

contributed in India to evils similar to those that have to be rectified here. The direction and scope of the reform must necessarily depend upon more complete information than is at present available respecting the land tenures and local agricultural customs of this island, the varieties of soil, the means of irrigation actual and possible, and the conditions and habits of the agricultural classes generally.

Information on these essential points may, however, be obtained before the termination of the present engagements with the tithe-farmers in March 1879. A rough field survey would prepare the ground for a systematic inquiry into rights and interests in each estate and village throughout the several districts of the island. The inquiry, conducted by the respective commissioners of districts in the next few months of favourable weather, may be made to embrace the following points :—

1. The extent of the several holdings, and whether held under proprietary, sub-proprietary, or occupancy rights.

2. The average produce of each estate or holding, and its value, say for the last three or four years.

3. The areas respectively (1) under cultivation, (2) not under cultivation but culturable, (3) unculturable and barren waste.

4. In the case of culturable lands not under cultivation, inquiry should be made whether this is the result of the oppressive way of collecting tithes, or the want of money or cultivators, or whether the land is required for grazing or other purposes.

5. The character of the soil in various parts of the island, and the respective producing capabilities.

6. The arrangements, existing and possible, for irrigation by wells, aqueducts, and tanks.

7. The proportion of the people occupied in agriculture, and the proportion in other pursuits than husbandry.

8. The personal condition of the agricultural classes, whether well housed, well clad, with good cattle, ploughs, and gear, or the reverse.

9. The standard for measuring land. The area of each estate or holding, after measurement, should be reduced to English standard acres.

The result of these inquiries, accurately and clearly recorded, would afford valuable data for determining the extent to which the present tithe arrangement may be modified for the ensuing financial year. Whatever modification may be adopted in substance, the tax will at least be collected without injustice or oppression, and the cost of collection will be covered by the increased revenue