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# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

*Revenue* DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.

B.P. No.

596

Press

Mis.

Dated 10-5-1876 196-

*Not to be folded or roughly handled*

No. 81. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 20th April 1876, No. 1,054:—

Read the following letter from A. J. STUART, Esq., Acting Collector of Tinnevelly, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Tinnevelly, 24th April 1876, No. 915:—

I HAVE the honor to forward copy of a letter from the Acting Sub-Collector, who has carefully examined the villages of the Nanguneri Taluq, where remissions for dry crops were reported necessary.

2. I quite agree in Mr. Glenney's remarks deprecating the grant of dry remissions, except in very unusual cases; but the season has been very exceptionally dry this year, as is shown by the rainfall statement enclosed, and this part of the district suffers more than any other from absence of rain, the soil being light and sandy.

3. Ordinarily, in years of scanty rainfall, I would not give remissions, as the villagers have other resources in palmyras and well cultivation, and, as a rule, have more dry land than they can ever hope to cultivate properly. This they hold for fear of others taking it, and one season with another manage to pay the assessment upon it from uncertain crops raised upon a part of it very roughly and carelessly cultivated. The consequences of this system, I think, they ought not to be artificially protected against by remissions.

4. The present is, however, quite an exceptionally bad season for them, and one in which I think some indulgence may be granted. From the statement enclosed, it will be seen that the assessment on the area cultivated amounts to Rupees 9,717, and that on the waste held to Rupees 11,226, making a total of Rupees 20,943. I do not think that the remission proposed by the Acting Sub-Collector, which would amount on a rough calculation to Rupees 3,000, would be sufficiently felt as a relief, and I propose, with the sanction of the Board, to remit one-third of the total demand, or Rupees 6,981.

5. In the Streeviliputtur Taluq, I am glad to be able to report that I found matters better than was expected; there is a good deal of cotton cultivation in the taluq which will yield a return, though a poor one. The dry crops, though much below the average, were not altogether lost; there is, besides, a large number of wells and a subsoil reservoir of water which is both abundant and close to the surface; the cultivation under these wells has been as successful as usual. The wet crop in several villages at a distance from the hills has either totally or partially failed, but the bulk of the crop has been or will be saved. The price of food-grains throughout the district continues low. Under these circumstances, I see no sufficient reason to recommend any exceptional measures in Streeviliputtur.

6. The rains of the 12th of last month will, I hope, have saved the bulk of the Pesbanum crops in the Tenkarai Taluq, and have done very great good both in Ambasamudrum and Tinnevelly Taluqs.

7. Water is becoming rather scarce in Otapidaram and parts of Sattur and Sunkaraninarcovil Taluqs; but measures are being taken in the Local Fund Department to meet the anticipated difficulty by grants for the purpose of deepening wells and drinking-water tanks.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,  
10th May 1876.

8. On the whole, though the season may be considered in every respect unfavorable one, I have no doubt that we shall get through without the necessity for further exceptional measures.

9. I beg sanction for the remission of 6,981 Rupees dry crops in the Radhapuram and Vullur Divisions of the Nanguneri Taluq.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From W. H. GLENNY, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector, to A. J. STUART, Esq., Acting Collector of Tinnevely, dated Chermadevi, 1st March 1876, No. 38.

In pursuance of your demi-official instructions, I made a tour in Radhapuram Division of Nanguneri Taluq in the course of the week ending 7th instant, with reference to the question of dry remissions.

2. I have delayed the submission of my report till now, in order, first, to the discussion of the question with you and others; and, secondly, to see whether there would be, as appearances strongly indicated, a fall of rain. I am happy to say that there has been a heavy fall of rain (which began here at 9 A.M. on 12th instant and lasted about fifteen hours) sufficient materially to improve the aspect of affairs in the Sub-Division generally, and therefore to diminish the pressure of the bad punjah harvest in the south. There is every appearance of more rain.

3. This fall of rain, besides keeping down prices, has given the people in the division in question a fair chance of raising gingely and other crops on dry lands, and has recruited the supply of water for their garden lands upon which they depend to a considerable extent. It has also saved a considerable quantity of cotton. Pasture and drinking water for cattle, in respect of which the people were in great straits, have been renewed. I believe the palmyra has benefited.

4. I have taken these collateral alleviations into account in making my recommendations; still the fact remains that in the Radhapuram Division, so far as I could learn, this season, following upon four successive years of drought, more or less severe, has been the worst known for the last twenty or thirty, and that the dry cereal crops have suffered to an unprecedented extent, amounting in the villages in the extreme south-west to almost total loss. The harvest of dry cereals having ended three weeks ago, this fall of rain has not saved a single grain of it.

5. The best proof I can offer of the reality of this late disastrous state of things is the evidence of my own eyes, and what I have learnt from credible witnesses. The annexed statement (No. 1) of rainfall is not much of a criterion, inasmuch as it was kept at Nanguneri. Even at Radhapuram, there is (for want of a rain-gauge, which should be supplied at once) no register of rainfall, and Radhapuram is on the northern boundary of the badly afflicted area. There was no mistaking the evidence of the remains of the crops: whether scanty stubble, as it was at best, or immature blades untouched by sickle. I examined also straw in backyards. In some villages, it was hardly possible to tell whether a crop of Samei, for instance, had been, as alleged, sown at all. It was clear that in every instance where gingely had been sown, the labor and seed had been wasted. The palmyra trees had died in numbers in the south-west division. I was told by the Revd. Dr. Caldwell that in the thirty and odd years of his residence, he had never seen the country so burnt up. Ordinary pasture had disappeared over the whole division: such of the cattle as remained were kept alive on what there was of unreaped and abandoned standing crops, but they had been, in numbers unusually large, I was told, sent to the Travancore Hills.

6. It was true (as you have pointed out) that the population do not make dry cultivation their mainstay by any means. They depend largely on palmyra cultivation, and also upon garden crops under wells. The first of these two latter resources I do not believe to have been materially affected this season. But the second has been. To raise crops this year under what is called the *Tularady* system, i.e., by wells in the ayacuts of tanks, the ryots have been obliged

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,  
10th May 1876.

may last twice as long as usual, viz., nearly six months instead of three. And "garden" cultivation under private wells has been subjected at this season to a similar abnormal burthen.

7. Thus there is, I think, no doubt that the division has suffered, with the exception of two villages, viz., the Cusbah and Perumudi, in an exceptional degree. In my opinion, a case is made out for the unusual interference of remission on drought. But there are two sides to the question, and I believe it would be bad policy and mistaken kindness to be lavish in according the indulgence.

8. In the first place, no remission whatever on waste should be given. It may be said (*vide* Statement No. 2) that there is no more waste than usual.

9. Remission for withered crops. I have the honor to recommend for all the villages of the division, except Radhapuram Cusbah and Perumudi. The outturn of Samei and horse-gram, the staple crops this year, have been fair in both these villages: the water-supply, especially in Radhapuram, has been good all along; and the garden cultivation (mainly of cholam) has been successful. It is true that the more remunerative *Varagu* would have largely taken the place of Samei had the season been more promising at seed-time. Still these two villages, all things considered at present, are not objects for exceptional indulgence.

10. The remaining fifteen villages, I would divide into three classes. For those in Class I., I would recommend remission of 25 per cent. of the demand on the cultivated area; for Class II., 50 per cent.; for Class III., 75 per cent.

|                |                                                    |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Class I. ...   | 1. Irukanturei.                                    |
|                | 2. Dhanagarkulam.                                  |
|                | 3. Karuppelankulam.                                |
|                | 4. Settikulam.                                     |
|                | 5. Adangarkulam.                                   |
| Class II. ...  | 6. Koliyankulam.                                   |
|                | 7. Mela Paravaikulam.                              |
|                | 8. Viziapati.                                      |
|                | 9. Perumanal.                                      |
|                | 10. Urumankulam.                                   |
| Class III. ... | 11. Samugarengapuram.                              |
|                | 12. Kottakarangulam.                               |
|                | 13. Karangulam (1st Division).                     |
|                | 14. Palavur (alias Karangulam, 2nd Division).      |
|                | 15. Vepalankulam (alias Karangulam, 3rd Division). |

11. Total remission even for withered crops I would not give even to the villages in Class III., situated in the south-western extremity of the district where the soil is worst, and when the rainfall has been, so far as I could learn, for many years as well as this season, most scanty. The people are only too strongly affected, as it is, by the unreasoning desire of possession. Allowing for the necessity of letting the land lie fallow after even the wretched crops, it, at best, now and then matures; the people themselves admit that they hold more land than they can possibly make remunerative, and, as you say, it would be a very great mistake to teach them to expect remissions except under very extraordinary circumstances.

P.S.—Since the above was drafted, a rough calculation has been made which shows that the total remission recommended in this letter would not exceed about Rupees 3,000.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) A. J. STUART.  
Acting Collector.

ENCLOSURES Nos. 2 to 4.—Statements.

THE Board sanction the remission of assessment on dry lands to the extent of Rupees 6,981 as a special case, in accordance with the Collector's recommendation.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,*  
10th May 1876

2. With reference to the Sub-Collector's remark that no rain-gauge has as yet been supplied to the Radhapuram Deputy Tahsildar, the attention of the Government Astronomer will be called to the Board's Proceedings marginally noted, with the request that he will expedite the supply of the rain-gauges indented for.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) C. A. GALTON,  
Acting Secretary.

No. 82. ORDER THEREON, 10th May 1876, No. 596.

Land Revenue, No. 3.

RECORDED.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,  
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. W. H. French.

6. The rains of the 12th of last month will, I hope, have saved the bulk of the Peshanum crops in the Tenkarai Taluq, and have done very great good both in Ambasamudrum and Tinnevely Taluqs.

7. Water is becoming rather scarce in Otapidaram and parts of Sattur and Sunkaranimacovil Taluqs; but measures are being taken in the Local Fund Department to meet the anticipated difficulty by grants for the purpose of deepening wells and drinking-water tanks.

8. On the whole, though the season must be considered in every respect a very unfavorable one, I have no doubt that we shall get through it without the necessity for further exceptional measures.

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ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From W. H. GLENNY, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector, to A. J. STUART, Esq., Acting Collector of Tinnevely, dated Shermadevi, 14th March 1876, No. 38.

In pursuance of your demi-official instructions, I made a tour in Radhapuram Division of Nanguneri Taluq in the course of the week ending 7th instant, with reference to the question of dry remissions.

2. I have delayed the submission of my report till now, in order, first, to the discussion of the question with you and others; and, secondly, to see whether there would be, as appearances strongly indicated, a fall of rain. I am happy to say that there has been a heavy fall of rain (which began here at 9 A.M. on 12th instant and lasted about fifteen hours) sufficient materially to improve the aspect of affairs in the Sub-Division generally, and therefore to diminish the pressure of the bad punjah harvest in the south. There is every appearance of more rain.

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7. Thus there is, I think, no doubt that the division has (with the exception of two villages, viz., the Cusbah and Perungudi) suffered in an exceptional degree. In my opinion, a case is made out for the unusual indulgence of remission on dry land. But there are two sides to the question, and I believe it would be bad policy and mistaken kindness to be lavish in according the indulgence.

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|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
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|                | 2. Dhanagarikulam.                                         |
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|                | 4. Settikulam.                                             |
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|                | 6. Koliyankulam.                                           |
|                | 7. Mela Paravaikulam.                                      |
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P.S.—Since the above was drafted, a rough calculation has been made which shows that the total remission recommended in this letter would not exceed about Rupees 3,000.

(True Copy.)

(Signed)

A. J. STUART.  
Acting Collector.

THE Board sanction the remission of assessment on dry lands to the extent of Rupees 6,981 as a special case, in accordance with the Collector's recommendation.

2. With reference to the Sub-Collector's remark that no rain-gauge has as yet been supplied to the Radhapuram Deputy Tahsildar, the attention of the Government Astronomer will be called to the Board's Proceedings, dated 29th May 1872, No. 3,831, Board's Proceedings, dated 22nd May 1874, No. 3,404, Board's Proceedings marginally noted, dated 10th April 1875, No. 2,820, with the request that he will expedite the supply of the rain-gauges indented for.

(True Copies and Extract.)

*W. H. French*  
Acting Secretary.

To the Collector of Tinnevely.  
" the Government Astronomer.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,  
with three Statements to be returned.

Encl. W. H. French.

*144 To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Madras, 19 May 1876*

*Rev 1876. Reports*  
**BOARD OF REVENUE,**  
**MADRAS.**

PROCEEDINGS, 20TH APRIL 1876, No. 1,054.

*Copy 4/10/76*  
Encl. 3  
*212*

Received

APRIL.  
No. 1,054.

*Assessment — on dry lands in Nanguneri Taluk, Tinnevely District.—Sanctioning remission of — to the extent of Rupees 6,981, and requesting Government Astronomer to expedite supply of certain rain-gauges indented for.*

*Records*

*C. S. 76*

*10 May 1876*