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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. / B.P. No.	1974	Press. / Mis.
Dated	7-12-1878	197 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1874
1

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

7th December 1878, No. 1,974.

Read the following paper:—

No. 87. From A. O. HUME, Esq., C.B., Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce, (Statistics), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Calcutta, 30th November 1878, No. 12.

I AM directed to forward copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, No. 168, dated 5th September last, with enclosures, and to request that, with the permission of His Grace the Governor in Council, you will cause copies of the papers to be circulated amongst persons interested in the tea industry in Madras with reference to the suggestion made in them for the adoption of chests of uniform size.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, dated India Office, London, 5th September 1878, No. 168.

I TRANSMIT, for Your Excellency's information, a copy of a recent correspondence* on the method of weighing tea, adopted by the English Custom-houses, and I beg to draw attention to the suggestion made in the concluding paragraph of the letter of 31st August, to Mr. J. Stalkartt, regarding the desirableness of securing for Indian tea chests such a uniformity of size and weight as is customary in the China tea trade.

* Letter from Mr. Stalkartt (without date).
" to " dated 31st August.
" from Board of Trade, dated 13th August, and its enclosure, dated 3rd August.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From J. STALKARTT, Esq., to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

I AM a tea planter, and, in the name of all the tea planters of India, beg the assistance of Government on the following subject.

Great loss is sustained by the tea planter through the system of weighing tea carried out in Her Majesty's Custom-house in England, from 1 to 2 lbs. per chest, or 2½ per cent.

This system is exposed in the *Indian Tea Gazette*, No. 21, page 97, volume II. It appears that the boxes are weighed and not the tea. The 2 lb. logs per chest is as much Her Majesty's as the planters.

This supposed loss had been brought to the notice of planters by buyers, therefore most planters put an excess into the chests, in some cases 1 lb., and still there is loss of 2 lbs. per chest. The English brokers tell us that this is not their fault, but the fault of Her Majesty's Customs, and they have no power to remedy it. I therefore, in the name of my brother tea planters of India, beg your most noble assistance in that you will, of your goodness, bring this deficiency to the notice of Her Majesty's Board of Customs, as this is Her Majesty's loss as well as the planters, " so that the teas may be weighed and not the chests."

Also, that duplicate weights of Her Majesty's Custom-house be forwarded to all the tea districts of India, that each planter may have his weights tested and corrected yearly before the season commences. It is thoroughly absurd to arrive at the weight of the tea by weighing the chests. A broken chest can never weigh as much as a chest unopened. A great outcry is made, because the tare of the chests in England is less than the tare at the factory in India, where the tea is made and is carried down in all the invoices, for it would damage the teas to expose them to the damp air in Calcutta. The air of the tea districts is much more damp than the air of Calcutta, that it is not possible to supply dry chests. Chests lose weight gradually upon the road, and on arrival in England the loss is from 1 to 2 lbs. This is deducted from the tea and not from the chest: hence a loss both to Her Most Gracious Majesty as well as to

your humble servants, the planters. Again, all teas are thoroughly desiccated, or they would not keep, so that on opening the chests and bulking they are more likely to gain than to lose weight.

Furthermore, we object to our teas being bulked, as this exposure reduces the value of the teas; it is not a raw article like hides or corn, but more like preserved provisions that would be spoiled if every pound tin was opened for examination.

If any doubt should rise respecting the contents of any invoice, a guarantee having been given, it can always be verified by a certain percentage being opened and tested by weighing *tea*, not the chest.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

From the Under-Secretary of State for India, to J. STALKARTT, Esq., dated India Office, 31st August 1878.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, received on the 6th June last, addressed to Viscount Cranbrook, on the subject of the method of weighing tea at the English Custom-house, and to forward in reply a copy of a letter received at this office from the Board of Trade, enclosing one from the Commissioners of Customs, from which you will perceive that both those departments are opposed to any alteration in the direction suggested by you. I am to add that, from inquiries instituted by Lord Cranbrook, it would appear that great irregularity exists in the sizes and weights (when filled) of the Indian chests, and I am to suggest that, if the same uniformity in this respect were attained as has been secured in the China tea trade, there would probably be less ground of complaint on the score of delay and erroneous valuations.

Dated 13th August 1878.
" 3rd " "

ENCLOSURE No. 4.

From the Secretary to the Board of Trade, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India, dated Board of Trade, London, 13th August 1878.

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, transmitting, by direction of the Secretary of State for India, a letter from Mr. J. Stalkartt, in which he complains of the method of weighing tea adopted by the English Custom-houses, and requesting the opinion of the Board of Trade thereon.

In reply, I am directed to state that the Board of Trade have been in communication with the Commissioners of Customs on the subject, and have received from them a letter, of which a copy is annexed, for Lord Cranbrook's information. In this letter, the Commissioners state generally that the regulations now in force have the approval of the Trade in this country, and they oppose any alteration.

Dated 3rd August 1878.

Under these circumstances, the Board of Trade are not prepared to express any opinion adverse to the practices of which Mr. Stalkartt complains, which appear to be primarily matters for the consideration of the Customs in their dealings with traders here, and which ought to be regulated by what is due to the revenue on the one side, and the convenience of the trade on the other. The Board of Trade are the more disposed to this view because of the interest the Customs would apparently have in agreeing to what Mr. Stalkartt suggests in order to get more duty than they now receive.

ENCLOSURE No. 5.

From the Assistant Secretary to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs, London, to the Secretary to the Board of Trade, dated Custom-house, London, 3rd August 1878.

THE Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs having had under consideration Mr. Giffen's letter of the 2nd instant, transmitting copy of a letter addressed to the Board of Trade by the Secretary of State for India in Council, enclosing a communication from Mr. John Stalkartt, in which he states that great loss is sustained by the tea planters in India in consequence of the system of weighing tea followed at the Custom-houses in this country, and Mr. Giffen having signified the request of the Board of Trade to be favored with the views of this Board upon the subject, I am desired to point out that the objections brought forward in Mr. Stalkartt's letter, and in the correspondence annexed to it, refer mainly to the process by which this Department arrives at the tare to be deducted for the chests in which the teas are contained, and to the draft of 1 lb. allowed to the buyer in this country, and as regards the first of these objections, I am to acquaint you, for the information of their Lordships, that Indian teas (like those from China) are weighed and tared to the even pound on importation into this country, the practice being to reject any odd number of ounces when taking the

gross weight of the full chest, and to take the next complete pound beyond the actual weight when weighing the empty chest to ascertain the tare to be allowed. This system may operate to some extent to the advantage of the purchasers of the tea in this country, by giving the net weight of the tea for duty and, as between buyer and seller, at somewhat less than the quantity really contained in the chest, but the arrangement having been in operation for many years, and being acquiesced in by the trade generally, the Board of Customs are not prepared to recommend that it should be altered.

If the practice of weighing to the even pound be observed at the gardens, and the teas are placed in dry chests, there should be no difference between the gross weights of the packages as taken at the gardens and this country; but it is stated in Mr. Stalkartt's letter that the air of the tea gardens is very damp, and that the *packages* dry in transit to Calcutta, and therefore some loss in the gross weights may reasonably be expected.

From enquiries which have been made, it is ascertained that 1 per cent. is about the average loss on garden invoices, so far as regards customs weight; in some instances, however, there is a gain on the gross weight, tare, and net weight showing that the weight taken at the gardens is not reliable.

As regards the 1 lb. draft allowed to the trade, and which accounts for half the loss complained of, I am desired to observe that it is a trade practice of many years' standing, applicable equally to Chinese as to Indian tea, and that it is not probable that the trade in this country would acquiesce in any proposal for its discontinuance.

Mr. Stalkartt requests "that the tea may be weighed and not the chests," but this arrangement could not be carried out without causing delay in passing the teas, and the alteration of practice would probably be objected to by merchants and others in this country, who regard the question from a buyers' point of view.

The bulking of the tea is an indulgence which is granted on the special request of the consignee or other person interested in tea in this country, but it is quite competent for Mr. Stalkartt to give what directions he thinks fit to his Agents in England as regards this matter.

With reference to Mr. Stalkartt's suggestion, that duplicates of the weights used by this Department should be forwarded to all the tea districts of India, that each planter may have his weights tested and corrected yearly before the season commences, I am instructed to point out that English weights and scales, such as are used by this Department, can be purchased at any of the scale-makers, &c., in this country, and most probably also in Calcutta, and that it is for the growers to make any arrangements they may deem desirable with the local authorities to test the correctness periodically of the weights in use at the gardens.

No. 88. ORDER THEREON, 7th December 1878, No. 1,974.

Miscellaneous.

FORWARDED to the Board of Revenue, who will cause the papers to be circulated as desired by the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) L. A. CAMPBELL,
Under-Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. W. H. Freuch.

Govt. of [1878] Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated December 78.

Printed title.

Read.

Entd.

G.O., 7th December 1878 No. 1,074.

DECEMBER.

Nos. 57-65.

The Chiefs.—Forwarding to the Board of Revenue for circulation, letter from the Government of India communicating copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State on the subject of securing for Indian — chests uniformity of size and weight as is customary in the China Trade.

Vide ent. 5656/78.

1376
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No. 12.

FROM

A. O. HUME, Esq., C.B.,

Secretary to the Government of India,

To

The Secretary to the Government of Madras

Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

Statistics.

CALCUTTA, *the 30th November 1878.*

SIR,

I AM directed to forward copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, No. 168, dated the 5th September last, with enclosures, and to request that with the permission of His Grace the Governor in Council you will cause copies of the papers to be circulated amongst persons interested in the tea industry in Madras with reference to the suggestion made in them for the adoption of chests of uniform size.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

A O Hume

Secretary to the Government of India.

Pd.

Revenue Department

1878. No 5364.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE.

STATISTICS.

No 1974

Forwarded to the Board of Revenue, who will cause the papers to be circulated as desired by the Govt of India.

To

The Secy to the Govt of Madras

Encl

No 12.

7 December 1878

Dated Calcutta, the 30. November 1878.

Copies to Board of Revenue and Dr Bean

5/12

SUBJECT.

FORWARDS copy of despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 168, dated 5th September 1878, and enclosures, for circulation amongst persons interested in the tea industry, with reference to the suggestion made in them for the adoption of chests of uniform size.

No 1974 - 7 December 1878

With an order

1874

3

No. 168, dated India Office, London, 5th September 1878.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,

To—The Government of India.

I transmit, for Your Excellency's information, a copy of a recent correspondence* on the method of weighing tea, adopted by the English Custom-houses, and I beg to draw attention to the suggestion made in the concluding paragraph of the letter of 31st August, securing for Indian tea chests such a uniformity of size and weight as is customary in the China tea trade.

* Letter from Mr. Stalkartt (without date).
" to " dated 31st August.
" from Board of Trade, dated 13th August, and its enclosure, dated 3rd August.

From—J. STALKARTT, Esq.,

To—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

I am a tea planter, and, in the name of all the tea planters of India, beg the assistance of Government on the following subject.

Great loss is sustained by the tea planter through the system of weighing tea carried out in Her Majesty's Custom-house in England, from 1 to 2 lbs. per chest, or 2¼ per cent.

This system is exposed in the *Indian Tea Gazette*, No. 21, page 97, volume II. It appears that the boxes are weighed and not the tea. The 2lb. logs per chest is as much Her Majesty's as the planters.

This supposed loss had been brought to the notice of planters by buyers, therefore most planters put an excess into the chests, in some cases 1 lb., and still there is loss of 2 lbs. per chest. The English brokers tell us that this is not their fault, but the fault of Her Majesty's Customs, and they have no power to remedy it. I therefore, in the name of my brother tea planters of India, beg your most noble assistance in that you will, of your goodness, bring this deficiency to the notice of Her Majesty's Board of Customs, as this is Her Majesty's loss as well as the planters, "so that the teas may be weighed and not the chests."

Also, that duplicate weights of Her Majesty's Custom-house be forwarded to all the tea districts of India, that each planter may have his weights tested and corrected yearly before the season commences. It is thoroughly absurd to arrive at the weight of the tea by weighing the chests. A broken chest can never weigh as much as a chest unopened. A great outcry is made, because the tare of the chests in England is less than the tare at the factory in India, where the tea is made and is carried down in all the invoices, for it would damage the teas to expose them to the damp air in Calcutta. The air of the tea districts is much more damp than the air of Calcutta, that it is not possible to supply dry chests. Chests lose weight gradually upon the road, and on arrival in England the loss is from 1 to 2 lbs. This is deducted from the tea and not from the chest; hence a loss both to Her Most Gracious Majesty as well as to your humble servants, the planters. Again, all teas are thoroughly desiccated, or they would not keep, so that on opening the chests and bulking they are more likely to gain than to lose weight.

Furthermore, we object to our teas being bulked, as this exposure reduces the value of the teas; it is not a raw article like hides or corn, but more like preserved provisions that would be spoiled if every pound tin was opened for examination.

If any doubt should arise respecting the contents of any invoice, a guarantee having been given, it can always be verified by a certain percentage being opened and tested by weighing *tea*, not the chest.

Dated India Office, 31st August 1878.

From—The Under Secretary of State for India,

To—J. STALKARTT, Esq.

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Dated 13th August 1878.
" 3rd " "

Dated Board of Trade London, 13th August 1878.

From—The Secretary to the Board of Trade, London;
To—The Under Secretary of State for India.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, transmitting, by direction of the Secretary of State for India, a letter from Mr. J. Stalkartt, in which he complains of the method of weighing tea adopted by the English Custom-houses, and requesting the opinion of the Board of Trade thereon.

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Dated 3rd August 1878.

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Dated Custom-house, London, 3rd August 1878.

From—The Assistant Secretary to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs, London,
To—The Secretary to the Board of Trade.

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1878.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, AGRICULTURE, AND COMMERCE.

STATISTICS.

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

No. 168.

Dated 5th } *September 1878.*
Recd. 28th }

Rev 5364/8

SUBJECT.

FORWARDS copy of correspondence on the method of weighing tea adopted by the English Custom-houses, and draws attention to the suggestion made in the enclosures, regarding the desirableness of securing for Indian tea chests such a uniformity of size and weight as is customary in the China tea trade.