

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

AND

BUDGET ESTIMATES

OF THE

COCHIN STATE,

FOR THE

MALAYALAM YEARS 1075 AND 1077 RESPECTIVELY.

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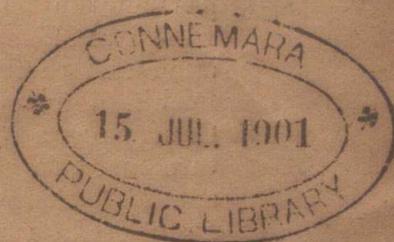


# ADMINISTRATION REPORT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES

OF THE

## COCHIN STATE,

FOR THE MALABAR YEARS 1075 AND 1077.



*From G. T. MACKENZIE, Esq., I.C.S., Resident in Travancore and Cochin, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Camp, Peermade, 24th April 1901, Ref. on C. No. 93.*

I have the honour to forward, herewith, the administration report of the Cochin State for the Malabar year 1075 (1899-1900) and the budget estimate for 1077 (1901-1902). The report which was due on the 1st April was received by me on the 12th, the Diwan explaining that the delay was caused by his giving his personal attention to the framing of the budget.

### GENERAL AND POLITICAL.

2. I acted as Resident throughout the year under report. The Diwan, Mr. P. Rajagopalachariar, took leave from the 19th July to 20th September 1900, during which period Mr. S. Locke, First Judge of the Chief Court, acted as Diwan.

3. Prince Kerala Varma, the Elaya Raja, brother of his Highness, had for several years been an invalid and died on the 6th November 1899. In October 1899 Lieutenant-General Sir George Wolseley passed through the State and was the guest of his Highness. During the hot weather of 1900 his Highness the Raja spent some weeks at Coonoor and visited the Governor at Ootacamund.

### LAND REVENUE.

4. The revenue survey under Mr. Thompson, of the Madras Service, made progress. The cost per mile is high, but that must be expected on this coast, where land is minutely divided into very small plots. The accretions or reclamations which were surveyed last year in the Cochin taluk were this year sold and the proceeds were credited to capital and not to current revenue.

5. The extent of dry and garden cultivation is not yet known, but in wet cultivation there is an increase of 1,523 acres, being land hitherto occupied but not assessed and now reported by the subordinate Revenue officers.

6. In land revenue, properly so called, there is a slight increase, but under some miscellaneous heads there are decreases which cause a decrease in the total. A percentage of 99.6 of the current demand was collected. With regard to arrears it may be noted that the total arrears four years ago amounted to Rs. 1,21,415, that this figure has been reduced to Rs. 22,236, that in this amount Rs. 17,805 pertains to the three disputes mentioned in paragraph 10 of the report, and that if the current arrears (Rs. 2,154) be also deducted, there remains only the small sum of Rs. 2,277 as old arrears unexplained.

7. This very creditable collection of almost all the demand was accomplished without any undue stringency of coercive process. The number of notices issued and the number of distraints have increased, but there are always people who do not pay until they receive the notice or until the distraining officer arrives. In only 26 cases was the distrained property sold and in only 75 cases was land transferred, while in 66 of these cases the defaulter has an option to repurchase his land.

8. The two estates mentioned in paragraph 20 are estates belonging to persons who are wards under the Madras Court of Wards.

#### CRANGANORE.

9. Twenty miles north of the town of Cochin is the village and territory of Cranganore. Although a spot of much antiquarian and historical interest the place has now no importance whatever. The Chief of Cranganore possesses a territory 18 square miles in area. This chief is of a family which is held in social consideration and therefore, although the Cranganore territory is legally a portion of the Cochin State and is administered by Cochin officials, yet the Cochin Darbar gave to Cranganore a sort of financial autonomy, keeping the Cranganore revenue, expenditure and balance separate and not showing this Cranganore balance in the Cochin administration report. It is now shown in paragraph 182 of the report. Cranganore has at credit a balance of a lakh and a half.

#### POLICE.

10. In paragraph 22 of my review of last year's report I said that timber merchants in the Palghaut villages had for years sent men over the Cochin frontier to steal teak from the Cochin forests. In order to stop this the Conservator of Forests armed some of his forest peons with muskets borrowed from the Cochin Nayar Brigade. A party of forest peons so armed towards the end of March 1900 met a party of woodmen from British India in the Cochin forests and fired on them, killing two men. Because of this affair a force of one inspector, five head constables and fifty constables was stationed on that frontier for some months. The police of the Malabar district also took up the matter and made it plain to the timber merchants and their employes that the law concerning stolen property would be set in force against them. Some of the party of woodmen were arrested and were surrendered to the Cochin authorities and in due course were convicted and sentenced in the Cochin courts. The Conservator of Forests now reports that this tract is almost free from thieves.

11. On his way to that disturbed frontier the Superintendent of Police, Mr. Bruce Ferguson, fell ill. He took leave to Europe and died there. His place is temporarily filled by Mr. D'Lemos, the Senior Inspector in the Cochin Police force.

12. From paragraph 42 of the report I see that the Diwan is not satisfied with the police work, and I certainly think that it is desirable that the Cochin police be placed under a capable Superintendent. Last year I remarked upon the practice of referring as false every case in which there is no prospect of detection, and in paragraph 38 of his report the Diwan deals with this point and longs for the arrival of an experienced Superintendent.

13. In the previous year there were two departmental and forty-four private prosecutions of police officers and all were acquitted. This year there was one departmental and forty private prosecutions and again all were acquitted. Upon this point the Diwan quotes Mr. Nicholson, who four years ago said that the police ought to be protected against these reckless accusations by which they are terrorized. The Diwan is unwilling to restrict in any way the right of the public to complain to the magistracy against the police, but I believe that in Travancore, where of course the same evil exists, the High Court has issued a circular directing magistrates who receive complaints against police officers to hold a preliminary enquiry before process is issued on the complaint. The Diwan thinks that a strong magistrate can make it unsafe for private persons to prefer vexatious complaints against the police. In this opinion I concur, but the strong magistrate has not yet appeared in Cochin. In paragraph 47 the Diwan points out that although the magistrates acquitted or discharged some thousands of persons during the year, in no case was compensation given for a vexatious complaint.

14. An incident which happened during the year will serve to show the need for a good Superintendent of Police in Cochin. On June 22nd some lighters took sacks of rice from the shipping in the Narakal roadstead and ran for British Cochin. The evening was stormy and four of the lighters were driven ashore on the coast. The populace went down to the shore, overawed the crews of the boats and a solitary

constable who was there and they carried off sacks of rice to the value of thirty thousand rupees. Next day the police arrived on the spot and made enquiries but nothing came of it because a wrangle arose between police and magistracy as to the correct procedure. A magistrate objected to cognizable and non-cognizable cases being included in one charge sheet or something of that sort. The result was that the wreckers went unpunished. I was in Travancore and heard nothing about this. Unfortunately it happened while the Diwan was on leave and the acting Diwan sent me no information about it. Meanwhile the consignees of the cargo in British Cochin made a protest of the circumstances before a Notary Public and sent in their claim to the Insurance Companies. The Calcutta Chamber of Commerce then wrote to the Resident saying that if the Cochin State is unable to protect property on its territory the Insurance Companies will charge an extra risk against the whole Malabar coast. I at once sent on this threat to the Cochin Darbar, and the Diwan, who had returned from leave, took up the matter with vigour. Some of the robbers were convicted, some magistrates and police officers were censured or punished, and a proclamation was issued warning the people that if anything of the sort occurred again, a punitive police will be stationed in the neighbourhood.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

15. In two points noticed last year there is an improvement. Rs. 6,685 of uncollected fines were scrutinized and written off. In the Magistrates' Courts no witness was detained for more than three days.

#### JAILS.

16. Because of the remarks made by Government on last year's report the Darbar proposes to pass a Prison Regulation enabling the Darbar to make imprisonment deterrent.

#### CIVIL JUSTICE.

17. The Diwan points out that the disposal was less than the number filed and that the number of pending cases has slightly increased, but I think that there is no need to blame the Munsifs who show a very clear file with only one case a year old and 32 cases six months old. The file of the two District Judges is not so clear and the Trichur Judge with fifteen cases more than a year old and an appeal average duration which he has permitted to rise from 51 to 135 days is deservedly censured. This officer has since the close of the year been transferred. The old appeals still pending in the Appeal Court and in the Raja's Court ought to disappear.

#### REGISTRATION.

18. This department continues to be a credit to the State. Of the documents presented for registration the large percentage of 99.6 were registered on the day of presentation and the remainder were registered within the week.

#### MILITARY.

19. The strength of the Nayar Brigade was reduced from 407 to 306 and the pay of the men was increased.

#### COFFEE AND TEA.

20. Tea has disappeared from the Nelliampathy Hills. There were still nineteen coffee estates. The yield per acre last year was said to be 220 lbs. This year it is quoted as 132 lbs. and the figures for the subsequent crop, which are now before me, give 394 lbs. This shows the great fluctuations in the annual crops on coffee land.

#### FORESTS.

21. During the year under report Mr. Alwar Chetty, Conservator of Forests, spent 183 days in camp and traversed the entire length of the block of three hundred square miles of forest which I last year described as an area inaccessible by road or by river. Mr. Alwar Chetty examined several possible outlets and finally advised the Darbar to obtain the services of an Engineer to survey a line for a tramway from

the interior of the forest to a river down which timber can be floated to the coast. This task was entrusted to Mr. Haffield, a Dublin Graduate in Engineering, who entered upon his work with energy. I believe that Mr. Haffield now sees his way to construct fifteen miles of tramway on which timber, drawn by oxen or lowered by gravitation, can be brought from the interior of the forest to the river bank. The importance of this project with regard to the future prosperity of the Cochin State is very great. The cost will be two and-a-half lakhs, but the Diwan is sanguine that it can be done from current revenue.

22. There is an equal area, three hundred square miles, of forest that is fairly accessible, and this area has been worked in past years. To this area also the Conservator gave due attention during the year. Demarcation, survey and reservation are in progress. Reproduction, both natural and artificial, is described in the report. The felling and the transport of timber was brought under some system and was regulated. Firewood and sleepers were supplied to the railway. The result of this intelligent management of the forests is seen in the increase of the net revenue. Two years ago it was eight thousand rupees. Last year it was thirty-three thousand rupees. This year it is one hundred and thirty-three thousand rupees. This most satisfactory result has been obtained without any mortgaging of the future, without killing the bird that lays the golden eggs. At the close of paragraph 105 the Diwan says deliberately that this increase of revenue is obtained with less timber removed from the forests than was removed in the former years of small receipts and undetected plunder. I cordially endorse the Diwan's description of Mr. Alwar Chetty as an officer who thoroughly knows his work and who is determined to do it thoroughly. I hope that Mr. Alwar Chetty will continue to do good work in Cochin until the end of his seven years' term.

#### RAILWAYS.

23. The work of constructing a metre gauge line from the Shoranur station on the Madras Railway, for a distance of 65 miles south to Ernaculam, went on speedily and smoothly throughout the year. The rise in the price of iron necessitated a revision of the estimate and the inability of European firms to execute promptly the orders for rolling-stock has postponed the opening of any part of the line. Rails are now laid on a great part of the line and it is hoped that the bridges will be completed and that trains will run through to Ernaculam in January 1902.

#### POST OFFICE.

24. The Anchal or Cochin State postal department opened six new post offices during the years and the number of articles posted increased, although during the year the Imperial Postal department opened seven new offices in the Cochin State.

#### SALT AND ABKRI.

25. Mr. Brown, a very capable officer of the Madras Abkari department, who was born in Cochin and knows the Malayalam language, was lent by the Madras Government for a term of seven years, and under his supervision an improvement is expected in the abkari administration, which hitherto has been a weak spot in the Cochin reports. As an indication of this former weakness I may point out that paragraphs 131 and 135 show that the former contractors were men of straw and that when decrees were obtained against them for arrears due, nothing could be got out of them. The opium monopoly is sold each year and in the year under report the price fell from Rs. 32,975 to Rs 24,384. I am disposed to regard this decrease as a healthy sign indicating that the Jews of Matancheri, who take this monopoly, are afraid that Mr. Brown intends to keep an eye upon them. The Travancore Darbar sells its monopoly for Rs. 63,000, which is at the rate of one rupee for forty-seven persons in the population of that State. The Cochin Darbar has been selling its monopoly for Rs. 33,000, which is one rupee for twenty-five persons. As it cannot be supposed that the population of Cochin consumes twice as much opium per head as is consumed by the population of Travancore, these figures lend much weight to the complaint of the Travancore renter that the Cochin renters smuggle opium into Travancore.

## MEDICAL.

26. The vital statistics have slightly improved, being about eight per mille on the figures of the census of 1891. There was also a slight improvement in the vaccination statistics. Sanitation hardly exists on this coast where there are few towns and each householder lives in his own orchard, but the streets of four towns are lighted and a private scavenging system in Ernaculam is said to be a success. The hospitals continue to be admirably managed under Dr. Coombes, in whom the Darbar has a zealous and efficient servant. I beg to draw attention to paragraph 162 which shows the great increase of work among women and children done by Mrs. Williams at Matancheri and by her pupil Miss d'Araujo at Trichur.

## INSTRUCTION.

27. There was little change from last year. So far as figures go, the statistics of the Cochin State are better than those of Travancore. The percentage of children at school is 49 for boys and 19 for girls, against 44 and 14 in Travancore. For Christian boys and girls the percentages are 72 and 36 against 56 and 25 in Travancore. An Ernaculam College student costs Rs. 108 and the Diwan thinks this an excessive expenditure for the results obtained, but it is much less than the Rs. 270 spent on the Trivandrum College student. In the University examinations also the results are better. Of the 111 pupils who appeared for Matriculation, 37 passed, which is better than the 15 in 114 of the Travancore aided schools. The Educational department in Cochin is doing good work. In both States the most striking feature and the healthiest feature is the immense amount that is done by the people themselves without State aid. The Muhammadan population is a little over fifty thousand and they maintain without aid 79 Arabic schools with 1,743 pupils.

## FINANCIAL.

28. The total revenue during the year amounted to Rs. 24,07,258. This was excluding debt heads and including Rs. 1,11,000, the sum due from the British Government under the Interportal Trade Convention which was not realized and credited to accounts until the commencement of the following year. The total expenditure excluding debt heads was Rs. 22,06,925. These figures show a surplus of Rs. 2,00,000. The process of examining and adjusting old accounts, which was in progress during 1074, continued in 1075, so that the figures of the one year cannot easily be compared with those of the other. Nevertheless the following variations may be briefly noticed.

As in last year so in this year "Forests" swelled the receipts by an increased revenue of Rs. 2,19,961 which has already been explained; "Judicial" showed an increase of Rs. 28,988 due to the introduction of court-fee stamped papers and labels; and "Salt" and "Excise" brought reduced receipts. Under expenditure, again "Forests" come for a large share of the increase. Increases are also observable in "Land Revenue" due to the progress of Revenue survey and in "Judicial" on account of payment of fixed salaries to the process establishment of civil courts; while a decrease occurs under "Education" due partly to the abolition of the additional parallel classes in the Ernaculam College and the district schools. The other variations are only nominal.

29. The extraordinary increase in receipt and expenditure under debt heads is due to the extensive railway operations to meet the expenditure, of which the Darbar sold Government promissory notes for Rs. 12,20,300. Promissory notes were selling for some time at a high discount and consequently the Darbar preferred to take temporary loans to the extent of Rs. 1,30,000, of which Rs. 30,000 was repaid during the year and the balance has since been cleared.

30. The year opened with a balance of Rs. 48,85,363 and the transactions of 1075 resulted in a closing balance of Rs. 27,60,201, of which Rs. 25,41,800 remained in Government promissory notes and Rs. 2,18,401 in cash in the State Treasuries.

## REVISED ESTIMATE FOR 1076.

31. The receipts and expenditure for 1076 have been revised and estimated at Rs. 25,63,517 and Rs. 24,19,985 respectively. These figures vary very little from the detailed figures of the budgeted estimate. The increase in receipts is due to Rs. 1,11,000 under Customs, a sum which should properly go in the accounts of 1075 but was credited in the accounts of 1076 for the reason already explained. Also the Diwan expects a further increase of revenue under "Forests." An exceptional item of expenditure, Rs. 70,000, occurs under "Forests." This amount has been provided from current revenues for the construction of a forest tramway which will be commenced during the year. Expenditure upon railway will continue and for this purpose provision was made to sell all the Government promissory notes which remained at the end of 1075: besides the sums thus realized it is intended to raise a debenture loan of Rs. 10,00,000, for which sanction of Government has been obtained and credit is taken for this amount in the revised receipts.

32. The sale of Government promissory notes tells upon the receipts, on account of the temporary loss of interest, to the extent of Rs. 1,00,000 as compared with the figures of 1075 and owing to this fact and the provision of Rs. 70,000 for the forest tramway, the year 1076 is expected to bring a comparatively small surplus of Rs. 32,500. But the result of 1077 must necessarily appear still further crippled.

## BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR 1077.

33. The receipts have been cautiously taken at as low an estimate as possible, regard being had to the figures of past years. The estimated revenue and expenditure during 1077 are Rs. 21,50,667 and Rs. 22,70,914, respectively. The decrease of four lakhs in the receipts and of one lakh and a half in the expenditure is due to reduced income and expense under "Forests" since the State will have ceased by this time to supply sleepers for the Shoranur-Cochin Railway. Also the customs amount of Rs. 1,11,000 adverted to more than once above again affects the figures of 1077 comparatively with those of 1076.

34. Under expenditure Public Works receive a reduced allotment, the reduction being Rs. 50,000, but the Diwan explains that care will be taken to see that the expenditure is so distributed as to leave the allotment for communications practically the same as in previous years. Also an increase occurs under palace. This is due to a lump provision of Rs. 3,50,000, instead of detailed allotments as hitherto, in pursuance of a scheme for regulating the palace expenditure which is engaging the attention of the Darbar. On the other hand provision has been made for a further expenditure of Rs. 1,20,000 upon the forest tramway, and also for revising and increasing the salary of the subordinate staff in several departments of the State and for the payment of interest on the debenture loan of Rs. 10 lakhs. Owing to these circumstances and the fact that the money in Government promissory notes which heretofore brought a good yearly interest will lie locked up in railway capital, the year 1077 will be a year of deficit which is expected to amount to Rs. 1,20,000. Nevertheless, as shown by the Diwan in a concise statement given in paragraph 148 of the report, the Darbar will be better off by over 6 lakhs on the last day of 1077 than it was on the last day of 1071—Mr. Rajagopalachariar assumed charge of office as Diwan early in 1072—and it should be remembered that this result has been obtained in spite of the several reformatory measures involving large expenditure undertaken and carried out during the interval.

## CONCLUSION.

35. In former years the administration of Cochin was not regarded as satisfactory. His Highness in December 1896 obtained the services of Mr. P. Rajagopalachari, Madras Civil Service, as Diwan for a term of five years, and since the arrival of this officer the change has been marked. There still remain some points in which improvement is possible, but if a Jail Regulation is passed, if the good work in the forests continues, if the Abkari department is put in order and if a Police Superintendent of experience is obtained, the administration of the Cochin State will attain a high standard of efficiency. The term of service of the Diwan will expire in December 1901 and much will depend upon the selection of an officer to succeed him.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

ORDER—No. 326, Political, dated 12th June 1901.

The Resident's review of the Cochin administration report for the Malayalam year ending in August 1900 is full and interesting. All the salient features of the twelvemonth under the principal departments of the State have been noticed by Mr. Mackenzie and the Governor in Council does not purpose to travel over the same ground. It is, of course, evident that in many directions there is need for reforms and improvements, but the Diwan's report shows that the darbar fully realises this. The recent appointment of experienced officers to superintend the departments of police and abkari will, it is to be hoped, bring those branches of the service up to the level of others. The Prisons regulation which has passed should lead to greater efficiency in the management of the jails in the State, and when the important railway operations to which His Highness the Raja has wisely devoted the savings of past years have been completed larger expenditure on education and other purposes will, no doubt, be feasible.

2. It appears to His Excellency in Council that there is much of promise in the administration of Cochin.

(True Extract.)

G. STOKES,  
Chief Secretary.

