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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	174	Press
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Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 82. Read the following letter from A. Government of India, Department (Agriculture and Horticulture), Secretary to the Government of Calcutta, 21st January 1876, No.

I am directed to forward copy of a State, No. 59, dated the 26th November Bengal, and to state that the Governor-General of the views of His Grace in Council on the and 12 as to the proper incidence of the elements of the population of a district in a pr

Enclosure

From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India India Office, London, 26th

The despatch of your Excellency in Council, tory of the action taken by your Government for the recent scarcity in Bengal, has been consider

2. The selection of Mr. Macdonnell, t purpose of making the proposed inquiries is a that officer by the Government of Bengal, under approval. If the inquiry, however, is in such, attention to be paid to the following observation

3. The first portion of the instructions refer 1873-74 (paragraphs 5 to 8). On this point I extend to the ordinary distribution of the various question, so as to show the area of the several as well as the total area cultivated, and, unproductive food-crops in a series of years should also be re possible, at which a failure begins to be seriously abundant harvests might also be noted, and which in the market or want of means of disposing of a comparison of the ordinary yield in the districts each of Bengal might also usefully be made, and a special inquiry instituted as to the probable relative yield of the crops as now cultivated compared to the yield of similar crops regularly irrigated.

4. As to the stocks of grain (paragraph 8), of dealing with the crop by the agriculturist or prop in the villages, or do they pass soon after the har know what proportion is retained for home consumption or is disposed of by barter.

5. This part of the inquiry leads to the population which has to be fed in the villages, is to be supplied by traders. It may be pro from its own stocks of grain without be investigated. With this would naturally paid for by money, and whether there is otherwise than in the towns. It has been the consequences of a scarcity in India in

HUME, Esq., C.B., Secretary to the Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, 16,) to D. P. CARMICHAEL, Esq., Madras, Revenue Department, dated

ten, from Her Majesty's Secretary of relative to the recent scarcity in n Council will be glad to be informed that question raised in paragraph 11 incurred in providing for the require of drought.

1. venue, to the Government of India, dated number 1875, No. 59.

(the 30th August, No. 7 of 1875, explanatory of obtaining statistics relative to in Council.

ating Collector of Darbhanga, for the by me, and the instructions issued to Secretary's authority, have my general on as still to admit of it, I should wish

o extent of the failure of the harvests in esing to remark that the inquiry should cautious of crop raised in the districts in crops as compared to the whole cultivated. The ordinary fluctuations of the yield of 1 and the limit ascertained, as nearly as by the population. The effect of very such cases exist have arisen from a glut due to insufficient communications. A each of the Ganges with that of other parts of Bengal might also usefully be made, and a special inquiry instituted as to the probable relative yield of the crops as now cultivated compared to the yield of similar crops regularly irrigated.

It requires what is the customary system of land. Are the stocks held by them to the dealers? It will be interesting to me, and whether the rest is sold for money

consideration of what is the proportion of the at in the which, being in the towns, has be bulk of the rural population is supplied extent to which this is the case should be other agricultural labor is to any extent considerable retail trade in grain for food at one of the great difficulties of meeting lot of paying the wages of labor in grain.

end of trusting to domestic supplies in the
of any development of retail traders and
population. This is a very important po-

6. As to the exports and imports (paragraphs 9 and 10), any available information in relation to its food-supply, an exhaustive survey of produce of this country would seem to show that other countries, which the population provides itself with second or worse conditions is found to be of a failure of the harvest would probably will be worthy of inquiry.

7. As to the effect of the rain on importance, the rainfall at any time will, the condition of material to which it is applied, be of greatest risk should be ascertained.

8. As to prices (Annexure IV) and are in the nature of remunerating the worker by money or kind, most of the labour in parts of Western India has passed through the condition of the peon. Though this condition may appear better now, it is not the wages or rather the pay any more, it is only a kind of very generous offer made in the standard of the other

[illegible][illegible]

13. There is a further point. Clearly, the results are restricted to a narrow set of hypotheses. A minimum of assumptions and a maximum of generality are required in order to proceed.

[illegible]

supply of food and to the comparative absence
to distribute food among the masses of the
and all possible light should be thrown.

from and to the districts in ordinary times will be treated as indicating the general position. So, if exports are customary, there must be ports are not the rule, or if imports are the point, it are raised in considerable amount, by help of means of relative scarcity. In proportion to the power of the population to reach the shore, water, and how far the taste lay on this point

graphs 11 and 12), it may be noticed that the curves depend on the ~~amount~~ of the plant yield, which will vary with different crops. The same is possible.

may be regarded as high prices in themselves, but relation to the ordinary wages of labour is the record. For many years past the price of wheat has been indicative of famine in China, it is at the least no worse for such high prices. The condition of an area is another consideration, every land is hard to place, but it will render a measure of relation to other districts or the town is not overlooked.

and was printed in 1914, pages 25 and 26, and
it contains the following information regarding
the history of an Indian community for 45
years, saying, and whence it came in the
United States, to live in India. "The original
is quite very large, generally, and it would be a
curious to what extent this high proportion of
white power and total condition of the people,
as of the expression, among the population which
it is need, mostly be said that in coming to
be required, and that all foreign opinions should

and made by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, which the population may be thought to be too subject to a large and difficult one, and send for your Excellency. I trust, however, that for any other information as your Excellency may wish, remedial measures are ready to be taken in connection with the execution of what is meant to secure the application of any such laws.

When the scope of such an inquiry is in my opinion, he carefully considered it before in connection with the case. The inquiry in the case of the Chinese family of the population of a village.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

a period of drought. However plans may be the
 in requisites and possibly awards preserving them
 would be most unwise to overlook the great dis-
 tress the prospect of making the general revenue
 difficult or of restoring all local distress and
 a share that establishes a permanent charge on the
 Bengal, where the Lieutenant Governor of
 Government in relation to emigration, the Council
 House, the permanent settlement, the local
 population.

12. The question which is thus raised of course is no simple one of great difficulty and so that the difficulty of providing any satisfactory representation of its vital importance to the race provides to the Government and the demagogue both some excuse too long the introduction of some other underlined responsibility which rests on the support and well-being. The duty of the State towards minors are applied for giving effect to burdens arising from its practical application at least enormous to those who have to bear them.

13. I commend these grave questions to Government, and I shall hope to receive in a direct suitable means of introducing, by degrees, their result the attainment of the important ob-

1993

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TOTALS

(One Ex)

D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

Project: Death of Marlow

— 105 —

any obligation on the State to do all that the people under such circumstances, if fairly accepting, if not the doctrine, at least the whole burden of meeting all land-lying the needed funds by borrowing in some manner for all future time. In reference to the obligations of the interest of the Government in the land is one are of special and more pressing

take local resources aid in meeting local
of, particularly in a country like India
it should not be allowed to obscure
being of the country, as well as of the
the people which must necessarily result
under which shall be suitably recognized
people themselves to provide for their own
not extend further than to see that the
principle and for distributing the local
in which shall be most equitable and

but consideration of your Excellency's
expression of your opinion as to the
question, measures which I shall have to
soon have repaired.

1878, No. 174

FORWARDED to the Board of Revenue
for remarks.

D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

No. 50 (Revenue), dated India Office, London, the 25th November 1875.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,

To—The Government of India.

The despatch of your Excellency in Council, dated the 30th August, No. 7 of 1875, explanatory of the action taken by your Government for the purpose of obtaining statistics relative to the recent scarcity in Bengal, has been considered by me in Council.

2. The selection of Mr. MacDonnell, the Officiating Collector of Darbhanga, for the purpose of making the proposed enquiries, is sanctioned by me, and the instructions issued to that officer by the Government of Bengal, under your Excellency's authority, have my general approval. If the enquiry, however, is in such a position as still to admit of it, I should wish attention to be paid to the following observations.

3. The first portion of the instructions refers to the extent of the failure of the harvests in 1873-74 (paragraphs 5 to 8). On this point I would desire to remark that the enquiry should extend to the ordinary distribution of the various descriptions of crop raised in the districts in question, so as to show the area of the several food crops as compared to the whole cultivated, as well as the total area cultivated and uncultivated. The ordinary fluctuations of the yield of food crops in a series of years should also be recorded, and the limit ascertained, as nearly as possible, at which a failure begins to be seriously felt by the population. The effect of very abundant harvests might also be noted, and whether in such cases evils have arisen from a glut in the market, or want of means of disposing of a surplus due to insufficient communications. A comparison of the ordinary yield in the districts north of the Ganges with that of other parts of Bengal might also usefully be made, and a special enquiry instituted as to the probable relative yield of the crops as now cultivated compared to the yield of similar crops regularly irrigated.

4. As to the stocks of grain (paragraph 8), I would enquire what is the customary system of dealing with the crop by the cultivators or proprietors of land. Are the stocks held by them in the villages, or do they pass soon after the harvest to the dealers? It will be interesting to know what proportion is retained for home consumption, and whether the rest is sold for money or is disposed of by barter.

5. This part of the enquiry leads to the consideration of what is the proportion of the population which has to be fed in the villages, and what is that which, being in the towns, has to be supplied by traders. It may be presumed that the bulk of the rural population is supplied from its own stocks of grain without purchase; the extent to which this is the case should be investigated. With this would naturally be asked whether agricultural labour is to any extent paid for by money, and whether there is, in fact, any considerable retail trade in grain for food otherwise than in the towns. It has been supposed that one of the great difficulties in meeting the consequences of a scarcity in India is the general habit of paying the wages of labour in grain, and of trusting to domestic supplies of grain for the supply of food, and to the correlative absence of any development of retail traders accustomed to distribute food among the masses of the population. This is a very important point, on which all possible light should be thrown.

6. As to the exports and imports of grain from and to the districts in ordinary times (paragraphs 9 and 10), any available information will be useful as indicating the general position of the tract in relation to its food supplies. Of course, if exports are customary, there must be an habitual excess of produce of this sort. If exports are not the rule, or if imports are frequent, it would seem to shew that other forms of produce are raised in considerable amount, by help of which the population provides itself with food in times of relative scarcity. In proportion as the ground of those conditions is found to be the case, the power of the population to resist the effects of a failure of the harvest would probably be greater; and how far the facts bear on this point will be matter of enquiry.

7. As to the effect of the rainfall (paragraphs 11 and 12), it may be noticed that the importance of a failure at any time will in great measure depend on the age of the plant and the condition of maturity to which it has arrived, which will vary with different crops. The time of greatest risk should be ascertained, so far as it is possible.

8. As to prices (paragraphs 13 and 14), it may be remarked that high prices in themselves are no indication of accompanying distress. Their relation to the ordinary wages of labour, whether in money or kind, must be at the same time recorded. For many years past the prices of grain in parts of Western India have been such as would be indicative of famine in other parts, though the condition of the people has been at the least no worse for such high prices. Though this caution may appear superfluous when the condition of an area is under consideration, in which the wages of labour do not materially vary from place to place, yet it will render any returns now compiled more generally useful and instructive in relation to other districts, or other times, if the standard of the ordinary wages of labour is not overlooked.

9. On the important question of the density of the population (paragraphs 20 and 21), and the possible excess, it seems worthy of special enquiry what is the necessary minimum population required under average conditions of age, health and sex of an Indian community for the complete cultivation of a given area, or any specified crop, say rice, and whether it varies in the case of other crops, such as wheat, barley, or the millets usually raised in India. The

agricultural population of India per acre of cultivation appears very large generally, and it would be a subject of much interest to ascertain, so far as possible, to what extent this high proportion of population is a necessary consequence of the physical powers and social condition of the people, and whether or not there is, in the ordinary sense of the expression, a surplus population which might economically be more profitably employed. It need hardly be said that, in coming to conclusions on such a point, great caution will be required, and that all foregoing opinions should be carefully set aside or guarded against.

10. You have remarked on the observations made by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, on the subject of emigration from districts in which the population may be thought to be too great for the local means of subsistence, that the subject is a large and difficult one and had better be separately treated. In this I quite concur with your Excellency. I trust, however, that so far as the enquiries now about to be undertaken, or any other information at your command, may lead to the adoption of the conclusion that any special remedial measures are requisite to meet any hitherto insufficiently known cause of difficulty in connexion with the recurrence of seasons of drought like that of 1873-74, no pains may be spared to secure the application of any such remedy thought practicable, and in the most effectual manner.

11. There is a further point, though not one to fall within the scope of such an enquiry as that which you have directed to be made, which should, in my opinion, be carefully considered by your Excellency's Government before the questions that arise in connexion with the occurrences of 1873-74 can be regarded as fully met. I refer to the proper incidence of the charges that are necessarily incurred in providing for the requirements of the population of a district in a period of drought. However plain may be the primary obligation on the State to do all that is requisite and possible towards preserving the lives of the people under such circumstances, it would be most unwise to overlook the great danger of tacitly accepting, if not the doctrine, at least the practice, of making the general revenues bear the whole burden of meeting all local difficulties or of relieving all local distress, and of supplying the needful funds by borrowing in a shape that establishes a permanent charge on the general revenues for all future time. In Bengal, where (as the Lieutenant-Governor observes in reference to the obligations of the Government in relation to emigration) the beneficial interest of the Government in the land is limited by the permanent settlement, these considerations are of special and more pressing application.

12. The question which is thus raised, of how to make local resources aid in meeting local wants, is no doubt one of great difficulty and complexity, particularly in a country like India. But the difficulty of providing any satisfactory solution of it should not be allowed to obscure the perception of its vital importance to the future well-being of the country, as well as of the troubles to the Government and the demoralisation of the people which must necessarily result from postponing too long the introduction of some system under which shall be suitably recognised the undoubted responsibility which rests on the people themselves to provide for their own support and well-being. The duty of the State does not extend further than to see that the needful means are supplied for giving effect to this principle, and for distributing the local burdens arising from its practical application in the manner which shall be most equitable, and least onerous to those who have to bear them.

13. I commend these grave questions to the careful consideration of your Excellency's Government, and I shall hope to receive in due time an expression of your opinion as to the most suitable means of attaining, by degrees and with caution, measures which shall have for their result the attainment of the important objects to which I have referred.

1876.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE,
AGRICULTURE, AND COMMERCE.

AGRICULTURE and HORTICULTURE
Famine.

FROM
HER MAJESTY'S SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR INDIA.

Dated 25th November }
Recd. 21st December } 1875.

No. 59.
Enclosures.
Spare copies.

D. No. }
L. No. } Progs. { No.

Rev 406/1876

SUBJECT.

ACKNOWLEDGES the receipt of despatch No. 19 of 1875, explanatory of the action taken by the Government of India for the purpose of obtaining statistics relative to the recent scarcity in Bengal and makes certain observations in connection with this subject.

No. 2
39

FROM

A. O. RUME, Esq., O.B.E.,
Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

The Secretary to the Government of India
of Bengal

Department of Revenue,
Agriculture, and Commerce
Agriculture and Horticulture
Famine.

Calcutta, the 21st January 1876.

SIR,

I AM directed to forward copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State, No. 59, dated the 25th November 1875, relative to the recent scarcity in Bengal, and to state that the Governor-General in Council will be glad to be informed of the views of the Bengal Government on the important question raised in paragraphs 11 and 12 as to the proper incidence of the charges incurred in providing for the requirements of the population of a district in a period of drought.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

A. O. Rume
Secretary to the Government of India.

1876.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE,
AGRICULTURE, AND COMMERCE

AGRICULTURE and HORTICULTURE.
FARMING.

To

No.

39

Dated Calcutta, the 21st January 1876.

Recd 31 Jan

50174 S. 1

*Forwarded to the Com
of Revenue for their consideration*

9 Feb 1876

4 to 7th Jan 1876

SUBJECT

Asks for their views on the question raised by
the Secretary of State as to the proper measure
of charges incurred in providing for the require-
ments of the population of a district in a period
of drought.