M.R.O. 14–5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 179A — Press Mis.

3774. 3779

Dated 15— 1— 1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

G.O. No. 179A

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 15th January 1867.

No. 377 H. Read the following :—

No. 380.

Extract from the Proceedings of the General Famine Relief Committee held on the 4th December 1866.

V. "Read letter from the Agent and Manager of the Shevagunga Zemindary, forwarding a complete report as to the present state of the Zemindary, and requesting assistance towards the Famine Fund established there.

"Resolved that Mr. Fischer be thanked for his very valuable report, which will be submitted for the information of Government, with advertence to Mr. Fischer's observations in paragraphs 36 to 47. Resolved also that a grant-in-aid of Rupees 3,000 be made to the Relief Fund which Mr. Fischer has established in Shevagunga."

* In original (to be returned).

Submitted* for the information of Government.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Honorary Secretary.

MADRAS,
11*th December* 1866.

Memorandum from G. F. FISCHER, Esq., Agent and Manager of Shevagunga Zemindary, dated Shevagunga, 9th November 1866, No. 394.

1. The Lessee of the Zemindary has sent me a letter from Mr. Dalyell, Honorary Secretary to the Famine Relief Committee at Madras, dated 10th September last, annexing twelve questions regarding the present scarcity. These questions have been sent to me for reply. In the course of my remarks I shall have occasion to refer to various Circular Orders which have been published in the "Shevagunga Zemindary Gazette" during the current year. I shall, therefore, send Mr. Dalyell the Gazettes themselves, from Nos. 1 to 46, to facilitate reference. I regret the delay that has taken place in drawing up this Memorandum, but it was owing to circumstances over which I had no control. With these preliminary observations I proceed to reply to Mr. Dalyell's questions.

Q. I.—What has been the average price per Madras Garce of rice, raggy, and other food-grains in the months of April, May, June, July, and August, as compared with their prices in the corresponding months last year ?

A. I.—2. The average price per Madras Garce of rice, raggy, and other of the chief food-grains in the months of April, May, June, July, August, and September of the current year, as compared with their price in the corresponding months of the past year, is as follows :—

Grains.		April.		May.		June.		July.		August.		Sept.	
		1865.	1866.	1865.	1866.	1865.	1866.	1865.	1866.	1865.	1866.	1865.	1866.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Wet.	Paddy ...	250	385	250	385	250	385	290	420	350	450	350	500
	Rice ...	450	640	450	640	450	640	480	700	540	800	580	915
Dry.	Raggy and Cholum...	230	360	230	360	230	360	260	380	300	420	300	450
	Cumboo and Thenay...	180	300	180	300	180	300	200	330	220	360	220	360
	Varagu and Valy ...	150	200	150	200	150	200	160	240	180	260	180	260

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3. Shevagunga is a *Waraputh* Zemindary, that is, the rents are paid chiefly in kind; money rents are also paid, but they are limited, the proportion being about three-fourths of the former to about one-fourth of the latter. As a general rule, whatever crop the ryot raises, he divides with the landlord; the ryot's share being called the *Kudiwarum*, and the landlord's the *Melwarum*. The crop is generally divided equally when the grain cultivated is paddy; but in the instance of dry grains, two-thirds of the crop is Kudiwarum, while a third only is the Melwarum. There are many exceptions to this rule, some of which it will be necessary to notice hereafter.

4. When a crop is divided, the ryot at once takes possession of his Kudiwarum share, while the Melwarum is sold either to him or to any other ryot of the village, or, failing this, to *any* outsider willing to purchase the same. But under all circumstances, and as a standing rule, it is sold at the current rates of the day ruling in that particular locality, whatever those rates may be; experience has shewn that it is better to dispose of the Melwarum as soon as possible after the crop is divided for cash, at the most favorable rates obtainable on the spot, than to hold it in expectation of better prices, exposed as it invariably is, not only to all the changes and chances of the weather, but to the almost certain risk of its being stolen or misappropriated.

5. And it is because there generally is so large a quantity of Melwarum grain on hand for sale, that the information here called for has been supplied with accuracy. The average prices mentioned in the above tabular statement are the wholesale rates at which the contractor's Melwarum grain (rice excepted) has been sold. Ryots sometimes dispose of their surplus Kudiwarum share to the local Chetties and other bazaarmen who, in turn, retail the same; but, as a general rule, they retain what they raise, partly for seed for the succeeding crop, but chiefly for their own consumption. The difference between the wholesale prices of the Melwarum and the retail bazaar rates of the day, varies from Rupee 1 to Rupee 1-8-0 per Kullum, in favor of the former. I have given the average prices of grain *per Madras Garce* as requested, but as the Kullum, in which all the Zemindary accounts are kept, is 54 Madras Measures, it is easy to convert the one description of measure into the other, a Garce or 3,200 Measures being 59$\frac{7}{27}$ths, or very nearly 60 Kullums.

Q. II.—Whether the scarcity has been caused by a deficiency of production, or by larger exports than usual.

A. II.—6. The present scarcity has been caused by a deficiency of production. The Zemindary is 1,460 square-miles in extent. It consists of 2,070 villages with their hamlets, and is essentially a rice-growing estate, seldom or never dependent upon importations for local consumption. But as there are no large hills or heavy forests in it, which would attract rain, it depends for its supply of water almost entirely upon the periodical monsoons, not to mention smaller rivers; the Vigay is its only "foreign" source of supply. This river in its south-easterly course to the sea feeds about sixty large tanks in four of the southern talooks of the Zemindary, but it affords at best a very uncertain supply. It is only when there have been very heavy falls of rain on the mountains on the south-east of the Dindigul valley, where it rises, that the Vigay is full. It is generally speaking a dry river throughout the greater part of the year.

7. If what is now commonly known as the *Periar project*, which I understand has been before Government since 1802, were sanctioned and carried out, there would, it is estimated, be a prospective increase in the revenue of the Madura District to the extent of three lacs of Rupees. The Zemindaries of Ramnad and Shevagunga would also be greatly benefited by the Vigay receiving the drainage of the lands cultivated by the Periar waters, and by any surplus water which there may be after feeding the tanks in the Government Talooks. It is the duty of Government to prevent scarcity and famine as far as human power can do so, and this can best be done by storing *all* the water available, instead of allowing so large a per-centage of it throughout the country to run waste into the sea.

8. Besides the Vigay, there are three smaller rivers or streams in the Zemindary, but the area dependent upon them for wet cultivation is very limited. These, too, like the Vigay, are full generally during the monsoons, and then only for a few days at a time. It seldom happens that the tanks fed by the rivers which flow through the Zemindary are full, when those dependent upon local rains are dry. Both rain-fed and river-fed tanks, therefore, are generally full about the same time, consequently there is either *general* prosperity throughout the Zemindary, or *general* scarcity.

9. About four-fifths of the cultivation depends almost entirely upon the north-east monsoon, and about one-fifth on the south-west. The first is distinguished as the *Kalum*, and the second as the *Koday* crop. The loss is, therefore, greater or less according as it is the north-east or south-west monsoon which has failed. Where both monsoons fail, there is generally speaking a very extensive failure, if not a total loss of crop. A total failure of crop is prevented by means of the well cultivation, which is so extensively had recourse to in all seasons of drought, and which, under the present administration, is liberally encouraged.

10. The present scarcity is owing to an extensive failure of both the past monsoons, or in other words, of both the past Kalum and Koday crops. The Kalum crop consists almost entirely of paddy, which is our chief article of consumption. The Koday consists chiefly of dry grains, which is generally the food of the poorer classes. A really good Kalum and Koday crop is estimated to yield about 14,00,000 kullums of grain of all kinds, in all the villages throughout the Zemindary. When the yield falls much below this estimate, it will be seen presently that, unaided by importations, there is far from being sufficient food for the 395,600 inhabitants which, according to the census of Fusly 1271, was estimated to be the population of the Zemindary. The consequence is that while thousands of the able-bodied, for whom it is impossible *always* to find sufficient remunerative labor, are compelled to emigrate, chiefly to Ceylon, in quest of labor and food, the larger number of those who remain are exposed to extreme privation and suffering, such as is being witnessed during the present scarcity.

11. A scarcity in the Shevagunga Zemindary can only be occasioned (1) by a deficiency of production, or (2) by larger exports than usual; and the drain upon its resources can only be obviated (1) by large importations of grain, or (2) by extensive emigration.

12. That the present scarcity has been caused chiefly by a deficiency of production, will be abundantly apparent by the subjoined table, exhibiting as it does

the gradual decrease of production of both wet and dry grains, during the past three Fuslies, the period embraced in the present lease of the Zemindary :—

Fuslies.	Wet Grain.			Dry Grain.		
	Quantity of land cultivated with paddy. A Chey being 1¾ acres.	The yield or out-turn. A Kullum being 54 Madras Measures.	Rate of yield per Chey.	Quantity of land cultivated with dry grains. A kurkum being ¾ acre.	The yield.	Rate of yield per Kurkum.
	Cheys.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.
1273	66,000	10,00,000	15	70,000	3,50,000	5
1274	50,000	6,50,000	13	56,000	3,00,000	5
1275	42,000	4,50,000	10¾	45,000	2,00,000	4½

13. But since according to the above statement, there has been an actual out-turn of 4,50,000 kullums of paddy, and 2,00,000 kullums of dry grains during the past Fusly, the question will naturally suggest itself: Why then this scarcity ?

14. The produce of the Zemindary is disposed of in three different ways, there are, in fact, three different proprietors who enjoy the Melwarum, or have the right of disposing of the same, and we shall call each disposition (1) *Ain*, (2.) *Durmasanum*, and (3) *Devastanum* and *Chuttrum*, according to the purpose to which it is applied, the proportions being 1¼ of the first, 1 of the second, and ¾ of the third, as shewn in the subjoined table :—

Total out-turn.		Proportionate division into				Shares.	
		Ain, 1¼ share.		Durmasanum 1 share.		Devastanum and Chuttrum, ¾ share.	
Paddy.	Dry Grains.	Paddy.	Dry grains.	Paddy.	Dry grains	Paddy.	Dry grains.
Kullums 4,50,000	Kullums 2,00,000	Kullums 1,87,500	Kullums 83,330	Kullums 1,50,000	Kullums 66,670	Kullums 1,12,500	Kullums 50,000

15. Of the 2,070 villages and hamlets of which the Zemindary is composed, 881 are *Ain*. These generally divide the crop with the contractor. In the instance of paddy they give him one-half of their out-turn, and in the instance of dry grains, one-third. In Fusly 1275 it was about 93,750 kullums of the former, and about 27,775 kullums of the latter. These receipts by the landlord constitute his *Melwarum*, and it is this Melwarum which, under the present lease, the contractor of the Zemindary has at his disposal for sale. It is the Melwarum share of only the Ain villages which, with certain favorable rents paid by the Durmasanums, Devastanums, a nd Chuttrums, forms the aggregate income upon which his yearly profits depen d. The former fluctuates with the seasons, the latter is fixed. In a season of scarcity, therefore, the greatest sufferer is the Zemindar, or under the present arrangements, *the Contractor*.

16. Of the remaining villages, 729 are Durmasanum, Jeevithum, Inam, &c. These are held chiefly by Brahmins on very favorable terms. There are about 7,000 shareholders, who pay an annual money rent of about 40,000 Rs., or about 6¾ Rupees per share. Paying the least rent, they are generally the wealthiest tenants

of the Zemindary, and as such they have little or no occasion to dispose of the crops they raise. The utmost which it is estimated they sell is one-fourth of their total out-turn, that is, about 37,500 kullums of paddy, and about 16,670 kullums of dry grains. The rest they retain for their own consumption.

17. The Devastanums and Chuttrums have 460 villages. About three-fourths of their produce is expended exclusively upon these institutions, while only about one-fourth, viz., 28,125 kullums of paddy, and 12,500 kullums of dry grains, is disposed of at the current rates of the day.

18. The total quantity of surplus grain, therefore, that has been available for sale *during the past Fusly*, which terminated in June last, was as follows :—

Grain available for sale.	Wet.	Dry.
	Kullums.	Kullums.
Contractor's Melwarum according to paragraph 15	93,750	27,775
Durmasanum surplus do. do. 16	37,500	16,670
Devastanum and Chuttrums do. do. 17	28,125	12,500
Total ...	1,59,375	56,945

making a grand total of 2,16,320 kullums.

19. Now of the population of 395,600 in the Zemindary, it is estimated that about ⅜ths or 148,350 are actual cultivators, as distinguished from employés, laborers, and others, who have each a Kudiwarum right, and as such have their respective Kudiwarum shares of grain for their own consumption, while about ⅝ths or 247,250 form the non-cultivating or non-productive class.

20. The cultivating class in the Zemindary, as in every other country, must, as a rule, raise not only sufficient food for themselves, but also for the non-productive class. This is especially necessary in a Zemindary which is generally unaided by importations. Wherever the local supply is not equal to the demand, and there are no importations to counterbalance the local deficiency of production, the inevitable results are and must be, either a partial scarcity, or a general famine in a greater or lesser degree.

21. The following data then being given, viz., (1) the actual out-turn of produce during the past three Fuslies, and (2) the population, (which for the sake of account we shall fix nearly at the figure which it was at the census taken in Fusly 1271,) and (3) fixing the quantity of grain consumable by each individual at 2½ kullums per year, or about ⅜ths of a measure of cleaned grain per day, *as it really is on an average*, the subjoined tables will, I trust, serve to give the Famine Relief Committee at Madras an *approximate* idea (1) as to whether the agricultural class had raised sufficient food for themselves, and if so, had left a surplus; (2) whether sufficient food had been raised for the non-productive class also, and if not, what was the deficiency; and (3) dividing the total out-turn equally amongst the whole population, whether each man had sufficient food for consumption during Fuslies 1273, 1274, and 1275.

Statement No. 1.—Did the agricultural class raise sufficient food for themselves, and if so, what was the surplus?

Fusly.	The amount available by the agricultural class after paying Melwarum or disposing of their surplus.				The agricultural class.	The actual quantity of grain required by them, giving to each individual 2½ kullums per year.	But as the quantity available by them according to Col. 5 exceeded the actual quantity required as stated in Col. 7, the surplus was	That is to say, there was sufficient grain for the number stated below in excess of the number mentioned in Column 6.	If the actual quantity of grain available, according to Column 5, were equally divided amongst the 148,350 of the agricultural class, the grain available by each individual instead of being only 2½ kullums per year was
	Ain.	Durmasanum.	Devastanum and Chuttrum.	Total.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.
1273 ...	3,05,556†	3,37,500†	2,53,125†	8,96,125	148,350	3,70,875	5,25,306	210,122	6
1274 ...	2,18,750†	2,37,500†	1,78,125†	6,34,375	148,350	3,70,875	2,63,500	105,400	4¼
1275 ...	1,49,305†	1,62,500†	1,21,875†	4,33,680	148,350	3,70,875	62,805	25,122	3

Statement No. 2.—Was there or was there not sufficient food raised for the non-agricultural class also?

Fusly.	Supposing the agricultural class had sufficient grain for their own consumption and disposed of the surplus, the grain available by the non-agricultural class from the undermentioned sources was				To this must be added the surplus over and above the quantity actually required by the agricultural class according to Statement No. 1.	Making the total quantity available by them.	The non-agricultural class.	The actual quantity of grain required by them, giving to each individual 2½ kullums per year, is	But as the quantity available by them, according to Col. 7, exceeded the actual quantity required as stated in Col. 9, the surplus was	That is to say, there was sufficient grain for the number stated below in excess of the number mentioned in Column 8.	If the total quantity of grain available according to Col. 7 were divided equally amongst the 247,250 of the non-agricultural class, the grain available by each man instead of being only 2½ kullums was	But as the quantity available by them according to Col. 7 is below the actual quantity required as stated in Col. 9, the deficiency of production was	Therefore the total quantity of grain available instead of being sufficient for the non-agricultural class was sufficient only for the number stated below.	And the total quantity available divided equally amongst the non-agricultural class instead of being to each man 2½ kullums was only
	Ain.	Durmasanum.	Devastanum and Chuttrum.	Total.										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.
1273...	2,56,945†	1,12,500†	84,374†	4,53,819	5,25,306	9,79,125	247,250	6,18,125	3,61,000	144,400	4	.....	.....	.....
1274...	1,77,034†	79,167†	59,374†	3,15,625	2,63,500	5,79,125	247,250	6,18,125	.....	.....	.....	39,000	239,650	2¾
1275...	1,21,525†	54,170†	40,625†	2,16,320	62,805	2,79,125	247,250	6,18,125	.....	.....	.....	3,39,000	111,650	1½

Statement No. 3.—Was the *total* out-turn sufficient for the *whole* population?

Fusly.	Population according to the Census of Fusly 1271.	Grain actually required for this population at the rate of 2½ kullums per head per year.	The actual out-turn.	Difference between Columns 3 and 4.		At the rate of 2½ kullums per head per year. the actual out-turn was sufficient for	When the out-turn was sufficient, the quantity available by *each* individual at the rate of 2½ kullums per year was	When the out-turn was insufficient		Amount actually available to each individual in consequence of the deficiency of production was
				Surplus.	Deficiency.			It was sufficient by.	And for the undermentioned numbers.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	No.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.	Kullums.	No.	Kullums.
1273	395,600	9,89,000	13,50,000†	3,61,000	.....	540,000	$3\frac{3}{8}$	.....	.....	$3\frac{3}{8}$
1274	395,600	9,89,000	9,50,000†	.....	39,000	380,000	.....	39,000	15,600	$2\frac{3}{4}$
1275	395,600	9,89,000	6,50,000†	.....	3,39,000	260,000	.....	3,39,000	135,600	$1\frac{1}{8}$

22. In these calculations I have omitted all fractions, and have given round numbers. I do not pretend to say that these figures are perfectly correct in every particular; still, the population, the actual quantity of food raised as nearly as it can be correctly ascertained, (not taking into account of course all the pilferings of grain which take place throughout the Zemindary, and which it is scarcely possible effectually to prevent in a *Warapath* Zemindary, before and after division of crop), and the actual requirements of each individual being pretty correctly given, the other figures are fair and reasonable deductions drawn from these facts, and will serve, as I have already observed, to give us an *approximate* idea of the cause of our present scarcity.

23. The foregoing tables require no comment, they speak for themselves; but to shew that the figures in Columns 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Statements 1 and 2, and in Column 3 of Statement 3, are not fictitious, I append the subjoined table, the figures which correspond in the four tables being marked with a cross to facilitate reference.

No. 4.—Statement of produce of Fuslies 1273, 1274, and 1275, shewing the quantity available for consumption and for sale.

Landlord, according to paragraph 14.	Proportionate division into shares.	Description of grain.	Fusly 1273. Ain Kudiwarum, and available for consumption by Durmasanums, Devastanums, and Chuttrums.	Fusly 1274. Ain Melwarum, and surplus of Durmasanums, Devastanums, and Chuttrums.	Fusly 1274. Ain Kudiwarum, and available for consumption by Durmasanums, Devastanums, and Chuttrums.	Fusly 1274. Total outturn of wet and dry grain.	Fusly 1275 Ain Melwarum, and surplus of Durmasanums, Devastanums, and Chuttrums.	Fusly 1275 Ain Kudiwarum, and available for consumption by Durmasanums, Devastanums, and Chuttrums.	Fusly 1275 Total outturn of wet and dry grain.
1	2	3	5	7	8	9	10	11	12
			Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.	Kullums.
Ain.	Cols. 4, 7, and 10, ½ share Melwarum... Cols. 5, 8, and 11, ½ ,, Kudiwarum... Cols. 4, 7, and 10, ½ ,, Melwarum.... Cols. 5, 8, and 11, ½ ,, Kudiwarum...	Wet.	2,08,334	1,35,417	1,35,417	2,70,834	93,750	93,750	1,87,500
		Dry.	97,222	41,667	83,333	1,25,000	27,775	55,555	83,330
Durmasanums.	Cols. 4, 7, and 10, ½ share available for sale. Cols. 5, 8, and 11, ½ share retained by Durmasanum and other shareholders.	Wet.	3,05,556†	1,77,084†	2,18,750†	3,95,834	1,21,525†	1,40,305†	2,70,830
		Dry.	2,50,000	54,167	1,62,500	2,16,667	27,500	1,12,500	1,50,000
			87,500	25,000	75,000	1,00,000	16,670	50,000	66,670
Devastanums and Chuttrums.	Cols. 4, 7, and 10, ¼ share available for sale. Cols. 5, 8, and 11, ¾ share retained by Devastanums and Chuttrums.	Wet.	3,37,500†	79,167†	2,37,500†	3,16,667	54,170†	1,62,500†	2,16,670
		Dry.	1,87,500	40,624	1,21,875	1,62,499	28,125	84,375	1,12,500
			65,625	18,750	56,250	75,000	12,500	37,500	50,000
Grand Total.....			2,53,125†	59,374†	1,78,125†	2,37,499	40,625†	1,21,875†	1,62,500
			8,96,181	3,15,625	6,34,375	9,50,000†	2,16,320	4,33,680	6,50,000†
			4,53,819	1,12,500†	62,499	1,74,999	54,170†	1,62,500†	2,16,670
				62,499	21,875	84,374†	28,125	84,375	1,12,500
				21,875		21,875	12,500	37,500	50,000
			4,53,819	1,74,999	84,374†	2,59,373†	95,295†	2,84,375†	3,79,670

24. We have next to consider whether larger exportations than usual have, on the one hand, contributed to the present scarcity, and whether, on the other hand, importations and emigration have either separately or together tended in any degree to mitigate the prevalent distress. These two questions are so intimately connected with each other, that I shall consider the subject of exportation, importation, and emigration together. I have already observed that the Zemindary seldom or never depends upon foreign aid for local consumption. It generally grows sufficient grain for itself and to spare, and we have seen that in Fusly 1273 there was an actual surplus of 3,61,000 kullums. Recently large importations of paddy to the estimated extent of about 50,000 kullums, chiefly from Tanjore, were made by the leading Natukotay Chetties, but though a large quantity of it was sold, the greater portion, I should say two-thirds, was intended to be stored for daily expenditure at the various Chuttrums, which these Chetties maintain in two of the northern talooks of the Zemindary, Shakay and Kundathavy. These importations, therefore, have not made any sensible impression upon the general scarcity.

25. With regard to exportations, there were the usual outlets of grain, though not by any means to the same extent as in previous years, and these were partly from Tiroopavanom to Madura, which is twelve miles distant, partly from Yemminaswarum to Permagudy, both which towns are on opposite banks of the Vigay, the former in the Shevagunga, and the latter in the Ramnad Zemindary, but chiefly to Arupookota, a flourishing town in the District of Madura, and the residence of rich Natukotay Chetties. I am not prepared to say what the quantity of grain exported really was, but I believe it to be one-third in proportion to the importations.

26. The two Districts of Tinnevelly and Madura supply Ceylon very largely with labor for the Coffee plantations. It is estimated that the number of those who emigrated from the Shevagunga Zemindary to Ceylon, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly, during the past twelve months, was about 15,000. This represents a saving of about 37,500 kullums of grain, but in place of these emigrants, not to mention those who travel through the Zemindary on their way to the salt pans at Vuttanum, and those who vist the pagodas at Therugoshtiyoor and Kaliarkovil, we have during each year, it is estimated, upwards of 50,000 pilgrims and others on their way to and from Ramaswarum, by two main routes through the Zemindary, viz., the Trunk Roads Nos. 15 and 13, the former by Vanamadura, and the latter by Kalianagary. Some of these pilgrims are, it is true, fed at our Chuttrums, but the proportion is comparatively very small. They are generally the Byragees, Gosayees, and other mendicants or professional beggars from the north, but thousands of respectable people, who are above receiving eleemosynary aid, come from all parts of the country on a pilgrimage to sacred Ramaswarum, and Shevagunga contributes very largely indeed to their support.

The Beriz of the Ain portion of the Zemindary, upon which the income of the Lessee chiefly depends, was as follows:—In Fusly 1273 (six months of which only were under his administration) seven and a half lacs, Fusly 1274 ten lacs, Fusly 1275 seven lacs!

It has thus, I trust, been made sufficiently clear to the Famine Relief Committee that our present scarcity is due mainly to a deficiency of production.

Q. III.—Whether it has been general, or restricted to particular localities, with the probable reasons ?

A. III.—27. The scarcity, it will no doubt be inferred from the preceding remarks, is *general*, and is not restricted to any particular locality. The reasons for this *general* scarcity have also been fully stated. But although the scarcity is general, it has not been so keenly *felt* in three of the northern talooks of the Zemindary, because of the timely relief so extensively and so liberally afforded by the Natukotay Chetties, thousands of whom either reside or have extensive landed property or pecuniary dealings, especially in two of the above-mentioned three talooks, Shakay and Kundathavy.

28. Possessed of immense wealth, the principal Natukotay Chetties are always engaged either in building new Pagodas and Chuttrums, or in repairing existing ones, in taking up waste lands for cultivation, in digging wells for drinking water, and in constructing large tanks for cultivation. All these works give constant employment to thousands, who would perhaps otherwise be compelled to emigrate.

29. But their liberality and public spirit does not stop here. Each of the leading men amongst them maintains a Chuttrum of his own, where it has hitherto been the practice to feed only the more respectable description of wayfarers, but during the present scarcity, these men have not hesitated, at my request, to extend their bounty, and regardless of expense, to feed very often as many as a thousand applicants a day, irrespective of caste or creed. The number of Chuttrums which these Chetties maintain is about twenty. After having established four Poor Houses in four of the chief towns of the Zemindary, where I found it was absolutely necessary to give *immediate* relief, but where unfortunately there are no wealthy men to do so, I very recently spent a fortnight at Shakay and Kundathavy amongst the Natukotay Chetties, and personally witnessed, and therefore bear testimony to their munificent charities.

Q. IV.—At what period the distress first manifested itself, and among what class of the population ?

A. IV.—30. The last kalum crop was cut in February and March last, and it apparently afforded means for local consumption till about the end of May. The distress first begun to be felt in June, and it has continued ever since in consequence of the all but total failure of the koday cultivation, which, as a supplementary crop, succeeds the kalum, and is generally cut in the months of June and July.

31. The distress in the Zemindary is most keenly felt, as it is everywhere else, by the poorest classes, such as the Shanars, Pullers, Vulliers, Pariahs, and generally by all who have either no lands of their own, or no means of remunerative employment, the greater proportion being of course women and childern. In a tour I made into two of the talooks of the Zemindary, Sholapuram and Tripatore, in the month of July last, it was most painful to witness the extreme poverty and utter destitution of most of the poorer classes. It was their heart-rending cries for help and succour, which induced me immediately after to establish the four Poor Houses, which now give daily relief to upwards of 1,500 of the most miserable and wretched of the inhabitants of the Zemindary.

Q. V.—Whether it was restricted to any particular caste or castes ?

A. V.—32. The scarcity does not appear to have been *restricted* to any particular *caste*. I do not see why it should be, or why a scarcity should affect one *caste* more than any other. *Every* caste feels the scarcity more or less, the privation and suffering varying in degree according to the means at the disposal of each for resisting it, or according to the means available to each for profitable labor or employment. Not to mention men of substance and means, such as the Natukotay Chetties, the Durmasanum shareholders and Inamdars, who are the wealthiest amongst the landowners, feel the scarcity the least, the cultivating ryots feel it to a greater degree, while the non-agricultural or non-productive classes, those who live from hand to mouth, and by manual labor alone, feel it most bitterly.

33. The scarcity of food has been so great that the poor have been driven to eat the roots of the plantain tree, the bulbs of the lotus, the potatoe which grows in the beds of tanks, the seeds or "rice" of the rank grass which grows on waste lands, grain found in ant-hills, unripe wild fruit of all kinds, particularly the country fig, green tamarind, wild greens of every kind, and the unripe palmyra fruit, the last most extensively.

Q. VI.—Whether the scarcity has caused an unusual amount of crime ?

A. VI.—34. I believe I am correct when I say that the scarcity *has* caused an increase of crime. I mean petty thefts, chiefly sheep-stealing. There was a feeling of insecurity everywhere, particularly in the town of Shevagunga, in consequence of these petty thefts, preceded as they used to be, in some instances, by house burning ! This is only to be expected during a time of scarcity, but I do not think the increase of crime has been *unusually* great, nor have there been many *grave* crimes committed ; this is due almost entirely to Mr. Robinson's perfect system of Police. His *system*, I repeat, is perfect, and there can be no doubt that crime will be and can only be reduced to a minimum, when the state of the public exchequer will enable him to make the meshes of his net-work organization much smaller.

35. The fact of sheep-stealing being one of the chief crimes committed, proves, I think, that needy, starving men are only too ready to avail themselves of the opportunity to possess themselves of property which, being the least protected, is therefore the most subject to temptation, regardless of the risk incurred by the unlawful possession. I have, however, no statistics whereon to base my assertion with regard to the actual increase of crime. My information is derived from hearsay reports during my tours into the Zemindary. The criminal returns of the Magistracy and Police of the District will, no doubt, have supplied Government with accurate information, respecting the increase of both petty and grave crimes during the present scarcity.

Q. VII.—Whether the public health has been affected by it, as shewn by a comparison of the number of deaths from different diseases during the last six months as compared with the corresponding period of last year ?

A. VII.—36. The public health has been *seriously* affected by the present scarcity, or rather by the recent drought. Besides cholera, no other disease has prevailed to an unusual extent. There has been some small-pox, but it did not rage

as an epidemic. Cholera, it was generally supposed, prevailed during the cold weather only when the new grain came in, and chiefly in places where the laws of sanitation were disregarded. It is found, however, in the Zemindary, that cholera prevailed in the hottest weather, and generally where there was the greatest amount of distress and destitution; starvation, and perhaps, I should add, eating unwholesome substitutes for food, seems to have been the chief causes of the cholera. It is said that more cholera has prevailed in the Shevagunga Zemindary, during the past twelve months, than is within the memory of the "oldest inhabitant." Thousands have fallen victims to this disease which, as far as my information extends, has invariably been of a virulent type. The prevalence of cholera, combined with the distress for want of food, greatly enhances the *miseries* of the people. I regret that the incomplete state of the Mortuary Returns, received from the Curnums of the Zemindary, preclude my submitting a statement comparing the deaths during the past six months with the corresponding period of last year.

37. There can be no doubt that a smaller number would be swept away by any epidemic if the laws of sanitation were implicitly obeyed, and under this impression, I published a few simple rules regarding the treatment and prevention of the spread of cholera in the Zemindary Gazette, and sent copies of them to the six Sub-Magistrates in and around the Zemindary; but I apprehend that comparatively very little good can be done in the matter of preserving the public health, unless the people paid more attention to sanatory measures; unless they were *compelled* to do so by a legislative enactment; unless the Towns Improvement Act were introduced into the larger towns of the Zemindary at first, and ultimately extended to all the villages; unless officers of health were appointed throughout the country; and unless the Magistracy of all grades and the Police took a more active interest in such matters.

C. O. No. 188, *vide* copy of my letter to them.

38. Cattle and sheep also suffered *exceedingly* from the drought; both suffered from the want of proper or sufficient fodder and water, and cattle died by thousands from the disease known as the "*foot and mouth disease.*" This malady, according to Dr. Thacker, is "a specific fever, contagious, generally epizootic, and attended with the formation of vesicles or blisters on the tongue, inside the lips, roof of the mouth, and in the clefts of the hoofs." The mortality amongst the cattle is being severely felt by the ryots during the present cultivating season. The food of cattle, during the drought, was chiefly the unripe fruit, the tender leaves, and the soft pithy substance found in the trunk of the palmyra tree. When the Collector of the district applied to me in July last for a supply of palmyra nuts, I was in hopes of being able to send him at least *six lacs** of the same, but in consequence of their having, in the meantime, formed the food of both man and beast, I shall not be able to send him even 10,000† nuts!

* C. O. No. 142.

† See my letter to the Collector of 8th October 1866.

39. The cactus is scarcely met with in this Zemindary. At Salem, where it is a perfect nuisance, the prisoners were very often employed to remove it, as it was

supposed to engender cholera, and this they used to do by first burning off the thorns. This process was, however, always a very slow one, and it was found that the work of destruction proceeded more rapidly when the prickly-pear was first cut down with swords, then pitch-forked into hampers made of gunnies, and at once removed and buried, the feet of the prisoners employed in this work being protected by thick leather slippers. The thorns with which each plant bristles; the fact that a single thorn entering the flesh by accident invariably leads to a large troublesome boil or abscess; the fact that the prickly-pear is generally infested with snakes, chiefly the cobra; and the very troublesome process of removing the thorns; to say nothing of the danger to the life of cattle, if by chance they eat a plant from which the thorns have not been properly removed, all these will, I fear, always operate as drawbacks to the general use of the cactus as food for cattle. Their native owners too will be slow to adopt an innovation. Under these circumstances, I think the cactus may prove useful as an article of food for cattle only as a *dernier resort*, when no other description of fodder is available. Preference will no doubt be always given to the palmyra fruit, wherever it is to be had in abundance, or to any other substitute as cheap and as easily procurable.

Q. VIII.—Whether there have been any deaths from actual starvation, and if so, how many?

A. VIII.—10. I have *heard* that there have been some deaths from actual starvation, but I am not in a position to state the number, nor is it likely that the number will ever be correctly ascertained. I have little or no faith in the Mortuary Returns now submitted to Government, and even if these returns can be depended upon for accuracy as regards the *number* of deaths, I doubt whether those who have died from actual starvation have been correctly ascertained and entered. For this the present *system* of registering the deaths is at fault, and it certainly is in the hands of Government to remedy this defect.

41. Those who applied for relief when the poor houses were first opened, were mostly on the very verge of death from starvation. Such being the case, I think it may safely be presumed that the larger proportion of them would have died but for the timely relief, of which they have since been made the grateful recipients.

42. In connection with the preparation of the Mortuary Returns, I have already observed that the present *system* of registering the deaths is at fault. This important work is left entirely to the Village Curnums, except, I believe, at places where the Municipal and Cantonment Acts have force. With few exceptions, who are the *Village Curnums?* Can *their* returns be depended upon for accuracy? What mode of scrutiny has been adopted to ascertain the correctness, or to check the incorrectness of their returns? Practically none! And yet these returns are accepted as true, they are condensed at the talooks,* and ultimately submitted to Government, and I believe upon them alone are based important statistics regarding the health of the community!

* Board's Standing Circular No. 37 of 1866.

43. So far as the Zemindary is concerned, these returns are not only inaccurately prepared, but they are submitted without the slightest regard to punctuality in point of time, and practically there is no way of ensuring either their

accuracy or their punctual submission. I complained, on one occasion, of the shortcomings of a Curnum in this respect to the Collector * of the district, but the answer I received was † that "as Collectors had no power to punish the Curnum "of a village in a settled Zemindary, I must get him removed by a decree of the "Court if he does not perform his duties." If I were to institute a suit in Court against every Curnum who fails to submit his monthly register of deaths, how is the legitimate work of the Zemindary to go on? And is it expedient that I should do so? And yet we in Zemindaries have practically no remedy against a Curnum! Let him commit himself to any extent, let him defy us, let him offend every law, human or divine, and all we can do is to institute a *civil* suit against him for his dismissal! Such is the unsatisfactory state of the law!

* 20th April 1866.
† 24th ,, ,,

44. Then the very large consumption of paper which these returns involve, many of the returns too being blank! This circumstance alone, when economy is the order of the day, will, I hope, induce Government to substitute the system which I am about to advocate. Pass a law making the registration of deaths *compulsory*. Every town and village is supposed to have a *Munsiff*, but if every town and village throughout the country has not a Munsiff resident within it, appoint fit men to the vacant posts. As soon as a death occurs in any town or village, let the Munsiff report the fact, stating the name, sex, age, caste, and occupation of the deceased, and the date and cause of death *at once* to the Magistrate, European or Native, within whose jurisdiction he resides, and mentioning any other particulars which he thinks important. Let the failure, on the part of the Munsiff to report any death on the very day it occurred, be punishable with a small fine for the first offence, and dismissal from office if the offence be repeated. The reports from the Munsiffs may be on cadjan, as a measure of economy, but simple printed forms would be better to ensure uniformity. Abolish the Registers which are at present kept at the villages. They are of no use whatever, as the original reports are always available at the Offices of the Magistracy. On the 1st of each month, let each Magistrate, European and Native, collate all the reports which he has received during the previous month, condense all the information they contain, and submit the two reports to the Board, called for in their Standing Circular No. 37 of 1866. The returns by this system are likely to be more punctually submitted and more accurately rendered, the useless work of submitting *blank* returns will be avoided, and there will be an *immense* saving of paper.

45. It would, at the same time, be advisable to make the registration of all marriages and births also compulsory, and to enforce a similar system in regard to the reporting of these two domestic occurrences. The statistics which all these reports will furnish might be collated and condensed by the Principal Inspector General, Medical Department, who might be appointed Registrar General, and a monthly report submitted by him to Government, and published in the Official Gazette, in the same way as is now done in England.

46. There always appears an unwillingness on the part of Government to enforce wholesome sanatory improvements by means of legislation; so long as this feeling lasts, the public health *must* suffer, especially in times of scarcity. Vaccination is not yet made compulsory, hence small-pox decimates the population; sanitation is only now being regarded as a separate and distinct study. The Towns Improvement Act is only now being introduced, but unfortunately only into a few places, the larger area of the Presidency being thus *still* deprived of wholesome sanatory improvements. If the public health is to be preserved at all, let a comprehensive scheme be devised by men who have made sanitation their *study*, and let *paid* Officers of Health be appointed to give effect to the plans they recommend by means of a legislative enactment. It is practically useless attending to the health of one place, to the exclusion of every other *in its vicinity*. Many of the "ills which flesh is heir to" are attributable no doubt to the neglect on the part of the people of the laws of sanitation, but it is only when gaunt disease is combated and conquered *everywhere* throughout the country, by means of comprehensive sanatory reforms, that there ever will be a prospect of mitigating human suffering, and perhaps of causing *epidemics*, in particular, to flee the country.

47. It is generally supposed that the Natives of India are opposed to legislation. The masses no doubt are averse to innovations, but the more enlightened among the Native community are, I am sure, convinced that legislation keeps pace with the civilization of a country. But let the masses, too, see that it is to their immediate advantage, or to the prospective advancement of their country, that legislation is had recourse to in any particular instance, and it is remarkable how readily they submit to any measure of reform, and tacitly, if not openly, acknowledge the benefits which they have derived from the same. Have they rebelled against the Income Tax, Stamp, Post Office, Arms Registration, and, now, the Municipal Acts? So will it be if vaccination and sanatory reform be made compulsory by law!

Q. IX.—Whether any, and what special measures have been taken for the relief of distress, and if so, what amount has been, or is about to be expended from Zemindary funds or famine works?

A. IX.—48. Long before the last kalum crop was cut, it was anticipated that there would be a large deficiency of produce, and special measures were taken, from time to time, for the relief of distress. The rents of the Zemindary being payable, as I have already observed, chiefly in kind, the landlord, in the protection of his interests, is obliged to maintain a large number of servants, whose duty it is to submit various accounts to him from time to time, by which he is enabled at any moment to form an approximate idea of the prospective returns of the estate.

And receiving, as he does, so large a quantity of grain as his Melwarum share, the Lessee of the Zemindary assumes the character of a large grain-dealer. The Durmasanums, Devastanums, and Chuttrums, are his only competitors, but as the quantity of surplus grain which they generally have for sale is comparatively small, and as they are, moreover, scattered all over the Zemindary, their competition is never of a very formidable character. With these exceptions, no private merchant in the Zemindary can possibly compete with him in the sale of grain, unless he were to import it at an enormous cost to himself, chiefly from Tanjore. But it is to the interest of the Lessee never to ask too high price for his grain, for if he were unreasonable, there would not only be no purchasers for his large stock of grain, upon the sale of which his income mainly depends, but the richer Nattukottay and other

Chetties would combine to import grain themselves, if driven to the necessity of doing so. An unscrupulous landlord, especially in a Waraputh Zemindary, can generally, however, command the market and regulate its prices. It certainly appears to be in his power to do so. Food must be consumed, and consumers, where there is little or no competition, will be compelled to buy from him alone. Such being the case, if in an ordinary year the Lessee is at liberty to rule the market and to demand capricious rates for his Melwarum, how proportionately great is his power of doing so in a time of scarcity?

49. When the kalum crop of Fusly 1275 was cut in the months of February and March last, various proposals were made to me on behalf of the Lessee, to store as much of the Melwarum grain as accommodation could be found for, and not to sell it until the scarcity was at its highest, the rates at which the grain might then have been sold would be *famine* prices, and such no doubt would have been the course pursued if the Zemindary were in the hands of one who cared more to enrich himself than to study the welfare of the thousands committed to his care.

50. But so far from taking advantage of the present unparalleled scarcity, the Melwarum grain has invariably been sold *to the ryots* at the prices ruling in their respective villages on the day of sale. The sales too have been made, wherever it could possibly be made, to those ryots who divided their crop with the landlord, and generally almost immediately after the division of crop. It is only when a ryot had a larger quantity of Kudiwarum than he thought he could himself consume, and did not therefore desire, or perhaps could not afford to purchase the Melwarum, that it was sold to any other party willing to buy the same. The option to purchase was invariably first given to the ryot, who shared the crop with the landlord.

51. The great object in view was to give the *ryots* the opportunity of purchasing as much grain as they could possibly require, or could afford to purchase, and thereby to make them less dependent, if possible, upon the many unscrupulous local money-lenders and others, at whose mercy ryots generally are, and less dependent for food upon the retail *bazaar rates* of the day. In all our dealings with our tenants, the principle which guides and governs us, is the firm unalterable belief that our own prosperity and the prosperity of the Zemindary is identical with the prosperity of our ryots. I am aware that no reform can so greatly and so permanently tend to the benefit of the ryot, as a radical change in the present system of Waraputh tenure, but this is a misfortune, to alter which the present Lessee is denied the liberty, but which he does not the less deeply and sincerely regret.

52. The foregoing remarks, it will be seen, bear pointed reference to a system which has been introduced only from Fusly 1275, viz., that of selling the Melwarum grain to *the ryots* in preference to all others, at the current rates of the day. It will naturally be supposed that the contractor would rather sell the large quantity of grain, which circumstances throw periodically upon his hands, to rich Natukottay Chetties and others, who are not only able and willing to make large purchases, but who would pay him for it *at once*, and thus save himself a vast amount of trouble and annoyance.

53. The system which was in force up to Fusly 1274 *was* to sell the Melwarum grain, on what was called Durkhasts, to rich Natukottay Chetties. A Chetty would make interest with the Zemindary agents, and offer a certain fixed price

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 15th January 1867.

for a large quantity of grain, the produce of many villages, or perhaps of groups of villages called Mahanums, or sometimes of one or more talooks. Content with a fixed price, and receiving prompt payment for the same, the bargain was complete, and the grain ordered to be made over to the wholesale purchaser. He, in his turn, would sometimes sub-divide his purchase for a fixed remuneration, recoverable from those who had not the same amount of interest as himself with the Zemindar. The ryots, who in the generality of instances were already largely indebted to these wholesale purchasers, and who had perhaps also mortgaged their own Kudiwarum share of crop to them, were thus completely at their mercy, and were compelled to purchase even the ordinary necessaries of life at the capricious rates demanded by these unscrupulous men, which were mostly exorbitant and extortionate. If their stock of grain fell, they would import grain to continue to secure the market to themselves, and to keep the agricultural classes within their grasp. The inevitable consequence was that, while, on the one hand, comparatively a few became immensely rich, thousands of hardworking ryots, on the other hand, were completely impoverished, and in order to evade the extortionate demands of these Chetties, it was the practice with many to flee the country.

54. This system has now received its death blow,* and instead of food and wealth being allowed to accumulate in the hands of a few, *food* at least is available to the many at the current rates of the day. Had the Durkhast system been in force during the present scarcity, how completely more or less the whole Zemindary would have been at the mercy of the Chetties, can be better imagined than described. While I cannot but in simple justice to them give to these men, on the one hand, a large meed of praise for their unvarying and timely munificent charities, I feel constrained, on the other, to express my reprehension of the inordinate greed and love of money, and the unworthy means which are often employed to gratify "the ruling passion," which are the distinguishing features in the character of the Natukottay Chetties. The contrast is most remarkable.

* See C. O. Nos. 21—108 and 113 of 1866.

55. A third special measure which has been taken for the relief of distress, is the establishment of fairs† in the chief towns or larger villages of the Zemindary. With the exception of those who had taken the precaution to store sufficient grain for themselves, I found that there were a great many, chiefly the employés of the Zemindary, who, though they had the means of buying food, could not obtain the ordinary necessaries themselves of life to buy. This state of things has been amply remedied by the establishment of fairs, which I am happy to state are increasing in popularity.

† See C. O. No. 167.

56. Another measure of relief has been the extensive grant of remissions in all cases in which the failure of crop was not the consequence of neglect on the part of the ryots. There is nothing which is so inestimable a boon to the ryot, and which he so greatly appreciates as a remission, especially in a season of drought. The grant of remissions is not now left to individual caprice, as it used to be. A ryot need not now resort to any artifice or subterfuge before pronouncing his crop to be a failure. It is the standing rule‡ to grant a remission in every

‡ See C. O. Nos. 7 and 101.

instance, in which it is but just and fair to grant it, so long as the requirements of my Circular Orders are complied with.

57. Another measure of special relief, which has been adopted for the relief of distress, is the compensation given to ryots who bring their crops to maturity by means of water from wells dug at their own expense. Before Fusly 1274, compensations used to be granted for failure of crops, but they were at best capricious, and were generally speaking made only to *favorites*. The grant of compensation for failure of Nunjah and Punjah crops is now the invariable *rule*, the rate of compensation depending upon the amount of labor which the ryot has bestowed in bringing his crop to maturity. These rates are detailed in my Circular Orders* Nos. 27. of 1866, and 160 of 1865, to which I beg special reference.

* See C. O. Nos. 160 of 1865, and 27 of 1866.

58. Work was found for the able-bodied in the repair of the chief tanks in each talook, but I regret that various causes have combined to preclude our doing as much in this direction as we could have wished. The chief of which are, first, that we had to deal with soil which, in consequence of the extreme heat, had become quite hard. To work in such soil would be a mere waste of labor and money. In the second place, cholera sadly interfered, and prevented the mustering of a sufficient number of laborers on any one spot for work, but our third and greatest drawback has been the crippled state of our own exchequer, in consequence of our regular payments to the Ranee of the Zemindary and our own establishments, and the inevitable Government demand of Rupees 2,58,640, which in spite of our straightened means, we paid by seven instalments as usual, punctually on the 8th of each month.

59. We are fully sensible of the immense advantages to be derived from a systematic prosecution of works of irrigation. In this respect we are, in a word, of the school of Sir A. Cotton himself. The subjoined table, shewing the actual expenditure on Maramut during the past three Fuslies, to say nothing of my numerous Circular Orders on the subject, will prove that we have always endeavoured to find work for the able-bodied in order chiefly to stem the tide of emigration, and to do as much as lies in our power towards repairing some of the thousands of tanks in the Zemindary, which have been allowed to fall into disrepair during a long course of misrule:—

See C. O. No. 28.

Expenditure on Maramut.

Year.	On buildings.	On works of Irrigation.	Total.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1864 ...	2,546 6 0	29,569 13 0	32,116 3 0
1865 ...	4,366 15 10	68,132 9 1	72,499 8 11
1866 ...	4,382 14 3	653 7 10	5,036 6 1
Total ..	11,296 4 1	98,355 13 11	1,09,652 2 0

60. Every facility is being offered to induce ryots on the one hand, and capitalists on the other, to take up waste lands for cultivation. Forced labor has been resolutely put down. Ryots, in whatever manner engaged, or however employed, are now fully and punctually paid for their labor. The practice of supplying the palace and those in power with supplies of every kind, *gratis*, has been suppressed, and illegal exactions are, I believe, things of the past. These and the means for tiding over the present scarcity, which form the subject of my C. O. No. 171, have, it is believed, done something towards alleviating the suffering and distress which at present prevails in the Zemindary.

C. O. No. 171.

Q. X.—Whether any relief houses have been opened, and if so, for how long; by what funds maintained; on what system conducted; what number of persons have been relieved; at what outlay up to date; and at what cost per head per day.

A. X.—61. Four relief houses have been opened at four of the chief towns of the Zemindary, viz., at Shevagunga, Vanamadura, Kaliarkovil, and Tripatore, and it is in contemplation to open six more, *provided* funds, to be raised by subscriptions and donations, be forthcoming. The heavy rains we are now having will, it is hoped, enable us to sow and ultimately to reap an abundant kalum crop for the current Fusly 1276; but as it cannot be available till February or March next, we must continue the relief now afforded by the poor houses till that time.

62. The Lessee of the Zemindary has contributed 5,000 Rupees towards the maintenance of these poor houses, subscriptions to the extent of nearly 3,000 Rs. have already been received, and I hope I shall be able to raise subscriptions to the extent of about 4,000 Rupees more within the next four or five months. I have appealed to all who are in a position to contribute their mite to this object, and if I shall not have appealed in vain, I shall have a sum of about 12,000 Rupees at my disposal, which, large as it appears to be, will, I am afraid, be scarcely sufficient if I give full effect to my wishes to have ten poor houses altogether, and to continue to afford relief, but on a much larger scale, till the end of March next. Arrangements are now being made for opening two more poor houses at Mullakotay and Thiruvagampath. I intend to give the poor a dole of rice twice a week in future, raggy and cholum being given them on all other days, and to distribute cloths to such of the poor as absolutely require this indispensable necessary.

C. O. No. 184.

63. I should have opened more than four poor houses ere now, but I have had a great many difficulties to contend with. Institutions of this kind are quite a novelty in this Zemindary, and I have, therefore, had to go to each place to establish a poor house myself amidst many discouragements. My greatest difficulty has been the cholera. The places at which I wished to establish poor houses being the largest towns, and comparatively more thickly populated, the opening of these institutions at such places and under such circumstances would, in all probability, have considerably added to the number of deaths by this dire disease. I have, therefore, been able to open only four up to this time, each on a large scale, with directions to afford relief to all proper objects of charity, however great the number.

64. The system under which each poor house is conducted is as follows:—Having secured a sufficiently commodious building at each place, a strong enclo-

sure, large enough to accommodate about 800 or 1,000 people, is erected on its front, with one doorway only for the purpose of egress and ingress. On the ground within this enclosure are a number of shallow trenches, about nine inches deep, and six feet apart from each other. The building before which the enclosure is erected, is for the purpose of storing and cleaning the grain, and for the purposes of cooking. The hour at which the poor are fed is 3 P. M. Previous to this the food for the day has been cooked, and brought into the centre of the enclosure ready for distribution.

65. Each poor house is managed by a Committee consisting of six working Members. The duty of the first and second is to determine who are really fit objects of relief; all who, in their opinion, are not proper objects of charity are peremptorily excluded. Relief is confined to the blind, lame, aged, sick, and others of both sexes, who from starvation or any physical infirmity are unable to work. To each is given a printed ticket, which ensures his admission into the poor house. Precisely at 3 o'clock the first bell rings; all who hold tickets immediately present themselves at the door of the enclosure for admission. A Member of the Committee who stands at this door admits only such as hold tickets. As each ticket-holder is admitted, he takes up his place, and sits down in a line with the trenches on the ground in regular order, the vessels which the poor bring with them they place into the trenches, by the side of which they sit. The men sit apart from the women, and silence and order is persistently maintained.

66. When all have sat down, and the tickets have been examined, and it is seen that no unworthy object of relief has been admitted, the second bell rings, and the cooked food is at once carefully distributed; as much is given to each person as he can reasonably require. With each dole of food is also given a small ball of "chatney," consisting of various digestive condiments. After half an hour, when all have been fully supplied with food and water, the third bell rings, and at this signal the poor at once quit the premises. The three bells regulate the admission and dismissal of the poor, and the distribution of the food, and prevent confusion which there would otherwise be. The rules for the management of each poor house are strictly carried out. The food is rice on Sundays,* and cholum and raggy on all other days, made into a palatable conjee. It must be eaten on the spot; none is allowed, except by special permission, to leave the premises. Relief is extended to all who are fit objects of charity, irrespective of caste and creed, and they are treated with pity and compassion. The grain purchased for the poor is the best procurable, and is carefully cleaned and cooked, the provisioning and cooking departments being under the immediate supervision and orders of the third and fourth Members of the Committee. Each poor house with its enclosure and all the cooking and other vessels are always kept scrupulously clean. Any respectable person is at liberty to visit a poor house, and to make whatever remarks he pleases as to how it is conducted, &c., in the Visitors' Book, which will be expressly handed to him for the purpose by the sixth Member of the Committee, who generally resides on the premises.

* Rice is now given *every day*.

C. O. Nos. 172, 177, and 180.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th January 1867.

67. The number of persons who have been relieved, the outlay up to date, and the cost per head, per day, is given in the subjoined table:—

1	2	3				4	5	6	7	8
No.	Locality of Poor Houses.	Number of persons fed.				Total expenditure.	Average number fed per day.	Average daily expenditure.	Average expenditure per head per month.	Average cost per head per day.
		In August.	In Sept.	Up to 5th Oct.	Total.					
						Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1	Sheragunga.....	8,798	12,021	7,494	28,313	1,063 10 4	382	14 4 0	1 2 0	0 0 7¼
2	Vanamadura	1,962	5,563	2,415	9,940	502 2 9	152	9 12 0	1 8 6	0 0 9¾
3	Kaliarkovil	.....	3,135	4,570	7,705	247 3 0	227	8 0 0	1 2 0	0 0 7¼
4	Tripatore	.....	.....	1,950	1,950	73 10 1	195	7 8 0	1 2 0	0 0 7¼
		10,760	20,719	16,429	47,908	1,886 10 2	956	39 8 0	1 3 7	0 0 7¼

The numbers since the 15th instant have *considerably* increased at each poor house, in consequence, as may be imagined, of the continued scarcity, and the all but total failure of the past koday crop.

Q. XI.—For what period the present prices are likely to be maintained, with the reasons why they are expected to fall at the end of that period.

A. XI.—68. The present prices of paddy and of the chief dry grains, as compared with the prices ruling in October 1865, are as follows:—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Period.	Wholesale and retail.	Rice.	Small Paddy, Mellage Shumba.	Large Paddy, Perunel.	Raggy.	Cholum and Cumboo.	Varagoo and Valy.	Gram.
		Rupees per kullum.						
October 1865	Wholesale ...	9	4¼	4	4½	4½	2¾	4½
	Retail... ...	12	5¼	5	5	5	3¼	5½
October 1866	Wholesale ...	12	6	5½	5½	5½	3¾	6½
	Retail... ...	13	8	7½	7½	7½	4½	7½

69. These prices are likely to continue till about the end of March next, when it is expected that the kalum crop, which is now being cultivated, will be brought into the market for sale, and when perhaps each description of grain will fall in price about 2 Rupees per kullum. I do not anticipate that prices will fall to the level of the prices which ruled prior to the present scarcity. After so great a rise in the market as has recently taken place, it does not appear that prices will fall to their former level, or that the market will regain its former elasticity for at least six months to come.

Q. XII.—What prospect there is of providing the able-bodied with work, and the aged, sick, and infirm with food until the scarcity has passed over.

A. XII.—70. This question has already been in a great measure answered. Sanction has been given for the repair of a number of tanks, but the recent heavy rains we have had have supplied the tanks with water, and have consequently stopped

all work *pro temp.*, but the poor houses will, as I have already observed, continue to afford relief till the end of March next.

71. I am afraid I have extended these remarks to a greater length than was expected or is desirable, but the nature of the subject upon which my opinion has been requested will, I trust, be a sufficient apology. I cannot, however, close this paper without making an earnest appeal, which I now respectfully do, on behalf of Shevagunga, to a Committee which has been specially organized for the purpose of affording relief to the suffering poor of the Presidency.

72. Considering, then, that the scarcity which is at present prevailing in the Zemindary is *general ;* considering that it is likely to last at least till the end of March next, and that if it is expected of us to afford relief up to the end of that time, the funds at my disposal are not likely sufficiently to meet the objects which I have in view ; considering also how ready we have been to help ourselves, and have made and are still making great efforts to relieve and, I may add, cherish our suffering poor, I earnestly entreat and sincerely trust that the Famine Relief Committee, of which Mr. Dalyell is the worthy Secretary, will be pleased to supplement the amount which I hope to be able to raise by means of local subscriptions, with a grant of 3,000 Rupees. The Committee may rest assured that the additional means which they place at my disposal for the relief of distress, will be properly and judiciously applied.

(Signed) G. F. FISCHER,
Agent and Manager. Shevagunga Zemindary.

No. 377 I. ORDER THEREON, 15th January 1867, No. 179A.

Miscellaneous.

1. The Collector of Madura will inform Mr. Fischer that the Government highly appreciate his liberal exertions for the relief of distress in the Shevagunga Estate.

2. Paragraphs 42 to 46 of Mr. Fischer's Memorandum will be communicated to the Board of Revenue for their observation.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Secretary to Government.

To the Revenue Board.
,, the Editor's Table.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

13 Feb 92 Pf Kf

3 Feb 21/92

Dispatch
with Enclosure
4443 1/2
from the
Govt.
Relief
Fee ———

Dated 11th December
Received 12th 1866.

Sir

I have the Honor to
transmit herewith
a Report
of the Manager of the
Shenandoah Library
Association on the distressed
State of the Finances
& the measures adopted
for affording Relief.

I have the Honor to be
Sir
Your most obedient
Servant
[illegible]

To
The Secretary of State
Washington D.C.

18
16
JD