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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

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83

No. 3,054.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 4th December 1876.
Read the following letter from H. T. ROSS, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector,
to J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, dated Madaksera, 23rd November 1876, No. 312:—

I REGRET to find that in your letter, No. 406, dated 31st October last, and in the Revenue Board's Proceedings of the 3rd instant passed thereon, the remarks made by me regarding the scarcity of grain in the local markets have been entirely misunderstood.

2. I have been credited with laying stress upon the fact that there is very little grain "in the country". I do not know what there is in my letter which has led to the impression that I stated such a fact or hold any such opinion. On the contrary I have known all along that there is a good deal of grain in the country, and in the letter under reference I even stated in words that many of the cultivators were still willing to part with some of their surplus stock and put it into the markets. But there is a vast difference to the distressed classes between grain "in the country" and "grain in the markets", and it is only as long as the holders of grain have a surplus to dispose of and a hope of replenishing their stock by further cultivation that the surplus in the country (by which phrase I mean, in the present case, my taluqs) will go into the local markets. There could be no doubt that after three successive bad seasons the surplus supplies in the country were very meagre, and that if the north-east monsoon failed there was no hope of further cultivation to supplement them. The important point which I did lay stress upon was that a little of the grain produced in the north-east monsoon became certain, and I apprehended a consequent difficulty in the way of the distressed classes procuring grain. This anticipation soon became a matter of fact, and it only required personal inspection to realize how speedily the markets from being well-stocked became insufficiently supplied.

3. With reference to importation, what I said was that in ordinary times the supplies of local markets were not regularly imported supplies, by which I mean supplies purchased not locally but at a distance from the place of sale and carried thither by the seller, and when the locally-produced supplies were seen to be failing, it was an alarming fact that their place was not being taken by imported supplies, that private enterprise seemed to be numbed, and trade continued dull. As the mere demand of the distressed classes did not appear to enliven local trade, and their difficulty in getting grain still continued, I counselled Government importation. Now trade is brisk, but the stagnation of the markets was beyond doubt until an artificial stimulus was given to private enterprise by the recently adopted system of Government purchasing in the local markets and giving advances to trading middlemen to bring grain from a distance which is only Government importation under another name, but with large profits to the middlemen, and enhanced prices to all consumers. Even now, with all this attraction to induce the grain "in the country" into the markets, little or none of it is to be got, and the present supplies are coming from Bangalore, Toomkoor, and other parts of Mysore. I mention this because it confirms what I stated about there being very small surplus supplies in the taluqs, and because you seemed to think that holders of grain in the country would come forward, and that at all events grain (by which of course is meant the staple grain of the bulk of the people) would be imported.

and could be sent, if necessary, from Bellary, whereas it now turns out that the merchants nor Mr. Price can get any raggy or cholera in Bellary.

4. As I would undoubtedly have made a serious mistake if I had said was very little grain in the country, or that merchants would not import even such a stimulus as Government now gives them, I am anxious that I should not be under suspicion of having committed such an error as that now attributed to me. I have the honor to refer to matters of importance going on under my own eyes. I have the honor to request therefore that this explanation may be sent on to the Board of Revenue with reference to their Proceedings on my Hindupur Report.

SUBMITTED to the Board with reference to the Proceedings of the Board, No. dated the 3rd instant.

BELLARY,
29th November 1876.

(Signed) J. H. MASTER,
Collector.

RECORDED.
(A true Copy and Extract.)

W. J. Lewis
Acting Secretary.

To the Collector of Bellary.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Ed. W. J. Lewis.

Recd 1876. Dec 14
BOARD OF REVENUE,
MADRAS.
2/5/77

PROCEEDINGS, 4TH DEC. 1876, NO. 3,054.

Copy 13 Dec 17/1

Encl.

Recd 14 Dec

DECEMBER.
No. 3,054.

Copy 13 Dec 17/1
Copy—Recording letter from Collector of Bellary submitting explanation of Acting Head Assistant Collector regarding alleged scarcity of at certain places. 2/5/83