. Should my proposals be carried into effect the result will be a loss of revenue, amounting to Rupees 52,682. I regret this, but believe it cannot be avoided, the season having been an unquestionably bad one, and the complete failure of rain in the month of January having caused the entire failure in a great many localities of the pulse, castor-oil, and other late crops which the people hoped would make up to them for the partial failure of the more important early crops of cholam and other principal food grains.

5. Among other results of this failure of the rain that was confidently expected in January are lowness of the wells and an extreme scarcity of fodder throughout the northern villages of the division generally. I examined many wells in a tour I made just before the Easter holidays, and found very few in which there was enough water to allow of the full extent usually irrigated by them being brought under cultivation. Very many wells were quite dry and the gardens attached to them entirely waste; and few held more than 2 or 2½ feet of water, or less than half the depth they would have contained in an ordinarily favourable year. Several of the drinking water wells I inspected were quite dry so that the people have to go long distances to procure that first necessity of life. In many gardens the remains of the crops still on the ground showed that from want of water they had been cultivated during the past season with common dry grains instead of with the usual far more profitable garden crops. Not unfrequently I saw large plots of tobacco, a most valuable crop, and one on which the people of this locality greatly depend, stunted, useless, and withering. As a rule the white cholam crops, which are the chief garden hot weather crops of this part of the country, and which should now be 2½ to 3 feet high, are very backward and not more than eight inches to a foot high. What the cattle live on I cannot tell. Fodder there is none growing, and they will be hard put to it if (as there is every chance) there is not some rain shortly. Up to the present, however, men and beasts are generally healthy. In one village a few cattle have died recently, more I believe from want of food than from any specific disease, but they generally look pretty well; and as prices are not high there is no fear of their owners or any one else coming to actual starvation. At the same time I am of opinion that the remissions I now recommend, and which I have put as low as I can, are absolutely necessary; and I confess that I shall be freed from considerable anxiety for the future when I hear that the railway works, sanction to commence which has, I believe, been received, have actually been begun and that ample employment is thus ensured to the poorer classes.

6. In conclusion I beg respectfully to point out that the Board appear to have misapprehended the meaning of my letter, No. 455, dated 27th December 1871, embodied in their Proceedings under notice. I never proposed a "general remission ranging as high as 50 per cent." All that I asked for was authority to grant remissions, naming 50 per cent. as the maximum I proposed. I stated, however, that I was of opinion that the full rate of remission would not have to be very generally given. This is my opinion still, as will be seen by my proposing to remit 50 per cent. in 10 villages only out of 93 needing relief, and a total number of 251 in the Sub-division.

7. This report would have been submitted earlier if I had been able before to get from the Curnams exact figures as to the area and assessment of the waste, etc., in their villages. They

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have been very backward, however, this year in the preparation of their accounts owing to the census, the tabulation of which for the Quinquennial Returns employed them nearly up to the end of December.

8. I should mention that I have availed myself of the Board's permission to suspend collections on unirrigated land after the fourth instalment in the case of those villages in which, I am of opinion, remission is required at the rate of 50 per cent., and after the fifth instalment in the second class of villages, or those in which I recommend remission at the rate of 37½ per cent.

ENCLOSURES Nos. 2 and 3.—Statements.

THE Board sanction the remission of assessment on dry land proposed by the Sub-Collector and advocated by the Collector.

2. The Sub-Collector was directed by telegram on the 19th to report on the state of the season and the condition of the people at present. His answer is not unfavourable. The Collector will keep the Board informed as to the state of the taluqs.

No. 307.

ORDER THEREON, 29th April 1872, No. 692.

Miscellaneous.

THE Board's Proceedings are approved.

2. The Government regret to receive so unfavourable a report of the Madras sub-division.

(True Extract.)

(Signed)

W. HUDLESTON,

Officiating Chief Secretary.

To the Board of Revenue.

Frd. F. R. Bantleman.

Revenue Department

*Proceedings of the Board of Revenue
Dated 22nd April 1872*

N^o 104.

Read the following

From,

*W. Mc Lachlan Esq^r
Asst Collector of Madras*

To,

*J. Lyrose Esq^r
Secretary to the Board of
Revenue, Madras*

Sir,

*With reference to the Board's
Proceedings dated 26th January 1872 N^o 188,
with 2 enclosures
*Dated 6th April 1872 N^o 113
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Madras } W. McLuhac
9th April 1872 } As Collector

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[True copy & Extract]
E. J. Grose
Secretary

To, The Collector of Madras
with enclosure returned.
[True copy]

To,
The Officiating Chief Secretary to Government
Revenue Department
with enclosure returned

G. H. Hughes
C. S. Secy
McKinnon & Co.

H. 1451.

222222 April 1872

Received 24th.

Dec 3. Det

No 692-29 actually