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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
 DEPARTMENT
Revenue

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

2948
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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

25th September 1877, No. 2,948.

Famine Relief.

Read the following paper :—

No. 695. From the Honorable T. C. HOPE, C.S.I., Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, (Agriculture and Horticulture—Famine,) to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Additional Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated Simla, 29th June 1877, No. 557.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1,963, of the 12th instant, and your telegram of the 27th instant, on the subject of the rise of prices of food-grains, the low condition of stocks, and the consequent increasing pressure upon the population of the distressed districts of the Madras Presidency.

2. The prices given in your letter are contrasted in the following table with those of March 31st as given in the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated April 6th, which were published in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India* of the 21st idem :—

Districts.	RICE.		CHOLU.		RAGI.		CUMBOO.	
	June 5.	Mar. 31.	June 5.	Mar. 31.	June 5.	Mar. 31.	June 5.	Mar. 31.
Kistna	8.45	8.26	11.15	10.27	12.94	13.9	10.38	10.53
Nellore	7.78	7.87	9.64	10.	11.74	11.83	10.06	9.8
Chingleput	8.90	9.40	9.65	10.98	10.72	11.26	...	10.78
South Arcot	8.75	...	11.	...	11.5	...	11.75	...
Trichinopoly	7.6	8.12	13.2	16.8	10.3	10.37	9.7	10.32
Tanjore	8.	...	10.	...	12.18	...	10.81	...
Madura	8.2	8.47	10.4	12.15	9.8	10.46	9.7	11.03
Tianevally	8.25	8.40	11.25	9.	10.75	11.47	11.	10.85
Kurnool	8.95	...	...	...	9.92	9.92	8.92	8.88
Cuddapah	7.73	7.91	8.66	9.53	9.25	9.01	8.93	8.36
Bellary	6.83	7.41	7.56	9.05	8.25	9.30	7.29	8.74
North Arcot	7.9	8.38	8.9	10.58	9.8	10.85	8.2	8.91
Salem	7.43	7.70	9.	9.09	8.81	9.28	8.12	8.98
Coimbatore	7.40	7.83	8.41	9.14	8.89	9.55	8.61	10.51

Estimated requirements for the year 1877-78

From this it would seem that in Kistna, Nellore, Salem, and Tinnevely prices were on June 5th pretty much the same as they were at the end of March; that in North Arcot, Trichinopoly, and Madura, there has been a considerable rise, but only in comparison with a previous lower average; that in Chingleput, Kurnool, and Cuddapah, the rise has been about half a seer, and in Bellary and Coimbatore about a seer. For South Arcot and Tanjore the prices of March are not available.

3. Since June 5th the general upward tendency of prices has continued, but the table shown below, which has been compiled from the telegraphic reports of prices on the 19th instant, which appeared in the *Gazette of India* on the 23rd instant, shows that except in Bellary a man can still everywhere procure for one anna more than the one pound ration, which in Bombay at least has been found sufficient for maintaining health; that except in Bellary and North Arcot one anna and three pies suffice to procure within about two ounces of what authorities in Madras have admitted to be sufficient, while in seven districts that sum will procure more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Under the new scale lately introduced the conditions as regards the laborers on the relief-works are still more favorable.

	lbs. per rupee.		For 1 Anna.		For 1-3.		For 1-6.	
	Rice.	Dry Grain.						
Kistna	17.81	23.95	1	7.95	1	13.98	2	3.92
Nellore	15.90	21.98	1	5.98	1	11.47	2	0.97
Cuddapah	14.75	17.98	1	1.98	1	6.47	1	10.97
Kurnool	14.31	17.94	1	1.94	1	6.42	1	10.91
Bellary	13.82	14.93	0	14.93	1	2.60	1	6.39
North Arcot	15.24	16.89	1	0.89	1	5.11	1	9.33
Chingleput	17.42	19.69	1	3.69	1	8.61	1	13.53
South Arcot	16.99	22.88	1	6.88	1	12.60	2	2.82
Salem	14.79	17.55	1	1.55	1	5.94	1	10.82
Coimbatore	15.14	17.42	1	1.42	1	5.77	1	10.13
Madura	17.99	21.86	1	5.86	1	10.70	2	0.04
Tinnevely	16.48	22.66	1	6.66	1	12.32	2	1.99
Malabar	18.17	24.20	1	8.20	1	14.25	2	4.30

4. With reference to the supply of food-grains, I am to remark that although the marginal statement, taken from the returns published weekly in the *Gazette of India*, shows a certain falling off in the imports into the Madras Presidency by sea, the last three weeks have witnessed a very decided improvement in the shipments of rice from both Calcutta and Burmah.

		By Sea.	From Raichore.
		Tons.	Tons.
Gazette of April	7th	17,768	2,050
"	14th	22,956	1,550
"	21st	17,634	1,760
"	28th	18,526	1,576
May	5th	15,666	3,106
"	12th	16,538	3,115
"	19th	15,295	2,778
"	26th	14,441	1,728
June	2nd	12,372	1,883
"	9th	14,663	3,672
"	16th	10,570	2,178
"	23rd	8,133	2,378

holding out fair inducement to the trade. It is, indeed, not improbable that this rise may lead to some increase in the numbers on the works and in receipt of gratuitous relief, and so may augment the drain on the public treasury; but this His Excellency in Council believes to be a far lesser evil than that which would result from any reversion to the plan of purchasing supplies of grain on behalf of Government, — a plan likely to be more costly and less efficient than that of leaving the present high prices to attract importation. This general principle is, of course, subject to the modification which was referred to in paragraph 9 of the instructions to Sir R. Temple of the 16th

January last, in the case of remote localities where private trade may be inactive. In such cases the best course would appear to be for the Government to advertise for supplies to be delivered at the nearest spots to which there are facilities for importation, and to give the relief to those who need it in the shape of food. It is obviously most desirable that the measure here referred to should be adopted only on the most clear and urgent grounds, and that if resorted to, it should be carried out with the utmost practicable publicity.

6. In conclusion, I am to state that with the view of informing the trade of the present condition of supplies and the continuance of the policy of non-interference hitherto observed, this correspondence will be made public with the least practicable delay.

No. 696. ORDER THEREON, 25th September 1877, No. 2,948.

Miscellaneous.

RECORDED.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

No. 557.

FROM

THE HONOURABLE T. C. HOPE, C.S.I.,
Additional Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

THE ADDL. SECY. TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

Dept. of Revenue,
Agriculture & Commerce.
Agriculture and Horticulture.
Famine.

Simla, the 29th June 1877.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1963 of the 12th instant, and your telegram of the 27th instant, on the subject of the rise of prices of food-grains, the low condition of stocks, and the consequent increasing pressure upon the population of the distressed districts of the Madras Presidency.

2. The prices given in your letter are contrasted in the following table with those of March 31st as given in the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue dated April 6th, which were published in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India* of the 21st idem:

DISTRICTS.	RICE.		CHOLU.		RAGI.		CANNON.	
	June 5.		Mar. 31.		June 5.		Mar. 31.	
	June 5.	Mar. 31.	June 5.	Mar. 31.	June 5.	Mar. 31.	June 5.	Mar. 31.
Kistna	8.45	8.26	11.15	10.97	12.94	13.9	10.38	10.53
Nellore	7.78	7.87	9.64	10	11.74	11.88	10.06	9.8
Chingleput	8.90	9.40	9.05	10.98	10.72	11.26	11.75	10.78
South Arcot	8.75	...	11	...	11.5	...	9.7	10.32
Trichinopoly	7.6	8.12	13.2	16.8	10.3	10.87	10.81	...
Tanjore	8	...	10	...	12.18	...	9.7	11.08
Madura	8.2	8.47	10.4	12.15	9.8	10.46	11	10.85
Tinnevely	8.25	8.40	11.25	9	10.75	11.47	8.92	8.88
Kannool	6.95	7.20	8.06	8.79	9.51	9.92	8.92	8.36
Cuddapah	7.73	7.91	8.66	9.53	9.25	9.91	7.29	8.64
Bellary	6.83	7.41	7.56	9.05	8.25	9.30	8.2	8.91
North Arcot	7.9	8.58	8.9	10.58	9.8	10.38	8.12	8.93
Salem	7.43	7.70	9	9.09	8.81	9.26	8.61	10.61
Coimbatore	7.40	7.62	8.41	9.14	8.89	9.55	...	...

From this it would seem that in Kistna, Nellore, Salem, and Tinnevely prices were on June 5th pretty much the same as they were at the end of March; that in North Arcot, Trichinopoly and Madura there has been a considerable rise, but only in comparison with a previous lower average; that in

Chingleput, Kurnool and Cuddapah the rise has been about half a seer, and in Bellary and Coimbatore about a seer. For South Arcot and Tanjore the prices of March are not available.

3. Since June 5th the general upward tendency of prices has continued,

	lbs. per rupee.		For 1 anna.	For 1-3.	For 1-6.
	Rice.	Dry grain.			
Kistna	17.34	23.95	1	7.95	1 13.93 2 3.92
Nellore	15.30	21.38	1	5.98	1 11.47 2 3.57
Cuddapah	14.75	17.98	1	1.98	1 6.47 1 10.97
Kurnool	14.31	17.94	1	1.94	1 6.42 1 10.91
Bellary	13.82	14.93	0	14.93	1 2.66 1 6.39
North Arcot	15.24	16.89	1	0.89	1 5.11 1 9.33
Chingleput	17.42	19.69	1	3.69	1 8.61 1 15.53
South Arcot	16.99	22.88	1	6.88	1 12.60 2 2.32
Salem	14.79	17.55	1	1.55	1 5.94 1 10.32
Coimbatore	15.14	17.42	1	1.42	1 5.77 1 10.13
Madura	17.00	21.36	1	5.36	1 10.70 2 0.04
Tinnevely	16.48	22.66	1	6.66	1 12.32 2 1.99
Malabar	18.17	24.20	1	8.20	1 14.25 2 4.30

except in Bellary and North Arcot one anna and three pies suffice to procure within about two ounces of what authorities in Madras have admitted to be sufficient, while in seven districts that sum will procure more than 1½ lbs. Under the new scale lately introduced the conditions as regards the labourers on the relief works are still more favourable.

4. With reference to the supply of food-grains, I am to remark that

			By sea.	From Raichore.
			Tons.	Tons.
Gazette of April	7th	...	17,768	2,050
"	14th	...	22,956	1,560
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"	12th	...	16,583	3,115
"	19th	...	16,295	2,378
"	26th	...	14,441	1,728
June	2nd	...	12,372	1,883
"	9th	...	14,663	3,672
"	16th	...	10,570	2,178
"	23rd	...	8,133	2,378

ments of rice from both Calcutta and Burmah.

5. Under these circumstances His Excellency the Governor General in Council is of opinion that the rise of prices which has occurred is not excessive, and considers it, on the whole, a fortunate circumstance that the rates are keeping up for the present, and thus holding out fair inducements for the continued importation of food by private trade. It is indeed not improbable that this rise may lead to some increase in the drain on the public treasury, but this His Excellency in Council believes to be a far lesser evil than that which would result from any reversion to the plan of purchasing supplies of grain on behalf of Government—a plan likely to be more costly and less efficient than that of leaving the present high prices to attract importation. This general principle is, of course, subject to the modification which was referred to in paragraph 9 of the instructions to Sir R. Temple of the 16th January last, in the case of remote localities where private trade may be in active. In such cases the best course would appear to be for the Government to advertise for supplies to be delivered at the nearest spots to which there are facilities for importation, and to give the relief to those who need it in the shape of food.

but the table in the margin, which has been compiled from the telegraphic reports of prices on the 19th instant which appeared in the *Gazette of India* on the 23rd instant, shews that except in Bellary a man can still everywhere procure for one anna more than the one pound ration, which in Bombay at least has been found sufficient for maintaining health; that although the marginal statement, taken from the returns published weekly in the *Gazette of India*, shews a certain falling off in the imports into the Madras Presidency by sea, the last three weeks have witnessed a very decided improvement in the ship-

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE,
AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE
AGRICULTURE and HORTICULTURE.
Famine.

To

THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

No. 557.

Dated Simla, 29th June 1877.

Recd. 5/7/77

24th 6/7/77
7th 1/7/77

29th 6/7/77

25/7/77

SUBJECT.

25/7/77

ACKNOWLEDGES receipt of their letter No. 1963, dated 12th instant, and makes certain remarks with reference to the rise of prices of food grains, the low condition of stocks and the consequent pressure upon the population of the distressed districts of the Madras Presidency.

It is obviously most desirable that the measure here referred to should be adopted only on the most clear and urgent grounds, and that if resorted to, it should be carried out with the utmost practicable publicity.

6. In conclusion, I am to state that with the view of informing the trade of the present condition of supplies, and the continuance of the policy of non-interference hitherto observed, this correspondence will be made public with the least practicable delay.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant.

W. Hope

Additional Secretary to the Government of India.