

Vol . XII

SOME DOCUMENTS ON RACK-RENTING,
EXTORTION, HIGH USURY, AND RECOURSE TO
TORTURE DURING BRITISH RULE, c.1750 - 1900

Compiled by
Dharampal

Ashram Pratishtan, Sevagram - 442102
May 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PRE-BRITISH LAND RIGHTS IN INDIA - Report of Mr Beaufoy, Secretary, Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India created in 1784 by British Parliament, early 1792 4	
2.VIEW OF BRITAIN TILL THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY..... 5	5
3. INDIAN PEASANT COULD ESTABLISH NO MORE RIGHT ON LAND THAN A TENANT IN ENGLAND 8	8
4. CONQUEST CONVEYS A RIGHT OF CHANGING INSTITUTIONS: MR. PHILIP FRANCIS, c.1776..... 9	9
5. IN CANARA REGION TILL MID-18TH CENTURY LAND TAX EQUAL TO THE AMOUNT OF PADDY SEED SOWN, BUT PAID IN VOLUME OF RICE; T. Munro to Board of Revenue: 31.5.1800 10	10
6. LAND, THE PROPERTY OF INDIVIDUALS PAID IN MANY CASES NOT FIVE PERCENT OF THE PRODUCE IN TRAVANCORE, ETC.: BRITISH POLITICAL RESIDENT IN TRAVANCORE, c.1800..... 13	13
7. INDIAN PEASANT'S WAITING FOR TIME OF JUSTICE AND HUMANITY: BRITISH JUDGE LEMAISTRE: c.1775 14	14
8. INDIA BECAME LAWLESS FROM THE MOMENT SHE PASSED UNDER OUR GOVERNMENT: c.1773 15	15
9. LARGE SUMS OF MONEY IN LIEU OF PLUNDER OF CITIES, COUNTRYSIDE, ETC. FROM INDIAN RULERS, INHABITANTS. 16	16
10. AMOUNT OF TIPOO'S REVENUE COLLECTION AND ITS DOUBLING BY THE BRITISH SOON AFTER: c.1790s..... 17	17
11. LAND WHICH PAID ONE RUPEE BEFORE NOW PAYS FIVE RUPEES: 1761..... 18	18
12. FORMER COLLECTIONS OF DINAGPUR, BENGAL WERE 11-12 LAKHS, NOW THEY ARE 78 LAKHS; FROM THE RESIDENT AT THE DURBAR OF MURSHIDABAD: c.1769 19	19
13. WHAT WAS COLLECTED HERE WAS SPENT HERE - FROM G.G.DUCAREL, SUPERVISOR, PURNEA TO CONTROLLING COUNCIL, MURSHIDABAD: c. 1770... 20	20
14. BRITISH INCREASE LAND TAX FOUR-FOLD: BENGAL, c.1775..... 21	21
15. POPULOUS AND OPULENT BENGAL BECOMES IMPOVERISHED IN 15 YEARS OF BRITISH CONTROL: c.1773..... 22	22
16. INDULGENT TREATMENT OF THE PEASANT BEFORE BRITISH DOMINANCE AND PRESENT DAY OPPRESSION AND IMPOVERISHMENT: c.1773 23	23
17. ALEXANDER READ ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ENGLISH AGRICULTURE 24	24
18. IN ENGLAND THE ENGLISH FARMER HAS 20% OF THE GROSS PRODUCE FOR SUBSISTANCE:..... 28	28
19. DEATH TOLL IN MASULIPATAM REGION IN 1791 - 92 HUMAN : 6,56, 974; CATTLE : 2,67,735 29	29

20. EXTENSIVE BRITISH USURIAL PRACTICES IN INDIA: MADRAS PRESIDENCY: GOVERNOR HOBART'S MINUTE, c.1795.....	30
21. WE HAVE RODE THE COUNTRY TOO HARD; GREAT OPPRESSION EXERCISED RESULTING IN LAMENTABLE POVERTY: MADRAS GOVERNOR BENTINCK: c. 180436	
22. THOMAS MUNRO TO BOARD OF REVENUE ON HOUSE TAX OR INCOME TAX: 28.1.1805	37
23. THOMAS MUNRO'S FAVOURITE TAXES MOHTURFA AND VISABUDDY c.1805 NOT EVEN BEGGARS REMAIN UNTAXED LONDON CONSIDERS THEIR ABANDONMENT AND REPLACEMENT BY OTHER FUTURE TAXES.	41
25. RACK-RENTING IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY ON INSISTENCE FROM LONDON: MADRAS BOARD OF REVENUE MINUTE, PARA 288, 5.1.1818	44
26. PASSING OF LAND FROM THE PEASANTRY TO COMMERCIAL CLASSES RESULTING FROM BRITISH POLICY SINCE 1760s AND SEEMED NATURAL AND WELCOME TO CANARA COLLECTOR: c. 1833.....	46
27. ONE THIRD OF MOST FERTILE LAND HAD GONE OUT OF CULTIVATION IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY DUE TO EXTORTIONATE GOVERNMENT LAND TAX: COLLECTOR, NORTH ARCOT, 1854.....	50
28. OVER ASSESSMENT IN REVENUE SURVEY, MINUTE OF LORD HARRIS, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY, 1854.....	61
29.REVENUE DESPATCH TO MADRAS ON TORTURE IN THE COLLECTION OF LAND REVENUE	62
30. USE OF TORTURE IN LAND REVENUE COLLECTION IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY : c.1840 - 1850s.....	63
31.MINUTE OF LORD HARRIS, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY, ON TORTURE: 1854	64
32. RESEARCH NOTES ON THE TORTURE INVESTIGATION MADRAS PRESIDENCY	66
33. HOW WE TAX INDIA - A LECTURE: 1858.....	71
34. EXTRACTS FROM CONDITION OF INDIA: REPORT BY MR. JAMES CAIRD, MEMBER, FAMINE COMMISSION, c. 1880.....	72

Note: The bold text (*) in this document is the emphasis added by the Editor-Compiler and is not part of the original document.

**1. PRE-BRITISH LAND RIGHTS IN INDIA - Report of Mr Beaufoy,
Secretary, Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India created in 1784 by
British Parliament, early 1792**

IOR: HM.382 (pages 78-9)

By the ancient system of India, the situation of a ryot was much superior to that of a tenant at will; nor was he subject to arbitrary exactions at the pleasure of the zemindar. While he continued to pay the rent and fulfill the conditions to which by the custom of his village he was bound, he could not be legally dispossessed, and if taxes unauthorised by the government, or by the usage of the district were demanded, the courts of the capital as well as those of the province were open to his complaints; for the protection of the cultivator of the soil was described as the first *duty* and often became the first *object* of the Magistrate.

Even in the ruins of this system traces of its principles are easily discovered, for among the numerous assessments that now burthen the lands of the ryots, a tax which is called the original rent invariably takes the lead and has the semblance of governing the rates by which the other branches of the land tax are determined.

But the ancient privileges of the ryots, their claim to continual possession on the terms of a reasonable and established payment, and their exemption from all imposts but those which custom or positive enactments have duly authorised have perished with the government from which they derived their force.*

* Emphasis added by Editor-Compiler

2.VIEW OF BRITAIN TILL THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Based on a note by the Compiler of these narrations, 1970

2. *Incomes.* Regarding the comforts and prosperity enjoyed by the British people at this time (and in fact till about a century later) the people of England of this period may be divided into four economic categories. A survey of the position was made in 1812 by a much quoted authority. He computed the gross national income of Britain at £430,521,372 in 1812. This he divided amongst the various categories of the population according to a calculated income per family under each head. The following is from his data and grouped here under 4 main categories: *The first* consisted of the following:.

	No of heads of Families	Average annual Computed share of internal/family £
Temporal Lords	516	10,000
Spiritual lords (Arch Bishop & Bishops)	48	5,010
Baronets	861	3,510
Knights & Esquires	11,000	2,000
Gentlemen & Ladies living on incomes	35,000	800
Bainent Bankers & Merchants	3,500	2,600
In all	50,925	

The second

Higher Civil and Military servants	50,880	£980 - 200
Eminent Clergymen	1,500	720
Lesser Clergymen	17,500	200
Judges,Barristers,Attorneys etc.	19,000	400
Physicians,Surgeons,Apothecaries	18,000	300
Artists,Sculptors,Engravers	5,000	280
Freeholders of land of the better sort	70,000	275
Lesser Merchants	22,800	805
Engineers, Surveyors, Master Builders.	8,700	300
Owners of ships, various manufactures.	54,150	304 - 600
University Teachers.	874	600
In all.	2,68,404	

The Third:

Lesser Freeholders and Fanners.	4,90,000	£120- 100
Minor Manufacturers like Tailors Milliners etc.	43,750	180
Shopkeepers and Retail Tradesmen	1,40,000	200
Clerks and Shopmen	95,000	70
Inn-keepers and Publishers	87,500	100
School-owners and Teacheremploying some capital	35,000	204
Dissenting Clergymen	5,000	100
Actors in Theatres etc.	875	200
In all.	8,97,125	

The Fourth

Half Pay Officers.	6,500	100
Common Soldiers.	2,80,000	35
Seaman and Marine	1,71,540	42
Any Pensioners in Homes etc.	42,000	15
Labouring People in Agriculture, Mining etc.(including earning of the Females)	7,42,151	45
Acquate Labourers in the Merchants Service, Fisheries, etc.	1,80,000	45
Umbrella and Personal Makers, Lace workers, Launderers Etc.	70,000	50
Artisans, Merchants, Labourers in Manufactories, Building work etc.	10,21,974	48
Hawkers, Pedlars etc	1,400	45
Persons in Prison for Debut	3,500	30
Paupers, producing from their own Labour in miscellaneous employments	3,87,100	10
In all	28,99,665	

The income of royal personages ranged from £172,000 to £18,300. There were several amongst the nobility, eminent merchants, bankers etc. whose annual incomes were higher than the latter figure. Wilberforce himself is said to have had an income of £30,000 a year.

3 Land Ownership

In 1813 England was still largely an agricultural country. The following indicates the position of land ownership about this period:

	No of Families	Income Range £	Proportion owned of cultivated land
1. Great Landlords	400	50,000 to 5,000	20-25%
2. Gentry:			
a) Wealthy	700-800	5,000 to 3,000	50-60%
b) Squires	3,000-4,000	3,000 to 1,000	
c) Gentlemen	10,000-20,000	1,000 to 300	
3. Freeholders:			
a) Better Sort	25,000	700 to 150	15-20%
b) Lesser Sort	75,000	300 to 30	

Over a million other families who were wholly engaged in agriculture were either landless labourers or tenants. The position sixty years later, in 1873, was only marginally different.

	No of owner	Extent in Acres
Peers and peeresses	400	5,728,979
Great Landowners	1,288	8,497,699
Squires	2,529	4,319,271
Great Yeomen	9,585	4,782,627
Lesser Yeomen	24,412	4,144,272
Small Proprietor	2,17,049	3,931,806
Cottagers	7,03,289	151,148
Public Bodies	14,459	1,443,548
Waste		1,524,624
	9,73,011	34,523,974

3. INDIAN PEASANT COULD ESTABLISH NO MORE RIGHT ON LAND THAN A TENANT IN ENGLAND

House of Commons 5th report - 1812

It was accordingly decided, "that the occupants of land in India could establish no more right, in respect to the soil, than tenantry upon an estate in England can establish a right to the land, by hereditary residence" and the meerassee of a village was therefore defined to be, "a preference of cultivation derived from hereditary residence but subject to the right of Government as the superior Lord of the soil, in what way it chooses, for the cultivation of its own lands."

4. CONQUEST CONVEYS A RIGHT OF CHANGING INSTITUTIONS: MR. PHILIP FRANCIS, c.1776

IOR : Francis papers : MSS Eur E 31 pp. 47 - 81 (sent to Lord North and Mr.Strachey 13.5.1776) Note: Mr.Francis's remarks on General Clavering's Observations on the Plan proposed for a new Settlement of the Provinces. The observation was against the right of adoption of the "large land-holders" and was for reducing the size of large "zemindaries." (Extract)

...(p.78)... In answer to the objection that, by changing the law, we should usurp those rights which we are bound to protect, it is sufficient to say that, **if conquest conveys a right of any kind, it certainly includes the right of establishing such institutions as are indispensably necessary for its own security***. Let us either relinquish our dominion, or take the necessary steps to preserve it. I cannot reconcile contradictions.

**5. IN CANARA REGION TILL MID-18TH CENTURY LAND TAX EQUAL TO THE
AMOUNT OF PADDY SEED SOWN, BUT PAID IN VOLUME OF RICE; T. Munro to
Board of Revenue: 31.5.1800**

IOR: p/286/42: Part of unprinted portion: para 6 is however in the 5th report. (Extract)

3. ...(p.7379) October the country being now freed from the enemy the ryots made very little further opposition to the settlements. Those of Canara were finished in January and the jammahbundy might have been forwarded to you in February had not the placing Sondah under my charge made it necessary to wait for the settlement of that province which from its desolate state and the disorders to which it had long been exposed required a much longer time in proportion to its rent than that of Canara.

4. I have been the more particular in describing the abstracts which I met with in the settlement of Canara because except in the districts claimed by Poligars they originated entirely in the inhabitants having once been in possession of a fixed land rent, and in their still universally possessing their lands as private property, circumstances which distinguish Canara in a remarkable manner from all the countries beyond the Ghauts, and which must be attended to in whatever system may hereafter be framed for its management. The (p.7380) attachment of the inhabitants to this ancient land rent and the obstinacy with which they had resisted every new addition to it under the Mysore Government induced me to examine a number of ancient sunnuds and revenue accounts in order to ascertain from them what had been the state of revenue under the Rajahs of Biddanore as well as under Hyder and Tippoo and the cause of its decline. The accompanying statement shows the amount of the revenue under the Rajahs of Biddanore - and all the successive additions that have been made to it down to the close of Tippoo's reign. I have frequently entered ten or twelve small items under one head because it would be endless and perplexing to have detailed them all separately. I have confined myself to the land rent without taking any notice of the customs for a detail of them would afford no criterion from which a judgement could be formed of the state of the country - because rice from which they chiefly arose was never permitted to be freely exported by sea - but was always in part reserved though in a different (p.7381) proportion almost every year for supplying the troops at Nuggar and in all the garrisons both above and below the Ghauts. And as this rice paid no customs it therefore often happened that in years where the produce of rice was equal, the produce of the customs was less by half in one than in the other.

5. The great value of land in ancient times led the curnums to adopt every expedient they could think of for the preservation of their accounts because they were not only a register of the public revenue but of all the transfers of land among individuals. They wrote their accounts in black books which lasted above a century - and to guard against accidents they always made two or three copies which were distributed among different branches of the family to be kept separately. Whenever a volume became much worse from length of time and frequent use a fresh copy of it was made and a memorandum was usually inserted in the title page mentioning the year of Shalivahah (?) in which it had been written and also (p.7382) the date of the original or older copy from which it had been transcribed. The use of these registers having been prohibited during the Mysore Government a great part of them has been lost from negligence and other causes but enough still remains to furnish a compleat abstract of the land rent during a period of more than four hundred years.

6. **From the remotest times of which there is any record till near the middle of the fourteenth century all land was assessed in rice at a quantity equal to the quantity of paddy sown. That is to say a field which required ten candies of paddy to sow it paid ten candies of rice to the sirkar...***

7. ...ought to have) been allotted to them. Besides enams to bramins and pagodas there were many Enams to Polygars and Potails not entered in the jumma which were brought forward and added to it in succeeding reigns.

8. ...The settlement of Hurry Hur Ray which is referred to in all after assessments and is the foundation of the present land rent of Canara is not supposed to have been made from any actual measurement, but merely from the rough estimate of the quantity of seed reported to have been usually sown in each field. The distance of Canara from the seat of Government might have been the reasons, why it was conducted either very carelessly or with great indulgence to the inhabitants for between the years 1348 and 1366 additions were made to the jumma of above 20 per cent arising solely from lands not entered in the original settlement. From this time down to the year 1587 when Sadasewah Ray made over Canara on certain conditions to Chinnapah Cour of Kildi the founder of the Biddanore Government the sirkar rental continued unattended. It was so light that the inhabitants could have had no pretense for demanding any reduction of it. It is likely enough that they thought themselves fortunate in being permitted (p.7385) to retain so great a portion of the produce as they must than have enjoyed and that they therefore rather avoided than sought any discussion on so dangerous a subject. And that the Bijanuggar Rajahs in the possession of extensive dominions were satisfied with realising a certain the moderate revenue from the more distant provinces.

9. The Biddanore family made no additions till 1618 when they imposed an additional assessment of 50 per cent on the whole of the Jumma (except in what is called the Hobly of Mangalore...

(p.7437)

STATEMENT OF THE SUBAS COLLECTION OF LAND RENT 1788-9 to 1797-8

	(Totals of 13 Canara Dists)	Belgi (only)
1788-9	473,550-3-12	16,596-3-27
1789-90	454,273-14-56	17,067-35-18
1790-1	367,604-12-1	16,206-30-7
1791-2	368,108-30-77	16,179-12-7
1792-3	456,241-19-41	12,831-20-5
1793-4	418,903-28-32	8,504-18-41
1794-5	382,754-13-37	6,085-27-21
1795-6	333,691-7-42	9,717-29-66
1796-7	295,400-30-40	9,240-14-11
1797-8	208,849-19-64	4,029-13-50

Schedule of 1792 314,887-7-17

Settlement of Fusly
1209 (by T. Munro) 606,342-12-40

(Note)

It was my intention to have given the statement of collections from the year 1778-9 which by including four last years of Hyder's government would have shown how far his settlements after they had reached their highest pitch were realised, and it would have also shown in Tippoo's reign the decrease of his receipts in proportion as his assessments were raised and his affairs fell into confusion. But want of the accounts of one two villages in almost every district prevented me from obtaining a total of any one year in the first ten years for Canara or in the last ten for Soondah.

I may be able at some future period to compleat my plan but the arrears of current business have (forced) me to abandon it at the present.

IOR: P/286/42: Part of the portion of T.Munro's report on Canara dated 31.5.1800 not printed in the House of Commons Papers vol 7 for 1812. In the printed extracts, besides the exclusion of various paras etc., there is some seemingly inadvertent omission of the above reproduced portion of para 7 and of the first two lines of para 9.

6. LAND, THE PROPERTY OF INDIVIDUALS PAID IN MANY CASES NOT FIVE PERCENT OF THE PRODUCE IN TRAVANCORE, ETC.: BRITISH POLITICAL RESIDENT IN TRAVANCORE, c.1800

Evidence of Col. John Munro, Resident in Travancore for ten years, and who was employed in India from 1791-1825 before the House of Commons Select Committee: parliamentary Papers 1831-32 Vol XI

Question 1420: ...Col John Munro:... Some (lands) are held at a very low rent (Government tax) indeed, not amounting to five per cent of produce.

1424:... In general the Government assessment was two, three or four times the amount of seed sown. These were the assessments on the lands which were the absolute property of the Government.

1426: In some of the richer soils the produce was, I suppose, about 15 times the quantity of seed, or from 15 to 20. On an average, I should suppose at least from eight to ten times the quantity of seed sown.

1427: No, (the assessment would) not (amount) to half; but this was land the immediate property of the government, not the property of individuals because, **as I have stated, the land the property of individuals paid in many cases not five per cent on the produce.***

1478:Question: In cases where the government was not the immediate landholder and proprietor of the land, can you state at all what was the proportion which the cultivator paid to the intermediate landlord out of the produce of the land, as compared with the proportion paid to government?

Col Munro: I should think pretty much the same. For instance if the government, from any crime committed or imputed, sequestered the lands of an individual, they were entered in the revenue books, with the rents paid for them, by the tenants, and those rents were afterwards paid direct to the government; and the rents paid to private proprietors by their tenants were much the same with those paid to the government for its own lands.

Question 1488: Are there any differences with which you are acquainted between the systems as prevailing in those native states and under the Company's Government, which would be of any consequence in the execution of the Ryotwar system?

Col John Munro : Excepting in Tanjore, where there is a meerasy system, which may be considered as one of property in the soil, the amount of rent, in proportion to the produce of the land paid by the ryots to Government, is generally much higher throughout the Company's territories than it is in Travancore and Cochin.

7. INDIAN PEASANT'S WAITING FOR TIME OF JUSTICE AND HUMANITY: BRITISH JUDGE LEMAISTRE: c.1775

IRO: Francis Papers: MSS Eur F 13/A (No. 85 in printed catalogue): titled in catalogue "A Note on Impositions on the Ryots" undated.

Mr Justice Lemaistre:

In a country, that has been subject to so many revolutions, to expect the proof of customs and usages with all the technical exactness by the law of England, would be perhaps to expect an impossibility.

This is a country of considerable manufactures as well as agriculture; and the good policy of the despot must, I think, have intervened to control his power. Nor can I think that this country, without such regulations, could have been in the flourishing state it was, when it came into the hands of the Company.

The timid natives of this country, though inured to slavery for so many generations, still have a sense of the injustice of this legislative authority in the despot. It is notorious that the ryot, who does not pay perhaps above twenty rupees a year for his taxes for the ground upon which (p.10) he and his ancestors have subsisted for ages, keeps his account in columns in this manner: so much, says he, in the first, was the original payment which was made by my ancestors. So much, says he, in another, it was increased by Aliverdi Cawn upon such a pretence. So much, says he, by Sirajhud Dowla upon another. So much by Jaffier Aly Khan, upon another. So much, by Mr Sykes, for a Muttoot. And so much by the collectors of the East India Company another pretext.

Having made the sum total of those, he makes his deductions; such a tax taken off by Jaffier Ally Khan: such another by the East India Company: and having made such deductions, the remainder is what he is to pay.

Where arises this mode of keeping his accounts? Evidently upon this principle of natural justice, which he feels. (p.11)

These new importations have been lain upon me oppressively, at the will and pleasure of the ruling power; a time may come of law, justice, and humanity: I will be able to show what was the original payments which I admit to be due from time immemorial. I will keep every imposition separate and distinct, together with the pretext upon which it was raised; that, when the time of justice and humanity shall come, there may be materials upon which it may be decided whether I have been rightfully burdened or not.

8. INDIA BECAME LAWLESS FROM THE MOMENT SHE PASSED UNDER OUR GOVERNMENT: c.1773

A Letter to the Right Hon'ble Lord North on the present proceedings concerning the East India Company (London 1773) signed by A.B. 24-4-1773: 37 pages: British Museum: 100.m.44 (Extract)

(p.12) But India became lawless from the moment she passed under our government; the sceptre, wrested from the gentle grasp (13) of Asiatic despotism, was thrown aside and rods of iron put into the hands of British barbarians: No rule for direction, no sanction for punishment, no interest in the rulers for the protection and preservation of the governed, prevailed then. The harvest was abundant, but the season short and precarious: not a moment was lost in gathering, not an art was omitted that could expedite the hoarding. Pride and emulation stimulated avarice; and the sole contest was who should return to that home, which they almost quitted beggars, with the greatest heap of crimes and of plunder.

The first labourers tired and satiated left the gleaning to others, who are since successively returned with smaller but not inconsiderable bundles; and the only men left destitute are the unhappy natives, to whom the whole of right belonged.

9. LARGE SUMS OF MONEY IN LIEU OF PLUNDER OF CITIES, COUNTRYSIDE, ETC. FROM INDIAN RULERS, INHABITANTS.

IOL: MSS EUR 33: Memoir of Campaign on behalf of Raghonath Rao by James Forbes, FRS, etc. Chaplain to Regiment commanded by Col. Keating, March 1775

From typescript MSS page 140 missing: It was this day given out in general orders, that Ragobah had signed a phirmaund, in which he promised the English forces now on this service under Col. Keating the sum of 30 lakh of rupees, to be paid on his arrival at Poonah, and being established there as Peshwa. And this donation is meant in lieu of all plunder, prize money or any demand whatever of that kind.

This method of recompensing the English for their service in war, has always been adopted by the princes on the other side of India.

[There are innumerable instances of such occurrences in all parts of India from about 1750 (or may be earlier on even from the time of Thomas Roe, circa 1620s) to around 1860. If the British could agree with the local people and rulers about the amount they would be given if they did not attack and plunder, in such a situation, plunder was abandoned. In others when no such agreement could be had recourse was taken to plunder. This happened in South India numerous times during 1750 and 1800 and quite possibly in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, etc. after 1757. The same practice may have occurred in a large number of places in India wherever the British began to advance between 1800 and 1857. Tanjore is one of the major cities which probably avoided such plunders several times before 1800.]

10. AMOUNT OF TIPOO'S REVENUE COLLECTION AND ITS DOUBLING BY THE BRITISH SOON AFTER: c.1790s

SRO: Scottish Record Office : GD 51/3/499/6 (Folio 533 recto) (Extract)

By Tippoo's Schedule, the revenues of the ceded countries north of the Covery, were estimated to 2,90,000 cantarary Pagodas, equal to about 2,40,000 Star Pagodas.

Date	Gross collection after deducting all native Servants	Collector Commission	Nett Revenue
By Captain Read's Collection			
From the date of the definitive treaty, to 12th July 1792.	S. Pag 79,689	3,820	76,407
From the 12th July 1792 to the 12 July 1793.	4,71,014	22,779	4,55,581

It is not easy to form an estimate of future increase of revenue, probably it will be 60 or 70,000 more in the course of five years. The nett revenue will then be about **5,20,000 Star pagodas - which will be considerably more than double Tippoo's estimate.***

Dindigul, Pylery and Verapatehy were estimated by Tippoo at 90,000 Cantarary Pagodas. I do not know the amount of our collections, but understand they ought to be a lack of Pagodas; even allowing them to be only 80,000 the countries ceded to the Company on our side of the Peninsula, may be valued at six lacks of Star Pagodas, nett revenue.

11. LAND WHICH PAID ONE RUPEE BEFORE NOW PAYS FIVE RUPEES: 1761

Bengal District Records: Chittagong (BM:ISBE 309/9) Vol.1. 16 Feb 1761; pp 33,35: Omissions in the printed text.

(p.33) In the same letter We further / / that a considerable Quantity of lands lay free of Rent P[articu]larly what had been granted in charity, that so great in the Revenues we thought in a few years might [] died by allowing the possessors of them []ment during their natural lives only and then to [] to the Company: but as lands once given in charity ar[e] g[ene]rally held sacred, we request your sentiments thereon.

(p.35) In our Letter of remarks to your honor under date the 16th February, we mentioned that the quantity / / Land which originally paid one Rupee rent, now pays upwards of Five; and that we judge the amount of the Revenues to be upwards of Five Lacks.*

**12. FORMER COLLECTIONS OF DINAGPUR, BENGAL WERE 11-12 LAKHS,
NOW THEY ARE 78 LAKHS; FROM THE RESIDENT AT THE DURBAR OF
MURSHIDABAD: c.1769**

The Letter Copy Books to the Resident at The Durbar at Murshidabad 1769-70, 1919. Extract: Mr. Becher to
Hon'ble President 24-5-1769 (pp. xi-xiv)

The strictness with which the Collections have been kept up, and the destructive method of employing Aumils, I shall now give my sentiments on as full, as I am able, and then proceed to point out the remedies that appear to me to be necessary and practicable in the present situation of affairs. In Aliverdy Cawn's time the amount of the Revenues paid into the Treasury was much less than what comes in at present...

When the English first received the grant of the Dewannee their first consideration seems to have been the raising of as large sums from the country as could be collected, to answer the pressing demands from home and to defray the large expenses here*. The zemindars not being willing or able to pay the sums required, aumils have been sent into most of the Districts. These aumils on their appointment agree with the Ministers to pay a fixed sum for the districts they are to go to and the man that has offered most has generally been preferred. What a destructive system is this for the poor inhabitants! The aumils have no connection or natural interest in the welfare of the country where they make the collections, nor have they any certainty of holding their places beyond the year : the best recommendation they can have is to pay up their Kistbundeas punctually, to which purpose **they fail not to rack the country whenever they find they can't otherwise pay their Kists.***

(p. xxvi - xxvii) (on a Separate paper)

Formerly the Collections of Dinagepoor, which never exceeded 11 or 12 lacks were entirely entrusted to the management of the Zemindar...

In the Bengal Year 1172, we fixed the Bundibust at 78 lacks, the whole of which was collected and paid into the Treasury.*

(p.xxvii) In the Bengal year 1172, the Revenues of Tipperah amounted to 34,945 Rupees, but in 1173 the insurrections of the Zemindar put an entire stop to the Collections, and only 164 Rupees were by severity wrested from his Vacquils stationed at the City. In the year 1174 after the Zemindar was subdued, and had taken to flight, this District became firmly united to Bengal, and it's Revenues have since been under a perpetual increase, so that for this last year the sum of 1,05,748.4 was paid into the Treasury.

Pachite is a resemblance of the foregoing --in the year 1173 when this Province was first subjected and included in Bengal only 7000 Rupees were collected, which has been since augmented to 68,999 Rupees, and in future no attention shall be wanting to make a further increase. What the Company have been pleased to write in praise and commendation of my industry and abilities in affairs of Government, which I exert through a motive of establishing their interest, I look upon as the highest mark of their favour and esteem. By the Blessing of God, I shall never be remiss in testifying my desire for their prosperity and welfare.

**13. WHAT WAS COLLECTED HERE WAS SPENT HERE - FROM
G.G.DUCAREL, SUPERVISOR, PURNEA TO CONTROLLING COUNCIL,
MURSHIDABAD: c. 1770**

Pro of the Controlling Council, Murshedabad, Vol 2, p.68, 13.12.1770; omissions in the printed text.

I cannot conclude my Observations on the state and improvements of the Country without remarking that **those points which I have spoken of as erroneous in the Country Government as administered here, appear [] me to have been customs of long standing arising from the Man[ner] & Dispositions of the people. They have been gradually losing grou[nd] since our coming to the Dewanny, though less in distant places than [] those near the Center of Government.**

The Country has been less flourishing since our Time than heretofore -- the primary Cause is the Difference of Revenue paid -- I cannot find on examining the Records, that except for two years of Cossim Ally's Time this Country ever remitted to the City more than 4 or 5 Lacks of Rs annual Reve[nue]. What was collected here was spent here,* besides the trade being in favour -- and although the Government was bad and property insecure [] only changed Hands, the province was not thereby impoverished [] Circulation lessened.

14. BRITISH INCREASE LAND TAX FOUR-FOLD: BENGAL, c.1775

Minute of Mr. Higginson, Member Council of Revenue, Burdwan; IOR: G/6/4:- 23.5.1775

Problem created by Revenue Free Assigned Lands; Bengal Presidency: 1775

I cannot conclude the subject of accounting for the failure in the Beerbhoom revenue without observing to you a further evil which is annually increasing in this district. This is the frequent practice which prevails among the ryotts who have cultivated the malguzarry lands to desert at the time of cultivation to the neighbouring petty taluks and other lands which are held free of rents by different grants of government. They are encouraged to it from the low terms which the possessors of these places grant to all ryotts who desert to them which they can well afford ... **it is certainly a great inducement for a ryott to desert [land paying revenue to government] and cultivate these grounds [revenue free assigned lands] when he can obtain them at the rate of four or six annas per bigha, instead of paying from 12 annas to a rupee and a half for malguzarry lands, at which rates the latter are in general valued***. I would beg leave to propose to endeavour to remedy the continuance of this evil by issuing perwannahas, as well from our council as that of Moorshedabad positively restricting all talookdars and possessors of charity lands from inveighling away the ryotts belonging to the malguzarry lands or permitting them to take refuge within their districts under the severest penalties, such as confiscation of their lands &c.

15. POPULOUS AND OPULENT BENGAL BECOMES IMPOVERISHED IN 15 YEARS OF BRITISH CONTROL: c.1773

British Museum: ADD MD 29207: Warren Hastings Papers, ff 96r-96v.

...But to be more particular 1st I answer on the subject of the state of the country with respect to inhabitants, that it was more populous some years ago than it is now. At the time of the late Shujah ud Dowlah, the ryots were in a state of opulence. In the time of Mahabut Jung by reason of the Mahratta troubles, and in the time of Meer Mohd Jaffair Cawn, and Meer Cassim Cawn by reason of the various disputes, the ryots were impoverished. After this there was a grievous famine during which those who had some substance were reduced to want, and those who had not, died of hunger. With respect to the measures I would recommend *first* let the evils of former times be remedied and *second* let the present rulers apply themselves to this grand object with one voice, and one heart. ...

16. INDULGENT TREATMENT OF THE PEASANT BEFORE BRITISH DOMINANCE AND PRESENT DAY OPPRESSION AND IMPOVERISHMENT: c.1773

British Museum: Add MS 29136: FF 97R-98V, Warren Hastings Papers: Volume 5 of original correspondence. undated and unsigned. Probably from G.Vansittart whose letter of 23.2.1773 precedes this on ff 96.

Second with respect to cultivation, the land is of three kinds and the ryots, have always a proportion of each. **Formerly the rent was small, and the greater quantity the ryots cultivated, the greater profit they made; in consequence of which a great deal of land was cultivated. Now the rents are high and the ryots exceedingly poor***. The country for this reason is in a bad state of cultivation. It therefore becomes requisite that the rulers should assist them with seed and provisions, moderate their rents, and give them all proper encouragement. A ryot by this means, who has now ten beeghas may be induced to cultivate another five. ...

Fourth with respect to the former method of collecting the revenue in the mofusul, **the zemindars and talookdars used to consider the situation of the ryots and the prospect of the produce, and were very very lenient to such ryots, as had not wherewithal to pay, not demanding the revenue till the harvest; and yet they themselves paid agreeably to their kists. The ryots were consequently easy, and the revenue regularly paid. But the zemindars and talookdars are not now in their former state of affluence, and the ryots are impoverished***. If you will order the zemindars and talookdars to collect the revenue in the manner, which may be the most easy to the ryots and indulge them with diminution, where the produce is but small, and collect according to the patta on such land only as has yielded a favourable harvest, this will be a comfort to the ryots and an advantage to the country.

... **Sixth** with respect to merchants and bankers there were formerly in the country opulent omrahs and munsubdars, and zemindars, and the merchants had some indulgence shown them with respect to duties. They consequently came from distant parts. But now the country is not peopled as it was, nor do any such merchants exist as formerly. Therefore commerce is declined. Was the country to be populous, was there abundance of goods, and was no one to obstruct the merchants, then the merchants would flourish. The success of bankers depended on the abundance of loans and bills and... Formerly when the zemindars and talookdars owed money to the bankers, the Government enforced the payment of it. But now in the Company's time the bankers have been plainly told that their debt could not be recovered for them. For this reason their business is stopt...

17. ALEXANDER READ ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ENGLISH AGRICULTURE

TNSA: THE BARAMAHAL RECORDS (PRINTED): c.1790 Vol 21, pp 116-119

(p.116) 34. To comprehend all the ranks of people maintained by the produce of the soil in other countries it remains to speak of landlords the clergy and the poor. The two latter being amply provided for in these districts as will hereafter appear the present question may be confined to the former. The princes or Government being the only landlords in India excepting Zemindars and Polygars of which there is only one in the ceded districts, all the rents of the cultivating tenants, the subject of the first and second hypothesis, and in the farmers or landholders who are that of the third are deposited in the public treasury whence being issued for the disbursements of the civil, military and commercial departments, they must be tardy in flowing back and a great part never return to be employed as the means of carrying on cultivation. Even in Europe where the most extensive lordships or estates of the nobility and gentry are small compared with kingdoms, and their rents are mostly laid out in rich furniture and equipage, domestic products and in silks, velvets, wines, spices, and other articles imported from abroad, their rents are esteemed in a great measure unproductive to agriculture and on that account overgrown estates are considered detrimental to it and of loss advantage to home manufactures than small ones. How perfectly correspondent that opinion is with the low state of the arts in this country! The great estates in Europe having originated in feudal tenures and the accumulation of fortune by farming being very slow in any country there can be no apprehension of estates becoming too large in India for many centuries, whatever advantages may be allowed to people in that line of life.

35. As granting those proposed to the inhabitants of these districts would occasion such a total change of system, that tho' most arguments that occur for and against it have been adduced that seemed possible without entering too far into details, something more than abstract reasoning may be requisite to carry conviction of its expediency and Great Britain being the most prosperous country in the World, the distribution of its gross produce may be admitted as the best example that can possibly be given. The subjoined statement is therefore (p.117) extracted from the works of the celebrated Mr. Young the receiving which at this very time is no less singular than its fitness for the present design. He estimates the state and quality of the soil of England and Wales to be

	ACRES.
Aerable Land	16,000,000
Gross Lands	16,000,000
Barren and uncultivated lands	2,000,000
Total	34,000,000

36. Population of Agriculture exclusive of landlords, clergy, parochial poor and manufactures.

Number of men servants	222,996
Maid servants	167,247
Boys	111,498
Laboures	334,494
Men servants and laborers	557,496
Farmers	111,498
By particular estimate	1,505,223

The number of souls according to the average of 15 per œ100 including extra labour is 2,957,490 and deducting the maids and boys in the farmers families part of them being children of the laborers reduces it to 2,800,800 souls.

37. Product of the Soil. - This is deduced from the number of acres growing each kind of grain and the products of live stock at their average prices which give the following result.

	£
Wheat and rye	17,476,310
Barley	9,856,423
Oats	7,714,267
Pearse	4,519,865
Beans	3,110,559
Turnips	4,110,559
Clover	1,449,474
Total products of arable crops exclusive of potatoes, cabbages, &c.	48,237,691

Cows	7,107,996
Sheep	14,494,740
Wool	694,539
Fatting beasts	7,024,374
Young cattle	2,229,960
Swine	2,508,709
Poultry	334,494
Total products of live stock which including hay sold to towns amounts to about	35,000,000
Total product of the soil, except house rent, woods, parks chaces, &c.	83,237,691

38. Expenditure of Husbandry -

Wages of 222,996 men servants at the average rate of £ 8-9-9	1,892,675
Their board, &c. at £ 9-0-0	2,006,964
Wages of 167,247 maid servants at £ 3-9-0	577,001
Their board at £ 5-0-0	836,235
Wages of 1,11,498 boys at £ 3-2-0	345,643
(p. 118) Their board at £ 6-10-0	724,737
Earnings of 334,494 laborers constantly employed at 7 s. 1 d. per week	6,160,262
Extra labor of men, women and children at harvest, &c.	2,053,420
Total industrious poor or amount of labor	14,596,937
Renewal of the stock of draft cattle, farriers, &c.	780,486
Renewal of the stock of horses and oxen	7,024,374
Wear and tear of implements	8,195,103
Repairs of buildings	278,745
Purchase of seed	4,873,308
Interest paid by the farmers on 110,000,000 stock at 4 per cent per annum	4,400,000
Amount of extra charges	25,552,016
Total expence of cultivation including the subsistence of the Cultivators, viz., 14,596,937 + 25,552,016	40,148,953
Remains net Receipts of articles particularly estimated	43,088,738
Deduct supposed amount of expences less susceptible of calculation	2,484,381
Remainder or surplus which may be demanded as the ground rent	40,604,357

39. Income of the soil. Mr. Young makes this to be œ59,601,294 by including under this head 14,596,937 the amount of labor and 4,400,000 the interest of stock but these are included above in the expence of cultivation, to find the surplus 40,604,357 as what may be considered in this country the ground rent which as hereafter will be seen is the *teerwa* or *Sirkar rent* constituting the valuation of lands by the survey - the appropriation of which is the chief subject of information proposed by this digression, and he states the land lords rental to be 16,000,000 which is here, divided into their income and the tax to Government, because supposed to include it.

The farmers profit or income is	18,237,691
The land lords income exclusive of the Land tax	14,000,000
The Land tax to Government	2,000,000
The clergys tythes	5,500,000
The Poores rates	866,666
Total	40,604,357

It appears the surplus, or what remains after defraying the expence of cultivation which might be demanded as the cultivating tenants rent is $48\frac{1}{4}$ the farmers profits 21, the landlords income 17, the tax to government $2\frac{1}{2}$ the Clergys tythes $6\frac{1}{2}$ the poores rates $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent of the gross product so that rate tythes and tax amounting to $10\frac{1}{4}$ or one eighth of the product of the soil

exclusive of woods, timber, inland fisheries, parks and mines of all sorts, which would probably reduce it to a ninth or as the author of the wealth of nations supposes a tenth of the whole, and the amount of profit and income being 38 per cent of the product according to the statement it is more than probable that including woods, &c., it is two fifths of the whole. These two fifths are what proprietors may draw from their estates if they chuse to take them all under their own management, and if they prefer the letting them out to farmers they are sure of nearly one fifth for their own income. This it is that gives lands in (p. 119) England such value that according to Mr. Young who was at great pains to ascertain every point their average sale is 33 ½ years purchase and it is so great a surplus remaining after defraying the expence of cultivation and paying all public demands upon the ground rent that makes land there such good security. A child may infer that the reason of their being no security and of no value in this country is the little that remains to the farmer (for there are no proprietors in sirkar lands) after paying the exorbitant demand of Sirkar.

18. IN ENGLAND THE ENGLISH FARMER HAS 20% OF THE GROSS PRODUCE FOR SUBSISTANCE:

**From Capt. Thomas Munro to Col. Alexander Read,
Superintendent, Baramahals: Tenkaraikottai, 31.7.1793**

Baramahals Records: Printed p.60 (Extract)

...I should also think that you have allowed too much for subsistence and contingencies and my reason for this supposition is the near correspondence of your estimate with the karnams. The flourishing state of Tiruppattur before the war is a sufficient proof that this was not too high; and, if the ryots would then pay the old Kandayam under all the disadvantages of being forced to sell their crops on the ground, of being continually liable to the imposition of arbitrary fines, and of having no kind of security for their property, they ought to be much more liable to pay an equal sum now when they are allowed full time for disposing of their crops, and when they know that not a cash above their rent will be demanded from them. Another cause for my supposing your allowance too great is the comparison of it with that of farmers in England. There I believe the landlord's share of the produce varies from a fourth to an eighth, but I have read somewhere that it is in many places 1/5th. Government's share was also at one time 1/5th. There then remains 3/5th for expense of cultivation and the farmers' allowances, the former of these in a country where ploughing is so laborious cannot well be reckoned less than that of the wet grains here 40 per cent. **The balance left 20 per cent is what the English farmer has for subsistence and contingencies.** The nature of the climate also brings many burdens upon him which are hardly known to the Indian Kumbi, such as coals, clothing, etc. A vellala with a thousand pagodas wears nothing but a turban and kambli, he has no house but a hut in which he never lights a lamp. I have too little knowledge of the subject to say positively that you have allowed too much, but, were it ever proved to be so, it is the safe side to err upon for heavy rents ought by every means to be avoided. **You have omitted some trifling articles of the farmer's gains by selling cattle and ghee. This is considerable in some districts. The ghee ij...ra in this district being near 2 per cent of the ground rent shows that a great quantity be sold. You have also in your account of labourers forgotten some of their allowances: Mandai, kalavasam and one balla per candy divided among them by the farmer at harvest. There is no necessity for looking after them; their condition will naturally improve with that of their master.**

**19. DEATH TOLL IN MASULIPATAM REGION IN 1791 - 92 HUMAN : 6,56, 974;
CATTLE : 2,67,735**

**Abstracts of the Loss of Inhabitants and Cattle in the Districts Dependent on
Masulipatam: 1791 -92**

[TNSA: Board of Revenue Proceedings: P/284/49, p.2497, dated 13.5.1793 with letter of 12.9.1792]

Names of the Countries	Inhabitants of all classes dead	Cattle dead
Mugiatore	1,41,682	33,086
Northern and Center Divisions of the Havelly	53,950	34,736
Southern Division	4,874	5,625
Peddapore	1,84,123	74,543
Bettapore (?)	82,937	17,648
Nandigamah	11,370	8,714
Jallapelly (?)	7,018	5,718
Palavaram (?)	16,204	10,366
Jootallah	12,639	8,028
Cotapally	4,851	3,019
Corondah (?)	9,035	7,595
Rajahmahendrapuram	7,430	2,630
Cottah	7,800	3,100
Somapah's Villages	2,306	1,193
Noozeed	96,210	30,720
Char Mahall	16,545	20,015
Total	6,56,974	2,67,735

A true copy of the translation

20. EXTENSIVE BRITISH USURIAL PRACTICES IN INDIA: MADRAS PRESIDENCY: GOVERNOR HOBART'S MINUTE, c.1795

IOL: Minute of Lord Hobart, Governor, Madras Presidency, 24th October 1795, House of Commons Papers.

The Carnatic exhausted and being led to rapid destruction; HOBART 1795

The proposed arrangements which have been brought into discussion since the death of his Highness *the Nabob Wallajah*, make it necessary for me to advert with more minuteness than has been usual upon the Public Records, to the system on which the Administration of his Revenue has been conducted, because it manifestly shows the necessity of that change which it is my object to accomplish, both in respect to the Country itself, which, though under the immediate control of his Highness, it is the duty of this Government, in a general point of view, to cherish and protect; and in respect to the security which has been pledged to the Company for the support of their Military Establishment, and for the discharge of the Consolidated Debts guaranteed by Parliament to the private creditors of his Highness the Nabob. I shall, therefore, in this Minute lay before the Board the information which I have collected, and the consequent observations which have occurred to me, upon the usurious loans which it has long been the practice (principally among the European Gentlemen of the Presidency) to make to the Durbar, for mortgages upon the different provinces of the Carnatic; and here I may be allowed to express my belief, that though the Honourable Court of Directors have been extremely pointed in their orders and observations against this practice, the continuance of it has been owing in some measure to the want of that candid exposition of the fact, which it is my intention to make.

The Southern Districts of the Nabob's country, and Tinnevely in particular, as being the most distant from the Presidency, have been the theatre in which these scenes have been chiefly exhibited; but it is notorious that similar practices have been introduced, and are now actually in use, in Nellore, Arcot, and Trichinopoly.

The transaction commences at Madras, where the Kists of his Highness are payable, and is opened by an agreement between the Nabob and some one of the principal houses of business, or even some of the Company's servants for the payment of a certain sum into the Treasury on account of his Highness's public engagements. The advancers of this money, knowing from experience that a simple mortgage would be insufficient security, unless the means of reimbursing themselves should be placed in their own hands, find it necessary not only that a person of their own nomination should be appointed to the management of the mortgaged province, but that there should be a vigilant superintendence and a powerful support of the concern upon the spot, hence the expediency of a connection between them and the military commanding officer in the District; he also finds it advantageous to embark in the speculation, because he thereby adds considerable weight to his own interest, and because it facilitates the means of raising money to carry on his part of the concern. From this connection both parties derive ample security for their money by the absolute power of the one in command upon the spot, and by the weighty influence of the other in command of monied *interest at Madras*. This outline is filled up by a further connection with the person who appears to receive the appointment of *Aumildar or Manager* from the Nabob; hence it is either stipulated that a person

chosen by the money lenders at Madras shall be nominated to manage the District, or where men of rank may have already been appointed as *Foujdars* by his Highness, the same effect is produced by a communication between him, the commanding officer, and the money lenders, previous to the agreement for a loan at the Durbar. The combination is in this latter case completed by the appointment of a *Tehseeldar* on the part of the money lenders, and thence forward produces an uniform, consistent, and connected operation. His Highness having by this arrangement obtained his principal object, provision for the payment of his kist, without any immediate disbursement from himself, delivers his people and his province up to the control and power of the Manager, evidently without regard to their situation; because, as his terms with the money lenders necessarily provide for the removal of all restraint from the governing power, so he must expect that the Manager, who can have no interest in the future prosperity of the Country, will have recourse to every means by which he may hope to bear himself and his connections harmless, and that within the shortest time possible.

The interest allowed by the Sirkar varies in different places, and depends not a little upon the influence which the lender may happen to have at the Durbar: at a medium however it may be stated at 4 per cent per month, besides the pay of all the servants employed by the junto in receiving the Revenue. This last charge is always a fixed sum at the expense of the Nabob, considerably above the actual expense incurred by the Tehseeldar, and the difference is considered amongst the customary advantages of the concern*. The Manager arrived within his District immediately assembles his under Managers, Aumildars, and Renters, and then ensues the second part of this oppressive system:- The Tahseeldar is importunate, and the Manager must find means of satisfying his demands:- subordinate Soukars, native as well as European, are called upon for assistance. The Soukar makes his advance; and in the first instance, the Aumildar or Renter of the Districts, assigned over as security for such advance, grants his bond until other securities shall be forthcoming: these are either the bonds of the Inhabitants or grain. In time about three-fourths of the sum are secured to the Soukar by grain made over to him, and placed under charge of his servants; and for the other one-fourth the bonds of the inhabitants are made over for that part of the Revenue payable by them to the Sirkar in ready money upon the cultivation of dry grain, &c. Those are frequently forced from them at the commencement of the season, which consequently compels them to anticipate the crops, and pay interest upon money before it be due from them.

At this period of the transaction the Soukar sends his servants and Peons into the Country, with an order from the Nabob's manager to the guards placed therein to afford every assistance (as it is generally called), but in fact to obey them implicitly in collecting the amount of the bonds from the inhabitants. Anxiety to secure so precarious a property, naturally leads the Soukar to adopt such measures as power enables him, and the custom of the country authorises. Then follows this process: if the Ryot is dilatory in the discharge of his bond he is confined without victuals, beaten with rods and compelled to pay Batta to those very peons and guards who are the means of his confinement and punishment. In this manner, I am credibly informed, that an inhabitant who grants his bond for 100 chuckrums (nearly 40 pagodas) is compelled, before he is released from the consequences, to pay from 110 to 115 chuckrums, according to circumstances. If his credit or his other means is exhausted, which is too often the case, he must necessarily dispose of some part of his stock, which consists of cattle and seed grain.

The first part of the system which I have stated, describes the original cause at the fountain head; in both the considerations of the means which are immediately employed, and of the effect which it may produce upon the future Revenue, is abandoned; and while the grand mover of these effects is at a distance from the scene, and the subordinate instrument is hardened by practice, conscience is lulled to rest by the delusive opiate of interest upon interest.

Thus far I have traced the progress of a loan secured upon the bonds of the inhabitants: it will be not less politic for me to pursue it to the disposal of the Paddy.

The first endeavour of those who are engaged in a concern of this nature is, to enhance the price of grain by artificial means, lest the ordinary price of that article, the sole subsistence of the natives, should fail to answer the large advance of money and the exorbitant advantage expected upon it by the Soukar. The means of effecting this purpose is easy; for the necessitous condition of the Ryots compels them to dispose of their grain as soon as it comes into their possession, in order to satisfy the urgent demands upon them which I have already described: the purchasers of this grain monopolize it until the demand, which increases with the consumption, advances the price: if, towards the expiration of the season, any part of the grain should yet remain on hand, the expedient is, to divide the whole quantity, in whatever condition it may be, among the inhabitants, and to force it upon them by Guddyum. This Guddyum, it appears, compels the people (in general the manufacturers) to receive grain at a valuation considerably above the market price; and it would seem to be of ancient establishment and current practice; for in the agreement which I was successful in negotiating with his late Highness Nabob Walajah, for placing a portion of the Tinnevelly weavers under the immediate superintendence of the Company's Resident, his Highness has expressly reserved, nor could he be prevailed upon to relinquish, the Right of his Sirkar to exercise this Guddyum.

The inferior servants of the Sircar, whose duty should be to watch over the public interests, are placed under the arbitrary control of the money Lenders without whose permission not an anna can be expended nor a measure of grain issued, except by stealth: indeed I understand, that upon the arrival of a Soukar or his Representative in a Mortgaged District, the usual custom is, to notify his authority throughout the villages, and to prohibit the expenditure of grain or money but by his order; this prohibition extends to the ordinary charges of pagodas, maniums, and sibbendy; and when an order is granted from the Sudder Cutcherry for any of these purposes, the persons receiving the Sunnud must wait at the Cutcherry of the money lender for a confirmation of his right.

Instead of receiving relief by Tukavy (or advances for cultivation) at the proper season, by which to replace their cattle, and to provide seed for extending their cultivation, the inhabitants are often obliged to sacrifice both to their own immediate wants and the rapacity of the Soukar; of course no system of regulation can prevail, and every hope of improvement must be relinquished. Some of the means for enhancing the price of grain I have already related, but the subject is exhaustless. The Poligars have been prevented by the Manager of Tinnevelly from selling within the Sirkar lands the grain which is allowed them for Dash Cavelly (or watching fees); and I should hesitate to advance, if I was not supported by the authority of public record, that during a late scarcity of grain in the southern provinces, Ektabar Khan, the Nabob's Manager, had the hardiness to write a public complaint to the Company's Collector against the

Poligars for selling grain to the inhabitants; nor was the evil removed without the interposition of this Government, who, by sending vessels loaded with grain, induced the monopolizers, from regard to their own interest, to restore their usual supplies to the market: yet did the Company not escape the effects of this monopoly, for they were reduced to the necessity of purchasing grain at the price to which the monopolizers had raised it, for the subsistence of those troops who were stationed there for the protection of his Highness's territories.

After this exposition no comment can be required to show that this species of Government, if it deserves the name of Government, contains the most grievous oppression of the people, the certain impoverishment of the Country, and consequently the inevitable decay of Revenue; but it will be useful to show the particular manner in which it affects the resources of his Highness the Nawaub.

It is estimated, and I believe not with exaggeration, that the Province of Tinnevelly alone is annually mortgaged upon the terms I have described, to the amount of 3,00,000 pagodas; and calculating the period for which interest is paid upon the whole sum, at six months, the amount of interest, at 4 per cent. per months is, *72,000*

The charges paid by the Sirkar for the Sibbendy of the money lenders, during that period, cannot amount to less than	<i>3,000</i>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------

The amount of loss therefore to the Sirkar, on this transaction is, pagodas	<i>75,000</i>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------

That an individual gentleman should, in less than three years, amass a fortune of more than \approx 50,000, would be a matter of wonder, if this statement did not at the same time afford a solution of the difficulty, and a proof of its own correctness.

But the scene is not closed here: Besides the dealings of the principal Soukars with the Head Manager, there are subordinate transactions of *similar* nature among the inferior officers, and those who possess but smaller means for usurious practices, amounting in all perhaps from fifty thousand to a lakh of pagodas; this brings an additional expense upon the Sirkar, because interest is allowed on all advances made by the Renters on pressing occasions, before the Kists are due, and on the other hand, the inhabitants are not exempt from a part of this expense, which is imposed upon them by fine, forfeiture, or guddyum, in order that he may be enabled to make the advance, upon which he receives interest.

As the Manager is under engagements to pay the fullest computed value of the district, he is justified, according to the custom of the country, in availing himself of every possible resource. A proportion of the church [Temples, Chattrams, Mathams] allowances is withheld; the pay of all descriptions of servants is kept in long arrear, and in particular the Sibbendy Sepoys: a small advance indeed, is sometimes made for subsistence; but their principal resource (and it is not unproductive) is in the Batta, which they receive by acknowledged practice while doing the duty of Sezawuls, and in the dexterous management of the power which that service gives them to extort presents for their forbearance. The manager knows from experience, that in the event

of assuming the Country, the English Government will be induced, either from motives of humanity to attend to the calls of these unhappy people, or from motives of policy to satisfy the clamours of a mutinous and undisciplined rabble. Thus at the very time when the exigencies of Government became most pressing, a part of their resources, which ought to be immediate, is appropriated to the liquidation of arrears.

If this is a true history of the present management, it may be asked, why an immediate and large defalcation of the Revenue does not follow; for the operation of such system as I have described tends directly to the point of ruin. Nothing less than the hand of arbitrary power could avert it, even for a time. In proportion as the means of cultivation decrease, the price of grain is enhanced; and it is a notorious but inhuman maxim of Eastern finances, that a year of scarcity is more productive than a year of plenty to the Sirkar; because, as a given number of mouths can only consume a proportionable quantity of grain, the immediate advantage or disadvantage of government arises from the price at which that given quantity is sold. --In years of plenty the superfluous grain is in a great measure useless, owing to the partial and difficult means of exportation:-- in years of scarcity the same given quantity is required for the subsistence of the people; and as the demand is greater than the supply, an increase of the price is produced by the usual effects of a competition in the market.

Though the dealings of Soukars in the collection of the Revenue are not of recent establishment, yet the terms of loans have never been carried to so usurious an extent as since the practice has been introduced among Europeans; and though the inevitable effects of it may be protracted by the harsh expedients of an arbitrary Government, yet no man who reflects upon such a system can doubt that the resources of the Country have been undermined; that the Wealth of the people is exhausted; and that a principle of decline has been established which is now precipitating the Carnatic, with accumulated weight and rapidity, to destruction. Impressed as I am with a serious conviction of this truth, I cannot but look with extreme anxiety to the nature of the security provided by the Treaty of 1792, for those resources on which the British interests on the Coast of Coromandel materially depend; I cannot but see that the present system of collecting the Revenues of the Carnatic manifestly invalidates that security, and that, whenever a failure may happen in the payment of his Highness's Kists, we shall in vain have recourse to it for the recovery of the defalcation. As those payments, though avowedly moderate in their extent are now kept up by the extraordinary means which I have described, so it is reasonable to suppose that a failure, whenever it may happen, will arise from the total impoverishment of the people. In taking possession of a District under such circumstances, for the amount of a Kist which will then have fallen in arrear, we shall, instead of finding the immediate means of reimbursement, become charged with an exhausted Country, requiring all the liberal assistance and fostering attention of a lenient and indulgent Government. It is not only that our means will be curtailed at our greatest need, but that humanity and policy will call upon us for advances of money, at a time when our expenses will be most burthensome. This is an embarrassment from which the known resources of this Government are unequal to extricate us; and it is a dilemma unprovided for by the Treaty of 1792; for the objects of that Treaty are, the payment of a debt guaranteed by Parliament, which we are not at liberty to postpone: and the discharge of military pay, which cannot be interrupted without danger to the State.

To avert the consequences of an evil big with such imminent danger, is an object that merits the most serious as well as the most unwearied attention of this Government: and it is a matter of very great mortification to me, that seeing the progress of this calamity, and anticipating as I do its pestiferous effect, I am compelled to acknowledge, that the means of arresting its course is extremely difficult.

The prohibitory orders hitherto published have all failed of their object, because the evasion of them is easy to Europeans, through the agency of their native servants, and because the enormous profits, which arise from those usurious loans, hold out an irresistible temptation to adventurers. To prohibit the intercourse of Europeans at the Durbar is ineffectual; - other channels of communication are open; and the superintendent of an usurious loan at Palamcotah, conveys his demands to the ears of the Nabob with no less certainty than he who lives in the precincts of Chepauk: as long therefore as his Highness shall be so regardless of his true interests, as to deliver up his *provinces* and his people to public depredation, so long will there be found men who, in the pursuit of extravagant advantages, will overleap the bounds of discretion and of moral obligation.

So desperate a malady requires a remedy that shall reach its source; and I have no hesitation in stating my opinion, that there is no mode of eradicating the disease but by removing the original cause, and placing those Districts which are pledged for the security of his Kists beyond the reach of his Highness's management. The disposition which his Highness has already evinced to support such an arrangement, leaves me in no doubt of the real cause. It is not possible to calculate the extent and variety of interests which are involved in this one pursuit; and though they are subdivided in every direction of the Carnatic, yet at the call of danger they all rally round a common centre. The great houses of business, who are the principal money lenders at the Durbar, borrow from individuals, who, though not absolutely engaged in the loan itself, are partakers of the speculation in a remote degree, and feel with no less sensibility than their principals the approach of danger: similarity of interest makes it a common cause; and the great body of influence which is condensed upon this principle, is uniformly exerted to support his Highness the Nabob in an inflexible resistance against a melioration of system, and to oppose a reformation which I consider essential to the national welfare.

In the proposition which I have made to his Highness the Nabob, I am aware that I have offered great concessions on the part of the Company; but, with the impression of the evils I have stated strongly on my mind, I could not but consider the object I had in view above every idea of a pecuniary nature, even if the system of the Nabob's Government was not in itself calculated completely to annihilate every source of Revenue.

**21. WE HAVE RODE THE COUNTRY TOO HARD; GREAT OPPRESSION
EXERCISED RESULTING IN LAMENTABLE POVERTY: MADRAS GOVERNOR
BENTINCK: c. 1804**

Nottingham University : PwJb 772: from pp 272-283

Lord William Bentinck, Governor Madras, to Lord Castlereagh, President Board of Control Oct 18, 1804

I have paid a great deal of attention to the revenue management in this country. Your Lordship will perceive, if your leisure can permit you to attend to any of our details, that the general tenor of my opinion is, that we have rode the country too hard, and the consequence is, that it is in a state of the most lamentable poverty. Great oppression is I fear exercised too generally in the collection of the Revenues. I have discovered some instances of it, and I have thought it expedient to make examples of those Collectors who were responsible for better management and more just government...

22. THOMAS MUNRO TO BOARD OF REVENUE ON HOUSE TAX OR INCOME TAX: 28.1.1805

MRO: BR Misc Vol. 31, ff 56-75v, Extract: ff 71r - 76v

21. The statement No. 6 shews amount of house rent collected last year in the ceded districts and other sum which it is proposed to add to it if the Board shall think a further extension of that tax advisable. As the Minute of the Right (p.71v) Hon'ble the Governor in Council dated the 2nd of November last specifies that his view in imposing a general house tax is to make up for the remission of town duties, I have made an addition to the house rent hitherto levied, equal to the estimated amount of those duties. But as the house rent is already sufficiently heavy upon those who pay it, I have assessed the whole of the increase upon those who either from caste, from poverty or from other causes are exempted from the tax. Though a house tax is a more simple and less expensive mode than a town duty on commodities for raising certain revenue, and though from the smallness of the sum to be paid by each individual it may appear that it could not be burdensome even to the poorest, yet I apprehend that if it is carried into effect it will be found to be a worse tax than a town duty. The house tax in the ceded districts can only be rendered more productive by making it more general than it is at present. If it is made more general, it must fall upon Brahmins, Mussalmans, and other privileged castes, who have never been subjected to it under any government, and who according to their own expression have never paid it since the beginning of the world. And it must also fall upon the lower orders of every caste who have enjoyed an exemption on account of their poverty. The privilege of Mussalmans has no doubt arisen from their entering this country as conquerors (ff 72r), and that of Brahmins, Rajpoots and some other castes from their supposed superior sanctity, or dignity. The exemption from house rent is considered by them as an hon'ble distinction. The imposition of it will therefore be regarded with abhorrence as confounding them with the lowest castes. And the amount of the tax however insignificant will be called oppressive because it is degrading. The tax too, however low would be heavy on the lower orders, and would be with difficulty realised; for, except in the great towns labourers almost every where receive their wages in kind, and they would often be distressed by being obliged to convert a part of it into money to pay their house rent. They would look upon it as an additional tax, for they would never consider that they had formerly paid more as a town duty on the articles which they consumed. The house tax, however notwithstanding the objections to it might no doubt without any great difficulty be universally established. But I cannot think that the object in view is of sufficient importance to be purchased at the price of the popularity of Government, and the prejudices of the people; and though it is evident that the house tax would be less than the town duties now actually paid by the individuals of every caste, and description of inhabitants, yet this could never be (ff 72v) comprehended by the mass of the people, and would therefore never be felt, or acknowledged as a benefit. But independent of ancient prejudices there are some other considerations which render a town duty preferable to an extension of the house tax. The town duty is perfectly voluntary. It is not perceived, for it is confounded with the price of the article. It is not paid by arbitrary instalments, but only at the times that it is found convenient to purchase. A part of it may be saved by diminishing consumption, which cannot be done in the case of a house tax. It falls more equally than a house tax, for it is exactly in proportion to consumption, one advantage which no possible modification of the house tax can ever attain.

A tax to be properly a house tax should be composed of the rent of the ground occupied by the house, and of a tax on the rent for which the house can be let. But such a tax would not produce one-fifteenth part of what is now actually collected as house rent. The ground of the largest house would not yield one fanam as rent, and that of most houses not a quarter of a fanam. Houses in the interior cannot be hired as in the great towns can be on the coast, or in Europe; and can therefore yield no profit to the owner. Hence it appears that what is now called house tax is something else. (ff 73r)

It is undoubtedly a tax upon income, and of the highest antiquity. The Brahmins who have in all ages directed the revenue were probably led to adopt it from perceiving that they could not raise the duties on commodities without taxing themselves, and the other privileged castes in consumption, and that the rich merchants and manufacturers could not by any other expedient be made to contribute in proportion to their means to the necessities of the state. Whatever might have been the origin of this tax it is a productive one, and easily collected. The amount is regulated by long usage. The gross sum for each town is fixed in the cutcherry, and the different classes of tradesmen settle among themselves the proportion to be borne by each individual according to his supposed ability of which they are always the best judges. Were this tax to be abolished under the idea of its being personal, or vexatious it would be impossible to find another which could with equal ease to the inhabitants yield so great a revenue. There may be a few instances in which it is personal, or professional; but with these exceptions it is in all other cases an income tax. It has been already observed that houses cannot be let for rent, and that the rent of the ground which they occupy would be very trifling. It is therefore plain that if they are (ff 73v) made to yield a considerable revenue, the chief part of it must arise from a personal-professional, or income tax. Rayets paying land rent are in general exempted from the house tax because as their whole income arises from their land, it is supposed that when they pay the rent of it they have paid all that ought to be demanded. It is however the practice in some districts to make them pay a house tax of about a quarter of a rupee annually on pretence of their being exempted from duty on the produce of their lands, and on some other articles when purchased within the limits of their own districts. Rayets also who are employed as yearly servants or day labourers pay a small part of the profit of labour as a house tax.

All weavers pay a house tax whether they work for others, or on their own accounts, or employ workmen. It is usually called a loom tax, but it is in fact a tax on income for though it is also proportionate to the quantity of the manufacture, and the supposed profit of the trade. If income is to be taxed it seems but reasonable that the weavers should pay his share as well as the merchant, or shopkeeper.

The houses which pay no rent are (ff 74r) about 3/4 of the whole number in the ceded districts, but as they belong either to privileged castes, or to the poorer sort of other castes, a considerable revenue could not be drawn from them without, in the one case exciting discontent, and in the other occasioning some distress. A town duty is much more expensive in the collection, but as it is cheerfully paid and against no prejudice, it ought to be preferred to an extension of the house tax. It has not even at the present rate 6% been prejudicial to the general trade of the country in any article but that of cloth. It has like every other comprehensive arrangement affected some particular interests, and excited some clamour. But this must be expected in every such measure. On the present occasion I see no cause for complaint except in the case of

cloth. If the trade in any other article has actually suffered the evil may be easily removed by some alteration of the duty.

22. The statement of the house tax is itself so full that it requires very little explanation. A great proportion of the houses in India are actually Sirkar property. Almost all the houses of Rayets, and many of those merchants and manufacturers have no private owners. The house of a Rayet is only his while he remains in it. If he removes to another village, it is given to the (ff 74v) first new settler who comes, whether cultivator, or tradesman. Many tradesmen employ houses of this kind which they sometimes for their own convenience repair, or enlarge. But if they quit them from an increase of rent, or any other cause they cannot sell them; for they again immediately become public property.

The frequency of emigration, and the danger to which the building of a good house exposes the owner of being fined on account of his supposed wealth under the native governments, have prevented the erection of comfortable habitations. The houses of the inhabitants are therefore in general very mean, and there is seldom any great difference between those of the rich and the poor. The house which had been built by a merchant is frequently occupied by a common husbandman, and that which had been deserted by a weaver inhabited by a merchant. Hence it arises that the size of the houses affords no just rule for the taxing its occupant. I have therefore paid no attention to the house itself but regulated the tax by the estimated consumption of taxable articles by the inhabitant, and by his ability to pay it.

The whole of the inhabitants are divided into three classes, and each caste, or profession in those classes is again sub-divided into three according to their wealth, or poverty. The first class contains (ff 75r) merchants, shopkeepers, Bramins, and all those castes whose income and expenditure are greatest. The second, husbandmen, weavers, artificers, etc., whose expenditure is less, and the third all the poorer and meaner castes, and professions. The mode by which the rich and poor of the same caste, or trade are distinguished is shewn in the statement and will be easily understood from one or two examples. The Buckals, for instance are divided into three orders. In the first are comprised all those who are shopkeepers, in the second those who have not shops but go about the country as itinerant traders with merchandise on a bullock, or on their own back; and in the third those who have neither shop, nor merchandise, but are employed as servants, or coolies. In the caste of Lingbuljiwars, the first order comprehends wholesale merchants, or those who import betelnuts, cotton, etc. in the gross. The second, shopkeepers, and the third, bullockmen. In the first order of Bramins are included Meerasdars, such as curnums, and proprietors of large Enams, in the second all who are in service, or rent land, and in the third Bhutwurties, or holders of small Enams, and beggars. And in the caste of Coonbies, or husbandmen (No. 28) the first order is composed of landholders; the second of fixed servants, and the third of day labourers. Among the castes who are subjected to the house tax there are a few individuals (ff 75v) who have always been exempted from it for other causes besides poverty. The Shetties, or headmen of the Buckalls-Buljiwars, and other castes are excused as a mark of distinction. The Moossedies, who is a sort of deputy to the Shetty, is also exempted on the same account. Both these belong to the first order. In the second order the WSuntakoolie is exempted because he lodges, and prepares food for travellers of the caste. It would be endless to point out the reasons of every particular exemption. But I trust that the inhabitants will still be permitted to enjoy the little privileges, and distinctions to which they are

so much attached, and that a town duty rather than a general house tax will be adopted as the medium of increasing the revenue.

Munro to Board of Revenue on Tax on Houses in Ceded Districts: 25.8.1805:

BRO: BR Misc. Vol 32, Anantpoor, 25 August 1805, ff 13v-49v; Extract: ff 30r

16. (19) The taxes on houses and trades included in the land rent shall be collected as at present subject however to such reduction in their rates as Government may deem expedient.

**23. THOMAS MUNRO'S FAVOURITE TAXES MOHTURFA AND
VISABUDDY c.1805 NOT EVEN BEGGARS REMAIN UNTAXED LONDON
CONSIDERS THEIR ABANDONMENT AND REPLACEMENT BY OTHER FUTURE
TAXES.**

IOL: Revenue Department, 5 November (No. 17) 1856.

Our Governor General of India in Council.

Para 1. YOUR letter in this department, dated the 28th February last (No.5) reports to us the final result of your deliberations on the subject of the revision or abolition of the Mohturfa and Veasabuddy (taxes on professions, trades, artificers, houses, &c.), under the presidency of Fort St.George.

2. This question has been the subject of discussion and correspondence between the Government of Madras, your Government, and ourselves, for the last 12 years; and after an inexcusable delay on the part of the Madras authorities in furnishing the information which had been repeatedly called for the case was at length put in a shape sufficiently complete for decision in the proceedings of the Madras Board of Revenue, dated the 27th March 1848.

3. In a minute dated the 12th September 1848, Mr. Daniel Elliot reviewed the whole question at considerable length, and arrived at the conclusion that the admitted evils of the system might be eradicated to a great extent by a modification of the rates, and a change in the mode of collection; and he offered various suggestions, with this object. In a subsequent minute, however, under date the 5th May 1853, he states that a further consideration of the question had induced a change in his views; and he avows that, "feeling more sensibly the difficulty of the proposed reform, and, indeed, almost despairing of the possibility of success in it, and being very strongly pressed by the consideration of the disadvantage that this Presidency will be under, if it is left subject to taxes of this nature, from which Bombay has been relieved, and which do not obtain in Bengal, his opinion is now for the entire abolition of this revenue."

4. Mr.J.F.Thomas (Minute dated 23^d April 1853) considers that "it is not practicable to find a remedy for the abuse which exist under it" and, in the event of its abolition, does not doubt that the loss of revenue would, at no distant date, be made good to the State from the increasing numbers and prosperity of the non-agricultural classes. "Their advancing wealth," he says, "would extended the market and enhance the value of all products of the land, and better prices would then be obtained by the ryot, and greater stability be thus given to the land revenue. I should not hesitate, therefore, to counsel the entire abolition of the mohturfa taxes, in a financial point of view, as well as upon the ground of the evils and abuses inherent in them".

5. Of all the members of the Madras Government, the Governor alone (Sir H. Pottinger) advocates the retention of any portion of the mohturfa taxes. The admissions made in his minute of the 28th April 1853, go far, however, in our opinion, to nullify his conclusions and the numerous modifications which he proposes would, if carried out, still leave many of the

inequalities untouched, and most of the opening for abuse unclosed, as they exist under the present system.

6. These proceedings were laid before your Government, with a letter dated the 26th May 1853; but the matter was not taken into consideration till the 31st December 1855, when the Marquis of Dalhousie recorded a minute, in which, after explaining his reasons for delay in disposing of the subject, he expresses himself in the following words; "**The mohturfa taxes, as a whole, are indefensible in principle. They are a direct tax upon humble industry. They press upon the poorest of the people. They press with an unequal pressure. They are felt sensibly; felt as an obnoxious burden; and they give unbounded scope to the worst of all the vexations which we see and detest, but cannot eradicate the petty oppression of petty native officials**".* His Lordship accordingly came to the conclusion that "the mohturfa taxes should be abolished, wholly and unreservedly;" but looking to the actual financial condition of the Indian Empire he suggested that their abolition should be deferred until the present extraordinary pressure should be removed so as to admit to the revenue the produce being relinquished with safety.

7. Lord Dalhousie's views were concurred in by Mr. Dorin, but the three other members of Council, Mr. J. P. Grant, Mr. Peacock, and General Anson, pronounce in favour of their immediate abolition.

8. The mohturfa taxes were abolished in Bengal in 1793, and in Bombay in 1844; and even Mysore, in the heart of the Madras Presidency, is exempted from them. Their average net produce is from 11 to 12 lacs of rupees per annum.

(Side Note: Bellary, Cuddapah, Tinnevely, Malabar)

9. The arguments in favour of the abolition of these taxes appear to us to be irresistible. They are confined to one Presidency which is subject to at least as heavy a pressure of taxation as any other part of India; and even there, whole districts and parts of districts as well as particular classes of people are entirely exempt. They are most unequally distributed over the districts subject to them, four only of the twenty collectorates into which the Presidency is divided, contributing upwards of half the total amount. The assessment is arbitrary, irregular, and undefined, resting (except as regards the veesabuddy of the Ceded Districts) on no law but merely on ancient usage, and thus affording to the native officers employed in their collection ample opportunities of oppression and extortion, of which it is in evidence that they largely avail themselves.

10. We are perfectly satisfied that no modification of the existing system can be devised which would divest it of its objectionable character, and **we accordingly convey to you our authority to direct its total abolition, at such time and in such manner as may seem to you expedient**.*

11. **It has been suggested in the course of the discussion, that the Mohturfa might be so regulated as to convert it into a house tax or a income tax, or into both combined. Such taxes, if fairly assessed, may be unobjectionable in principle; and, as Mr. Dorin suggests, some similar imposts may hereafter be found unavoidable as a measure of financial necessity throughout India**.* In the present case, however, any such conversion of the Mohturfa taxes would be open to the fatal objection, that it would be continuing to subject the Presidency of Madras to a system of taxation, from which the rest of India would be free; but in thus relieving

our native subjects from the payments of imposts which in their mode of collection under our administration have proved oppressive, you will bear in mind that, with the prospect of a reduction also in the amount of the land-tax, you will require to take into your immediate consideration the means of obtaining revenue from other sources, and to notify to those who derive advantage from the remission of the mohturfha, that such is the intention of our Government.

12. With respect to the suggestion of Mr. J. P. Grant, to which you have called our attention, for an increase in the rates of import duty at all the Presidencies, to compensate for the loss of revenue to be occasioned by the abolition of the mohturfha, we must observe that such a measure must be considered, if at all, on its own merits, and not in connexion with the question discussed in this despatch. Mr. Grant has inadvertently stated the general rate of import duty at 3 1/2 per cent and valorem, instead of 5 per cent, to which amount it was raised under our orders by Act IX of 1845.

13. We shall communicate a copy of this despatch to the Government of Fort St. George for their information.

We are, &c.
(signed) W. H. Sykes
R. D. Mangles.

London, 3 November 1856.

25. RACK-RENTING IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY ON INSISTENCE FROM LONDON: MADRAS BOARD OF REVENUE MINUTE, PARA 288, 5.1.1818

IOR: P\292\53: proceedings of the Madras Board of revenue: Minute 5.1.1818 (pp,21-337: 308 paras) The minute is a general review of the British revenue arrangements in the Madras Presidency from the formal acquisition of the various areas (much of it being actually controlled or dominated and thus being managed in revenue affairs according to British needs and precepts dated back to around 1750) to the time of the minute. London took strong exception to the charge of extortion (especially in para 288) and rack-renting made in it and compelled Madras to withdraw what had been expressed.

Para 286. "The village settlement, however, though it commenced by fixing the assessment on each village, and making over the lands to the people collectively, or to head of the village, expressly contemplated, its gradual subdivision and distribution, not indeed upon each field, but upon the entire land of each Ryot; and consequently the gradual conversion of the collective into an individual settlement, wherever the interests of the village community would admit of this change. One of the chief advantages of the ryotwar system was thus engrafted on the village settlement, but the measure was not to be universally or immediately introduced; the people were not to be constrained to adopt an arrangement, which however abstractedly expedient, was in a great number of the provinces at variance with the landed tenure, the ancient institutions, and the circumstances of the inhabitants. It was hoped that as their means improved the obstacles to this arrangement would be overcome; and accordingly it was to be rather promoted than introduced by the collectors".

Para 287: "The judgement which has been pronounced in England against the village system, of which the outline is given above, is founded on a very partial and unfavourable view of its results; for it does not appear that the authorities at home had, at the time when that judgement was passed, any information before them respecting any other portion of it than its commencement, the triennial settlement. It is hoped that the Reports which have since been forwarded, in elucidation of the effect of the decennial settlement, will enable them to form a more correct opinion of the tendency of the village system".

Para.288. Nothing, however, that has been urged at home, appears to contravene any of the fundamental principles of the village system. The whole of the evils arising from the triennial settlement, or which have been attributed to it, may distinctly be traced, not to its intrinsic principles, but to its over-assessment, which it must be allowed has been justly condemned; for it was nearly everywhere a mere rack rent. **Under the pressing orders received from England, about that period, requiring from the country a surplus revenue of a million sterling, accompanied by a threat from the hon'ble court of directors [i.e., actually by the British state] to take the revision of the establishments into their own hands, not only was the most rigid economy enforced in all departments of the state, but the triennial settlement of each village where the Ryotwar system had existed was too generally determined with "reference to the payments under the survey rent", in other words, with reference to the collections under the ryotwar system,(see report of the Board of Revenue to Government dated 25 April 1808) when all was taken from the people that they were able to pay***. The over assessment during this period, therefore, arose from the triennial settlement having in great degree been founded upon the fallacious data of the Ryotwar collections, and if any

inference is to be drawn from this circumstance it is one against the Ryotwar, not against the Village settlement.

Para 289: "This practical error, with some other of a similar nature which had inadvertently crept into the triennial settlement, and are attributable entirely to a deviation from its principles, was in general avoided in the decennial settlement, which as embracing a longer period and a greater vicissitude of seasons, is the standard by which a fair judgement may be formed of the results of a village system".

Para 290: "To take a complete review of the result of this settlement would extend the already voluminous proceedings to too great a length. Referring therefore for particular information to the late report of the Board on this subject, it will here be sufficient briefly to state that, although this system has not been equally successful in every district, yet even where (as in Bellary) it has been the least so, the collectors are unanimous in opinion that it has most materially improved the condition of the great agricultural population of the country and that it is the great body of the Ryots and not the mere parties with whom the settlement was concluded. The Ryotwar teerwas have nearly everywhere been greatly reduced, and instead of head Ryots oppressing their inferiors most of the collectors have been obliged to prop their weakened authority by that of their Tahsildars. This without any material exception, is the universal language of all their reports, and it is a result which may be confidently offered as conclusive evidence that the system has generally answered the expectation of those by whom it was introduced. But where the settlement has been best conducted, as in Cuddapah and the Northern division of Arcot, a picture of prosperity is drawn, of which the parallel may in vain be sought for throughout the revenue records of this Presidency".

26. PASSING OF LAND FROM THE PEASANTRY TO COMMERCIAL CLASSES RESULTING FROM BRITISH POLICY SINCE 1760s AND SEEMED NATURAL AND WELCOME TO CANARA COLLECTOR: c. 1833

TNSA: A50(D) 189: Reports of Commissioner John Stokes (12-1-1833/17-1-1833) etc. On revision of Assessment and the disturbances known as Koots in Canara etc. (pp. 117), Commercialisation of land welcomed by the British, c.1833 - Selection from the records of the Collector of South Canara, Pub 1885.

33. The particular process which appears to be going on in Canara, seems such as might have been expected. It has been observed, that a good deal of the land is passing from the hands of the exclusively agricultural to the commercial classes. The acquisition of land will, of course, follow the accumulation of capital. It is hardly to be expected that much wealth could be amassed in the pursuit of agriculture alone, even were the ryots a more frugal race than they are. They almost universally live up to their incomes, and frequently outrun them. They are wasteful, and improvident, fond of squandering money in idle shows, or indulgences; and what they do not spend, they either hoard, or convert into ornaments, a mode of investment, which affords no return, and but bad security. When they have occasion to raise money they thoughtlessly submit to ruinous terms, forestal their crops, and soon involve themselves in irretrievable embarrassment. The ryots generally and especially the Sudra castes, seem rather deficient in natural sagacity, and few of them have the benefit of even the first rudiments of education. In all these respects, their habits and character are strikingly contrasted with those of the commercial class. The latter are generally of foreign extraction; and a great majority of them, as well as many of the public servants, are Brahmans, who, attracted by the extensive trade, or other causes, have originally emigrated from Goa and the rest of the Concan.

They are settled all along the coast, and almost monopolise the internal as well as the export commerce of the country; all the merchants in Canara are more or less educated, and seem to be sufficiently expert and assiduous as men of business; and the Concanies, in particular, are characterised by acuteness and intelligence. It is not surprising that men of this stamp in the general struggle for wealth, should be successful competitors with the simple and ignorant farmers with whom they have to deal.

34. The circumstance that Soucars and public servants are supplanting the original landed proprietors of Canara, has been noticed as matter of regret, but I can discern no good reason to view it in that light. The evil resulting from it is, I think, almost but speculative; and it is attended with many positive advantages both to the country, and the Government. It should be considered as an evidence, not so much of the depression of the old moolgars, as of an accession of capital to the landed interest, the beneficial results of which are many and obvious. Estates in the occupation of capitalists can be brought to a pitch of improvement far beyond what they ever could attain under the management of a needy proprietor. The former can thus afford to pay a greater sum to Government, and still enjoy a larger net income. His tenants are likely to be treated with more indulgence and consideration, and to be more secure and independent in their farms. Indeed, it may be doubted, whether the circumstances of a ryot, as an impoverished vurgdar, are more enviable, than as the tenant of a wealthy land-lord. The estates, known to belong to Soucars or public servants, are, as has already been noticed, usually

assessed at the full amount, which is realized with greater ease and regularity than in any other case.

35. Frequent complaints have been made of the usurious and extortionate dealings of the Soucars, which it has been proposed to check by legislative enactment; and the complaints are probably well founded. We can scarcely expect it should be otherwise, where men are influenced so much by self interest, and so little by moral considerations. But this is not an evil to which it would be politic on the part of Government to attempt the application of a remedy. The class with whom the soucars are contrasted, can scarcely claim a larger share of our sympathy for they are not morally superior, while they are inferior in most other respects. When they know how, they seem quite as ready as the Soucars to over-reach their neighbours by dishonest artifice. Any peculiar protection to them would counteract rather than assist the law of nature; by which all evils of this kind have a tendency, if left to themselves, to work their own cure.

The wisest course for Government is to abstain from interference, and to look for a remedy in the gradual spread of enlightenment; and in extended competition among the commercial body. In the meantime, any legal restrictions on the dealings of the Soucars would be nugatory as to the attainment of the object proposed, and in many other respects, injurious; but on this subject it is not necessary to add any thing to the judicious remarks already in the records#of the Board.

36. One fact that has been referred to by those who have complained of the heaviness of the assessment and almost the only unquestionable one, is the fall in prices, especially of rice, the staple commodity of the province. The effect of this reduction, so long as it continued must necessarily have been to increase the pressure of the assessment, and in some cases, to occasional distress. To this cause, I think, must be mainly attributed the great outcry from the provinces of the Western Coast, during the last few years. On this subject I shall extract part of a remark of Col. Munro already referred to. "There is always** much clamour among the land holders, when the price of produce is low, but, with the exception of a few years, it has been higher than under the Mysore Government. Many of the poorer land holders, however, suffer from a cheap season, without benefitting much from a dear one, because they sell early before the price rises much and there are therefore every year a few who must have remission or sell their lands. The same thing would happen, were the assessment lowered one half." A fall in prices is not an adequate reason for permanently reducing a fixed assessment, at all events, until we know that the fall is a permanent one. Temporary relief is all that is required in the meantime, and this has been amply afforded in Canara.

37. Allusion has frequently been made, in connection with this subject, to what has been termed the Sircar or settlement price. It has been urged that the price obtained by the ryots for some years has been much less and that they must therefore necessarily have found it difficult to pay the assessment. Mr. Cameron has mentioned the subject in his Letter to me of the 27th February, and I have noticed it in remarking on the passage. It does not appear clearly when or on what data this price was assumed. I believe it is the rate at which the rent produce of the

From Government, 10th August 1821. Do. on settlement of Canara for Fusli 1232 4th November 1832, Para. 5. Board's proceedings 6th September 1830, paras 40, 41

** See Reference in Para.9

estates has been calculated in the Revenue Accounts for the several Taluks, in reference to which the annual alterations in the Settlement are regulated.

In some passages^{##} it appears to be spoken of as the rate at which the payment in grain were originally commuted into money. I am not aware on what authority this tradition rests; but considering the time which has elapsed since the commutation referred to took place, its correctness seems rather doubtful. Admitting the rate quoted, to be that at which the existing money assessment was calculated, and the price on an average for the last two or three seasons to have been less, it does not necessarily follow, that the assessment may not be collected without undue severity. The rate of commutation assumed in calculating an assessment intended to be permanent, would probably be the medium rate of all kinds of rice for a series of years; and it would be contemplated that, in the fluctuations of the market, the current price would sometimes fall below as well as rise above the standard.

38. Besides, the principles on which the assessment was framed, do not, after the lapse of so long an interval, afford safe data for judging of its practical operation. We have to consider the assessment not so much in its theory as in its actual relation to the existing resources of each estate. An increase in the quantity of produce in particular estates may have compensated for the reduction of its value.

39. As far as I have been able to ascertain, however, it does not appear that the average price has ever fallen so decidedly below the public standard, as has been assumed. As I have noticed in my remarks on the settlement of Bekul, in many parts of the district several descriptions of rice are produced, differing considerably in value. The public rate has been contrasted with the price of red rice, which is the cheapest of all the sorts.

40. The fall of price has usually been attributed to a want of demand. The official returns however, show the average annual exports latterly to have been remarkably steady. A statement will be found in the appendix of the quantity, official value and average price of rice exported from Canara by sea in 16 successive years, being 8 before, and 8 subsequent to, the reduction of the export duty from 10 to 3 per cent. If fusly 1234, a remarkable year, in which the exports were increased, to an unprecedented extent, by a scarcity in the Eastern Coast, be left out of the comparison, the average of the two periods will be as nearly as possible equal; a good deal of rice in that year was brought from above the Ghauts. The value shown in this statement is the product of the price multiplied into the quantity of each description, and the average therefore is a fair medium for the whole. Since the year 1823, the official value of each kind of rice in the account of the Sea custom Department has been fixed according to the actual whole-sale price of the market, which has been ascertained and reported officially once a week, and may be therefore considered tolerably accurate, or at all events to be rather under than above truth. Prior to that period, the duty was collected on the Tariff valuation which was then universally complained of as too high; the inference, therefore, is, that the price shown in the statement is greater than had generally been obtained previously, when lowness of price was not stated as a reason for reducing the assessment.

^{##} From Mr. Harris on settlement of Canara for 1232, 17th June 1823, para 10.

From Fusly 1225 to 1232	21,333
Do. 1233 to 1240	23,100
Average of 16 years	22,216
Highest Year 1234	35,456
Lowest Year 1231	18,430

*No.1

Fusly	Average price per corge		
	Rs.	As.	p.
1225	83	8	3
1226	83	6	5
1227	83	6	0
1228	83	6	3
1229	84	2	6
1230	83	14	7
1231	83	10	7
1232	63	13	10
Average of 8 years	81	1	6
1233	74	12	10
1234	88	15	5
1235	97	10	8
1236	82	4	2
1237	80	2	7
1238	71	1	1
1239	63	7	8
1240	58	15	10
Average of 8 years	78	7	10

**27. ONE THIRD OF MOST FERTILE LAND HAD GONE OUT OF
CULTIVATION IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY DUE TO EXTORTIONATE
GOVERNMENT LAND TAX: COLLECTOR, NORTH ARCOT, 1854**

TNSA: Madras Board of Revenue Proceedings: Report of J.D.Bourdillon, Collector, North Arcot: 23.10.1854

No. 127.

North Arcot, Collector's Cutcherry,
Chittoor, 23d October 1854.

From J.D.BOURDILLON, ESQUIRE,
(*Collector of North Arcot*)

To W.H.BAYLEY, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Board of Revenue,
Fort Saint George.

Sir,

Para 1. Before quitting this District to take up my appointment as a member of the Board of Revenue, I am anxious to reply to the Board's order of the 31st August 1854, respecting the reduction of the assessment; although I must necessarily do it in an incomplete manner, from want both of time and of some necessary information. The order in question refers to two separate objects first that of giving immediate relief in cases where "the excessive pressure of the assessment has tended to keep valuable lands permanently out of cultivation"; and second, a more general and systematic revision and reduction of the assessment. for the first of these objects, measures were to be taken once by Collectors; while for the second, they were to report for the orders the Board the arrangements which they would recommend. I propose to report on both; to state what I have done under the former order, and to set forth briefly and generally the measures which I would propose under the latter. I shall at the same time reply to the orders of Government the 3rd February 1854, respecting the survey and assessment of the five southern Talooks of the District, received with an Extract from the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue of the 20th idem.

2. There is no doubt that the heavy assessment has actually kept valuable lands out of cultivation in every part of the District. But its operation keeping waste whole classes, or large proportions of whole classes, of the (?) land, is seen most in the five Talooks south of the Palar. In those talooks it is the general rule that the best lands are permanently waste. I stood on the bunds of numberless tanks, and seen the land immediately contiguous to the bund, waste, and the cultivated land commencing at some distance: and on asking why the best lands were thus abandoned, the reply has been that those were first class, or first and second class, as if that were of course a natural and sufficient explanation. This is not the case to the same extent in the Talooks north of the river, where even in the highest classes, some part is most commonly under cultivation.*

para 15 Extract Minutes of Consultation July 10, 1854, Revenue Department No. 806.

3. This difference is I believe in some measure due to the greater energy and industry of the ryots in the Northern Talooks; but there are other causes in the Revenue arrangements also. In the Southern Talooks the highest class lands were probably assessed for two crops, but under the system prevailing there the amount for each crop was not distinguished, nor was remission given for the second crop when it was not cultivated. Consequently as it often happened that the water was insufficient for the second crop, it became necessary to throw up the land as the risk of loss was too great. In the Northern Talooks, on the other hand, as each crop has only to bear its own burden, it has been practicable to cultivate a part of the best lands in almost every village. Again, the system in use in the Southern Talooks allows a second crop to be grown on the inferior lands, which were certainly assessed for one crop only, without any additional charge; and this circumstance has tended to promote the abandonment of the best lands; the water available for a second crop being in many cases taken to inferior lands, which have thus been able to pay the assessment, often too high to be paid from a single crop. In many cases also wells have been dug to aid in watering the second crop.

4. The object of the present reduction being immediate relief, and there being a prospect of a much more complete measure at no distant date: I thought it best to deal with whole classes only. To have discriminated between parts of the land in the same class, reducing some and leaving the rest untouched, would have involved the necessity of preparing detailed field statements, as without such precaution much room would have been given for fraud. This would have caused much delay; so that *immediate* relief would have been impracticable, and the present measure would hardly have been in actual operation before the more complete one was ready to supersede it. This method of proceeding by whole classes had indeed its inconveniences: but it could not be expected that a temporary and immediate measure, carried into effect too by means of the ordinary establishment only, could be complete. On the one hand it made it necessary to reduce the assessment in many cases on some cultivated land as well as on the waste; while on this other, where the proportion of land in a class kept out of cultivation was not large, no reduction could be made on it at all.

5. As to the former of these circumstances, indeed I think it is not to be regretted. For the effect of reducing the assessment on the waste only and leaving contiguous and similar land at the old rate, would certainly be simply to transfer labour and capital from the latter to the former; the former waste would be cultivated, and the former cultivated would become permanently waste. Indeed though that result will be avoided now as regards land in the same village, yet it will still follow as respects lands of different villages, unless the more complete measure is speedily carried into effect. For if the ryots who have fully cultivated their lands see them on that very account continue under their old burden, while those of a neighbouring village where the ryots have been less industrious and frugal receive relief, they will certainly throw up their own high class lands also, as a means of ultimately obtaining a reduction of the assessment.

6. This dealing with class only, unavoidable as I believe it to have been, had the further effect of making the reductions rarer in the Northern than in the Southern Talooks. In the latter, as already said, whole classes 1st and 2d class land are permanently waste in many village, or only a very small percentage is cultivated; and here therefore very little revenue was given up, even for a time, by reduction. But where half or more of the land of any class was under cultivation, and paying perhaps from 25 to 35 rupees a Cawny, I did not think myself justified by the present order in making a reduction, however certain that it would be followed by the

cultivation of the whole, because of the large amount of actual revenue which such reduction would involve. In the Northern Talooks therefore I selected only a few villages in each Talook, where the extent of waste was largest and where the assessment was notoriously the most burdensome, and for the present made reductions in those villages only. In the four Talooks of Cauveri, Sholinghur, Suttivaid and Cuddapanuttum, I made no reductions. In these Talooks, and more particularly in Suttivaid (which was surveyed and assessed while it formed a part of Chingleput.) the assessment is less burdensome than in the other Talooks; and it did not seem necessary to apply the present order to them. I should add that with one exception to be noticed presently, my reductions were on Nunjah only, (including tank and channel otacal) where indeed relief is much more wanted than on Poonjah. I may also explain that, as respects the extent of cultivation and waste, I used the accounts of Fusly 1262. That was a year materially above the average extent of cultivation, and it would have required much time to prepare the necessary detailed accounts for a series of years.

7. The foregoing paras explain my mode of proceeding under the order ... question; I will now briefly notice the results on the revenue. Enclosure I gives these at one view and in a convenient form. It shows for each Talook the number of villages untouched, with the extent of Nunjah land both waste and cultivated, and the total assessment on each; the number of villages to which the present order was applied, with the same particulars of the land and assessment in the classes untouched; and lastly the extent of land, waste and cultivated, in the classes of which the assessment has been lowered, with the amount and proportion of the reductions made. It will be seen that the whole Nunjah Ayacut of the nine Talooks in the statement is 1,17,889 Cawnies, bearing a Government assessment of 15,10,914 Rupees, of which the extent cultivated is 73,917 Cawnies or 62 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent; bearing an assessment of 9,19,509 Rupees or 60 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the whole. Thus three-eighths of the land is waste and unproductive. Out of the whole extent, 5,725 Cawnies of cultivation, and 12,306 Cawnies of waste were brought under the present reduction; the assessment being 1,12,612 Rupees on the former, and 2,34,969 on the latter. The reduction on the cultivation amounted in the whole to 17,993 Rupees, averaging 16 per cent of the present assessment; that on the waste amounted to 54,390 Rupees, being 23 and a fraction per cent on the present assessment.

8. Thus about 18,000 Rupees of present Revenue is given up, but in return there is the reasonable prospect of a large accession of Revenue from the waste land subjected to the reduction. The total assessment charged on that land at the reduced rates is 1,80,579 Rupees, being just ten times the amount of the Revenue now given up. The whole of this land is now waste and unproductive; and supposing that only half of it is brought under cultivation as a consequence of the present reductions there will be an increase of 90,000 Rupees to set off against the loss of 18,000 Rupees. Thus even as a mere question of Revenue, I think there can be no doubt that the present measure will be one of gain and not of loss; while as regards the taxpayers, the present measure of relief, scanty and narrow as it is, will indubitably be hailed as a boon. I should add that the real reduction is less than is shown in the statement, because the new rates in the Southern Talooks are not to be subject to Teeauzgarry remission. Supposing one-third of the cultivated land operated on to enjoy that privilege now, the real sacrifice of actual Revenue will be Rupees 16,220, instead of Rupees 17,993, as it appears in the statement. I may remark also that the loss is further less than it appears, because the cultivation of Fusly 1262 was above the usual and average extent.

9. The exceptional case of reduction of Poonjah rates to which I have referred is the following. Soon after the present order of the Board reached me, I had before me on some other business the Monigars and Curnums of two villages of the Sautghur Talook. I took the opportunity to enquire respecting the rates of assessment, and the extent of cultivation and waste in the villages, and I found them to be as shown in the enclosure 2. The following table shows the extent of cultivation and waste respectively. [Table not given here]

10. I am now speaking of the Poonjah. It will be seen that out of 295 Cawnies in Rungumpettah, only 50 was cultivated while 245 was waste; and in Goondlapully, that out of 363 Cawnies, only 97 ½ was cultivated and 265 ½ waste. It was fully clear that this lamentable state of things was owing solely to the exorbitancy of the assessments, which in both villages alike, ranged from 5 Rupees 6 Annas a Cawny to 3 Rupees 1 Anna, in these remote jungle villages, after deducting the customary remission of 12 ½ per cent from the Taram rates. This had compelled the abandonment of the land, which had now been waste for many years; and the ryots and labourers, without occupation or means of living, had emigrated, or remained in poverty on contracted holdings; even if they had not, as not unfrequently happens in such cases, resorted to occasional robbery in the neighbouring ghauts. Much of even the land actually cultivated would have been waste also, but that some private wells aided in the cultivation of the greater part of it. I had no hesitation in applying the present order to this case; I lowered the rates as shown in enclosure 2, and there is no doubt that cultivation will speedily be extended. The state of the Nunjah was much the same as of the Poonjah, and it will be seen in the statement that I reduced the rates on that also. I may add that these new rates in these villages are not to be subject to the customary remission; they are still higher than I think they ought to be.

11. I must not omit to notice another and distinct measure which I have adopted under the rule now in question. It has long been well known to the Revenue authorities of the District, and has repeatedly come under the notice of the Board, that in the five Southern Talooks, which have never been settled on survey, the extent of the lands in many villages is far less than that which appears in the accounts and on which they are assessed. In some cases that real extent of the land is not more than 70 or 75 per cent of the nominal extent. This circumstance of course makes the assessment more burdensome in reality than in appearance; and this cause operates not less than the nominal high rate of assessment to keep land waste.

12. I happen to have at hand a memo. of the deficiency in two villages of the Arcot Talook, viz. Chuckramulloor and Mundialum, both fine villages. In the former, out of an extent of 229 Cawnies of Nunjah land shown in the accounts, there is no more in reality than 182, leaving a deficiency of 47 Cawnies, or 20 per cent. The assessment of the deficient land amounts to about 650 Rupees. In Mundialum there is a deficiency of 40 Cawnies out of 167, or 23 ¾ per cent, and the assessment of the deficient land comes to about 500 Rupees. If the whole land were cultivated these large sums would have to be paid over and above the nominal assessment; and it is no wonder therefore at a large extent of land in both villages is permanently waste. The same state of things is found in various degrees in many other villages. Last year the Meerasdars of three villages in Wundiwash Talook petitioned the Board and that not for the first time, that they might be charged for only the actual amount of their lands. The Petition being sent to me for enquiry and disposal, looked into the matter at the Jummabundy, and finding the complaint well founded I gave the relief sought by charging for the extent,

according to survey of the village made under Mr. Nisbet#. The same relief is needed in very many other villages; and conceiving that the present order might be taken to authorize the measure, I have directed that Mr. Nisbet's survey shall be adopted universally in the five Talooks to which it extends, (in all the wages for which it was completed) in the settlement of the current Fusly. This measure will remove a standing grievance and a great deal of discontent.

13. The foregoing is a brief detail of the measures adopted by me under the order for giving immediate relief from over assessment, in those cases only where land is actually and manifestly kept permanently out of cultivation by that cause. I now proceed to the second part of the subject; As to state those which appear to me advisable in the more general and systematic revision of the assessment. This revision, if I rightly understand the intention, is to be directed to other and larger objects; is not to regard solely the increase of the revenue or even the preservation of it from some present diminution; but is to aim also at relieving the ryot from burdens which impede or press down his exertion, and effectually prevent his growth of wealth, intelligence, and comfort; so as to enable him at no distant time to the same or a still larger amount with much less inconvenience and privation. The want of time at present, as well as the absence of the particular information necessary to a minute and detailed exposition, make it necessary that I should deal with the subject briefly and in outline only; but I think it desirable that it should be done thus, rather than not done at all. The extract from the Minutes of Consultation of Government which## accompanied the Board's Proceedings above quoted, materially shortens and facilitate the task; for the views of Government there expressed render it necessary either to produce proof that the assessment is burdensome, or to argue in favour of immediate proceedings without waiting for a correct survey. I shall therefore proceed at once to explain the state of the assessment at present, and the alterations which I would propose.

14. I will first speak of the Nunjah land; and I will begin with the southern Talooks of the District; excluding Sutwaid however for the present, as the assessment of that Talook was fixed on an entirely different basis from those of the other Northern Talooks. In my letter### replying to the Board's questions respecting the commutation rates, I stated (para 9) the proportion of the crop taken as the Government share in forming the present money rates. The Government share in all was taken at 50 per cent; and in all except Palmanair and Vencataghirrycottah the proportion taken from the Ryot was further increased by fees to village servants, so that the share really left to him was no more than from 46 ½ to 48 ½ per cent, there being some variation between Talook and Talook. These proportions were those for land watered by tank or channel; in the case of land watered by wells, (the extent of which however is but small) the Ryot was allowed two thirds of the crop,(except in Palmanair) in consideration of the cost of raising the water.

15. The quantities of grain thus obtained were commuted into money at the average selling price of ten years; the average price in each village was taken but as stated in para 4 of the letter above referred to#, there is nothing to show what were the prices thus averaged; and it seems

See Endorsement on Petition 1860 of 1853

Extract Minutes of Consultation Revenue Department July 10th 1854, No. 806.

August 28, 1854, No. 99

August 28, 1854

likely that they were those of the sales of Government paddy, (the revenue of Nunjah land being then taken in kind) and the Government grain, as a general rule, was certainly sold at the times when the market was best; thus the average would not be a fair one. The money rates thus fixed were soon found to be very exorbitant; and their pressure was so severely felt, that, the case being represented to the Board of Revenue, a general remission of 12½ per cent^{##} was granted and still continues.

16. Supposing the quantity of produce originally assumed to be correct, and supposing the commutation price to have been fair at first and to have still continued so, the actual share of the crop left to the ryot including this remission, is 56¼ in Palmanair, and from 52 to 54 per cent in the other Talooks. But it is well known that the conditions have not so remained unchanged. Having but very imperfect data, I will not hazard any opinion as to the fairness of the two elements of the commutation, viz. quantity and price, at the time, beyond the remark made above in the proceeding para; but indubitably the pressure of the assessment has been very greatly augmented by the subsequent fall in the price of grain. I entered into this question also in my letter above cited, (August 28, 1854) and gave a table showing the prices prevailing in each Talook during each of the last ten Fuslies in comparison with the commutation price. And, making some correction (though I believe not to a sufficient extent,) on the prices of those ten years which were the *town* prices, for comparison with the commutation averages which were *village* prices, I found that the fall of price in the several Talooks (omitting Palmanair and Vencataghirrycottah where it is less), ranged from 17 per cent to 60 per cent.

17. If this fall were natural, resulting from the cheapening of the processes of agriculture, or from a lowering of the cost of bringing grain to market through the improvement of the roads, or from increased skill obtaining heavier crops, then it could not be held to increase the burden on the ryot, but would in fact be itself the result of the burden being lightened, and would be the restoration of the equilibrium. But there is no reason to suppose that improvement of any of the three kinds specified, or any other; has tended in any material degree to produce a natural depreciation. I think the cause must be sought elsewhere; and without stopping to enter at large into this subject, I think it may be accounted for, partly by the demand of the non-agricultural classes not increasing, and perhaps in some quarters even diminishing; and partly by an increase in the value of silver, being so far a nominal and not a real cheapening.

18. With regard to the former cause, I would observe that some branches of the country manufactures have certainly very greatly declined during the last half century, under the pressure of the Moturfah tax, and in competition both at home and abroad with much more lightly taxed importations from other quarters; and further I would remark that this view seems to some degree supported by the fact that in the talooks of Palmanair and Vencataghirrycottah, where a considerable and lately much increasing extent land has always been devoted to the growth of the sugar cane the fall in the price of paddy is much less than in any other talook. As to the second of the causes above mentioned, I would observe that not only would the demand for silver to pay the Government kist increase its price to the Ryot, but there is a proof from official documents that the export of silver during the last thirty years has very greatly

^{##} Letter from Government to the Board of Revenue March 18, 1823. The reduction authorized was 12 per cent, but for convenience sake it was made 12½ or one-eighth.

exceeded the imports, and this to so great an extent as seriously to affect the whole quantity of silver in so poor a country.

19. If there is any truth in the preceding observations as to the causes of this fall in the price of grain, it follows that it has not been accompanied by any compensation to the Ryot, but that it has simply increased his burden, by augmenting the share of his crop taken from him by the Government. I feel no doubt at all that this is really the case; if not to the full extent of the all itself, yet very nearly so, and the result cannot but be very disastrous to the Ryot. It has also certainly been injurious to the Government Revenue. In support of this assertion I beg to request attention to enclosure 6 which shows the Revenue from the Nunjah lands in a number of villages for a series of years. Had there been more time the list could have been much enlarged; as it is, however, it is of some value. Having only received it at almost the last moment of my time, I cannot offer much remark on it, but it deserves attentive examination. It will be seen that in many of the villages the Revenue has sunk in the course of the half century of British rule or rather in the thirty years of Ryotwar field settlements, to one-half and even to one-third of what it was formerly. It is my full belief that the cause of this lamentable decline, implying as it inevitably does a more than corresponding fall in the comfort and resources of the people of those villages, is due almost exclusively to the exorbitancy of the Government tax; though the neglect of works of irrigation has no doubt operated to some extent and in some cases. I beg also to appeal to enclosures 3,4, and 5, showing the cultivation and waste, and to the large proportion of the latter, in proof of the same fact.

20. In their proceedings on a report from the late Collector of South Arcot in view to a reduction of the assessments there, the Government# have adopted the principle that one-third of the crop or $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent is as much as can properly be taken from the Ryot. In the talooks of this district of which I am now speaking the present assessments as already said nominally taken from 44 to 48 per cent, but in reality they take much more. The rule just referred to, if put in force here would make very extensive reductions. Thus in the Tripputty Talook there are lands assumed to produce 40 Cullums of paddy and assessed at the enormous rate of Pag.6 As.7 or Rupees 22-8-6 a Cawny for a single crop; and even after deducting the permanent remission the net assessment is $19\frac{3}{4}$ Rupees. But if instead of $42\frac{1}{2}$ per cent the Government share were reduced to $33\frac{1}{3}$, and this diminished quantity of grain were commuted into money at the rate of $5\frac{3}{4}$ ## Cullums to a Pagoda, instead of 3 Cullums, the rate for a single crop on this land would be only about $2\frac{1}{4}$ Pagodas or less than 8 Rupees. This would be a reduction of 60 per cent of the present net assessment. But so large a reduction is not called for; the ryots do not expect it, and do not even ask for it. Even the premises do not involve so large a sacrifice; for I must observe that the assessments here, and everywhere else so far as I have seen, are based on the value of the *grain* only, to the exclusion of the straw; though this latter is in reality no inconsiderable item. A cawny of land producing forty Cullums of Paddy will yield also about forty bundles of straw worth in ordinary times an anna each, or on the whole $2\frac{1}{2}$ Rupees. This, added to the rate obtained as above by taking one third of the grain, would give a total of nearly $10\frac{1}{2}$ Rs.

Extract Minutes of Consultation of Government, June 26th 1854, No. 748

See para 21 of letter of August 28, 1854

21. I will now briefly explain the state of the nunjah assessment in the five Talooks South of the Palar. The existing assessments in those Talooks were settled while they formed a part of the South Arcot District, and there is no information on my records to show the basis on which they were framed, with the single exception of the amount of the commutation price. I gather however from some papers obligingly placed at my disposal by you that in the settlements made by Mr. Garrow in Fusly 1212, the Government share was taken, according to the custom, at different proportions, varying according to the Talook, according to the mode of irrigation, and according to the caste or tribe of the ryot; Musselmans and Brahmins being allowed 10 in the hundred more than Soodras. On the average of the whole however, including the low and the high proportions, the Government share amounted to no less than 57 per cent on the assumed produce. The quantity of grain thus determined as the share of Government was commuted into money at the rate of four Rayajee Cullums to a Pagoda.
(From Collector South Arcot to Board July 12, 1802, Para 69.)

22. The rates thus obtained were very exorbitant; they were somewhat reduced in the succeeding year by Major Macleod; but still the highest rate was no less than 16 ½ Pagodas a cawny. In Fusly 1215, Mr. Ravenshaw made still further reductions in the most highly assessed villages only, by reducing the average of several rates to five Pagodas a cawny, where it exceeded that sum. He calculated that this reduction would leave the ryot about 24 ½ per cent of his crop; 75 ½ being thus taken by the Government. He adds that the share thus given to the cultivators was 25 per cent less than in his opinion it ought to be.

23. The excessive rates then fixed have been maintained to the present day; for the remission of 12 ½ per cent granted in the Northern Talooks has not been extended in the Southern. Bramins and Musselmans in those Talooks, however, still enjoy the privilege of paying only nine-tenths of the Taram rate on their usual holdings, though this privilege is not permitted in the case of land reclaimed from waste. But though thus nominally still in operation, those rates have been materially modified in practice, but so unequally and irregularly that it is quite impossible to say what proportion of the crop is now taken by the Government. These disturbing causes I will briefly notice. In the first place in Fusly 1215, Mr. Ravenshaw with the view of promoting the cultivation of the waste, ordered that such lands taken up for cultivation should pay certain proportions of their Tarum assessment, according to the time for which they had been waste, increasing gradually to three-fourths of the Tarum rate, which was to continue the permanent assessment of such lands. Under this rule which seems to have continued in the operation...

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

No. 460

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation, under date the 23d April 1855.

Minute by the Right Honorable the President. [Governor of Madras Presidency] No. 35.

Para 1. With the foregoing Proceedings of the Board of Revenue lay before Government a Report received from the late Collector of North Arcot, (October 23rd 1854) in pursuance of the orders of Government of the 10th July 1854, on the subject of the reduction of the present land assessments where found to be too heavy. The Board approve of the measures of the Collector both those carried into effect for giving immediate relief in extreme cases, and those submitted for approval in view to a more general revision. The Government have attentively considered

the Collector's report, and they concur in the Board's approval of the measures reported and proposed. It is unnecessary to recapitulate those measures in detail, or the reasonings on which they are founded; but they will be noticed briefly.

2. The first part of the Collector's letter details the steps which he has taken for giving immediate relief, in cases where the present assessment is so heavy as actually to keep land waste. The reductions extended to 18,031 cawnies, and amounted to 72,390 Rupees; nearly 18,000 Rupees of this sum was on land actually under cultivation in the year of which the accounts were used viz., Fusly 1261, and may be regarded as Revenue given up. The remainder of remission, viz. 54,390 Rupees was on waste land, and therefore involved no sacrifice; and as the reduced assessment on this land, (12,306 cawnies) which is of superior quality, amounts to 1,80,000 Rupees, there seems no doubt that much more than the small amount of Revenue nominally given up, will be recovered by the occupation of this land. The other measure for immediate relief, viz., the adoption of the five Southern Talooks, of the measurements of the survey made by Mr. Nisbet's direction, in lieu of the existing recorded measurements, which in many cases are notoriously above the true area, is also approved.

3. As respects the future, the Collector recommends very considerable reductions both on Nunjah and on Poonjah. As an introduction to his proposals respecting the former, he reviews with some minuteness the processes followed in forming the existing assessments both in the Northern and in the Southern parts of the District. The former Talooks are those which have from the first formed a part of the North Arcot District, and which were for the most part surveyed and assessed by Mr. Graeme in 1805; and the latter are those which were transferred to this District from South Arcot in 1808, after having been assessed in common with other parts of that Collectorate, though without a survey. As respects the former, the Collector shows that the assessment was based on a division of the crop, which left the Ryot no more than from 46 ½ to 48 ½ per cent of it, (there being some variation between the proportions in the several Talooks) increased by subsequent remission in 1823, to from 52 to 56 ¼ per cent; and that even this scanty share has practically been very greatly diminished, by the great fall in the price of grain subsequently to the year when the commutation into money was made. As respects the Southern Talooks, the information respecting the original basis of the assessment is much more meagre; but there is enough to show that the Government demand was excessively heavy, amounting as computed by the Collector at that time (Mr. Ravenshaw) at no less than 75 ½ per cent of the gross produce#, and that it still continues so, notwithstanding a measure of relief in various ways. The assessments in the Southern Talooks are higher than in the Northern, and in both Divisions they are materially above those of the adjoining District of South Arcot, where however a reduction of 25 per cent has been ordered by Government.

4. The Collector proposes a remission of 30 per cent of the present net assessment which involves a loss of Revenue of 3,26,000 Rupees. The reduction is not to be uniform, but to vary according to the requirements of the case. It is to be larger in the south than in the north, and larger on the high classes than on the lower ones. In the Northern Talooks it is to be applied to the existing survey; in the Southern to that made by Mr. Nisbet but never yet brought into use. In the Southern Talooks the rate of reduction will vary much more between village and village than in the Northern; because at present the burden of the assessment is much more unequally

Para 22

distributed in the former division of the District than in the latter. The lands are to be classed as one crop and two crop, the latter comprising all usually possessing means of irrigation for two crops; and the 2nd crop assessment is to be remitted in the latter case where the crop is not raised, and to be added in the former when a second crop is grown. The remission of one-tenth of the Tarum assessment is allowed to Bramins and Mussulmen in the Southern Talooks under the term Teazgary, is to cease; being merged in the general reduction.

5. On the Poonjah land, or that not supplied with irrigation from Government sources, the Collector proposes a reduction of 25 per cent. This proposal is based on similar grounds to that respecting the Nunjah. The present assessment of Poonjah land were based in the greater part of the District on a share of one third of the gross produce, but the fall in the price of grain has much increased that proportion. The extent of waste too, is very large in comparison with that cultivated, the later being only one third of the whole arable area. The reduction is to be applied to the land in the same manner as that above stated in the case of Nunjah. The total loss of Revenue is stated at 1,10,000 Rupees.

6. The total sacrifice of revenue involved in these reductions on Nunjah and Poonjah is shown by the Collector to be about 4,36,000 Rupees: viz. 3,26,000 on Nunjah and 1,10,000 on Poonjah. This is a large sum; but the Right Honourable the Governor in Council is satisfied that the measure is necessary. Whether a comparison is made between the existing assessments in North Arcot and those in other districts, or whether regard is paid to the very large proportion of waste in this District, both in Nunjah and Poonjah and especially in the best and most highly taxed land, the conviction is inevitable that a large reduction of the present rates is urgently called for. But the Government do not at all anticipate that the loss will be more than temporary. In Nunjah the extent of waste land is 71,280 cawnies bearing an assessment at the reduced rates of about 5,56,000 Rupees and there is besides a large extent of land well fitted for Nunjah cultivation though not yet classed or assessed. In Poonjah the extent of assessed waste land is 3,51,680 cawnies with an assessment at the reduced rates of about 5,86,000 Rupees and there is a still much larger extent of cultivated land not assessed.

7. Thus, independently of the waste extent of land yet unreclaimed, and much of which needs but little preparation for tillage there is an area of 4,22,960 cawnies, all formerly under cultivation (though probably not all at one and the same time) and now waste for many years greatly in consequence of an exorbitant Government demand, which if all brought under cultivation would yield a revenue of 11,42,000 Rupees. There seems nothing unreasonable in the expectation that from this source and the unreclaimed land, so much will speedily be brought under permanent tillage as will fully replace the revenue now given up. The Government fully coincide in the Board's remarks (Paras 12 to 14) as to the importance of enlarging the tax paying area and so lightening its pressure. It is certain that the very high assessment has greatly operated to restrict the extent of land in cultivation in North Arcot, and the present step in lowering the demand will no doubt cause an extension of cultivation, especially favoured as it is by the simultaneous improvement of the means of transport. And there is another cause which will aid in replacing the revenue given up, viz. the diminished frauds consequent on the diminution of the premium on fraud. There is no doubt that high assessments promote such dishonesty as the Collector truly remarks (Paras 33 to 35) and the instances cited by him are striking and instructive. In proportion as the assessments are

lowered the temptation is lessened, and both the loss to Government, and the demoralization arising from habituation to such frauds and their necessary concomitant bribery, will be diminished.*

8. Some details of the plan may be briefly adverted to. The Government agree in the Board's remarks in Paras 15 and 16 as to the maximum rates stated by the Collector for Nunjah and Poonjah respectively, as to the proportion of the 2nd crop assessment on the former. They would consider it an advantage indeed if some plan could be devised for getting rid of a separate and contingent assessment for second crop. There is no reason why the Government should give up the demand on second crop for which it provides water; this would be only to favour particular persons at the expense of others. The alternative is to compound for the second crop; but the result of this kind of composition hitherto has only been to cause the withdrawal of labour and capital from such two crop lands, usually much the best.

28. OVER ASSESSMENT IN REVENUE SURVEY, MINUTE OF LORD HARRIS, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY, 1854

Revenue Consultations; July 4, 1854 (Range 282 vol.37 pp. 3854-4490; Survey of South Arcot pp.4194-4251,
Minute of Lord Harris of 16.6.1854 pp. 4212-18, Thomas of 23.6.1854 pp.4219-26)

Lord Harris (pp 4217): I am desirous of pressing this subject (of revenue survey) forward for immediate attention because **I have learnt both from oral statement and from published documents and indeed I believe it not denied that there are portions of the lands of this Presidency and those some of the richest and finest soils which have been thrown out of cultivation in consequence of the impossibility of paying the excessive assessment charged on them that in consequence improvement is at a stand still and the population in actual want of the necessaries of life.***

If this be true if such a state really exists, I feel it is my imperative duty to do my best that not a day or an hour should be lost without endeavouring to apply a remedy to a condition of affairs so unnatural and so hostile to the best interests of the government and of the entire population...

29. REVENUE DESPATCH TO MADRAS ON TORTURE IN THE COLLECTION OF LAND REVENUE

Madras Public Consultation, No 19, dated 26 July 1854, (pp. 239-42)

1. In a recent debate in the House of Commons, aspersions, alleged to be founded on information provided by official and other persons resident in your presidency were made, to the effect that torture was frequently employed by native officers to compel the ryots to pay the demands of government.

2. The aspersions having been thus publicly made, we desire that you will institute the most searching enquiry into the subject, and call upon every collector in the Presidency to report fully whether such an unjustifiable practice is suffered to exist, and whether they have reason to believe that an occurrence of this kind can have taken place without their knowledge in any part of the territories under your government. We desire that you will furnish us with a full report on the subject.

We are, your loving friends, I. Oliphant and 9 others (acknowledged by Public Letter No. 30 of 23 September 1854, presented to Parliament and ordered to be printed, July 27, 1855)

30. USE OF TORTURE IN LAND REVENUE COLLECTION IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY : c.1840 - 1850s.

Madras Public Consultations: September 12, 1854 (in Range 249 vol 31; pp 3398-3938, August 22 - September 12, 1854)

No.8 Minute of Governor Harris:August 28,1854 (pp 3863-5)

The extracts from the reports of the debate in Parliament on Mr. Blackett's Motion on the state of Madras Presidency which accompany this Minute have been made at my desire in order to give sufficient grounds for this government to take action thereon.

There can be no doubt, I imagine, that it has been positively asserted in Parliament, and that that assumption received no positive contradiction that instruments of torture are commonly employed in this Presidency and for the purpose of exacting an immoderate rent

.*

Whether the rent or tax be immoderate or not is a point which it is unnecessary here to discuss but the other portion of the assertion is so fearful a charge that I cannot allow it to pass without at once stating my opinion that every exertion should at once be made by this government to discover by the strictest scrutiny whether there is any and what degree of truth in so grave an imputation.

The idea of such a practice is so abhorrent to the principles which are innate in every Englishman that I would not hesitate at once to repunge an accusation of the kind on the part of the covenanted service, but I feel sure that any general denial of such a nature would not be satisfactory to the officers of the service themselves, but that they will be as desirous as I am that the fullest inquiry should be made: that the question should be thoroughly investigated, that if untrue, it may be at once openly and clearly rebutted and that if there be any truth in the observation, if practices have been carried on which cannot but be condemned, which are disgraceful to the government under which they are tolerated, that every exertion should be made to expose them and to take such measures as will prevent any repetition of such transactions.

I forward the extracts to my hon'ble colleague this evening in order that he may take this subject into consideration at the meeting of Council tomorrow.

Harris (Governor)

Government House, 28th August 1854

31. MINUTE OF LORD HARRIS, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY, ON TORTURE: 1854

Madras Public Consultation, No. 40, pp. 4577-9

Mr Minchin's report is a sufficient proof of the crying necessity of the inquiry which has been called for.

His proceedings and statement manifest a degree of energy, high principle and good feeling which are most creditable to him.

There is one subject mentioned in his report to which I am of opinion, that the most serious attention of government should at once be given, that is the possibility of a considerable diminution in the revenue occurring in consequence of the prevention of those measures which have hitherto been adopted to enforce its payment.

It appears to be Mr. Minchin's opinion that the processes which can at present be legally employed for enforcing the payment of revenue, are so dilatory that they are tantamount to a complete exemption from taxation to those who refuse voluntarily to meet the demand.

I propose, therefore, that the law on this subject should be immediately taken into consideration and that if it be found to be circuitous and dilatory in effecting its object, that it be at once revised, so that no delay may occur in its being forwarded to the Legislative Council.

I think measures should also be taken at once to ascertain whether the collectors are in all cases acting on the instructions they have received lately from the Board of Revenue and whether they have taken measures to give the fullest publicity to the instructions of government, respecting alleviation of assessment in all cases where it is required, in all the villages of their several districts.

The feeling amongst the entire officials evidently is that without the power of ill-usage, which they have hitherto employed, they will be unable to collect the revenue. Many Europeans, I doubt not, will be found to support this view.*

It behoves the government therefore to use every means in its power to prevent any result of this kind.

It will be necessary from the outset to demonstrate clearly both by instructions and by acts:

First, to their officers, that whilst the employment of illegal modes of punishment will not be tolerated, yet that they will be strenuously supported in the performance of their duties;

Second, to the people, that whilst no ill treatment will be permitted, yet that they will be required to pay their just dues and in the event of their failing to do so, that the law will be strictly enforced.*

Government House October 6, 1854.

Harris

This report will of course be forwarded to the Commissioners.

Harris.

32. RESEARCH NOTES ON THE TORTURE INVESTIGATION MADRAS PRESIDENCY

No.9 Minute by I.F.Thomas: 30th August 1854 (pp 3865-6)

It must not be overlooked that torture or any personal injury and violence on the part of any officer either of revenue or police is punishable as a criminal act. Our records show, that it is not unknown in police cases, and that it did exist as an old native usage. It is not prevalent, I believe, at this hour in revenue matters.

No.10 Resolution of Government; 9th September 1854 (pp 3866-73, 16 paras; printed P.P. 1854-5; vol XL pp.627-9)

No. 11 Letter to E.F.Elliot, chief magistrate and superintendent of police; H.Stokes, acting collector of Madras: and J.B.Norton, Bar-at-law from H.C.Montgomery, chief secretary dated 9th September 1854 (5 paras, pp 3873-6; printed pp 627)

Madras Public Consultations: September 19, to October 17, 1854 (in Range 249 vol 32, pp 3939-4626)

October 3:

- No.33 Petition from Bellary on torture (pp 4260-7)
- No.34 To collector Bellary for enquiry (pp 4267-9)
- No.36 From Elliot,Stokes,Norton (pp 4271-4;printed 634)
- No.37 Minute of Sarris on above (pp 4274-81)
- No.38 Resolution of Government (pp 4281-8; printed pp 635-6)
- No.39 To Advocate General (pp 4288-91)

October 10:

- No. 23 From Advocate General(pp 4394-6)
- No. 24 From Government Pleader (pp 4396-8)
- No. 25 To Government of India (pp 4399-44 05)

Madras Public Consultations (Range 249/32, September 19-October 17, 1854)

Nelson's letter to Chief Secretary: Sept 23, 1854 (No.8, pp 4080-7: printed 722-4): Government's reference to Minchin and reply to Nelson (No 9, pp 4087-8)
Minchin's Report to Government: October 17, 1854 (No 39, pp. 4557 - 71, printed pp. 662-5); correspondence with Nelson:pp 4572-6; printed; 724-5)

Minute of I.F.Thomas; October 6,1854 (No. 41, pp 4580-1)

I can only join most cordially in the Right Hon'ble the President's approval of Mr. Minchin's proceedings and concur entirely in the opinion, that this single statement is sufficient to shew the necessity for the enquiry instituted, and of measures being taken for the total eradication of the system of torture, too long in force by the native officers.

I doubt, if additional power, or legislative provisions are called for; or that they would effect anything. I should require the European officers to proceed to any talook, when there was an unusual and unlooked for diminution of the collection, and to satisfy himself by careful personal examination, that the parties, in arrears, could fairly pay them up. If they were not able, it is clearly a case where remission would be proper and the diminution of the revenue would be just and no more than ought to take place, especially in such years as the present. I would require an immediate report from the Board of Revenue on this point.

Resolution of Government: October 16, 1854 (No 42, pp 4581-4)

1. The Right Hon'ble the Governor-in-Council considers that the above report is, in itself, a proof of the necessity for the enquiry instituted under the orders of Government in extract Minutes of Consultation of 9th ultimo, No 922, into the alleged prevalence of "Torture" in the collection of the public revenue.

2. Mr. Minchin's proceedings and statement manifest a degree of energy, high principle and correct feeling which are most creditable to him.

3. By Captain Nelson's timely information and well judged proceedings, the charges investigated by Mr. Minchin have been brought home to the guilty parties and furnished with a degree of promptitude, which must prove a salutary example.

4. Mr. Minchin states, in his report, that the higher native officers do not hesitate to avow their apprehension, that falling off of the revenue will be the result of the determination of government to put down in every shape torture and all other illegal methods of coercion. In this apprehension Mr. Minchin himself participates to a certain extent, and it seems to be his opinion that the processes which can at present be legally employed for enforcing the payment of revenue are so dilatory, that they are tantamount to a complete exemption from taxation to those who refuse voluntarily to meet the demand.

5. The existing state of the law on this subject will be immediately taken into consideration in the Revenue Department, in order that if it be found to be circuitous or dilatory in effecting its object, these defects may be remedied without delay.

6. The Board Revenue will also be required to report at once whether the collectors are in all cases acting on the instructions they have received, regarding the alleviation of assessment, and whether they have taken measures to give the fullest publicity in all the villages of their several districts of the intention of government to moderate the demand wherever it is required.

7. The feeling among the native officers evidently is, that without the power of ill-usage which they hitherto employed, they will be unable to collect the revenue, and it behoves the government, whilst limiting its demands to a fair and equitable amount, to use every means in its power to prevent its just dues being evaded.

8. It will be necessary from the outset for the government, by instructions and acts, to demonstrate to its own officers, that whilst the employment of illegal modes of coercion will not be tolerated, yet that they will be strenuously supported in the performance of their duties, and to the people that whilst no ill treatment will be permitted, yet that they will be required to pay their just dues, and in the event of their failing to do so, that the law will be strictly enforced.

9. Ordered that Mr. Minchin's report and the papers connected with it be forwarded to the Commission now sitting and that this resolution be communicated to the Revenue Department where the subjects noticed in paras 4 to 8 will be considered and disposed of.

From Captain F. Nelson (concluding para)

As far as Ongle is concerned and the surrounding villages, I have no hesitation in saying that "instruments of torture" are not used by the revenue officers, unless the term is taken in so wide a sense that the canes, ferrulas, kneeling upon a ruler &c., all common methods of punishment in many English private schools are considered "instruments of torture".

The stooping posture enforced by the neck and leg being held in proximity, no doubt must be highly inconvenient and to a plethoric Englishman might almost amount to torture, but to the supple cool-blooded native of this part of the world, I should hesitate in describing the enforced attitude as one of torture. Nevertheless I deem it my duty to reveal what I have, being sure that personal violence in however slight a degree, employed arbitrarily, for the purpose of extracting revenue, is contrary to the spirit of British rule.

Torture: Madras Public Consultations: 3.10.1854; No. 22 (pp 4240-2) Resolution No 1018 (on a letter of A.Hall, Collector, and G.S.Forbes of South Arcot Given as no. 20 & 21 on preceding pages 4230-5 and 4235-40, respectively.)

It was not intended by Government nor was it anywhere so stated that the appointment of a Commission at the Presidency to investigate cases of torture should interfere with the enquiries of Collectors ordered by the Minutes of Council of the 9th instant. Mr Hall will carry out the orders he then received as well as those contained in the subsequent Minutes of Consultation of the 18th instant, and he will report the result of his enquiries hereafter. The extract from the Magistrate's records appended to para 5 of his letter shows the existence of the practice of a species of torture in South Arcot and the Government must add that the manner in which the cases given were disposed off does not manifest any active endeavours on the part of the authorities to suppress the practice. The Governor in Council desires that the Session Judge be directed to call up the records in those cases and to furnish the Government with his opinion as to the sufficiency of the evidence and on the propriety of the decision in each case.

30.9.1854.

Consideration of Despatch of 26.7.1854. (No. 26 of 26.9.1854, pp 4170) Acknowledgment of Despatch : (No.1 of 23.9.1854, pp 4075)
Some Despatches of August 9. 1854 dealt with on Sept 19,1854.

REPORTS AND OTHER PAPERS IN VIEW TO A REVISION AND RECASTING OF THE REVENUE LAWS OF THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY

- by H.Stokes, 1856, pp 87.

...made in consequence of Minute of Consultation of June 20, 1855, "for the task of revising the law as it now stands in this Presidency for the Recovery of Revenue and of rent".

...The Great design of legislation I conceive to be the protection of Government and its subjects in their just rights. With this view it aims to repress crime, to adjudicate between conflicting claims to property, and to define and regulate the powers of the State in the levy of taxes; thus, naturally branching out into three main departments of Criminal, Civil and Fiscal Law, each with its own powers and procedure. (para 12 of first report of Government, dated September 20.1855)

Mirasi; Madras Board of Revenue: May 14, 1856 (Range 312 vol 68; pages 7950-7990, 26 paras)

Para 21. (pp 7983)...the right of the state to lands which remain uncultivated and unassessed should be vigorously maintained.

Para 23. Within Madras itself the Board have recommended a modified course because litigation in the Supreme Court is in their opinion to be avoided now that it appears from the Advocate General's opinion that great stress would there be laid on Mr.Ellis's description of Meerasi Tenures. The importance attached to that work by English lawyers on account of its having been written by a public servant and printed and circulated by Government would of course be increased by the knowledge that Government have recently cited it as the very best authority and acting upon this opinion have set aside a Decree which had been given in its own favour.

Para 24. Any decision passed by the supreme court regarding Meerasy Tenures would not be without influence in the provinces and it is undesirable that Government should enter into litigation on the subject in a court where it would be under a great disadvantage...

Para 25. The magnitude and importance of the subject leads the Board to lay these remarks before the Government and solicit its reconsideration of the question. It is not only the past and future revenues derivable from forests and waste lands that are at stake, but also the right of those numerous parties who relying on the faith and Good Title of Government have accepted waste lands from it and laid out sums on their improvement. (printed in Papers on Mirasi Rights pp 538-53 Dealt in Rev from Madras 5.6.1857 paras 22-42: pages 142-6)

ASSESSMENT OF NELLORE

Proceedings Board of Revenue (May 3-7, 1855 Range 312 vol 6 pp 6675 -7255;Nellore pp.7092-7210, from Collector dated Sept 28,1854 pp 7092)

Para 1. As the most obvious, and indisputable of the latter, I would, observe, that whilst government has, in para 15 of Extract from Minutes of Consultations under date 26th June 1854 recorded its opinion that an assessment of 50% of the gross produce, is a tax which no district in Southern India can bear, it is in this district 55% not of the gross, but the **net** produce i.e. after deducting from the former 6 ½% for the fees payable to the village artifices and servants.

Nellore: Torture

Madras Public consultations October 17,1854 (No. 39. Letter from J.I. Minchin, Acting sub-Collector Nellore to Chief Secretary pp.4557-71)

Para 21. I believe however that the revenue practices within the zemindaris are at least not worse than within our own jurisdiction and two causes are there in existence which would naturally tend to prevent any great amount of personal ill-usage from taking place. The first is the separation of the police from the revenue authority which renders its practice more hazardous, the second is the custom of making all collections in kind which make it less necessary.

No. 40 pp 4572-6 Enclosed letters about Nellore

No. 40 pp 4577-9 Minute by Harris October 6,1854

No. 40 pp 4580-1 Minute by I.F.Thomas Oct 6,1854

No. 42 pp 4581-4 Resolution of government Oct 16,1854.

33. HOW WE TAX INDIA - A LECTURE: 1858

pp. 40 (BM: 8023. aa. 8.)

(p.25)...Lord Harris, the present Governor of Madras, in his minute dated October 26, 1854, advises its reduction, because, **"In the Presidency, I hear" he writes, "that it is often 50 per cent, or even more"!!...Aurangzebe, in the necessities consequent upon his long wars, had tried to get 50 per cent -- a proportion almost unheard of since the days (p.26) of Alla-ood-Deen, one of the Mussulman rulers of the twelfth century, whose name is execrated in oriental history as one of the most rapacious of monarchs... Actually, however, our tax was soon discovered to be a great increase... because we levied it upon all the land in cultivation, which the native tax-gatherers did not.. You will see how in this way each ryot might find his own individual tax twice as much as his old share of the village tax, and yet the nominal percentage of gross produce might be the same, or even less than before. This over-assessment, or rather rack-rent, was not and could not be paid.***

34. EXTRACTS FROM CONDITION OF INDIA: REPORT BY MR. JAMES CAIRD, MEMBER, FAMINE COMMISSION, c. 1880

Reported by James Caird, Esq., C.B. Presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1880

[In his talks with the Viceroy (Lytton) Mr. Caird asked him what was the pre-British revenue system in India. The Viceroy said that in years of plenty the ruler took a very large proportion of the production. But, in years of great scarcity as there was little production, there was no collection of the rulers share. The Viceroy however, added that we the British cannot follow this practice as our expenses are fixed. Whether there is production or not we have to raise the revenue to meet our expenses. Incidentally, during the 1769 famine in Bengal, in which about one-third of the people died, the British collected the full amount of the land revenue, as reported to London, even when there was little agricultural production.]

Mr. Caird was a member of the Famine Commission and was further asked by the British Government to submit a separate report on the condition in India. In his letter forwarding Mr. Caird's report to the Governor-General of India on January 22, 1880, Lord Cranbrook, Secretary of State for India, says the following: "In his letter to the Home Secretary on the subject of Mr. Caird's appointment to the Famine Commission, Lord Salisbury expressed his opinion that apart from his special duties as a member of the Commission, advantage to the individual cultivator might be expected to result from his enquiries and from the advice which he would be in a position to tender to Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Caird, therefore, thought it his duty to submit the enclosed report and I shall be glad to receive any observations which Your Excellency's Government may desire to offer on the important questions raised therein."

The available good land in India is nearly all occupied. There are extensive areas of good waste land, covered with jungle, in various parts of the country, which might be reclaimed and rendered suitable for cultivation, but for that object capital must be employed and the people have little to spare. The produce of the country on an average of years is barely sufficient to maintain the present population and make a saving for occasional famine. The greatest export of rice and corn in one year is not more than 10 day's consumption of its inhabitants. Scarcity, deepening into famine, is thus becoming of more frequent occurrence. The people may be assumed to increase at the moderate rate of one per cent per year. The check caused by the late famine, through 5 million of extra deaths, spread as it was over 2 years and a half, would thus be equal only to the normal increase over all India for that time. In 10 years at the present rate of growth, there will be 20 million more people to feed, in 20 years upwards of 40 millions. This must be met by an increase of produce arising from better management of the cultivated area, and enlargement of its extent by migration to un-peopled districts, and by emigration to other countries. We are dealing with a country already full of people, whose habits and religion promote increase without restraint, and whose law directs the sub-division of land among all the male children. As rulers, we are thus brought face to face with a growing difficulty. There are more people every year to feed from land which, in many parts of India, is undergoing gradual deterioration. Of this there can be no stronger proof than that the land revenue in some quarters is diminishing. It is unsafe to break up more of the uncultivated poor land. The diminution of pasture thereby already caused, is showing its effect in a lessening proportion of working cattle for an increasing area of cultivation.

The pressure on the means of subsistence is rendered more severe by the moral disorganisation produced by laws affecting property and debt, not adapted to the condition of the people. In most parts of India, as shown by the late proceedings in the Legislative Council on the Deccan ryots Relief Bill, and as is plain to any careful observer in the country, the people are not only dissatisfied with our legal system but while the creditor is not much enriched, the debtor is being impoverished by it. Those officials who see this feel themselves powerless to influence a central authority far removed from them, subject to no control of public opinion, and over-burdened with details with which it is incapable of dealing.

We have introduced a system the first object of which, for a foreign government, is necessarily the subjection of the people. This is rendered possible by the religious difference between the Hindus and Mahomedans which prevents their union against us, and they are in such proportion that the larger number of the first prevents the most warlike character of the second assuming predominance. We are accepted as the arbiters of justice to both, and the protectors of the weak against the strong. The handful of Englishmen could not hold these multitudes on any other principle. The strength we wield is a powerful army, now by the aid of railway and telegraph capable of rapid concentration on any threatened point. We run the government through British officers stationed in every district of the country, who under the supervision of the respective governments, administer law, command the police and superintend the collection of the revenue. Native officers are employed under them, both in the judicial and revenue departments, in large parts, to whom the drudgery of government is committed. The whole number of such officers, not reckoning the native army or police, is not more than one in 10,000 of the people. The English officers are not one in 200,000, strangers in language, religion and colour, with feelings and ideas quite different from theirs and enforcing a system of law, the justice of which they are slow to comprehend, while its costliness and delay are manifest.

By our centralising system we have drifted away from the Patriarchal method of rule common in the East, where the populations are agricultural and dense, under which the management of the people is left to their natural leaders, the headmen of the villages, hereditary or elected by the people, who are recognised by the community and who administer justice and preserve order, and are responsible for the public revenue. We have superseded this by discrediting the headman, and in Madras and Bombay by an attempt to bring millions of landholders into direct contact with the Government, through native officials of a low type (for the higher class of officers rarely have time to see them) and with a theory that our European officers, so few in number, will be able to personally supervise this arrangement, which is physically impossible. The Headmen, no longer recognised or treated as leaders, and seldom communicated with, except through the lower class of native officials (who are said to be apt to take advantage of their position to extort bribes) become distrustful of us, and are distrusted by us. I rarely met a civilian in India who did not speak of the Headmen with distrust. The British merchants who carry on their great business in India make no similar complaint of the native merchants whom they find upright and honest. Our officers do not know the natives as they used to do when our government was less centralised, and they are every year becoming more strange to the people by the increase of indoor judicial duties, and the frequent changes from one locality to another.

Following out our English ideas by collecting the land revenue in the convenient shape of money, we superseded the old principle of taking it in kind, in certain proportions of the produce, according to the value of the land. This is an ancient and common principle in all countries, both East and West, and prevails still in most Eastern States and in many parts of Europe in the Metayer system. It is specially suited to small cultivators having little or no capital and it carries within it a natural check on overpopulation. For, when payment of rent is made by a share of the crop, the cultivator, if he finds that his land requires rest from overcropping, lets it rest in fallow, as he saves in rent when he leaves the land idle. He must thus hold a larger area than he requires to keep under crop, and this operates against over density of population. **The share of the owner is greater in seasons of abundance, and when the crop fails the cultivator is not called to pay what he does not possess***. The owner is also interested in rendering the land productive, and is more ready to co-operate with the cultivator in such improvements as are calculated to increase the incomes of both. And there would not be now the same difficulty in India as in former times in realising the owner's share as roads and railways have opened up markets where it can be readily disposed of. The European officers say that it would be impossible now to revert to this system, because the detail would be overpowering and the opportunities for oppression by the lower class of native officials and of fraud by the cultivators would be largely increased. This may be true under foreign rule like ours, but it possessed two qualities of great value; first, a self-adjusting action of reassessment, instead of the arbitrary reassessments which are now the cause of great cost to the Government and much annoyance to the people; and second, comparative independence of the moneylender who has become the source of most of the litigation which has since overspread the country. There is the best proof of its success in the fact that, while those native governments who thus levy the revenue, obtain a land rent twice that of ours, the people are not only able to pay, but, with the exception of the moneylenders, rarely show any desire to seek easier terms of passing into British territory. The principle is so sound and suitable to the condition of the majority of the people, that the government would be justified in making trial of it in various parts of India, by careful painstaking officers, who might find themselves fully recompensed for the additional labour by the intimate personal knowledge of the people which they would thereby acquire. And the Government proportion might be sold to the native bankers and dealers, from whom our officers are strong enough to prevent oppression.

From the comments of the Government of India to Mr. Caird's Report, No.38 of 1880, dated June 8, 1880, from the Home, Revenue and Local Departments to the Secretary of State for India.

Your Lordship's predecessor forwarded to us, under cover of his Dispatch No.7, dated 22nd January 1880, a report which had been addressed to him by Mr. James Caird on "The Condition of India"; and Lord Cranbrook asked me for any observations which we might desire to offer on the important questions raised therein. Mr. Caird travelled through several provinces of India during the cold season of 1878-79. He had been appointed to serve on the Famine Commission by reason of his wide agricultural and economic knowledge, and he was specially invited to tender advice to Her Majesty's Government on questions affecting the agricultural population of India. The present report was submitted in compliance with that invitation.

(Side Note:- General notice of Report.)

2. Mr. Caird's report was submitted a few months after his return from India. It is brief, and contains little notice of the facts, arguments and considerations upon which his criticisms and suggestions may have been founded; nor does the report advert to the long discussions which have taken place on nearly all the suggestions which are now made. We desire to express our respect for Mr. Caird's high qualifications for the duty with which he was entrusted and we hope that India and the Indian peasantry may benefit from his presence on the Famine Commission. That respect and that hope are in no wise diminished, because in the following observations we are compelled to challenge some of his premises, and to demur to some of his conclusions.

(Side Note - Summary of Report.)

3. Briefly, Mr. Caird's Report may be summarized thus. India is in subjection to a foreign government. This subjection is rendered possible by the difference of religion between Hindus and Muhammedans, and is maintained by a powerful army. The vastness of India and the multitudinous diversity of Indian peoples and Indian circumstances make the good government of India a peculiarly difficult problem. British India is parcelled out into several minor governments, all of which are controlled by the Central or supreme Government. This Central Government-- the Government of India--meddles in matters of local administration to the detriment of the local country and people. Decentralization of authority is required. The several local governments should have full power in their own territories and should be subordinate direct to the Secretary of State in London, one of the local Governors being allowed power to summon the other Governors to a general council in matters of great importance. The local legislatures should have full power to make laws for their respective provinces, and there should be no Central Legislature. From such localisation of control much economy and much benefit to the people would result.*

(Side Note - Public Works.)

The Central Department of Public Works should at once be abolished, the control of public works being left entirely to local governments. The employment of native engineers should be encouraged. No works should be undertaken with borrowed money without sanction of the Secretary of State in each case. Agricultural works should be maintained by the people themselves, under a system similar to that adopted in Egypt. Meanwhile the investment of British capital in India should be encouraged. Railways should be constructed by private enterprise, with a Government guarantee of 3 per cent on the capital outlay. The coal resources of India should be specially sought out, and developed, railways being made to mines.

(Side Note - Employment of natives, and the Civil Service.)

Native Indians should be more largely employed in the administration of the country. All details of judicial, revenue and executive business should be left to them. Natives of India, serving in their own country, would require less pay than Europeans for doing the same duties. One or two European officers should be posted in every district for purposes of supervision; and such officers should be employed as much as possible in the same districts, transfers of officers from one district to another being avoided. The Civil Service of India should be

abolished. The best men should be taken wherever they could be found; and the civil administration should be manned mainly by officers from the British Army.

(Side Note - Legal and judicial system.)

English laws introduced by the British into India are unsuited to the country and to the people, who are dissatisfied with our judicial system. This system plunges the mass of people into debt. It ruins debtors without benefiting creditors. Pleaders should be excluded from petty courts of justice, and the fees on petty litigation should be abolished. As far as possible, civil cases should be decided by local juries (panchayats) and local notables. If in this way natives were more largely employed, and if native methods were followed, towns and districts of British India might vie with the happiness and liveliness now so apparent at the Capitals of native States.

(Side Note - Overpopulation)

Overpopulation, and the too rapid increase of the people are the great difficulty of Indian Administration. The condition of the landless labourer in the rural tracts is especially hard; wages do not rise, and he is becoming more and more depressed. The land system should be so arranged as to restrain the increase of population; while at the same time, emigration to the less-peopled parts of India should be promoted. New industries should be found and encouraged, so as to give work to the labouring classes, who are at present inadequately employed. Improved facilities should be given for opening up and cultivating waste lands.

(Side Note - Land tenure and land revenue.)

British rule has destroyed the village or annual system; has effaced the village and tribal chiefs, who were the natural leaders of the peasantry; has substituted money for corn rents, to the disadvantage both of the State and the people; has given landholders power to mortgage and sell their land, thereby enabling them to ruin themselves. The country is harassed by periodical remeasurement of the land and detailed enquiries for the settlement of revenue. The proper course is to restore the village system, and to improve the status of village headmen; to whom should be left the settlement of petty disputes. Recourse should be had, where possible, to the old system of corn rents; opportunity should be taken to withdraw the landholder's power of selling or mortgaging his tenure. At the same time all landholders should be encouraged to redeem the land tax on their lands, and so to be possessors of freeholds, over which they would have absolute proprietary powers. The payments made for such redemption should be spread over a period of 35 years, and should be invested by the Government in paying off the public debt and in constructing railways or other works of permanent improvement. The causes of the harassment to the people, inseparable from periodical regular settlements of land revenue, should be avoided by readjusting the Government demand on a review of the village cadastral records, which are framed yearly in much detail. Compensation for permanent improvements should always be given to landholders or to tenants.*

(Side Note - Agriculture)

The soil of the cultivated lands of India is deteriorating and being exhausted. The land revenue is in parts diminishing, food sufficient for the people is not produced. At the same time, the land is capable of more production. New agricultural staples should be introduced, and the old staples should be improved. Cotton, especially, which is never irrigated, should be made to yield a far heavier outturn to the acre. A special impost of Rs.2 an acre should be imposed on the better crops such as sugar, tobacco, opium, jute and other irrigated crops. This would yield an additional revenue of two million sterling, and would materially help to restore the financial prosperity of the country. The production of food should be stimulated by taking off export duty on food grains. And an important reform should be introduced in agriculture of inducing the people to grow fodder crops, for the lack of which, the cattle suffer greatly all over India.

4. Mr. Caird's remarks on the several heads of his subject are to be found in different parts of his pamphlet; but we propose to group our observations under the several heads of:

- I. Administration and legislatures.
- II. Public works.
- III. Employment of natives; and the Civil services.
- IV. Legal and judicial system.
- V. Overpopulation.
- VI. Land tenures.
- VII. Agriculture.