

32
32-1
Collector IInd Division Masulipatam to Board of Revenue: Oct, 1801

To
Mr George Garrow, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Fort St George
Sir,

(p 12285)

I request you will be pleased to inform the Board, that from the great objections made by the renters and inhabitants to entering into any engagements for a shorter period than three years (a circumstance I stated on the transmissions of my estimate on the 18th September last year) I have not, until this period, been able to complete the settlement of the country agreeably to their instructions of the 25th June last. Some of the purgannah and villages, as will appear by the accompanying statement, are under sumani, no proposal having been tendered.

2. The jumhabundy for the year (exclusive of the salt and sayer) the Board will observe by the statement amounts to Madras Pagodas 1,44,853.00.00 and which is within a trifle of the estimate sent down last year. As the renters however delivered in conditional proposals, in the event of the Board agreeing to extend their leases to three years, I have deemed it my duty to annex a column, shewing the amount they could (p 12286) then pay annually and which raises the jumhabundy to MPags 1,51,783.28.00

3. That there should be a difference between the proposals is not to be wondered at, when the cultivating inhabitants themselves will not give near the full value of land for one year, so precarious is the produce, but will offer only 5,6,7,8 or 9 Pagodas for a Peellj (Peetty ?), for which they will not hesitate paying ten or more for three years certain, when they would have the chance of three seasons. Whether therefore the country is rented, or managed as it was last year, for one year only, the loss arising from the above cause must fall upon the circar.

4. Should renting the country for three years be considered as interfering with the proposed arrangements, the Board would not perhaps object to my entering into specific arrangements with the inhabitants individually for that period (including this year) and which agreements (p 12287) on the sale of the lands, might be delivered over to the proprietors for the unexpired term, who could not object to receiving them, as they would be as advantageous as any they could themselves make with the inhabitants, and would ensure them as much as the lands can yield for that period.

5. It is requisite to observe that as I have not been favored with any further explanation from the Board, relative to the abolition of the Vessabady system, and additional shares to the Parties, I could not venture to proclaim their intentions in this respect. I informed the inhabitants however that it was to take place, although I could not say when. The proposals therefore of rent have been delivered in on a supposition that the old system is to be observed during the period of the leases.

Vide paras
8-12 of report
dated July 10

6. From the great want of cultivating inhabitants at present in this part (p 12288) I am of opinion that the Vessabady system cannot be done away, with security to the revenues until the permanent settlement is made. If the Board comply with the suggestion contained in the 11th paragraph of the address, the grand object of every inhabitant knowing the precise sum he would have to pay would be accomplished. No dispute could arise between them and the proprietor, and the purchaser being apprized by the bills of sale what the lands were rented for, and for what period, would be guided in making his proposals accordingly

IOR.F/286/70: Pre 26.10.1801

7. With respect to granting additional shares to Parajees I conceived that the proprietors of land would be at liberty to make the most of their lands, and that they would, with that view, be allowed to make the best terms they could with the Pargees or cultivators from neighbouring villages, for the cultivation of their waste lands, or lands for which they had not sufficient cultivators in their own estates. Their sources of revenue must otherwise be considerably lessened, and a defalcation of revenue ensue, more especially under the abolition of (p 12289) the cist cummoe (?). At present every inhabitant has a certain portion of land which his family have cultivated for years, and provided they cultivate that as heretofore they are at liberty to engage lands on the best terms they can in other villages which they may possess the means of tilling.

8. The purgunnah of Culdendee Teemedy Teendarva and Bendadah, composed entirely of low lands, have suffered greatly this year for want of water, as has also the Geertivence Samith, and the low land village in the Gausah purgunnah and Veeraceram in the Assuntah purgunnah, especially. The transplanting of the paddy this year did not commence till about 15 or 16 days ago, whereas the whole should have been transplanted in July and August.

9. In addition to the current revenue as per statement, I trust the balance of Fuzly 1210, outstanding in the 31st July viz MPags 17,975.17.43 will be all collected within the year. Madras Pags 7,615. 1.65 has been realised to the end of last month.

I am Sir, your most obedient servant
 Euglatere, October 1801 Samuel Skinner, collector.

Minute (of Board of Revenue) on the foregoing Letter: 26.10.1801

The disadvantages out of the Vassabuddy system are so strongly felt by the inhabitants and so oppressive in their operation that the Board had already determined on its abolition, and that the Vassabuddy villages should hereafter be considered suzanie, as well as that the high share to Pycarries, or rather/the /to Cadeome, who only pass from their own into the neighbouring villages, should be abolished; the opinion stated in the latter of the foregoing letters relative to the oppression of the Vassabuddy assessment, adverting to the immediate state of the population is hardly reconcilable with that contained in the former letter. The collector, the Board observe, says that it cannot be done away with security to the revenues until the permanent settlement is made. Is it then to be inferred that to keep up the revenue to the former standard it is necessary to persevere in an oppressive system, destructive of every industrious principle, and hastening the country to a state of desolation? If the (p 12295) Vassabuddy system has been found to produce such injurious effects it must naturally occur that the earliest it is abrogated, the more early prospect will there be of returning prosperity.

In abolishing the Vassabuddy of the villages it is not the Board's intention to do away the Vassabuddy or money rent of fields of a defined extent in the villages which is fixed according to the gradations of soil, as that is considered the best spur to industry and infinitely preferable to a division of the grain produce between the sirkar and ryet.

The Board were desirous that the collector should settle with the inhabitants for the country as it has been divided by him into estates, instead of purgunnahs to break the combination which seemed to have been formed to obstruct the arrangement of the

country upon the principle of securing the just dues of Government, and leaving to the inhabitants an equitable share of (p 12296) of the fruits of their industry and this is the ultimate object of the permanent system.

The Board, resolving the abolition of the Vassabuddy, withdraw their sanction of to the practice of granting high shares to the Pyscurra, originally intended to encouragement of the foreign cultivators but which has been allowed to grow into an abuse, The usage must have gained ground in the oppression of the Vassabuddy rates, and has in its operation been destructive of all local attachment inasmuch that the cultivating class of inhabitants have found it more their interest to bestow their labour on the lands of the neighbouring villages than on their own: if where the crops are divided the share of the resident inhabitants be insufficient, it ought to be augmented; but that can only be done on the collector transmitting a full and satisfactory report on the subject showing the percentage of the share enjoyed by the sirkar (p 12297) and the ryets.

The cist cauce is a most destructive rule in its present effects; altho in its original institution it may have been wise yet it now appears to have an indiscriminate operation and without regard to circumstances or principle it drains the very sources from whence a future revenue is to flow.

If such be the case, the Board are surprised that the collector should propose the continuance of the system, especially upon the supposition that the security of the revenue depends upon it, when it is manifest that it has caused emigration and produces progressive deterioration. The abolition of the Vassabuddy tenure the cist cauce will be discontinued, whereby the inhabitants will know the extent of the demand upon them and no longer be subject to an undefined and in some measure an unlimited assessment.

In the collector's report on (p 12298) on the estates he has stated that with a view to include a due proportion of wet and dry lands in each he had been under the necessity of not attending to the compactness of them, which he would otherwise have wished to have done. As this is an inconvenience to a proprietor, as augmenting the charges of his estate, and is otherwise liable to much objections, agreed to direct it be remedied by the size of the estates being enlarged so as to combine the necessary proportions of each description with the compactness of the estate which can be done with little difficulty.

The Board has prepared the following statement 'A' (c) to bring the particulars of the several purgunnahs into one abstract view and to afford a general idea of the extent of the arable lands, the proportion of arable lands cultivated and uncultivated, the portion alienated, whether in free gift or on cuttabeedy tenure and the average rates of assessment on the lands of each description. (Here enter statement 'A' (p 12299))

(p 12300) Column 6 shows the variation of assessment in the several purgunnahs, and where it arises in part from difference of the extent of land measure it is noted in red ink. The collector will no doubt be able to judge and explain from his knowledge of the fertility of the respective districts how far the results are correct. Col 13 shows the extent of sirkar arable lands uncultivated, which will be available to proprietors being 22% of those in cultivation and valued at the general sirkar rates Pagadas 40,537. Column 8 shows the extent of land alienated under cuttabeedy tenure and the large proportion of it in some purgunnahs being in aggregate equal to 17% of the sirkar lands cultivated; column 10 its value at the Sirkar rates of assessment P 27,488, and column 11 the actual cuttabeedy now

paid to Government P 8,747; not one third.

Column 16 shows the lands said to be alienated as free gift, amounting in one purgunnah to 58 percent of the total arable land in it, and nearly double the extent of sirkar land in cultivation and averages on the aggregate 22 per cent of the former and 44 per cent of the latter is of the sirkar lands in cultivation amounting as per column 18 at the sirkar rates of assessment to the enormous sum of N Page 73,939.

The proportion of these free gift lands appropriated to pagedas and Bramins is shown in column 21 and amounts to MPagedas 55,432, and of column 24 of the cuttaboddy lands to the same purpose valued at MPage 7,549, in all to bramins MPage 63,061. Column 25 is the extent of land said to be occupied by villages, gardens, wells, water-courses, &c, equal to 22 per cent of the total arable land some part of which is no doubt productive to the inhabitants.

Agreed to direct the collector's attention to this statement and to point out the necessity of his entering into an examination of the data his investigations have supplied and of elucidating his statements by intelligent explanations. (p 12302) Agreed also to direct that he furnish statements of the estates in a similar form to enable the Board to see the uncultivated arable in each, and in which large reservoirs of alienated lands may be expected; and with a view, also that the collector should be better able to form an opinion of the general accuracy of his information. The present cuttaboddy is all that is new to be included in the estates as available to the proprietor, nor has he any right to claim on the free gift lands as they at present stand. The jumma being formed on assets entirely distinct from these the recoveries of improper alienations are to be sued for by the orders of the Governor General in council thro the medium of the courts of justice, and when recovered they will be offered to the proprietor at a reasonable fixed jumma and if he declines they must be given to others. It is not meant to add the lands held by rajah cast people to the Government lands: if irregularly held, they must (p 12303) be recovered in the same manner. Only the lands held by causees and all revenue officers are to be considered jeryety. The village establishments or Oeliga Maunium, the considered responsible for the revenue like other sirkar lands as being appropriated to the pay of official servants equally for the benefit of the sirkar or proprietor and inhabitants, will notwithstanding be allowed to remain in possession of the occupants as at present, unless when it may appear that they have made great encroachments, in such case the proprietor will no doubt have a right to confine them to their just limits.

The Board observe the collector states that the inhabitants of the village of Pareer are considered actual proprietors of the lands and are at liberty to sell them when they please. Agreed to direct him to explain whence this right is stated to have been derived, and how the lands of the villages are assessed, whether in a money rent, on a (p 12304) given measurement, or share and also to forward copy of the deed executed by the inhabitants to each other when they sell.

The collector's observation on the necessity of allowing nunjah lands cultivated for four years successively to remain fallow for the same period to recover their fertility is not consistent with experience in other parts of India, where in many places the sun cultivation has been continued for a century, always one generally two, and sometimes three crops a year. The stubble water, and effects of the sun, frequently the only manure, the the second and third crops are sometimes quickened by manure only or by (?) milk-hodge, or leaves of jungle trees and shrubs. But of course the soil is always greatly improved

by manure particularly that of sheep. Neither is it found that the soil is injured by being long overflowed; which on the contrary fertilizes to a great degree, provided the water be not impregnated with (p 12305) salt. Where the lands suffer from inundation, the Board can only conclude that it must proceed from the tide flowing up the Godavery. But precaution could at no great expence be taken to prevent this evil, except in any extraordinary rising of the river. The Board, therefore, conceive that the information afforded by the inhabitants on these points may have proceeded from their habitual prejudices or with a view to lessen in the collector's opinion real value of their villages.

With a view to see the relative proportions of the progressive permanent jumma of the purgunnahs proposed by the collector the following statement is drawn out. (Here enter 'B') (p 12306)

(p 12307) The figures in red ink shew the percentage which the proposed jumma at the several periods bear, first to column 1 the average produce including present outtaboody, secondly to column 2 the utmost value to which the estates can reach supposing the whole arable lands in cultivation, thirdly to column 6 supposing the lands of revenue officers to be added to the preceding. From thence it will be seen that the jumma of the first three years in some instances greatly exceeds the average produce, and that in several purgunnahs the permanent jumma also exceeds it. In one case Warsapere, the permanent jumma also exceeds even the utmost bound of improvement of which the estate is calculated to be capable. This may perhaps be alleged to arise from the inaccuracy of the accounts, from whence the average produce was taken. The collector has endeavoured to correct in forming the estates; of this; however the Board will be better able to judge when they receive the statements of the estates in the form required, which (12308) they trust no time will be lost in completing, as from all the materials having been collected it will not require much time; the collector will at the same time attend to the Board's orders for rendering them compact.

As the collector has laid great stress on the differences of the present population, and at the period when the committee took their accounts, a comparison is added to the foregoing statement 'B' drawn from the details furnished by his predecessor for 1206 with their accounts, by which it appears that although it varies considerably in the several purgunnahs, no doubt by a preference being given where the cultivation is the least precarious, there is but a small reduction, viz 2,082 persons in the aggregate, and it is also satisfactory to observe that the number of of looms in 1206 exceeded that stated by the committee no less than 813; it may also be fairly presumed that population has rather increased than diminished in the last six years, and if as it is hoped, the introduction of inoculation becomes general it will rapidly augment.

(p 12309) The Board rely on the collector's using every exertion to accomplish their wishes; it was very much their desire that he should have made a settlement of the estates as formed by him, with a view to break the combination of the inhabitants of the whole purgunnahs to his obstruct his arrangement but this they observe he considered impracticable. Resolved however to issue positive orders that he form a settlement on this principle for the current year, as already directed, and when the inhabitants of the estates will not engage, either rent them to another or keep them in amsanie entering the estates in the jumabundy distinctly, only making the necessary alteration suggested for rendering them compact. If difficulties should be still opposed to the fulfillment of these orders the collector will immediately and explicitly state them, that radical measures may be adopted for carrying them into execution, as they are determined they shall not be again frustrated.

Agreed further to desire the (12310) collector

