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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.
B.P. No.

575

Press
Misr

Dated

9-2-1877

197

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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Proceeding of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
5th February 1877.

Read the following papers:—

No. 245. Read the following telegram from the Government of India, Department of Commerce, dated Calcutta, 26th January 1877.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE represents importance of not promising to the people remissions of land revenue but only suspending the demand. We commend question to your notice in consultation with him.

No. 246. Resolved that the following reply be despatched as a telegram:—

"Yours 26th about remissions of land revenue. Principle of assessment is a share of crop. Wet land when crop is lost for want of water receives remission by prescriptive custom. Dry land when crop is lost receives remission under special order of Board of Revenue. To introduce new suspension where remission customary would tend to check attempts at cultivation which it is desirable to stimulate. Letter follows."

No. 247. MINUTE BY THE HON'BLE SIR W. ROBINSON, K.C.S.I.

In dealing with this telegram, we ought, I think, distinctly to state the broad principle of our land revenue demand under Ryotwari settlement, viz., a right to a share of the crop of each field for the year in which it is grown, commuted into a money payment. No margin is allowed for extraordinary vicissitudes of season, and the demand is so heavy and searching that little room is left for the accumulation of agricultural capital to meet contingencies such as have overtaken the population. The proposal is therefore inconsistent with the principle of our settlement and a like impolitic and impracticable in a season like this when the crop has utterly failed, the cattle are perishing and nothing remains to exact from the bulk of our poorer ryots—in whose interest remission is being made.

The acreable demand on *wet* land is high throughout the Presidency, averaging upwards of Rs. 5 per acre. On *dry* land the demand is less; but averages upwards of Rupee 1 per acre. The total is heavy, and in this Presidency 30 millions pay about $4\frac{1}{4}$ millions Sterling of land revenue, while 60 millions in Bengal pay, I understand, considerably less.

Under the principle of our settlement when the crop, whether wet or dry, is lost, there is nothing to share. The ryot has lost his labor, seed and profits; the Government necessarily forego their demand against his unaided toil—thus remission, not postponement, is the unwritten and prescriptive law of the land when failure is so serious as to require abandonment of the State demand.

In the case of *wet* land for which water—which Government is bound to supply—has failed, remission is absolute and of right. There is no crop to share and the rent charge is high, and water-supply has not been maintained.

As regards *dry* land, the claim to remission is probably no less of right, but it is less completely conceded by Government, because the demand is on the whole lighter, and there is no guarantee in respect to needful water. Only when serious loss occurs in very bad years therefore and under special orders is remission for failure of dry crop conceded. Such a season as the one we are passing

9th February 1877

through now and circumstances render remission unavoidable on dry land where crop has wholly failed.

On these grounds I entirely dissent from Sir Richard Temple's proposals as contrary to the principle of a Ryotwari Settlement and customary immemorial law of the country, and as being specially unjust under the circumstances of the season and of agricultural population at this time.

Season like the present one must, irrespective of the loss of seed, labor and profits necessarily incurred and of debt already contracted, plunges the whole population in pecuniary difficulty of no ordinary magnitude for the maintenance of life; and still further pecuniary demand is before the agriculturists to enable them to resume their agricultural operations and obtain seed and cattle. To keep a debt of a million Sterling and more hanging over their heads in the shape of suspended taxations will prove most disastrous to the whole well-being of the country and must postpone its future restoration. I do not believe that in the long run, it would be found possible to recover the suspended demand and plenary remission must prove the final necessity. Why in the meantime hold so injurious a demand *in terrorem* over the country? The policy now pressed upon us by Sir Richard Temple is the objectionable practice of Native Zemindars, which so burdens the serfs they make of their cultivators. A policy which we take every opportunity of deprecating, and as opportunity (Court of Wards) occurs, of abrogating. Nothing has been more strongly deprecated and discouraged by our administration than the accumulation of arrears and State debts against our ryots, and this is specially a time for adhering to this policy.

It may not be out of place here to call attention to the enormous drain on the means of our people for mere subsistence which is going on at this moment and promises before the end of our distress to assume gigantic proportions. The imports of food-grain in the single port of Madras amounted during the 6 months between July and December 1876 to Rs. 145,00,000 against an average for the same 6 months of the previous three years of about 9,50,000. The exports of agricultural produce have, of course, fallen off very greatly, in respect to some articles ceased, and this import of food is being met from the small savings of the people. They will have spent millions on foreign food ere the country recovers, and I ask from whence is this suspended demand to be met?

31st January 1877.

(Signed)

W. ROBINSON.

No. 248.

ORDER THEREON, 9th February 1877, No. 575.

Land Revenue, No. 6.

ORDERED that the following letter be dispatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

(Signed)

D. F. CARMICHAEL,

Secretary to Government.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Telegram from Secy of Commerce,
Govt of India d/26th/1-77

The present Rules are here -

I. Wet land - where owing to absence of water which the Govt undertake to supply - the land is left waste or the crop sown is totally lost - we remit the full assessment. If, however, the Ryot grows a dry crop on his 'wet land' because it is the best thing he can do under the circumstances, we charge him the highest rate of the village for dry

Suggestion - We might always charge him at least the average dry rate which there worked out to be one rupee & an unstatable fraction; because if he does not get the water, he at least has the land. An exception must be made in those very bad years when having the land is no use to him; those years, like the present, when 'the heavens are brass and the earth iron'.

II. In districts not yet settled by the Settlement Dept, partially lost wet crops get partial remission - but in such districts only. The reason is because in these districts the rates are often high & unequal, & no allowance has been made in them for bad seasons.

III. As to dry - no remissions are permitted except with the Board's sanction; it is only the granted in exceptional years.

2) In regard to the general question, whether

This is beside the question before us I do not change rules at this time

Rule is remission out right

Govt. of (1877) Madras.
REVENUE.

1877

1877

1877

1877

Remissions of Land-revenue which are being made in Madras Presidency at request of the present Board. - Resolving to forward to the Government of India observation with reference to the representation made to them by Sir Richard Temple on the subject of -

a plan is to be introduced
 of postponing, instead of
 something, the appointment in those
 years where no crop has been possible -
 he got out with, I presume, to
 consult the Bd. of Rev.

The kinds of poor peasant proprietors
 at Madras must be considered:

Ex. gr.

The number of leases is 2,392,064;

Of these, those under 10 Rs. = 1,251,750

From 10 @ 30. = 455,716

from 30 @ 50. = 121,553

from 50 @ 100 = 79,085

All the rest i.e. above £10. 38,825

3. How can we put the decree against
 the vast majority of such a tenantry,
 as this - and that in a year succeeding
 one of famine, with its consequences to
 live stock too?

D.S.L. 30/1-7.

This number earnestly
 represents
 31/1

Wol

Munich

The demand is so heavy &
Ranking has better room in left
for the accumulation of specie &
Capital & need emigration.
Such as have over taken the
Ranking

In dealing with this Telegram we ought distinctly to state the ~~the~~ principles of our ~~under Rostown settlement~~ ^{under Rostown settlement} ~~of the crop~~ ^{of the crop} ~~for the year~~ ^{for the year} ~~in which it is grown~~ ^{in which it is grown} ~~committed~~ ^{committed} ~~into a money payment~~ ^{into a money payment} ~~no margin~~ ^{no margin} ~~is allowed~~ ^{is allowed} ~~extraordinary~~ ^{extraordinary} ~~season~~ ^{season} ~~The rate on wet land is high~~ ^{The rate on wet land is high} ~~throughout the Presidency averaging~~ ^{throughout the Presidency averaging} ~~upwards of Rs. 5 per acre. On~~ ^{upwards of Rs. 5 per acre. On} ~~dry land~~ ^{dry land} ~~the rate is less, but averages~~ ^{the rate is less, but averages} ~~upwards of Rs. 1 per acre, In this~~ ^{upwards of Rs. 1 per acre, In this} ~~Presidency 30 millions pay~~ ^{Presidency 30 millions pay} ~~4³/₄ millions~~ ^{4³/₄ millions} ~~Sterling~~ ^{Sterling} ~~while 60 millions in Bengal~~ ^{while 60 millions in Bengal} ~~pay~~ ^{pay} ~~considerably less.~~ ^{considerably less.} ~~When the crop is lost there is~~ ^{When the crop is lost there is} ~~nothing~~ ^{nothing}

There is no crop to
share and the rent-
charge is high. Can
additional reason
is often alleged viz. that
the Govt is responsible
to keep up the water
supply - this doctrine

and state further pecuniary
demand is before the appi. the
cultivist
and winter supply has not been
maintained.

Dismiss postponed

is a pecullar operations & I
have seed & cattle; I keep a
dash of a million sterling and
more hanging over their heads.
The shape of suspended lay-
-tion will prove most des-
-trous to the best living of the
County of its future re-
-formation. I do not believe
in the long run it will be found for-
-to know the suspended land and
the most worse the final
the meantime

in the case of the loss of
this description of crop.
Such a season as the
one we are passing
through ^{have} ~~had~~ ^{circumstances}
wonderfully ^{unusually}
entirely different
from Sir Richard Temple's
proposals as contrary
to improve a demand in Corn
in the country? &c.

The principle of a Ryotwari Settlement
to the Customary individual
Law of the country, and as to specially

is equal under the circumstances of the
season and agricultural settlement is a share of
population at this time.

31/11 Mr. John

I have nothing to add
to my worthy colleagues
remarks except to state
my entire concurrence

It would be most
to introduce an entirely
new system, that of
suspension in a year

which we can hardly keep

the majority of our land-holders
alive. R. Ellis

I would reply by wire
that principle of
crop. Wet land when crop
is lost for want of water receives
remission by prescriptive
custom. Dry land when
crop is lost receives remission
by special order of
Board of Revenue.

To introduce now suspension
where remission customary
would check tendency to
attempt at cultivation which
it is desirable to stimulate.

& also write at length

B. C. 72

R. A.

Read the following telegram from
the Govt of India, Dept of Commerce,
of Calcutta: 26th Jan'y '77

Resolved that the following reply
be despatched as a telegram:-

"Yours 26th about Remissions of
land revenue. Principle of aforesaid
is a share of crop. Wet land when
crop is lost for want of water receives
remission by prescriptive custom.
Dry land when crop is lost receives
remission under special order of
Board Revenue. To introduce now
suspension where remission customary
would tend to check attempts at
cultivation which it is desirable to
stimulate. Letter follows."

B. C. 21/1/77.

Report for the West

Minute

In dealing with this Telegram, we ought ^{to} distinctly to state the broad principle of our land revenue demand under Ryotwari Settlement viz a right to a share of the crop of each field for the year in which it is grown, commuted into a money payment. No margin is allowed for extraordinary vicissitudes of season, and the demand is so heavy and searching that little room is left

Benjamin
T. C. C. C.

4/2-2-77

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left for the accumulation of
Agricultural Capital to meet
Contingencies such as have
overtaken the population. The
proposal is therefore inconsistent
with the principle of our Settlement
and alike unpolitic and
impracticable in a season like

this when the crop has utterly failed the cattle
are perishing and with the repairs & bread from the bulk of our power
The acreable demand on Ryots - in those
wet land is high throughout interest remission
is being made -
the Presidency averaging upwards
of Rs. 5 per acre. On dry land
the demand is less; but
averages upwards of Rs. 1 per
acre. The total is heavy & in
this Presidency 30 millions
pay about $4\frac{3}{4}$ millions sterling
of

of Land Revenue, while 60 millions
in Bengal pay, under a good
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tlement when the crop, whether wet or
dry, is lost, there is nothing
to share. The Ryot has lost his
labor, seed and profits; the
Government necessarily forego
their demand against his unpaid
tax - thus Remission, not post-
ponement, is the unwritten and
prescriptive law of the land
when failure is so serious as
to require abandonment of the
State demand.

In the Case of Wet Land
for which water - which Govt.
is bound to supply - has failed,
remission

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Agre Right! There is no crop to share
Cont And the rent-charge is higher
over and water supply has not
pro, been maintained.

As regards Dry land,
the claim to remission is probably
no less of right but it is less
Completely Conceded by Government,
because the loss damaged is on
wet the whole rights and there is
the no guarantee is respect to need
of it water. Only when serious loss
the occurs in very bad years therefore
are and under special orders is
are Remission for failure of Dry Crop
the Conceded. Such a Season as
the one we are passing through
now

now and circumstances render
Remission unavoidable on Dry
land where crop has wholly failed -
On these grounds I entirely

desist from Sir Richard
Temple's proposals as contrary
to the principle of a Ryotwari
Settlement and Customary
immemorial law of the Country,
and as being specially unjust
under the circumstances of the
Season and of agricultural
population at this time.

A Season like the present one
must disrespect of the loss of
seed, labor & profits necessarily
incurred and of debt already
Contracted - plunges the whole
population in pecuniary difficulty

of no ordinary magnitude for the
maintenance of life; and still
a further pecuniary demand is before
the agriculturists to enable them
to resume their agricultural
operations and obtain seed
and Cattle. To keep a debt of
a million sterling and more
hanging over their heads in the
shape of suspended taxation
of will prove most disastrous to
the well-being of the Country and
must postpone its future restoration.
I do not believe that in the long
run, it would be found possible
to recover the suspended demand
and pecuniary remission must
prove the final necessity. Why

in the meantime hold so injurious
a demand in terrorum over the
Country? The policy now pressed
upon us by Sir Richard Temple
is the objectionable practice of
Native Zamindars, which so
burdens the serfs they make of
their cultivators - a policy which
we take every opportunity of
deprecating, and as opportunity
(Court of Wards) occurs, of
abrogating. Nothing has been
more strongly deprecated and
discouraged by our administrators
than

than the accumulation of arrears
and State debts against our Ryots
and this is specially a time for
adhering to this policy.

It may not be out of place here
to call attention to the enormous drain
on the means of our people for mere
subsistence which is going on at this
moment and promises before the end
of our distress to assume gigantic
proportions. The imports of food
grain in the single port of Madras
amounted during the 6 months
between July and December 1876
to Rs 14,50,000 against an average
for the same 6 months of the previous
three

15/10
three years of about Rs 9,50,000. The
imports of agricultural produce
have of course fallen off very
greatly - in respect to some articles
ceased, and this import of food
is being met from the small savings
of the people. They will have spent
millions on foreign food ere the
Country recovers, and I ask from
whence is this suspended demand
to be met?

31 Jan

W. Robinson

Loca/No.

FROM (Station)

OFFICIAL INSTRUCTIONS.—

503)

FROM (Person)

FROM

(L. L.)

H

AT

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M₁ on the

BY

ADRAS 26-1-77

Telegraph Master.

26

No 576-
Ordered that the following letter be
despatched to the Govt of India

9 Feb 1877

Revenue 1877 Depth
No 1150.

To:

From

Govt of India

Rev: Hrd Depth

Dated 26 Jan^r.

Recd. 8 Feb^r.

Informing that
Sir Richard Temple repre:
sents importance of not
promising to the people
remissions of land revenue
but only suspending the
demand &c.

Ord 245 p 248