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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1805	Press.
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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

20th March 1877, No. 218.

Pudukottai.

Read the following papers:—

No. 79. *From H. SEWELL, Esq., Political Agent of Pudukottai, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Trichinopoly, 6th January 1877, No. 9.*

With reference to G.O., dated 28th December 1876, No. 891, I have the honor to report that I made a short tour through Pudukottai in the middle of December in order to see the state of the country. I am sorry to say that they are very badly off. All their tanks depend upon local rains, and as they have been so deficient the wet crops are extremely poor and in most places have not been planted at all. The dry crops also are very poor indeed. I hear however that the rain which we had about Christmas-day has done some good.

2. The Rajah, I am happy to say, has shown himself quite alive to the emergency, and is conscious to do all he can to assist his people. At his suggestion, conjee-houses for the relief of the destitute poor were opened shortly after my visit, and I have made arrangements with the Sirkele for starting relief works and for improving the supplies of drinking water, &c. Rice is also being purchased wholesale by the State and retailed at cost price, and the pay of the subordinate officials who, as a rule, are miserably underpaid, has been slightly increased. I am just starting again for Pudukottai where I shall remain two or three days and will report again to Government after my visit.

3. One result of this scarcity will, I regret to say, be the postponement of the actual survey work, at all events till after the close of the present fasli. When I made arrangements with Colonel Hesse in the matter we anticipated that there would be a balance of about Rupees 50,000 available for the expense of the regular Survey party during the current fasli. But this estimate was made before we knew that the season would be so disastrous, and I fear the balance will be so much reduced that it will be impossible to provide for the outlay at present. The preliminary survey and sketching is however going on, and that can be completed without difficulty by the small establishment which is now at work.

No. 24.

The Government await the promised further report.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,

Chief Secretary.

FORT ST. GEORGE,
11th January 1877.

No. 80. *From H. SEWELL, Esq., Political Agent for Pudukottai, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Trichinopoly, 28th February 1877, No. 51.*

I have the honor to submit, for the information of Government, my further report on the state of the season, &c., in Pudukottai. After my first report I wrote to the Sirkele requesting him to furnish me with detailed information, as far as possible, in the same form as that required by the Government of India for other parts of the country. His reply, which I forward with enclosure, only reached me on the 23rd instant. Hence the delay in my present report. The rates have been converted into seers of 80 tolals.

2. I went over to Pudukottai on January 9th, and remained there a few days. There is no doubt that the distress in the country is very severe, probably about the same as in Madura. Conjee-houses had been opened previously in the town, at which a large number of distressed poor were being fed at the expense of the State. I found on my visit that several of the leading officials and residents of the place were anxious to come forward and assist in relieving the distress. I therefore held a meeting at which His Excellency the Rajah presided, and which was well attended by all classes. A very handsome amount of subscription and donations were promised including one from the State. A Committee was formed to look after matters, and the charitable feeding of the poor was entrusted to their hands. I inspected one or two of the relief-houses, the arrangements seemed to be very good, and the people, as a rule, seemed to be deserving objects of charity.

3. Public works are so backward in Pudukottai that there is of course ample scope for relief works. The principal want is roads. That from Trichinopoly to Pudukottai is in progress, and will, I hope, be completed in a few months; the others, the main roads from Pudukottai to Madura and from Pudukottai to Tanjore, are both in a wretched state, and the repairs of the former have been taken up as a relief work. The latter can also be put in hand when necessary. Pudukottai will then have good communications with the three principal neighbouring towns in British territory. Money has also been allotted for improving the water-supply and clearing prickly-pear in villages, and estimates for repairs of tanks are being prepared.

4. The Sirkele's estimate of the outturn of crops, &c., is of course based very much on conjecture, but I suppose is the only estimate that we can get. The mortality among cattle promises to be serious, and I fear it is difficult to provide a remedy. There are jungles to a great extent in the country, but in the present season they are nearly as dry as the cultivated lands, and afford scarcely any pasture. I have impressed on the Sirkele the advantages of using prickly-pear for fodder, but the native prejudice is strong against it, probably more so in a Native State like Pudukottai than in British territory. I should be greatly obliged if Government would send me some copies of Dr. Thacker's Manual in the Vernacular, or would inform me where they are procurable.

5. I do not anticipate any great difficulty as to the supplies of grain. When I was in Pudukottai I saw a very large number of bandies coming in with it from Tanjore, and there is no reason to fear that the supply will fail. I authorized the Sirkele to purchase a small quantity, if necessary, for the State, and to keep it in reserve, but I have strictly warned him against any attempt to interfere with private traffic or free trade. There was an inclination this way at first, but it has, I believe, been put a

stop to. Unfortunately the Sirkar grain received as waram from the ryots was sold off about September last just before the distress became severe.

6. Emigration has not increased much apparently because the Ceylon labor market is overstocked. On my tour, however, I met a good number of coolies on the road who said they were bound for Ceylon. I did not notice any very severe cases of distress among them.

7. If it had not been for the appropriation of four-and-a-half lakhs to clear off His Excellency's debts, the State would have been able to tide over the present season very fairly. As it is, it will be difficult to make both ends meet. I have, however, authorized the Sirkele, if necessary, to take loans from other funds under control of the State such as Devasthanam and Jaghire funds, and with this assistance I think they will be able to pull through as regards expense. I have impressed on the Sirkele the necessity of the strictest economy in everything relating to relief works, &c. I have advised him also to keep wages at the same rate as those ruling in British territory. Hitherto they have been somewhat higher.

8. I shall take an opportunity of going out again to Pudukottai probably about the middle of March, and will then report again to Government.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From BHOWANY SHENKER ROW, Sirkele, to the Political Agent of Pudukottai, dated Pudukottai, 22nd February 1877, No. 113.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, No. 28, I have the honor, as therein directed, to supply you with the following information regarding the state of season and crops, &c., in this territory.

1. Assuming the average yield to be 12 Annas, the crops saved this year is only 3 Annas for the whole territory; the yield in Trimiem Taluq being 5 Annas; that in Oulungudi Taluq 2½ Annas, and Koluttur 1½ Anna. There is no prospect of further sowings at present. Should there be early rains, Gingely-oil-seeds and some dry grains, such as cumboo, raghi, and cholam may be sown.

2. In justice, we shall have to remit a revenue of Rupees 42,000; but the present state of finances, and the established usage of this territory, alike demand that no remission should be given. The suspension of the collection of the last two kists, and collecting them when prospects have improved, as directed in your letter noted in the margin, will, I think, be beneficial to people.

Dated 14th December 1876, No. 267.

3. Among cattle 4,100 deaths have been reported up to date from disease and want of fodder; and a further loss of 27,000 may be anticipated if no early rains fall. To prevent disease among cattle, it has been usual here to segregate sick cattle from the rest, and treat them with some success, when any contagious disease breaks out among them. The people here are not enlightened enough to appreciate the English form of treatment. I shall, however, try to introduce in this territory the printed copies of treatment of cattle diseases, and for this purpose I beg you will send me 200 copies of the said treatise at once.

4. As to the water-supply, people here have to depend on rain-fed tanks for potable water. Most of the tanks have already dried up. In the remaining tanks there is only a small supply that would last for a month. Sufficient water is found in wells; but water is every where scarce for cattle, and wherever scarcity of water is felt, wells are being sunk.

5. No weekly account has been kept of the price of each of the principal food-grains in this territory; but from the monthly accounts kept here, a statement,* furnished by the Karbar,

* In Tamil.

showing the prices of each grain from October up to date, together with six years' average, is submitted herewith.

6. The local stock may be estimated at 60,000 colums of grain. Grain is imported into this territory from the Tanjore and Trichinopoly Districts. Only a small quantity of grain is being brought down by private enterprise, the supply is not likely to meet the demand as the season advances. As the merchants here are not very rich, competition amongst them is not sharp. Now there is an upward tendency in the prices.

7. There are in this territory people of all castes, high and low. Most of them are poor, and there are only a few well-to-do people. The majority of the people pursue agriculture. There are 3,600 people urban, and 14,000 artisan. There are only a few large and wealthy land-holders able to aid their tenants; but some only amongst them are likely to aid them.

8. Emigration has taken place only to a limited extent. Of the 2,200 people that left their homes, 200 have returned without being profited by the change. The condition of the rest is unknown, and therefore it cannot be ascertained how many more will return. If the season continues to be as unfavorable as it is now, it is feared that there would be a further emigration to Ceylon and other parts.

9. Relief works, such as road-making and removing prickly-pears have already been started. They are not at all sufficient to meet the exigencies of the poor. People resort to

1. Repairs to the large tanks and lakes.
2. Repairs to the ponds and wells.
3. Sinking new wells and ponds.

relief works in crowds, but owing to want of funds only a limited number is admitted. Additional relief works, that are considered

necessary, are arranged and marginally noted in the order of necessity.

10. In the three Relief houses in the town, about 1,000 disabled poor are being relieved every day, and in those of the taluqs and firkas nearly 200 are relieved. The expense for this is met from subscriptions collected from the people, and the large contribution which His Excellency the Rajah was pleased to grant for the purpose. Additional allowances have been given to chuttrams, where travellers of all castes are being relieved.

11. Thus there are at present 1,300 people employed in relief works, and people nearly equal to that number are fed in charitable institutions; and if the season continues to be in the same state as at present, it is expected that the Sirkar will have on hand about 3,600 people on the 1st of March, and 7,600 on the 1st of May, and 9,600 on the 1st of July next.

STATEMENT of Prices of Grain in Pudukottai State in Seers of 80 Tolahs

Name of Grains.	Average of October 1876.	Average of the same month of the past six years.	Average of November 1876.	Average of the same month of the past six years.	Average of December 1876.	Average of the same month of the past six years.	Average of January 1877.	Average of the same month of the past six years.	Average of February 1877.	Average of the same month of the past six years.
Paddy	20.64	24.51	15.48	24.51	10.32	24.51	9.03	23.22	10.32	22.58
Ragi	24.16	29.45	16.10	29.45	10.74	30.20	9.06	30.96	10.57	29.45
Cumbu	29.29	31.90	20.30	33.35	11.96	33.35	11.60	33.71	11.60	32.26
Varagu	58.21	51.80	29.60	48.84	45.16	48.84	23.68	48.84	25.90	53.28
Tennai	33.25	37.35	23.24	37.35	19.92	37.35	13.28	37.35	13.28	36.94
Samai	35.41	39.84	24.49	39.84	19.92	39.84	19.92	39.84	19.92	63.74
Cholum	20.67	31.27	16.96	32.99	1.92	31.27	11.13	30.21	11.13	47.62

The conversion rates for Tenai and Samai not being given in the table that accompanied Board's Proceedings, dated 8th December last, No. 3117, the general proportion of $\frac{1}{16}$ has been used in the conversion of these two grains from local measures to seers of eighty tolals, the local measure being of the same capacity as that of Tanjore which is of 133 tolals.

(Signed) H. SEWELL,
Political Agent.

No. 81. ORDER THEREON, 20th March 1877, No. 218.

The Governor in Council is glad to learn that relief measures are so well in hand, but relies on the Political Agent to keep his attention closely directed to the subject. Loss of life must be prevented.

2. It may be well to consider whether repairs or improvement of irrigation works cannot be pushed forward as relief works. The Revenue Department will be requested to furnish the 200 copies of Dr. Thacker's book on Cattle Disease required by the Sirkeie.

(True Extract.)

W. H. Smith
for Offg. Chief Secretary.

To the Political Agent, Pudukottai.
„ Revenue (Famine) Department.
„ Board of Revenue.

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72 B of March 21/1877

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Govt. of 1877
POLITICAL.

To
THE POLITICAL AGENT.

Ac. &c. &c.

Dated March, 30th.

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O.O., 20th March 1877, No. 218.

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the relief measures in this territory.
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