

REVIEW



BY THE

MADRAS GOVERNMENT

OF THE

ADMINISTRATION REPORT AND BUDGET
ESTIMATES OF THE COCHIN STATE,

FOR THE MALABAR YEARS 1077 AND 1079, RESPECTIVELY.

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REVIEW
ON THE
ADMINISTRATION REPORT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
OF THE
COCHIN STATE,
FOR THE MALABAR YEARS 1077 AND 1079.

From G. T. MACKENZIE, Esq., I.C.S., Resident in Travancore and Cochin, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Resident's Camp Office, Peermade, 6th April 1903.

I have the honour to forward herewith the administration report of the Cochin State for the Malabar year 1077 (1901-1902) and the budget estimate for 1079 (1903-1904).

GENERAL AND POLITICAL.

2. I was Resident throughout the year under report and Mr. S. Locke, Chief Judge of the Cochin State, acted as Diwan.

3. Her Highness the Senior Rani, aunt of His Highness the Raja, died on 14th February 1902.

LAND REVENUE.

4. The Survey department under Mr. Thompson of the Madras Survey continues to do good work. The cost per square mile has risen, but that is due to three causes beyond the control of the Superintendent. The financial pressure in the State has reduced the strength of field parties, but the supervising agency remains the same and its cost stands against a less outturn of field work and thus increases the cost per mile. The field work has reached the boundaries of the forest reserves, where work is more tedious and expensive. The tendency of the Cochin people to make reckless complaints produces a flood of petitions alleging that the demarcation of holdings is incorrect. These petitions must be enquired into at a great expenditure of the time of officers who but for these petitions would be engaged on field work. In this country of small but valuable holdings and of tenacious litigants work must always contrast unfavourably with the survey statistics of the Madras Presidency.

5. The Superintendent in his report says nothing about the instruction of Government to make early and efficient arrangements for the maintenance of survey marks and the correction of field survey books, but the Diwan says that this instruction will hereafter be given effect to.

6. The area under wet cultivation again increased and this is said to be due to the registry of unassessed land cleared and occupied by cultivators. There was a decrease of a thousand acres in the *kole* cultivation, *i.e.*, spaces in the lagoon where the water is baled out and is held back by dams, and this decrease probably is because the heavy rainfall kept up the water level in the lagoon and rendered this mode of cultivation difficult.

7. There is a slight increase in land revenue and the collection was prompt. Formerly temple money was lent out to cultivators on interest, but these loans have for the most part been recalled and the temple funds thus released have been invested in the State loans. This causes a decrease in the current collections from temple lands.

(Devaswam) as is explained in paragraph 8 of the report. The decrease in outstanding arrears is very creditable to the Darbar. Four years ago the outstanding arrears were Rs. 56,000 and now they are only Rs. 8,631. The coercion used to obtain this result is very slight. Numerous notices were issued for sums of about Rs. 12, but movable property was distrained in only 92 cases for sums of about six rupees and was sold in only 19 cases for sums of about two rupees. The *nadupattam* system of sale of land leaves to the defaulter a power to redeem.

CRANGANORE.

8. The accounts of the territory of the Chief of Cranganore are shown separately in paragraph 186 of the report. As Government regards Cranganore as portion of the Cochin State, these figures ought to be added to the statistics of Cochin. This financial autonomy given to Cranganore is a matter of courtesy on the part of the Cochin Darbar. It will be noticed in paragraph 125 of the report that the Darbar sends to Cranganore salt at cost price. I suppose that the duty on that salt is treated as part of the receipts of Cranganore.

POLICE.

9. The police force of 500 men in the Cochin State improves under the care of Mr. Arni Subba Rao of the Madras Police. Paragraph 31 of the report about rewards is interesting. The percentage of 770 convictions in 1002 cases charged is good, but a blot which catches the eye at the close of paragraph 37 is the excessive time during which some cases pend investigation with the police.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

10. Last year remark was made upon the large number of acquittals in the magisterial courts of the Cochin State, but this year the figures are worse. The number of persons before the magistrates last year was 7,654, and 5,920 or 77 per cent. were acquitted. This year 8,705 persons were before the magistrates and 7,209 or 82 per cent. were acquitted. The only good point is that the magistrates awarded compensation to 146 persons, as against 76 last year; but 146 in 7,209 is only one in forty-nine.

JAILS.

11. Rules under the Prison Regulation were not framed during the year and matters in the Ernaculam Central Jail remain as formerly. In the Cochin State imprisonment cannot as yet be said to be rigorous.

CIVIL JUSTICE.

12. The only point that calls for remark is that the two District Judges ought not to have on their files twenty suits and three appeals more than a year old.

REGISTRATION.

13. There was a slight increase in the number of documents registered and the creditable percentage of 99.6 of these documents registered on the day of presentation is repeated this year. Each office was inspected at least three times during the year.

MILITARY.

14. The Nayar Brigade of nearly 300 men has hitherto been under the orders of the Diwan. It has now been placed under the orders of the Superintendent of Police. The men are still employed only on guard duties and as yet no attempt has been made to create an efficient military force.

MARINE.

15. Although vessels anchor at Malipuram in Cochin waters, the cargo is conveyed by lighters to and from British Cochin where the customs dues are paid. The only exceptions during the year seem to be the landing of some chemicals and the shipping of some timber at Malipuram as shown in appendix 29.

FORESTS.

16. Under the supervision of Mr. Alwar Chetty of the Madras Forest Department, the work done by the Cochin Forest Department is always interesting. One point on which Forest officers sometimes fail is that they are not good salesmen and do not study the markets. In this part of his work Mr. Alwar Chetty is excellent. The timber enumerated in paragraph 100 of the report would not have been accepted by the various departments to which it was consigned, had he not taken pains to ascertain the exact requirements of these departments and taken pains to meet these requirements. This part of his work has replenished the Cochin treasury at a period of financial pressure.

17. The Forest Bill has not yet become law and the Conservator awaits this law before he publishes any "working plans" for his forest. I believe that to a man trained in forestry the phrase "working plan" has a very definite meaning and denotes an elaborate book with measurements and surveys on a Dehra Dun model. But meanwhile paragraph 99 shows that the Conservator is working on "methods" and timber is finding its way to the market.

18. At the foot of page 22 it is stated that owing to difficulty of transport the Conservator has ceased working in the Adarapalle forest. I hope that this difficulty is only temporary. At present the only outlet from this forest is southward through Travancore territory and egress was formerly permitted by Travancore, but recently Travancore has reserved the forest on the Travancore side of the frontier and has since objected to Cochin timber from Adarapalle passing through that Travancore reserved forest. An outlet could easily be made by Cochin along Cochin territory and thus this Adarapalle forest will remain untouched only until Cochin has funds to construct the desired outlet, from this magnificent forest of one hundred square miles of timber.

19. Paragraph 103 mentions that the industry of collecting lemon grass has extended to the Cochin State. This industry is well established in Travancore. From the lemon grass a fragrant oil is expressed and this is shipped at British Cochin for Europe where it commands a high price, being used, I believe, in the manufacture of scented soap. As this lemon grass grows freely on all the hills of Southern India, this trade seems capable of expansion.

20. It is satisfactory to note in paragraph 96 that the wholesale plunder of timber which went on in former years is a thing of the past.

21. The draft Forest Bill was submitted to Government during the year for approval and is still under discussion. In the order upon the previous administration report Government expressed a warning that great care should be taken to see that the forest development does not unduly interfere with the interests of the cultivators. The Cochin State has two distinct areas. One half of the State is a densely populated, cultivated tract. The other half is a very thinly inhabited tract of forest. Thus the greater part of the work of the Forest department lies in forest known only to jungle tribes and remote from cultivation. But on the fringe of the forest, where the arable land of the cultivator receives the wind-carried seeds of the forest trees, there is much need for common sense on the part of Forest officers, and it is to be hoped that the warning of Government will be remembered and heeded.

22. Although under the system of departmental working the expenditure on forests has much increased, the receipts are so large that the net receipts, the surplus of receipts over expenditure, has risen as follows:—

	RS.		RS.		RS.
In 1073	.. 1,727	In 1075	.. 1,33,423	In 1077	.. 2,18,968
In 1074	.. 33,740	In 1076	.. 1,52,276		

From this surplus of Rs. 2,18,968 the Darbar has spent Rs. 1,31,000 on the forest tramway and timber slides, and this reduces the surplus shown to Rs. 87,968. This tramway, as explained in previous years, is intended to open out forests in the interior which contain splendid timber and hitherto have seldom been trodden by human foot. Thus the tramway may be classed as an extraordinary reproductive work. The report by Mr. Haffield which is printed as appendix 33 in the report deserves perusal. During the year a portion of the tramway was inspected by His Highness the Raja who made a long and toilsome march on foot through the forest.

RAILWAYS.

23. The railway from Shoranur junction on the Madras line to Ernaculam—the head-quarter town of the Cochin State—was opened during the year, and at once commenced to earn a promising income, the net receipts being between 2 and 3 per cent. on the capital expenditure. Goods traffic seems to be a little slow in taking to this new channel, but the passenger traffic that offers is very large and exceeds the capacity of the passenger rolling-stock that had been provided. It will be necessary to greatly increase the number of passenger carriages and the number of trains.

24. A suggestion was made by the Darbar that it is desirable to arrange for the transit of goods direct from the ship's side to the railway station at Ernaculam, without detention for customs purposes at British Cochin. It will be understood that British Cochin is the port and that all goods landed for the Cochin State pay duty at British Cochin and proceed to their destination. The Madras Government offered to meet the views of the Darbar by placing at Ernaculam an establishment of the Sea Customs staff for which the Cochin State would pay. But the British Cochin Chamber of Commerce regarded the proposed arrangement as unsuitable and the Madras Railway authorities were not in favour of it, because they have in view a booking-office in British Cochin and a boat-service across the lagoon to the Ernaculam station. Thus the scheme remains in abeyance. The only firm at present whom it would benefit are Messrs. Best & Co. of Madras who propose to land at Cochin oil in bulk for the supply of the West Coast, and are constructing adjacent to the Ernaculam railway station a wharf with vats for the storage of the oil when landed.

POST OFFICE.

25. The number of articles carried by the Anchel post continues to increase, probably because it is slightly cheaper than the Imperial post office. Travancore works this post at a profit, but Cochin works it at a loss, the area being too small to support the cost of the supervising agency.

TELEGRAPHS.

26. The Superintendent of Telegraphs, Madras Division, complained that the drooping fronds of the cocoanut trees touched his wires and spoiled the insulation. The Diwans of Cochin and Travancore issued notice to landowners along the line of wire telling them to lop these fronds.

SALT.

27. There was a slight increase in the amount of salt sold by the State to consumers, and the rate of consumption per head of the population stands at 18.41 lb. per annum, which is higher than the Madras but lower than the Travancore figure. The explanation given is a repetition of the words used in the previous report, the good quality of the salt and the attention paid to the suppression of salt illicit manufacture and smuggling. With regard to the quality of the salt, it is true that in the two years covered by these two reports all the salt brought from Bombay by the contractors has been accepted, but in the year 1075 a quantity of 981 maunds was rejected, and I am told that in the present year a still larger quantity has been rejected. Under the bad system which Mr. Merriman brought to notice, the Cochin Darbar compels the contractor to pay full duty upon the rejected salt and then leaves the rejected salt in his hands to be sold by him to the people of the Cochin State or to be smuggled out of the State. It is suggested that a better plan would be to send an official to Bombay to reject bad salt before it goes on board ship for Cochin.

TOBACCO.

28. The Travancore State with a frontier which for a great part of its length permits a preventive force to scrutinize its merchandise, levies frontier duties on tobacco and obtains a revenue of nearly ten lakhs. Cochin with a frontier which is unsuited to such levies imposes a license fee on sellers of tobacco and obtains a revenue of only Rs. 21,000.

ABKÁRI.

29. This is the fourth review which I have written on Cochin administration reports, and for the fourth time I am compelled to say that the Abkári administration is unsatisfactory. It must be admitted that there were difficulties in the way. The former contractors, who still appear in paragraph 137 of this report as paupers, had to be replaced, and in August 1899 the Darbar brought in a Tamil contractor, who still holds the monopoly. According to paragraph 136 he does not even pay his current demand, and paragraph 139 shows a decrease of revenue. It appears to me that this contractor does what he pleases, and that the Darbar not only exercises no control but does not even know what the contractor is doing. It was hoped that the Abkári Regulation would improve matters, but the Darbar have not yet framed rules under that regulation.

OPIUM.

30. For many years the opium contract of the Cochin State was held by Jews of Matancheri—a town which adjoins British Cochin. In comparison with the price paid for the Travancore monopoly these Jews paid for the Cochin monopoly an excessive price and the explanation usually believed was that they valued the Cochin monopoly as an opportunity to smuggle opium into Travancore. They obtained their stock of opium from Bombay. In 1898 a Matancheri Jew retired on pension who for thirty-four years had been in the office of the Collector of Bombay as Inspector of Opium, and in 1901 the Madras Government issued rules compelling the contractor to obtain his opium from storehouses in the Madras Presidency and no longer from Bombay. For these or for other reasons, the Matancheri Jews gave up the opium contract and it was taken by a Hindu at a reduced figure. Nevertheless the opium contracts continue to be a subject of interest. After the Cochin State contract was thus sold at a reduced figure, the contract in the diminutive town of British Cochin, with its population of 21,042 souls, went up to Rs. 8,000 and this year has sold for Rs. 12,150. That is to say, Travancore, with a population of twenty-nine lakhs, gets a revenue of about Rs. 63,000 from opium or a little more than one-third of an anna from each person. The Cochin State, with its population of 812,025, obtains an income of Rs. 24,574 or a little less than half an anna from each person. British Cochin obtains a revenue of more than nine annas from each person. It would be interesting to know the reason for this excessive figure.

MEDICAL.

31. The vital statistics were very slightly better. The number of births reported rose from 5,267 to 5,787, and the number of deaths from 6,446 to 7,354. These figures are still ridiculously short of the truth. The prevalence of small-pox created alarm and caused an increase in the number vaccinated. The hospitals and dispensaries continue to do good work. The increase in the number of cases attended by trained midwives is satisfactory. Each now attends more than forty cases in the year.

EDUCATION.

32. There is an increase of 4,050 pupils in unaided schools, that most healthy and spontaneous feature of education in the Cochin State. The education given in these unaided primary schools is rudimentary, the children being taught to read and write Malayalam and learning by rote arithmetic with a cumbrous system of fractions which has to be unlearned when the child enters a school of higher standard. The teachers are men who cling to old methods and know little of modern ideas. Some of the children in these schools are so very young that evidently they are sent by their parents to school to be kept out of mischief and to learn to sit still. These schools are maintained by the people themselves, and in these schools a child at least learns his letters and prepares to proceed to a better school. If these schools do little good, they do no harm and they cost the State nothing.

33. A very remarkable instance of an unaided school is the high school at Chittoor—an outlying taluk of the Cochin State between Palghat and Pollachi. This school has not applied for any grant from the Cochin Darbar and it receives none. The

school has a staff of three graduates, of whom one has the L.T. qualification, a Sanskrit Pandit, a matriculate Malayalam Pandit, and a certificated gymnastic instructor. It is entirely a high school with no lower secondary or primary department. There are 119 pupils, of whom 75 are Brahmans, 43 are Nayars or other Hindus, and one is a Muhammadan. For matriculation 21 appeared and 15 passed, one in the first class.

34. Since the close of the year under report, Mr. Cruickshank, the Principal of the Ernaculam College and as such the adviser of the Darbar in matters of education, attained the age of sixty years and retired on pension from the Cochin service. Mr. F. S. Davies, Vice-Principal, has succeeded to the vacant post. It is to be hoped that in future years some attempt will be made to give more information regarding education in the State and to clothe these statistics with some instructive comment. As an instance of what I mean I would select the paragraph on Special Education. Even if this paragraph 178 be supplemented by appendix 52, there is much which one would wish to know. Some description might be given of the 2,428 students of Sanskrit or of the 2,320 students of Arabic. We might be told what music 571 pupils study. Also, what are the schools called Bible schools, and the reason why the 118 Bible schools with 2,995 scholars this year fell to 16 Bible schools with 353 scholars. Cochin is so small a State that it ought not to be difficult to know what is going on and the reason for these changes.

GRATUITOUS RELIEF.

35. In Travancore and Cochin there has existed from time immemorial a custom of maintaining at the expense of the State eating-houses where Brahmans are fed gratuitously. Probably the original intention of these institutions was to give food to travellers, but in course of time resident Brahmans also obtained food at these places. In the Cochin State there were thirteen such institutions, which cost the State Rupees 60,000 per annum. From 13th April 1902, a reduction was made. Four of the institutions were abolished, and in five others meals are now given to travellers only. At Tripunithura, the Raja's residence, and in another of these institutions, which is in an endowed temple, no change has been made. A new institution was opened near Puthucad railway station for the benefit of Brahman travellers. These changes have reduced the cost to the State from about Rs. 60,000 to about Rs. 40,000.

FINANCIAL.

36. The following statement shows the actual receipts and expenditure during the year 1077, and the receipts and expenditure according to the revised estimate of 1078 and budget estimate of 1079:—

	Actuals of 1077.	Revised estimate of 1078.	Budget estimate of 1079.
	RS.	RS.	RS.
Opening balance (cash)	3,08,816	2,21,935	4,43,323
Receipts under service heads	27,20,886	24,15,927	24,51,327
Other receipts	45,16,492	30,95,000	18,00,000
Total	75,46,194	57,32,862	46,94,650
Expenditure under service heads	25,15,765	27,54,539	25,07,549
Other expenditure	48,08,494	25,35,000	20,25,000
Total	73,24,259	52,89,539	45,32,549
Closing balance (cash)	2,21,935	4,43,323	1,62,101

37. Book adjustments which for some years have been a conspicuous feature in the Cochin accounts went on in 1077 also. This kind of adjustment makes difficult a correct comparison of figures between one year and another, and it is desirable that this work, although it has been necessary because the old accounts of the State have been scrutinized, should be concluded soon. The ordinary receipts and expenditure during the year under report yield a surplus of Rs. 2,05,121, but more than half of this large amount is due to these book adjustments.

During the year Forests brought large receipts as usual and exceeded the income of the previous year by Rs. 1,17,986, mainly owing to more extensive sales of timber to various Railways and the Cordite Factory. Other increases are Rs. 26,064, because of a larger sale of salt, and Rs. 4,114 under Education. Against these increases must be set off a decrease of Rs. 1,13,825 under Customs and Marine, Rs. 50,014 under Interest, Rs. 15,023 under Stamps, etc., and Rs. 6,622 under Land Revenue. The decrease under Customs and Marine is only nominal and represents one year's amount due to the Darbar under the Interportal Trade Convention, the Darbar having drawn in 1076 the amount due for 1075 also. Interest was less, because all the remaining Government pro-notes were sold during the year to meet the expenditure on the railway.

On the expenditure side, Forests show an increase of Rs. 1,56,497, of which, however, Rs. 1,31,000 is spent upon the tramway which should rightly be regarded as an extraordinary reproductive work; Salt Rs. 15,045, because of larger purchases and the reorganization of the Salt department; Interest Rs. 46,421, because of the railway loan of 10 lakhs raised in 1076; and Palace Rs. 46,709, because of the death ceremonies of the late and the penultimate Senior Rani. On the other hand a large decrease appears under the Public Works, Rs. 1,99,415. This and the decrease of Rs. 7,641 under Military are due to the fact that expenditure had to be incurred under these heads in 1076 on account of His Excellency the Viceroy's visit. For the same reason Miscellaneous also shows Rs. 32,800 less. Another decrease is Rs. 13,107 under Medical, because there was less fear of plague and some of the precautionary measures adopted in 1076 were cancelled.

The figures shown against "other receipts" and "other expenditure" swelled, since remittances to the Madras Bank on account of the railway expenditure continued. Government pro-notes were sold for Rs. 8,36,723 as against Rs. 15,88,410 in 1076 and only a small temporary loan of Rs. 3 lakhs was raised as against the railway debenture loan of 10 lakhs and the temporary loan of Rs. 2,72,275 raised in 1076. Rs. 16,35,077 was spent upon the railway during the year under report as against Rs. 26,68,820 in the previous year.

The year closed with a cash balance of Rs. 2,21,935 in the treasury.

REVISED ESTIMATE FOR 1078.

38. The revised estimate closely follows the budget figures and the few variations that appear have been made in accordance with the actual experience during the first six months of the current year. The sale of the Abkari farms is expected to fetch Rs. 32,000 more, and Forests an increase of Rs. 25,000. The figures under Forests are still $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs less than the actuals of 1077 and so are very cautiously estimated. Rupees 5,500 worth of jewels belonging to a temple were sold and consequently there is a larger receipt under Temples and Oottupurals. Also a larger demand for licenses to sell tobacco is expected to bring an increased license fee of Rs. 4,500. On the other hand, Stamps will sell for Rs. 40,000 less, and the railway receipts have been lowered by Rs. 25,000. This is because the income for the second half of the current year will be collected only in 1079. The Darbar expects to draw Rs. 1,50,000 a year as its share of profits on the railway.

As regards expenditure, an increased allotment of Rs. 7,500 is provided for Survey and Settlement, Rs. 5,000 for further reorganization of the Salt department, and Rs. 9,850 for purchasing tents, new furniture, etc., for the Huzur office. The Forests would require Rs. 25,000 less, because the Darbar thinks that the forest roads and bridges will require less expenditure in 1078.

39. With the railway debenture loan of Rs. 10 lakhs it was expected that the Shoranur-Cochin Railway would cost Rs. 57 lakhs, but as a matter of fact the Darbar actually spent Rs. 63 lakhs by the end of 1077 and this increased expenditure was met by temporary loans. Also the Darbar has to meet further expenditure in 1078, Rs. 1,50,000, for providing more engines and rolling-stock, and to this end and in order to repay the temporary loans referred to, the Darbar proposes to raise a State debenture loan of Rs. 10 lakhs, and credit has been taken for this amount in the revised estimate for 1078. Thus, before the beginning of 1079, the Darbar will have raised a total loan of Rs. 20 lakhs. And with these loans the Darbar will have at the end of 1078 a cash balance of Rs. 4,43,323.

BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR 1079.

40. In 1079, Rs. 40,000 more has to be paid as interest on the loans raised, the total interest payable being Rs. 90,000. But the special expenditure on account of His Highness' trip to Delhi disappears, the Forest tramway will be very nearly finished, and except the maintenance charges nothing more will have to be spent upon it. On the other hand it must begin to yield a good income and also a substantial income will accrue from the railway, Rs. 1,50,000. There will henceforth be more money in the treasury and the Darbar proposes now to start a sinking fund and contribute annually towards it Rs. 1,50,000. This amount is to be divided into two sums of Rs. 80,000 and Rs. 70,000, which will be separately invested and allowed to accumulate untouched. It appears to me that unless the Darbar expects to obtain 5 per cent. interest on these sums, the amount set apart is barely sufficient.

CONCLUSION.

41. During the year under report the administration was carried on by Mr. S. Locke, Chief Judge, as Acting Diwan. The routine of the administration worked punctually and smoothly and all credit is due to Mr. Locke for this. At the close of the year Mr. N. Pattabhirama Rao came to Cochin as Diwan, his services being lent for a term of years by Government. There is every hope that, during his tenure of office, the Cochin State will continue in the path of intelligent progress—progress which always has the support of His Highness the Raja.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

ORDER—No. 336, Political, dated 21st July 1903.

The administration report of the Cochin State for the Malabar year 1077 (August 1901 to August 1902) and the budget estimates for 1079, together with the revised estimate for 1078, were received by the Government about a week after the due date. The report has been slightly reduced in bulk as compared with that of the previous year. The question of the date of submission of the report will be separately considered.

2. *Land Revenue*.—The cost of survey per square mile is high and the expenditure under this head seems to require careful watching by the Darbar.

The Residents remarks regarding the decrease in the outstanding arrears do not appear to be altogether correct, although no doubt there has been some improvement; but the arrear balances which are reviewed from year to year do not represent the actual state of affairs. The system explained in paragraph 10 of the administration report might now well be abandoned. In order to arrive at the figure which represents the true arrear demand at the beginning of any year, it is necessary under that system to include in the arrear demand statement the total of all the demands of previous years as entered in the separate registers. There seems no reason why all money in arrears should not be shown at once as "arrears." In the case of occupied waste lands which have been assessed and registered for the first time the Government believe that it would be found a more correct procedure to include the whole amount of the assessment as demand in the year in which the cultivation is brought to account, noting the fact in the explanation of the increase in the current demand.

3. *Jails*.—The healthiness of the Ernakulam jail would seem to require some inquiry on the part of the Darbar. Although the average daily population of the jail was less than in M.E. 1076, the number of prisoners treated in hospital and the number of deaths exceeded those in the previous year, while of the convicts discharged more lost weight than gained it.

The Government regret that the rules under the Prison Regulation of 1076, reported last year to be under preparation with the view of rendering imprisonment more deterrent, have not as yet been brought into force.

4. *Forests*.—The administration of the Forest department reflects credit on those concerned; the results of the sales of timber were eminently satisfactory. In a separate communication the Government have expressed their views as to the provisions of the draft Forest Regulation.

5. *Railways*.—It is gratifying to learn that the passenger traffic on the Shoranur-Cochin Railway is steadily developing. The Government understand that the Madras Railway Company have made arrangements to provide additional engines and carriages to meet the increased traffic.

As regards the scheme for the direct transit of goods from the ship's side to the Ernakulam railway station, it is observed that before deciding whether to take advantage of the customs facilities which the Madras Government are prepared to grant the Darbar are waiting the receipt of trustworthy figures in respect of the volume of trade.

6. *Salt and Abkari*.—The Government hope that the suggestions made by Mr. Merriman for the improvement of the salt administration are receiving attention. The Darbar would be taking a step in the right direction if they discarded the present system of compelling the contractor to pay full duty on rejected salt and of leaving

such salt in his hands to be sold by him to the people of Cochin or else smuggled out of the State. The Darbar should be advised to adopt the method suggested by Mr. Merriman, namely, to receive all salt and to reserve power to pay a reduced price for such quantity as is not clearly up to sample.

The Government concur with the Resident in considering the abkári administration to be in need of reform. The matter is of consequence and much more attention to the working of the department appears to be called for. The want of control over the abkári contractor is presumably the cause of the large number of liquor shops which exist near the British frontier.

7. *Vital Statistics*.—The Governor in Council desires to reiterate the importance of improving the preparation of the vital statistics of the State.

8. *Education*.—The special feature of education in Cochin is the large number of unaided private schools belonging almost entirely to the primary grade and of the most elementary character. Deficiencies in strength and numerous other details are said to be obstacles in the way of recognition. It is, however, most desirable that these institutions should be recognised and brought under control, and for effecting this object the Darbar might with advantage consider whether it is not possible temporarily to relax the rules in this respect.

9. *Financial*.—The Resident has reviewed the financial position of the State on the lines indicated in the remarks made by the Government on the report for M.E. 1076.

The temporary loan raised in 1076 appears to be Rs. 2,75,000, and not Rupees 2,72,275 as stated in the fourth clause of paragraph 37 of the Resident's review. The latter figure seems to have been arrived at by taking the railway debenture loan at the full ten lakhs, instead of Rs. 9,97,275, and by deducting it from the total loan raised in 1076, viz., Rs. 12,72,275.

In regard to the proposal of the Darbar to start a sinking fund for the repayment of the railway debenture loan and of a new loan of ten lakhs, it is observed that, as the two loans are to be liquidated in eight and fifteen years commencing from M.E. 1079, the Darbar will have to set apart Rs. 1,10,500 and Rs. 51,800 at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest instead of Rs. 80,000 and Rs. 70,000, respectively, as stated in the report. There should of course be no difficulty in providing the additional amount required, namely, Rs. 12,300.

10. The Governor in Council cordially appreciates the able endeavours of the Darbar to increase the prosperity of Cochin. Much of the success which has already been achieved may be ascribed to the personal interest which His Highness evinces in the administration of the State.

(True Extract.)

G. S. FORBES,
Ag. Chief Secretary.