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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
Revenue DEPARTMENT

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No. .
From Simla, | To Madras,
„ Hon. T. C. HOPE, C.S.I., | „ Addl. Rev. Secy. to Govt.
Commerce.

Your letter, 1,963, of 12th, and telegram of 27th replied to by post to-day, comparing prices of June 5th with those of March 31st. No very serious increase perceptible. Even at prices of 19th instant more than one pound grain procurable for one anna everywhere except at Bellary. Under new scale more procurable everywhere by relief laborers than sufficient to support health. According to highest estimates by returns published in *Gazette India* importations by sea falling off somewhat; but shipments from Bengal and Burmah have increased last three weeks. Raichore supply well maintained. Government of India are 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 numbers on the works and in receipt of gratuitous relief, and may so 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 in 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 nine of the instructions to Sir Richard 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 on the most clear and urgent grounds, and that, if resorted to, it should be carried out with the utmost practicable publicity. In order to inform trade of present condition of supplies and continuance of policy of non-interference, correspondence made public.

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