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ADDRESSES, &c.

PRESENTED TO

AND

REPLIES MADE

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY THE LORD WENLOCK,
G. C. I. E.

ON HIS SECOND TOUR.

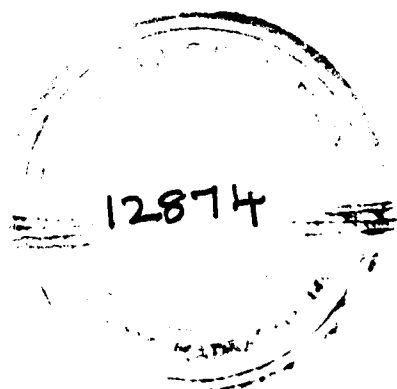


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ADDRESSES, &c., PRESENTED TO AND REPLIES MADE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE LORD WENLOCK ON HIS SECOND TOUR.

Address of the Members of the Municipal Corporation of Bellary.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.—We, the Members of the Municipal Corporation of Bellary, congratulate ourselves on the honour done to us by this kind visit of your Excellency to this town, and we beg most respectfully to welcome your Excellency very heartily.

2. As your Excellency tours through the districts of the Presidency, with the special object of learning from the people their wants and grievances at this time when a sore famine prevails in some districts, we feel bold to approach your Excellency with what little we have to say.

3. We beg to submit that this district is the driest in the whole Presidency. For want of sufficient water-supply, large areas are lying waste, and when rainfall is meagre or uncertain, famine threatens the people and large numbers perish. This district suffered the worst in the great famine of 1877–78. We have repeatedly pointed out to your Excellency's predecessors the schemes of Sir Arthur Cotton and Major-General Fischer for utilizing the waters of the Tungabhadra by skilful hydraulic engineering. We pray for the appointment of a competent Commission consisting of Major-General Fischer, who is in India, other hydraulic engineers and local experts, both Native and European, to discuss the feasibility and possibility of the scheme, and to see whether capital spent on it will not be recuperative, adding to the material welfare and prosperity of the people and the enhancement of the public revenues. We beg to submit that the failure of the Madras Irrigation Canal Company of Cuddapah and Kurnool is brought forward by some as a set-off against the very discussion of the *pros* and *cons* of the Tungabhadra scheme. But there is a vast difference in the peculiarities of Kurnool and Cuddapah, through which the Irrigation canal passes, and those of the district of Bellary. Hence our great solicitude for a Commission at least to discuss the merits of the Tungabhadra scheme.

4. We beg to submit that the Municipal High school is comparatively poor in strength and therefore unable to be self-supporting, as it ought to be, like schools in other districts. This is mostly because of the lower rate of fees charged in the local Mission institution. We concede to the decision of the Viceroy on the Report of the Educational Commission of 1884, that aided education should be encouraged. But we beg to state that indigenous, non-sectarian institutions only fall within the category of such aided schools, but not those where a special religion is taught and which are maintained by societies whose avowed object in all details of their work is proselytism. Pupils resort to Mission schools against their will, as they are unable to pay the higher rate of fees charged in Municipal schools. Municipal corporations are indigenous aided societies. Religious neutrality is strictly enforced in schools maintained by them. Bellary is declared to be backward in education. Parents and guardians have often brought to our notice their grievances in this respect. We therefore beg to request that your Excellency will be pleased to permit the Council to levy the same rate of fees charged in the local Mission school.

5. In conclusion, we sincerely pray for the long life and prosperity of your Excellency and Lady Wenlock, that both may leave immortal marks of fame and blessing in the land.—*Bellary, 17th August 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

His Excellency said he would in the first place thank them for the extremely kind address of welcome which had been read by the President. It had given him great pleasure to visit that part of the Presidency, and to find it one of the most flourishing and prosperous portions of the country. They had alluded in their address to the districts he was about to visit where famine was making its appearance, but he must say—he thought it only right that he should say—that they used too strong an expression when they alluded to it as being a "sore famine." He could not say there was not a certain amount of scarcity and distress in the Presidency. Still, the appellation "sore famine" could hardly be applied to those districts. He thought he ought to say that within the last week he had excellent reports of rain in the parts particularly affected, and he had every reason to believe that they would have no difficulty whatever in coping with as much distress as was now appearing there till the North-East monsoon came in. He was glad to notice that in their remarks they had nothing to say as regards scarcity in the Bellary district. But they had pointed out, and it was an undoubted fact, that they had one of the driest—if not the driest—portion of the Presidency immediately surrounding them, and in regard to this they asked Government to appoint a Commission to enquire into certain matters with regard to an irrigation scheme discussed and proposed by gentlemen living in the Presidency. With regard to this His Excellency said he had referred the matter to those best qualified to inform him, namely, the

engineering officers, and he had read the papers in circulation regarding the matter, and from what he had been informed and from what he read, he was afraid it seemed to be an absolutely hopeless undertaking for the Government to enter on and carry further than it had already been carried. The proposal was undoubtedly a fascinating one to a great many minds to have presented to them, namely, that a large area of waste and uncultivated ground should be made to bear crops and entirely alter the character of the country surrounding Bellary. Personally, he could see that it was a bold and fine conception if they were able to carry it out. But, from what he had seen, the proposal was one that could not commend itself to the Government of Madras, and it would be too much to ask from the Government of India such a large sum of money, and at the same time convince it that the advantages expected would be sufficient to compensate them for such a large original capital outlay. Under these circumstances, he was afraid he could give very little encouragement in the matter. His Excellency hoped they would understand that it was not from any want of sympathy. Personally, he would be glad to see this work carried out, but of this theoretical scheme all the engineering officers said it would not be a financial success. While on the subject of irrigation, His Excellency wished to say that he hoped everybody who could bring any influence to bear would do so in the extension of wells. He believed Government was doing all it could to encourage the ryots to make wells on their own particular lands. The terms on which Government offered them advances could not be obtained by the ryots from any other source. The only means of bringing prosperity and good cultivation to this part of the country was by a scheme of wells. He could only hope that in this part of the country the ryots might be induced to see that it was only by this means they might be able to irrigate their fields and cultivate them much better. They knew that, in a dry country like this, water was the only thing that could benefit the ryots, and if they could bring water on their lands at cheap and reasonable rates, he had every reason to hope that what was now dry and dusty land would eventually bloom like a garden. In regard to the other matter—the question of fees in the Bellary High school—he was afraid he had very little hope to offer. These fees had been laid down by Government throughout the Presidency, and it would require a stronger argument than had been brought against them to make him cause them to be lowered. He would take care to ascertain how this particular question lay, and would look most carefully into the matter when full information reached him on the subject. In conclusion, His Excellency thanked the deputation very much for their presence, and assured them that his visit to that part of the country had been a great pleasure, and he hoped to be able to see more of the district under the careful guidance of Mr. Sewell.

Address of the Residents of Hospet.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.—We, the residents of Hospet, the new suburb, built on the ruins of old Tirumaldevipatna founded by Tirumaldevi, the consort of the famous Krishnadeva Raya, beg to welcome your Excellency to this historic neighbourhood.

2. The ruins of Vijayanagar which your Excellency wishes principally to see begin from this place. Containing as they do numerous monuments of ancient architectural skill sublime even in decay, rich in example to the student of art, and pregnant with suggestions of the past history of the land to the magnificence of whose rulers they bear testimony, these ruins have from time to time been visited and admired by your Excellency's predecessors.

3. The work of Muhammadan conquest would have been completed by the rapacity of treasure-hunters and the ravages of time, were it not that your Excellency's Government stepped in with timely aid. But though much has been done and is being done to arrest the progress of decay, yet in the interests alike of the traveller, the savant, and the devotee, in the interests, too, of the 60,000 pilgrims who come annually to the great Humpi festival, we would urge that protective measures be increased.

4. Further, we would lay before your Excellency for consideration the necessity for completing the channel intended to supply this large and rising town with water from the Tungabhadra, a work begun 20 years ago and still unfinished.

5. We believe, too, that the peoples of these four western taluks are with us when we say that—

- (1) the early amelioration of the laws relating to the management of our religious institutions,
 - (2) the institution of agricultural banks protected and supported by Government,
 - (3) the relaxation of the Forest laws and especially the free use of brushwood for sugar-cane boiling and for agricultural purposes generally,
- are measures earnestly and widely desired.

6. It is with the hope of seeing our prayers answered under your auspices that we have ventured to detain your Excellency thus long, and it is with a deep sense of gratitude for the patient hearing your Excellency has given us that we beg to remain, &c.—*Hospet, 18th August 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

In the first place His Excellency thanked them very much for the kind words of welcome which they had addressed to him on the occasion of his first visit to this extremely interesting portion of the Presidency of Madras. Their address was one that contained expressions of loyalty which he was very much pleased to hear. At the same time, he remembered he was addressed as the head of the Government regarding certain points which might be advantageously taken up, and, if possible, carried out. As regards the various points, he would like in the first place to notice what they said about the historical and celebrated ruins of Vijayanagar not receiving the careful attention and preservation which they ought to have. He could assure them that they had in the Collector of the district, Mr. Sewell, a gentleman of well-known archaeological attainments and one who was anxious to preserve the celebrated ruins from decay. He was sure that any representations to Mr. Sewell would meet with most careful attention and consideration, and he had no doubt that these ruins would be more carefully attended to and properly looked after. If any matters were represented to Mr. Sewell, His Excellency thought it would be amply sufficient. But should Mr. Sewell ask His Excellency for help, he would only be too anxious to give the help necessary towards keeping these ruins and preserving them in proper state. The deputation had also called attention to the fact that there was a channel which he understood had been begun about 20 years ago, but he did not quite understand from the address whether they thought it absolutely necessary, for the sake of the water supply, that this channel should be completed. He wished to know if that was so. On receiving a reply in the affirmative, he said that, as far as he could ascertain, this work had been left uncompleted for over 20 years, and apparently owing to somebody's neglect it had been allowed to remain in that condition when a few hundred rupees would have finished it at the time. For some reason or other it had been allowed to silt up. His Excellency was also informed that this was a work which would naturally fall on the Taluk Boards and was hardly a work which they could call upon Government to do. Their remarks as regards the insufficient water-supply would receive the Government's most careful consideration, although he was not prepared to undertake the opening of the old channel. They had also asked for the amelioration of the laws relating to the management of religious institutions. He could only tell them, as he had told other gentlemen who had approached him on the subject, that the Committee which was appointed to report on this particular question had now considered it, and its report had not yet been laid before the Government, and it was almost premature, His Excellency thought, to address any remarks with reference to that till the report reached Government. He hoped that when it did, the matter would be treated in a way which would commend itself to the people of this country. With regard to the question of agricultural banks, he said that one of the first things which had attracted his attention was the extreme paucity of banks throughout the country. He had specially appointed a gentleman whose knowledge on the subject was extremely valuable, and he hoped would be extremely useful, to specially enquire into the subject. His Excellency said he felt convinced that if they were able to institute, on sound financial principles, banks throughout the country, he was satisfied that throughout the country there was a large accumulation of jewels of gold and silver which would be better employed if they were placed on deposit in these banks. A great deal would thereby be derived towards promoting the useful increase in the wealth of the country. If it were found possible to establish and develop in any way these banks, they might depend on him to do his utmost to further the scheme. They had also asked for the relaxation of the Forest laws as regards the use of brushwood for sugar-cane boiling and agricultural purposes. His Excellency was afraid on this point it was hardly possible for the Government to make exceptions in favour of one particular industry. He thought the sugar-cane industry hardly required any special prop or bolstering up by the Government. He did not think it possible for the Government to relax any of the rules laid down by it. As regards local industry, he found on enquiry that the prices charged were the same which the department charged in the other provinces. He did not think it would be possible to reduce them still lower for the sake of agricultural interests. If it were found possible to do so, he would like to see it done, but at the same time he felt bound to say that the Government had a difficult task before it in conserving the forests of the country. There was no doubt that, unless matters were taken in hand in time, the whole forest would have been denuded both of fuel and fodder. At present he did not think it possible to relax the laws which were found necessary for the conservation of forests. His Excellency did not think a Government would be doing its duty, if it did not do its best for the present interests of the country and for the interests of those who came after them. To do so they must have revenue, and it was found that they were obliged to charge certain fees and curtail certain privileges in order to preserve forests produce, which would eventually prove a source of enormous wealth to the people of the country. He looked forward to the time, not very far distant he hoped, when the forest revenues would have grown so large as to enable the Government to reduce very largely the taxation which pressed somewhat hardly on the subjects of the Queen in this country. He hoped that day was not far distant—perhaps in the life time of some of those assembled there. As matters stood at present, he could only say it was difficult for the Government to relax any of the rules and regulations which were found necessary to carry on the forestry of the country. He was not aware that they had touched on any other points in their address, and he was glad they had not alluded to any question of distress or destitution in this part of the country. It was a matter of great relief, at a time when there was considerable anxiety in various parts of

the Presidency, and it was a special pleasure to find among this large population that the people did not come forward with complaints regarding the scarcity. In conclusion, he assured them that it had given him much pleasure to be amongst them, and he looked forward to the visit he was about to make to the magnificent ruins in the vicinity of their town.

Address of the People of the Ráyachóti Taluk, Cuddapah District.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, on behalf of the people of Ráyachóti Taluk, respectfully beg permission to approach your Excellency to humbly welcome you to our parts with a grateful heart and a cheerful countenance. Just as a cup of cold water enlivens a thirsty traveller in the desert of Sahara, and gives him a new lease of life, so does your Excellency's noble presence in our midst, especially at a time when distress is staring sternly in the face, cheer us up and set us agoing once more in the land of the living.

We feel all the more grateful when we reflect for a moment that your Excellency has condescended to take the trouble of visiting our taluk with a view to better our pitiable condition and to relieve our sufferings by paternal sympathy and princely help.

2. The district of Cuddapah is divided into two parts, namely, the Main Division and the Sub-Division. The taluks of the sub-division, including our own, are poorer regarding agricultural products than those of the main division, which are rich and fertile; and of the four taluks of the sub-division, our Ráyachoti taluk happens, unfortunately, to be the poorest of all.

3. One great cause among others for the poverty of our taluk is that its centre is an undulating plain intersected by hills and hillocks, ravines and nullahs, waste forest lands and rocky grounds, and the consequence is that a limited area of land is available for purposes of cultivation; and of this limited area, only a smaller portion is brought under wet cultivation.

4. Owing to the failure of timely and sufficient rain last year, the outturn of dry crop was only *one-fourth*, and that of the wet crop was *one-half*. Besides this, the crop of the castor-oil plant, upon the sale-proceeds of whose produce the ryots depend mainly to meet the expenses of buying their clothes and of paying their annual assessments, was also eaten away by a species of caterpillars which swarmed the country.

To add to our misery the rains held off entirely this year, and the inevitable consequence is that our taluk is visited by famine.

5. The advent of drought was duly anticipated by our keen-sighted Tahsildar, who sounded a warning note in time, and this was re-echoed by our energetic Collector and our hard-working Sub-Collector, who promptly brought its menacing attitude to the notice of Government with a result that a large portion of minor irrigation works were ordered to be thrown open at once to the cooly class to enable them to earn their daily bread. Money loans are given to improve wells and to purchase cattle. The wet-crop raised under tanks till the end of this month is ordered to be charged only the dry rate. A large special remission of Rs. 19,886 has been granted for our taluk, which is nearly one-sixth of the whole assessment.

Cholera, the usual companion of famine and the terrible scourge of mankind, made its appearance recently in our taluk to add fuel to the fire. This was stamped out by the prompt adoption of preventive sanitary measures by the local Medical Officer and the Taluk Magistrate, who repaired at once to the infected place and encamped there until its subsidence.

For these manifold blessings we are greatly indebted to your Excellency's good Government and to the praiseworthy zeal of our conscientious district administrative officers, who went from village to village, enquiring after the welfare of the people, exposing themselves, with a great amount of self-sacrifice, to the burning heat of the sun.

6. While we feel extremely thankful to the All-merciful Providence Who has graciously placed us under the benign rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress of India, who is ever ready to hold out succour and help to the poor and needy in time of distress, we crave your Excellency's indulgence and patience to hear our following prayers and to relieve us from the heavy burden of famine, under which we are still groaning.

7. Although the baneful effects of famine on the people have not been pushed as yet to a melancholy extreme, yet a patient and careful enquiry set on foot among ryots reveals that a majority of the population content themselves with only one *insufficient* and *improper* meal in 24 hours, and many of the old and infirm people, who are quite unable to earn their livelihood, go even without this and starve for a day or two.

8. Though certain tracts of land present a carpet of vegetation here and there in our taluk owing to the late scanty rains, yet it only creates a hazy, tantalizing hope in our hearts, and faintly foretells that there is some good in store for us in the near future. It may be said, with some amount of certainty, that people would be in want until the harvest of the present crop, which does not seem to be a promising one, as the rains are still holding off and the winds are blowing with vengeance waiting away the clouds, which hang over our heads, far beyond hill and dale.

9. Though some rains have fallen and our eyes meet with green landscape as we glance around, yet the price of food grains remains as high as ever. Rice sells 5½ measures a rupee, cholam and cumboo 12 measures a rupee in our taluk, when the same grains sell at cheaper rates at Cuddapah.

10. We, therefore, humbly beg your Excellency to grant us the following requests until the subsidence of famine, and to issue early orders for their execution:—

(a) That 9 grain depôts be opened at the following centres of the taluk, in which food grains which are bought at Government expense at cheap rates be sold to the poor people for the same cost price. Cooked food or grain doles be given in these centres to the old and infirm people, who are quite unable to earn their daily bread:—

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| (1) Ráyachóti. | (4) Nulweddu. | (7) Veeraballi. |
| (2) Chiinnamondium. | (5) Lakkireddipalli. | (8) Tsundupalli. |
| (3) Yegavaghotivedu. | (6) Nilankantrapet. | (9) Devipatla. |

(b) That poor people be allowed to go to *certain portions of the forest in the different parts of the taluk to bring firewood free of license*. Many a poor man makes a living upon this trade. Now a poor soul, who wishes to get a bundle of firewood for sale, is obliged to spend one day in getting a license, another day for going to the forest and getting the fuel, and a third day for bringing and selling it in the town. The amount which he realizes by the sale of *this firewood, which cost him 3 days' labour, is only 16 pies at most*. Out of this sum, he is to pay 3 pies for license, and the remaining 13 pies, when subjected to a process of mathematical scrutiny, come up to a little more than 4 pies per day. Upon this, and this sum alone, your Excellency, he, his wife and children, and perhaps his aged parents, have to depend for *their daily maintenance, especially now when grains are sold at famine rates*. This, your Excellency sees, is hardly sufficient to eke out even a *vegetative* existence.

If the poor people are allowed to get firewood *free of license*, they can obtain it in a shorter time, and this will be one of the surest modes of supporting them in this dire season.

(c) Owing to the great scarcity of fodder, cattle died in numbers, and the remaining ones are the miserable living skeletons which unmistakably tell their own woeful tale by their famished appearance.

The ryots suffered a serious and heavy loss in the numberless deaths of their cattle, which is their chief property.

A ryot depends upon his cattle for manure, for milk, and for tilling his lands; *in fact, the cattle is his all in all*.

To enable him to maintain his *dying* cattle and to cultivate his land, *the reserved forests in all parts of the taluk should be opened out free of license for grazing them*.

(d) We have humbly drawn your Excellency's worthy attention in paragraph 3 of this address to the poverty of our taluk, which is mainly due to a small and limited area of wet cultivation.

We humbly beg to suggest that there is a panacea in hand for this evil, and that panacea is to be found in the early repair of our Kanchalamma tank. When this evil is removed, our taluk will be placed on a *par* at least with other taluks of the sub-division. The favorable situation of this tank is best described in the following words of our able Collector:—

“This is a locality of partial rainfall, and this tank is supplied from a stream rising or passing close to two large blocks of hills reaching 3,500 feet. These hills, my experience of the past ten day tells me, catch and condense every passing shower. Hence the tank would have every chance of stopping a lot of water that must often run to waste. * * * Kanchalamma tank, too, is handy to Rayachóti (two miles), and relief work there could be cheaply done.”

The river Mandevai, which supplies this tank, rises in Thummalagunthi, a place in the south-west corner of the taluk, and runs right in its middle to the extent of forty miles; after wending a tortuous course, it empties itself in the river Bahuda near Rollamadugu, which is situated in the north-east corner.

Upwards of 50 villages are situated along both sides of its bank, and the lands lying adjacent to them are brought under wet cultivation by means of irrigation channels sunk annually in the bed of the river. Unfortunately the water in this river runs only for a month every year, and it is quite dry almost all the year round—so much so, that great manual labour is required on the part of the ryots to keep the channels deeper and deeper as the summer season approaches.

If the breach of the Kanchalamma tank is closed, the bed of the river will be kept constantly wet throughout by means of underground percolation by having a large body of water in the tank, at the head, irrigation channels may be easily sunk; about 3,000 acres of land will be brought under wet cultivation, and there will be also consequent increase of revenue.

We, therefore, earnestly beg your Excellency to pass orders for the early execution of this work, which we believe will avert the poverty of our taluk and confer a great boon upon us.

11. We feel sorry indeed to note that our requests involve a certain amount of expenditure for Government for our protection. We humbly beg to submit that we, the loyal subjects of

Her Most Gracious Majesty, consisting upwards of 113,000 souls, have no other alternative than to look up to your Excellency's parental Government for help in our adversity and for sympathy in our trials.

Our position, your Excellency, is no other than that of a son who was fitted out in life by his parents, and who, owing to the reverse of fortune, failed in business and became a bankrupt. It will be admitted on all hands that the only course opened out for him is to fall back upon the unstinted generosity and sincere sympathy of his loving parents for help.

12. We are very thankful to your Excellency for the patient hearing you have given us, and humbly beg your Excellency's pardon for having occupied so much of your Excellency's valuable time.

13. In conclusion we respectfully beg to assure your Excellency that by your devotion to your onerous and responsible duty, and by your parental sympathy in our adversity, which obtains ample demonstration in your present visit to our distressed taluk, you have gently struck the tenderest chord in our hearts and have kindled in our bosom a warmth of deep and sincere gratitude, not only for your Excellency, but also for our beloved Sovereign, whom you have the honour to represent in our Presidency, and with whom the hearts of all Her Majesty's subjects, the rich and poor, the young and old, and the great and small, are united by the flexible chord of love.—*Gurralacheruru*, 24th August 1891.

His Excellency's Reply.

His Excellency in reply said that he had listened with attention to the address which had just been presented to him on behalf of the Union of Ráyachoti. He begged in the first instance to thank them very much for the kind manner in which they had welcomed him to the taluk. He assured them it was with the greatest interest he came among them at the present time. At the same time he assured them of his deepest sympathy with them on the present occasion, when, as they pointed out, a time of scarcity was coming on them and the approach of famine was not far distant. They asked him under these circumstances to take into consideration, as the head of the Government, certain steps to alleviate their position and ameliorate their condition, and in pointing them out they naturally expected from him certain remarks as to what he considered advisable to be done on the present occasion.

Speaking with reference to the various points brought forward, His Excellency said he had had an opportunity since being in the taluk of being able to get a very good idea, by seeing certain villages, as to what was the condition of the whole, and he was assured that what he had seen was a sample of the whole. He could see for himself very plainly that their lot there was cast in lines certainly of a difficult character, as they had constantly to meet with times of drought such as the present, and not only was this so in the present year, but possibly also in succeeding years. They had a soil unfavorable in itself, and naturally they had a great deal of trouble in being able to keep alive and keep up a position at all events of a certain amount of prosperity. As for himself the difficulty under which he laboured was that he hardly thought they had pointed out the direction in which it was possible for Government to afford any relief. But when he said this he hoped they would understand it was not from any want of sympathy on the part of Government. He could only assure them that Government was as anxious as any body of men well could be to relieve them of their distress at the present moment. But Government was confident it had in Mr. Wolfe-Murray an officer who would do his utmost, as far as he possibly could, to relieve the present distress and help them to tide over the time of scarcity. They represented in the first instance that a great many people were not able to receive the proper amount of food considered sufficient to keep life reasonably good in a healthy subject. To meet this difficulty Mr. Wolfe-Murray had opened out works, as they knew, in various parts of the taluk where men, women and children could resort and gain an allowance if they only chose to do a proper amount of work. Of course this was work that was not able to be done by everybody, and therefore a kitchen had been started at Ráyachoti to enable Mr. Wolfe-Murray and the Government to know what was the number of absolutely dependent persons who had no means of livelihood, and who were obliged to resort to the kitchen as the last means of saving their lives. The number who attend that kitchen were not such as to justify Mr. Wolfe-Murray in taking a gloomy view of the situation, for the numbers who had gone there up to the present were so small that unless it was seen that it was doing greater good the question would arise as to whether it was necessary to keep it going at all. All His Excellency could say on behalf of the Government was that if it was found necessary to keep the kitchen going and to open others in the district if the position got worse, Mr. Wolfe-Murray would be the first to see this done, and to see that those not able to work were placed in a condition to carry on their daily living.

The next point the address raised was in connection with the question of grain. The Governor said he had got the prices of grain drawn up for him and he was bound to say they hardly tallied with those mentioned in the address on taking the two standards together. Theirs were taken at 132 tolas to the measure and his own at the imperial one. The comparison showed, at present at all events, that the grains which were the staple food of the people were considerably above scarcity rates, and it would be a great interference with the ordinary channels of supply and demand that such a measure as they suggested should be taken by the Government.

Even if grain depôts were to be opened by Government in certain centres in the villages, His Excellency was afraid this was hardly the moment for Government to step in, because he believed it would be a measure likely to create trouble in the whole question of supply and demand.

They then alluded to the question of firewood. His Excellency felt bound to say that on going through the District he found this question, and that of feeding the cattle, excited a good deal of attention among the ryots, and he was anxious to know what was being done in this matter. He found that for purely domestic purposes ryots could obtain firewood from all unreserved lands, but that firewood removed for sale was paid for, and the Collector had power to reduce the fees. At present they said the fees for a license were considered too high. He was afraid it was not possible to grant licenses entirely free, but the Collector assured him that it was possible to, and that he would be glad to entertain proposals for, reducing the fees. But His Excellency was also assured that it was quite possible now for any one who wished to cut firewood to obtain a license from the head of the nearest village, and cut fuel in the unreserved lands, and sell it on one and the same day. It was an exaggeration to say that it took three days. There was no reason why they could not take out a license, and cut firewood, and sell it, on the same day. There were large areas in the unreserved lands in all parts of the taluk where every one had a right to cut wood on payment of small fees, but if the license were reduced, more would go into the business, and the prices would still go down, which was a point Government could not interfere with, and one which eventually arose in all matters of trade and commerce. Wherever the demand was great, the supply came up to it, and prices kept at the same level. If, however, it was considered that the fees were too high, they would be reduced. They had also alluded to the scarcity of fodder and to the fact that cattle were dying in great numbers. His Excellency was sorry to hear this, as he knew very well that the ryots depended in a great measure on their cattle. If it was possible to devise any means by which in times like these all cattle could be kept alive, he would be glad to have it done. With regard to their request that the reserved forests might be thrown open, he was told that already in the reserved forests such a number of cattle had been admitted on payment of a small fee, that if they were thrown open to more, it would only mean that a large number of useless cattle would be admitted to graze down the fodder, which was just enough to keep the cattle already in the reserved forest going—cattle of a better character which the ryots were anxious to keep alive. It would be a source of infinite trouble, and eventually of greater loss to the people. His Excellency believed that the only means by which the better class of cattle could be kept alive was that which the Government was now adopting. The result was that it acted as a sort of brake in this matter, because the ryots took care not to pay the fees except for the better cattle and for those which were worth preserving. The ryots, who were not able to send their cattle into the reserves in consequence of the restrictions, were none the less allowed to go into the reserve and cut grass free of charge—he believed the best way of assisting those who lived near the forests. They would naturally see that when they had to take this trouble they would give the grass to the cattle they were particularly anxious to keep. So that the Government was doing its best, and adopting measures that were absolutely necessary for preserving, as far as it possibly could, the cattle of the taluk. It was possible that a certain number of cattle would die, but it was beyond the means of Government to avert that. If they were able by the measures adopted to save during this period of distress and scarcity a certain number of the best class of animals which were most useful for breeding and working purposes, they would thereby be doing a great good.

The deputation, in their address, then went on to mention the question of the irrigation of a particular village which lay below the Kanchalamma tank, and mentioned that the Collector, Mr. Wolfe-Murray, had himself alluded to it as a means of irrigation, and if it were properly looked after in the way of damming up, it might be the means of stopping a great deal of water which ran to waste. On enquiry into this, he (Lord Wenlock) found that to a certain extent this was true. If the tank were put in order, more land could be irrigated than was irrigated at present, but not to anything like as large an extent as was alluded to in the address. At the same time, the Engineers who had gone thoroughly into the question to see how it could be put in order came to the conclusion that the cost would be so excessive as to make it perfectly impossible to recoup in any way the enormous outlay necessary, and so little land would be benefited, if it were put in order, that the outturn would be absolutely infinitesimal as compared with the outlay. Therefore Government was not prepared to undertake a work of this character, and His Excellency said he need hardly point out that Government in laying out money on improvements in one particular locality, where it gave no proper returns, was really taking the money out of the pockets of the people of other parts. Therefore it was, when the Government tried to hold the balance evenly, that it was bound to take into consideration the interests of those outside, as well as of those inside, one particular locality. He hoped they would understand that Government was obliged to take this view, not from any want of sympathy for them in their trouble, but because it was obliged to take the action considered advisable under the circumstances, and he also hoped that they would understand that his not meeting their wishes as laid before him resulted from the fact that he did not believe that was the best way of acting at this particular moment, and was not from any want of sympathy with or knowledge of, their sufferings.

For himself, going over the ground as he had done, and seeing the conditions under which they lived, he felt bound to say that to him the only hope of improving their position in the future seemed to lie in still further extending and developing the system of well irrigation. His Excellency believed that it was now thoroughly understood that Government was anxious to advance money to the ryots to dig wells. He was sorry to see that at the present moment the wells that had been constructed were not deep enough, and it appeared that after a long period of drought the water was giving out. The wells that were to be constructed in the future would have to be dug deeper than those already constructed. He did not know whether it was possible to improve the old wells and by deepening them to bring into cultivation a lot of land that went out of cultivation after the recent famine. He hoped applications for deepening these would come in and would be disposed of satisfactorily. It also appeared to His Excellency that tank irrigation was in this taluk, to say the least of it, not a success. There was an enormous number of tanks in the taluk very many of which were of no use. He would like to know whether the Engineer did not consider it feasible to get rid of the smaller tanks, and to merge them in larger ones. Of course certain lands would be lost, yet it would be found feasible to bring under irrigation a greater quantity of land below the larger tanks which would most likely be able to receive a constant and larger supply of water. He did not know that there was any other course but to proceed in this direction to guard the taluk against occurrences of distress. His Excellency told them he had come particularly to see for himself their position, and he regretted to find, at all events, that it was one that would cause a great deal of anxiety. He could only say he sincerely hoped and trusted that before many days were over, the rain would make its appearance, and improve the situation in a manner in which no other measure could possibly do. All knew that it was impossible for the Government to produce rain in proper time. If the rain did not come, they had, he could assure them, in Mr. Wolfe-Murray a gentleman able and anxious to assist them, and the Government knew they had in him an officer who would afford the ryots all the relief he possibly could. He was afraid he could say no more than what he had said. He could only hope and trust that this period of drought and distress might soon pass away, and that they might be restored to times of better weather and greater prosperity, and then he hoped that they would take note of what had occurred during this time, and would be able by a further extension of wells to be better prepared against a period like the present, which he was afraid was bound to occur with greater frequency in this district than in any other portion of the Presidency of Madras. In conclusion, he thanked them for their kind attendance and the manner in which they had spoken of him and for the extremely loyal expressions used in the address. He trusted to be able to come there at a time when he would find them flourishing to a greater extent than they were now and in times of comparative comfort and satisfaction. With regard to the tank they had asked him to have put in order as one of the famine relief works, His Excellency said he had been told by the Executive Engineer that it was impossible, for the condition of the bund was such as to make it impossible for coolies to work on it at present. The first thing that would be required was skilled labour, as there was a great deal of heavy masonry work to be done. It was, therefore, impossible to put it in hand as a famine relief work. He also wished to say that he had examined carefully into the condition of the coolies on the relief works that morning and the day before, and he really felt bound to say that, as far as he could judge, the condition of the people, judging from the persons of those on the works, was not such as would justify the manner in which they had been spoken of in the address. They appeared to His Excellency to be in a fair case, and he did not see any signs of emaciation on the part of the children in the villages through which he passed. He was quite aware that the present period was one of great anxiety, but he was glad to think, from what he could judge, that the people were entering on it in a condition which would enable them to make a good start, and he hoped measures would be taken to prevent them falling any lower. He only said this because he thought it was a point that ought to be noticed, as it was one of great interest at the present moment.

Address of the Chairman and Members of the Municipal Council, Cuddapah.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We beg most respectfully to offer your Excellency a most hearty welcome to our town. We esteem your Excellency's present visit as a special honour done to us, inasmuch as we are favoured with it in one of your Excellency's earliest official tours, and, on behalf of ourselves and of the inhabitants of Cuddapah whom we have the honour to represent, we eagerly embrace this fitting opportunity of expressing, through your Excellency, our profound loyalty and gratitude to Her Most Gracious Majesty our Queen-Empress.

We crave your Excellency's permission to lay before you certain facts connected with our town, fully trusting that your Excellency will deem them worthy of your generous and sympathetic consideration.

This town of Cuddapah has, we are extremely grieved to inform your Excellency, earned an unenviable notoriety for malaria, which has been attributed, by competent authorities, to four causes:—viz., (1) the extensive wet cultivation all round the town and the anicut on the Bugger

near the jail which affects the subsoil water under the site of the town, (2) the existence of a large number of burial grounds within municipal limits, (3) want of pure water for drinking, cooking and bathing purposes, (4) the utter absence of any arrangement for the proper drainage of the town.

Of these causes, the second has been completely, and the first partially, removed by the combined efforts of the Municipal Council and the Magistracy.

To remedy the third defect and secure to the town a supply of wholesome water, a scheme of water-works, far beyond our unaided means, has recently been successfully carried out in most respects, with the most liberal contribution granted by the Government of your Excellency's noble predecessor; but much yet remains to be done in the way of an extension of the reservoir at the head works and other improvements, at an estimated cost of about Rs. 20,000.

The removal of the fourth defect is, in consideration of the peculiar situation of the town, an imperative necessity, and the execution of a satisfactory scheme of drainage-works may well cost many thousands of rupees.

We are, by no means, averse to helping ourselves, as is evidenced by the fact of our having raised large debenture loans in connection with the water-works; but our capacity for borrowing has already been taxed to the utmost.

Therefore, while expressing the deep gratitude we feel for the extremely munificent help we have already received from Government, we build upon that generosity a strong hope that your Excellency will uphold our prayer for a substantial contribution from your Excellency's Government, in aid of the works mentioned above.

In conclusion, we most fervently pray that your Excellency and Lady Wenlock may enjoy uninterrupted happiness during the time appointed for your sojourn in this land, and we most earnestly hope that, when your Excellency's rule in this Presidency will have come to a termination, your Excellency will be leaving it amidst the most genuine and sincere blessings of the thousands of inhabitants of Cuddapah for the glorious boon of health which will have been completely secured to them by the benevolence of your Excellency's Government.—Cuddapah, 25th August 1891.

His Excellency's Reply.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN, MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF CUDDAPAH,—I beg to thank you in the first instance for the kind manner in which you have welcomed me to your town, and for the kindly and loyal expressions which you have made use of with reference to Her Majesty the Queen, of whom we are all fellow-subjects. This, it is true, is my first visit to your town, and it has given me much pleasure to be able to visit it to-day, and in reference to this visit I would wish to take the opportunity of saying to you how much obliged I am that you deferred to my wish expressed to you through Mr. Wolfe-Murray, your Collector, namely, that you should not be put to any expense in the matter by decorating the town in the manner frequently done on these occasions. I am particularly grateful to you for having negatived a proposal made, strongly supported by several members of the municipal body, who wished to present the town of Cuddapah in as decorative and as striking a manner as possible. On going round this town I particularly urged all parties to do their utmost to prevent any expenditure of public money on the usual decorations. I am well aware of the great strain local bodies are now put to, and I am anxious to save as far as I possibly can any public expenditure in this respect. Therefore it is that I am much obliged in being allowed to see your town in its natural state, in its every day working dress, which gives a better idea of it than if it was concealed beneath decorations. I can assure you that I am much obliged for this, but at the same time I wish to express my thanks for the wish which had been expressed not to depart from the ordinary custom. Having said this, I will now turn to the points you have formally called my attention to. I am glad to see that as a body you interest yourselves with the question of the health of the inhabitants committed to your care and that you have occupied a great deal of your time and attention and you have devoted considerable sums towards carrying out this laudable object. You have mentioned that you have been able at great expense, with the assistance of Government, in establishing a system of water supply, than which nothing can be more useful, nothing more beneficial to the health of the inhabitants. I have had an opportunity of inspecting the supply, and I am sorry to find it is beginning to fall somewhat short. I understand, however, that further improvements are contemplated to make the scheme complete. All I can say is that Government is ready to contribute half of what was found necessary to place it in a complete state and enable you to get a proper supply of water. I believe some estimates put the cost down at Rs. 20,000. That Government is prepared to give half towards completing the water-supply I believe you have already been informed, and I therefore hope you will be able to see your way towards raising the money. You also mention the utter absence of any arrangements for the drainage of the town and for the removal of

the malarial influences which always extend round your town, and you naturally seek as soon as you possibly can to remove the sources of impurity. As regards the drainage works we have just had before us Mr. Jones' report on what he considers advisable. At the present stage it is impossible for me, on the part of Government, to give a definite statement in this matter. The whole subject comes up to Government from the Local and Municipal Department and we shall then be in a position either to sanction or suggest some scheme which I hope will be found workable. As the matter is at present it is impossible for me to state anything definitely, as we have not at present sufficient data to go upon. I am glad to see that you have brought the matter forward so as to show me that you have the interests of the people at heart. I hope the water-supply will be thoroughly completed and before long you will have a proper drainage system devised. There was some idea of doing away with cultivation under the Dongacheruvu tank. Mr. Jones, however, reports that it is not prejudicial to the health of the people. As I have already told you, the matter is not finally settled, and it is impossible to say what means of arranging for the drainage system will be found efficacious. I have been taken round certain parts of the District at some distance from your town, and I am sorry to find in these parts a considerable amount of distress is likely to occur owing to a failure of the crops. Immediately round Cuddapah you are doing better, but I am afraid I cannot congratulate you on having a really good year. But as far as I can see the taluk of Cuddapah has no cause for anxiety. I only hope the long delayed rain will visit the whole of the District, and the anxiety thereby considerably relieved. At the same time I wish to thank you for the expressions of good will for myself and Lady Wenlock. I assure you it gives me much pleasure to come among you to visit the town, and I hope you will long live to enjoy years of prosperity and health.

Address of the Inhabitants of Kálahasti and its Suburbs.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the inhabitants of Kálahasti and its suburbs, beg most respectfully to approach your Excellency with this, our humble expression of welcome at your Excellency's first visit to Kálahasti, a sacred place of pilgrimage which, in the estimation of the native public, ranks only next to Benares in religious importance. It is usually called "Thakshina Kilas" or "Southern Siva's abode," and throughout the year, and particularly at its great annual festival in the month of February, pilgrims from all parts of India throng to it to worship at this ancient shrine.

We beg to thank your Excellency most heartily for the great honour done us by this visit, and in that this is the first visit ever paid to this town by a Governor of Madras, and more especially as we learn that your Excellency has undertaken this tour in the cause of suffering humanity in the affected parts of this Zemindary. This visit assures us of your Excellency's sympathy, and the distress-stricken people would now realize beyond all doubt that the Government are doing their best to alleviate their suffering and ameliorate their condition. In this connection we feel we cannot too highly speak of the exertions of our energetic Collector who, at great personal inconvenience and sacrifice, has toured in the affected parts for a long time and done all he could for the relief of the poor and needy. Keeping himself in close touch with the people, and knowing their wants, he has struck the note of warning at the proper time and opened relief operations. In this arduous work he was ably assisted by his Assistant, Mr. Buckley, and the Local Revenue Officers, and to all, and also to the Board of Revenue and the Government, who have supported and sanctioned their schemes of relief, we are deeply indebted.

We beg to bring to your Excellency's notice that between this town and the Railway Station there are two impediments to traffic.—the unbridged "Swornamukhi" river and the "Nakkal" channel beyond. We would pray for the removal of these impediments by the construction of substantial bridges over both, or if funds would not allow of this being done, by the construction of at least permanent causeways in both. We may be permitted in this connection to point out that for the large amount, viz., Rs. 27,000, contributed year after year by this estate to the District Board Fund, this Zemindary has comparatively received very little in return in the shape of public works. Considering the great public utility of the works in question, we may be pardoned if we ask also for a substantial contribution from the Provincial Funds for the purpose.

We beg further to represent to your Excellency that this town, with a population of about 10,000 people, is backward in its educational facilities. As it is, there is only a Primary School, which if raised to the standard of a Middle School would, we think, satisfy the wants of the public for the present.

The Medical arrangements in the town are also defective. We have a 3rd-class Dispensary here, and it would be a great boon to the public if it be constituted a 2nd-class Hospital with a certificated Midwife attached to it.

In conclusion, we beg to assure your Excellency of our staunch devotion and loyalty to the Throne, and it is our sincere prayer that in representing it in this Presidency, your Excellency

may have a prosperous and useful career. With great regard and esteem to your Excellency and Lady Wenlock,—We beg to subscribe ourselves, &c.—Kálahasti, 26th August 1891.

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I have to thank you very much for the kind words of welcome which you have addressed to me on my coming here this morning to visit this part of the country, at this particular time, when, I am sorry to say, owing to a failure of the rain, and the consequent bad effect on the crops in this part of the country, a certain amount of scarcity, and a certain amount of distress has lately been caused. At the same time, I am glad to have an opportunity of visiting such an important place as Kálahasti, the importance of which, specially from a religious point of view, you have pointed out to me in your Address. And it is a place of considerable historical association, and therefore I am glad to visit you on this occasion. As I have come here you have taken this opportunity of calling my attention to one or two points which you think might receive the attention of the Government, and possibly some relief. Of course it is always difficult for me, as the head of the Government, to meet the wishes of every portion of the community who want relief in any particular direction, because you well know the revenues of the Presidency are limited, and it is not possible to lay out the money in the directions which we are asked in every quarter, and therefore it is the duty of Government to watch carefully in what way it is best for it to lay out the revenue it is able to spare. I am afraid that in connection with the bridging of the river which you point out, there are a great many other places of greater importance and larger population which are still backward in this particular matter; they have larger rivers to contend with, and a larger amount of traffic crossing them, and they ask not unreasonably that the Government should assist them. At the present moment I can hardly hold out any hope to you that it is possible for Government to relieve you in this direction, either by making a substantial bridge or a permanent causeway. It may be found possible to give a grant in aid before many years are over, but at present I cannot hold out any hopes. As regards the point which you have raised as regards the outlay which is made in the Zemindary out of the funds contributed by this estate, you consider that it does not receive sufficient attention, and that the money has been taken out of the district and spent elsewhere. Mr. LeFanu has given me figures showing conclusively that this statement is hardly borne out by the facts, because in the Zemindary division the sum which was received is Rs. 20,987, and not Rs. 27,000. It is quite possible that you may have in your mind the other portion in Nellore, which of course does not affect this particular part of the North Arcot District. The receipts for the year 1890-91 were at any rate Rs. 27,487, and the expenditure under the four heads of local expenditure amounted to Rs. 20,466 in the Zemindary, and in this year as much as Rs. 18,536 have been spent out of the balance of the receipts of the district on the public works in this Zemindary. Therefore I can hardly say that the amount contributed by the Zemindary Estate is not spent in the Zemindary. As you see already, the special outlay for public works is equivalent to the land assessment paid by the Zemindary. I think you can hardly say that you are being neglected in this respect. On the contrary, your calling attention to this point has, I hope, resulted in its being made clear to you that a very large outlay is being made in this particular Zemindary towards assisting the people and relieving them from their distress. You then point out to me that with a population of 10,000 your educational facilities are not all as they should be. You have only a Primary School, and you ask for it to be raised to the standard of a Middle School. This matter rather rests with the Local Board than with the Government, and if you wish this done and conform to the conditions that are laid down, you can start a Middle School at any time. I am told that Middle Schools have been started at Kárvetnagar, Chandragiri and Tirutani, but up till now they do not justify the expenditure, and that the money spent there on these Middle Schools would enable a larger number of Primary Schools to be started. I am bound to say myself, that I think a great deal more attention should be paid to primary education than is being paid now. If you can you should spend more money on primary education by having larger number of Primary Schools, instead of a very small number of Middle Schools, which have but small effect on the education of the country. It is a matter which will require serious consideration on your part before you change. As regards the medical arrangements, they too rest with the District Board. It is a question for the local body to deal with. I cannot help saying that in a matter of this kind the Zemindar himself has particular interest in the condition of the people who live under him, and he might be approached to see if he himself would not lend some assistance. I consider it is the duty of every land-owner to take special care of the health of his own people, and even at some great personal sacrifice to improve the condition of the dispensaries which lie immediately about the place where he lives. You then conclude your Address in terms of special loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen, for which I beg to thank you most sincerely. I believe in this part of the country you are distinguished for your feelings of loyalty and attachment to the Throne; therefore it is on occasions like this I have special pleasure in coming amongst you. I thank you very much for the Address you have given me.

Address of the Inhabitants of Periyapoliam.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the inhabitants of Periyapoliam, take this opportunity most respectfully to offer, as loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress, a sincere welcome to your Excellency on the occasion of your Excellency's visit to these rural parts contiguous to Madras.

We approach your Excellency with mingled feelings of sorrow and gladness: sorrow for the inconceivable amount of trouble your Excellency has taken in undertaking a tedious and long journey at this part of the year to this now-parched-up and famine-stricken village, and gladness at the assurance afforded us by your Excellency's visit, to get an idea of our needs and difficulties in their native simplicity without being adulterated, that our sufferings may in a great measure be mitigated.

We feel unable to express in adequate terms our great indebtedness and heartfelt thanks to your Excellency for your Excellency's solicitude for the welfare of Her Majesty's subjects committed to your Excellency's charge, as evinced by the object of this tour; and we are sanguine that this visit is pregnant with good results in the future.

We are sure that the first thing that would have attracted your Excellency's attention is the total absence of lakes and tanks for agricultural purposes, which are, to use a strong word, the "manna" of this village.

There are a few wells about the village almost all of which are now completely dried up; and yield, in isolated cases, but a very scanty supply of water owing to the failure of the monsoons for two consecutive years. Consequent upon this, large arable areas are lying waste; and when rain is meagre or uncertain famine threatens the people, and cholera which breaks out during the annual Hindu festival, contributes largely towards the numbers that perish.

It is not our intention during your Excellency's visit to this place—a village honoured for the first time in its annals with a gubernatorial visit—to lay before your Excellency a train of grievances; some of them, if not most of them under the present state of affairs, would not be practicable to be redressed, but to make, in the compass of a few words, one request which, we deem, will not be out of place and which, we trust, will receive your Excellency's most careful attention in the near future.

Though this village is on the river Nagari the inhabitants of this village and its environs can afford to make, comparatively speaking, but very little use of its water, for this reason, that its water is allowed to run waste into the sea after a short course through the villages. But if there be an anicut constructed near the village, the water thus wasted may be stored up and we shall not be threatened with scarcity of water even if the monsoons fail.

Another tangible result of vital importance would be that the fierce monster—cholera—which, we believe, is fledged here during the annual feast, and which is imported into Madras and other places as the pilgrims disperse, will most probably disappear ere long.

In conclusion we sincerely pray for the long life and prosperity of your Excellency and Lady Wenlock, that both may be blessed with good health during your sojourn in this land, and that your Excellency may have a happy, beneficent and unmolested *regime*.—*Periyapoliam, 31st August 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to thank you very much for the kind words of welcome you have addressed me on behalf of the inhabitants of Periyapoliam on the occasion of my visit amongst you to-day. You have expressed yourselves in terms, as you say, of sorrow and of gladness, and regret in the first place that I should have been put to inconvenience to come at this time of the year and visit your district at a time when it is affected by scarcity and distress. I can assure you for my own part, whatever the inconvenience I have been put to in getting here I feel amply repaid by being able to see for myself the condition of the people here, and what means are being taken by the District officers to relieve the distress in this particular part of the country. I would like to take this opportunity of saying that, as far as I can see, I am glad to think the scarcity is not so deep or so severe as was represented in several quarters. I am perfectly satisfied that the measures taken by Government are sufficient to provide work for those who require it, and the kitchens are able to feed those who are not able, either from youth or infirmity, to take part in the relief works. I am also glad to find that the late fall of rain must be of considerable benefit to the country. I only trust it will be followed shortly by other and heavier showers, which may, I hope, soon relieve you from the scarcity of water which now prevails. I am sorry also to find, and there is no doubt, a serious widespread failure of the crops in the country. That no doubt is the cause of a greater or less amount of distress, but now we have reached the end of August we are not far from the date when the north-east monsoon ought to be due. At all events, up to that time the works that have been started and the kitchens opened will be quite sufficient to meet the wants of the people in this part of the country. The first point you make is that in the immediate neighbourhood of your village my attention should be called to the great want of tanks for agricultural purposes

in this part of the country. I have been over a great deal of it this morning. No doubt it will be found difficult in an extremely flat country to have a proper and sufficient supply of water stored up, and no doubt this particular means of preventing famine is difficult to ensure in this part of the country. At the same time, I think it right to say that within a four miles radius of the place in which we now stand there are no less than fourteen tanks intended to hold water, which should be a means of preventing famine. This is a large number. I should like to state that up to the present time the works which have been undertaken here amount to Rs. 11,500 in improving the tanks and supply channels of four tanks, and there are also sanctioned works on six other tanks with their channels amounting to Rs. 15,740 further all of which have been estimated for and sanctioned. The other four tanks, I understand, are in sufficiently good order not to require further attention. I may justly say that Government has not lost sight of this particular matter in this part of the country, but shows, by what it has done, that it is going to do its utmost to meet what is required in this particular line. At the present moment I dare say the wells in the immediate vicinity of the village are beginning to run dry. I am afraid that in certain instances that is the case, but I am glad to find that a large number of loans have been taken up by the ryots in this part of the country, and that all the wells recently sunk show a good supply of water. I only hope the system of taking advances from the Government will be taken advantage of by the people. Wherever I go I am marvellously struck with the appearance of the country that is well supplied with wells as compared with that where wells are few in number. I am perfectly convinced that a country like this cannot do without water, and the only means by which you can store water is by a proper supply of wells. I am glad to find that in the Chingleput District matters are being taken up under the able direction of Mr. Tremenheere, and are likely to be pushed a step further. You call my attention to one other point in which Government might come to your assistance still further, namely the suggested anicut to be thrown across the river so that lands now dry may be brought under cultivation under a proper system of irrigation. Of course on the first appearance of such a question it is impossible to say anything definite. It is entirely an engineering question and a question of water-supply and storage. It is also a question affecting the water lower down the river than here. It is therefore impossible to say what can be done in this direction until the question has been thoroughly examined from an engineering point of view. Therefore, with a view of receiving proper information, I shall be glad to direct an inquiry to be made and you will receive an answer as to what the result of the inquiry is. Further than that I cannot say anything. I do not wish you to understand that I hold out any hopes of the matter being taken up. It is only natural that if the outlay is larger than the reasonable return that could be expected from it it would be impossible to carry out the work. If, however, it could be shown that a reasonable outlay could ensure a corresponding amount of advantage, no doubt the matter would receive the attention of the Government. I beg to thank you gentlemen for the good wishes contained in your Address and also to express my pleasure and satisfaction at being able to be present here and to see for myself the condition of the country.

Address of the Residents of Perambur and of the Sembiam Union.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the Residents of Perambur and of the Sembiam Union, beg to embrace this opportunity to offer your Excellency our most respectful and sincere welcome as loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress of India, on the occasion of your Excellency's personal inspection of these rural parts contiguous to Madras and to present our humble address, trusting it will commend itself to your Excellency's approbation.

2. We beg to approach your Excellency with feelings of joy. We are thankful for the immense trouble taken on this tour at this trying time of the year, especially through this parched-up and famine-threatened district, and hope that this visit may be the means of mitigating in some measure at least the sufferings of the poor of this place.

3. The monsoons having failed again this year, there has been cause for much anxiety in this district and the sufferings of the ryot population being great we are thankful for the precautionary measures that are being taken by our worthy Collector who has already started kitchens for the destitute and sufficient occupation for the laborers by the repair of useful water works in the district.

4. We further beg leave to state that though the people of Perambur have for many years been paying water-tax to the Municipality of Madras, yet the benefits of the water works have not been extended up to the municipal limits, notwithstanding the many and repeated requests from us. We have therefore to depend entirely on wells, many of which have now completely dried up, and others yielding a most scanty supply of water, much suffering is entailed thereby.

5. The village roads in the Sembiam Union (which is in close proximity to Madras) are in a deplorable state though Road cess and the Union tax has been collected from us. As relief works are now urgently needed, we beg to suggest that this opportunity be taken to employ labour for the improvement of roads.

6. As much difficulty was experienced in sending our children all the way to Madras a school was started here lately by some of the leading inhabitants of these villages. The people of this place are poor consisting mostly of laborers, betel gardeners and ryots and cannot afford to pay the term fees. We request your Excellency to exempt us from adhering to the rules laid down in the Fee Notification and allow us all other benefits of the State aid given in the Grant-in-Aide Code.

7. All criminal cases belonging to the villages of this Union and the adjacent villages are now tried by a Magistrate at Saidápet, which causes much inconvenience to the parties; besides this place is growing in importance and the population is steadily increasing. We request therefore that a Magistrate may be appointed specially for this part of the taluk.

8. The strength of the Police force working here is quite inadequate to the requirements of the place. Dacoities and highway robberies are of frequent occurrence which fact is not unknown to the authorities. We would deem it a great blessing, if your Excellency should be pleased to sanction an immediate enhancement of the force.

9. In conclusion we beg once more to tender our grateful thanks for the honour of your Excellency's visit to the town and we fervently pray that your Lordship and Lady Wenlock may be blessed with long life and prosperity and a happy and beneficent reign over this Presidency.—*Perambúr, 3rd September 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I wish to express to you my sincere thanks for the extremely kind and loyal welcome which you have accorded to me this afternoon. I have arrived here at this particular part of the Madras Presidency after a long and extended tour, and I have in every place which I have visited particularly asked the inhabitants not to place themselves under any special expenditure in beautifying their towns or their villages in order to accord me a cordial welcome. Knowing as I do that at the present moment Local Funds are severely taxed to meet the necessities of the moment, therefore I asked that ordinary tax-payers should not be requested to lay out any money for this particular purpose. But I understand here that in this particular locality the private residents have arranged among themselves to specially adorn their town and receive me in the way which they have done this afternoon. I beg to thank you most heartily for the welcome you have accorded me.

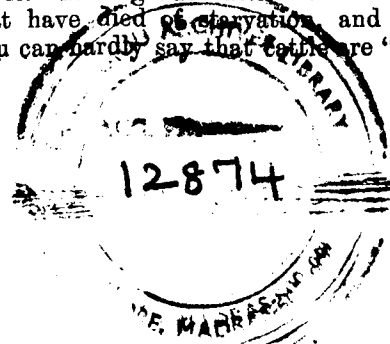
You allude to the tour which I have just made through the affected tracts of this district, and I have much pleasure, in very nearly reaching the end of my tour, to assure you, after a careful and minute inspection, that the condition of the people throughout these districts is very much better than it has been represented to be. I am glad to think that the efforts of the Government in every part have been quite sufficient up to now to meet all the requirements of the case; that work has been found for those that needed work and food for those who could not otherwise get it; and up to now I have not noticed any signs of what may be called famine. There have been in a great many places scarcity and distress. The people are not in as good condition as we should like to see them, but at the same time a great deal of exaggeration has been imported into this question, and it has been represented that this particular part of the Madras Presidency is suffering much more severely than I find it is. I have taken every opportunity to see as far as it is possible for any one to see, and I have consulted everybody whom I thought qualified to judge, and I think we are all agreed generally as to what is the condition of affairs, which is as I have described it to you. It was only a few days ago in the northern part of this district that I met a Missionary gentleman—Mr. Lazarus—who is as well known as are other Missionaries in this part of the world for extremely self-denying efforts among the poorer classes of the people, a gentleman who had every opportunity of judging what the condition of the people is, and he told me that his views coincided very much with those I had arrived at. So it is very satisfactory to find that in this particular part of the country we need not apprehend any very serious extension of the distress; and I hope that the long-looked-for rain will come and relieve all our anxieties. No doubt it is much wanted, and I hope before long we shall have such a downpour as will afford relief in all directions.

In your address you allude to the fact that in this particular part of the district there are certain points which you wish to bring to my attention. In other places I found generally the same question that you moot, viz., the trouble about water, and you ask me to assist you in this matter in the manner which you point out. You say that in Perambúr you have not received water within the town, but I am assured by Colonel Moore, the President of the Municipality of Madras, that water has already been laid on to a certain part of Perambúr, and taxes have not been raised from those who are within reach of that particular supply. As regards the other part of the town, I am afraid it will have to wait until the further development of the water works of Madras will enable that part of Madras to be reached. A larger outlay will have to be made, and then when Perambúr receives a full supply from the Municipality, it will have to pay a 4-per cent. tax instead of as now 2 per cent. You are in the

same position as another division of Madras, the Adyar, and under the Municipal Act it is hardly possible you can have relief just now. I hope it may not be long before you receive greater benefits from this source than you do at present.

The Collector of Chingleput assures me that relief works have been started wherever needed, and that it has hardly become necessary in this particular part to relieve the population in the manner you suggest. But, if disasters should arrive hereafter, you have a Collector who is thoroughly awake to your wants, and who will advise works being started here. The next point you refer to is the question of your school. I do not know if the information has reached you as it has me, but the Director of Public Instruction has ordered this particular school to be placed in the category you desire, and you will receive all the assistance you require under the definition of a Poor school. You ask that a Magistrate should be specially appointed for this town. From all the information which I have been able to get I do not know if this is absolutely possible, but as this prayer of yours was only put in my hands this morning, I have not been able to get all the information that will enable me to arrive at a proper conclusion, and, as soon as I get it, I shall then be able to give you a definite answer. As regards the strength of the Police force, and your allusion to highway robberies and dacoities here, I regret to say that on inquiry I find that such have taken place, but since the measures which have been made by Mr. Fullerton, no such offences have taken place, and I hope that will continue, and that the force at your disposal will be sufficient to properly safeguard you. At the same time I may mention that, in addition to the Police force in this district, there have just been sanctioned some additional constables, who will be placed at the disposal of the Superintendent of this district; and that more men will be stationed here than are at present. I have to thank you very much for the kind manner in which you have received me and for the manner in which you have placed your modest requests before me.

Before I continue my journey there is one matter which I would like to allude to, because I do not think any place would be more appropriate than the centre of the Chingleput District in which to refer to certain matters published in certain English newspapers. On leaving the North Arcot District and entering Chingleput my attention was drawn to a letter published in one of the English papers by Mr. Caine. I understand that Mr. Caine came out here last cold weather for a few months, and that from the knowledge he acquired then he assumed that it was in his power to lecture us on our duty here, and to take us to task on what he considers a neglect of our duty. It was rather appropriate that this information should reach me in this particular place, because I am able to, and am glad to, say from personal inspection, that almost every single word that was written by Mr. Caine is absolutely and maliciously untrue, and when I read to you what he says, I think that those of you who, like myself, know what is the position of affairs in this particular part of the country will agree with me that it is untrue. What he says is with reference to a Reuter's telegram to the *London Times*, and he, in what he calls "reading between the lines," draws on his imagination on this part, and for the rest relies on the information which he says has just been received by him from a correspondent at Madras; and the result of these two sources of information lead him to say that not only has a serious famine set in in Madras with all the horrors which accompany such a disaster, but that the Madras Government has been grossly neglecting its duty. These two statements I beg most distinctly to traverse. There is not a single word of truth in either of them. I shall go categorically through the various points he has raised. I think when I show you what has been done by Government and what Government is still doing, you will agree with me that such an accusation is absolutely false and baseless. He mentions in the course of his letter that while people and cattle are dying by hundreds, Government looks aside and takes absolutely no notice. These are two serious accusations, and I would ask you to go with me through the facts of the case. Take the Chingleput District. Not a single case of death by starvation has taken place. The death-rate in Chingleput is just normally the same as last year. As regards cattle in Chingleput, I am sorry to say that there is a point of truth in the statement. This is the only point which Mr. Caine can make in the whole of the statements which he has brought forward. There is no doubt that there has been considerable mortality among the cattle in Chingleput, but I find, after careful inquiries, that the greater number of those that died were weak and useless animals which in times of drought are sure to be the first to die. We all know that the system practised by the Indian ryots does not conduce towards the proper and scientific treatment of cattle. The old animals are allowed to live on what they can pick up with more useful animals, which is most wasteful and not the way of keeping cattle in a healthy and proper condition. There has been considerable mortality among cattle in Chingleput, but it was entirely confined to the old and valueless cattle. As regards the cattle in North Arcot, the death-rate is almost the same, though a little higher than it was last year. As regards the people of that district, if the rate of mortality continues to be the same for the next six months as during the last six months, the average at the end of the year will hardly be up to that of other years. I am sorry to say that four cases have been reported of death by starvation in North Arcot, and these were cases which Government tried its utmost to relieve, and it was not on account of any neglect on its part that these unfortunate people met their deaths, so that as regards that, we may say we have disposed of it. As regards cattle in North Arcot, I have had returns sent me as to the number that have died of starvation, and when I say that one out of a thousand died of starvation you can hardly say that cattle are "dying by hundreds."



Mr. Caine goes on to say in his accusations that the taxes are collected with the greatest rigour and severity, and that Government is oppressing people in times like this and taking no notice of their distress. As regards the taxes, I find in Chingleput that out of 22 lakhs due, 4 are remitted and 3 outstanding, making 7 lakhs out of 22—nearly a third. The taxes of people paying less than Rs. 50 have not been collected and there is no pressure being put upon the people, and every consideration is given in every case. There has been the utmost care and attention on the part of the Collector, and no one who knows Mr. Tremenhoe can accuse him of any harshness and severity in dealing with the people. In the North Arcot District there are two millions of people, and to get taxes in that district cattle have been sold in twenty cases—twenty cases out of 2 millions of people—which hardly shows that Government is exercising extraordinary severity in a period like this, so that as regards this particular charge it falls to the ground. I now turn to the rest of the information which Mr. Caine has drawn from a gentleman—he says a Native gentleman who has the “most exceptional means of obtaining information from the country districts of the Presidency.” As regards this, all I say is either that this is absolutely untrue and that this Native gentleman knows nothing of the country districts of the Presidency, or, if he does know anything about them, that he has wilfully closed his eyes to the state of affairs and has sent Mr. Caine a report which bears upon its face the impress of falsehood. Now what does this gentleman, who knows all about the country districts, say? He says that “there is no water to drink nor provisions for men.” As regards water, there are eighteen thousand irrigation wells now in good order which are available for drinking purposes as well as wells devoted to that purpose, and Government has already advanced 2½ lakhs for the construction of wells, and 840 have been completed. I should like to know how he manages to say that Government has done nothing in this behalf in this part of the country. The supply of food-grains in the districts is fully sufficient. In the Presidency I admit that the prices are high, but ragi, the principal food of the poorer classes, is 100 per cent. cheaper than it was in the famine of 1877. The same remark applies also to Chingleput, so that as regards drinking water and provisions, which this gentleman alluded to, Government cannot be accused in any way of neglecting the interests of the people. Numerous works were also provided in January in Chingleput and in February in North Arcot, and new works have been and are freely sanctioned wherever a large demand for employment exists. Wherever kitchens have been recommended by the Commissioner, Mr. Clogstoun, they have been opened by Government; and, after my first visit to Chingleput and North Arcot in March, kitchens have been opened where necessary. At the present moment 18,000 people are being employed on relief works and 5,000 are being fed in kitchens, and the monthly cost to Government of these measures of gratuitous relief and of relief works is about Rs. 80,000. This Native gentleman goes on to say that the Governor and Councillors are on the Hills; but my presence here to-day shows that that is not absolutely true. He then goes on to say that the Collectors are *de facto* the rulers of the district. The Collectors are *de facto* the rulers of their districts; the Collector is the responsible agent of Government. But there is a flaw in this also, because we all know the constant and untiring attention which has been paid to this distress by Mr. Clogstoun, who has been unremitting in his exertions and has kept the Government constantly informed as to the position of almost every distressed village in this Presidency; and yet this gentleman sits down in a chair in Madras and says there are none to study the state of things here and move Government to help the people! These officials have been unremitting and constant in their attentions, and yet this gentleman has had the effrontery to write as he has done, and I ask him to come forward and state where he got his information from, and not to shelter himself under the cloak thrown over him by Mr. Caine. I ask him how he dares to come forward with this unwarrantable statement against these hard-working officials. I do not know who I can accuse the most, but I feel the greater indignation against Mr. Caine, and I only wish he had ridden with me over the country during this tour, when I say that he would have been reduced in body if very much enlarged in mind. I may say that I do feel this, I feel it is wrong for a public man to sit down in England and write things like this of the Government at times of considerable anxiety and to write a letter like this and publish it abroad to the English people, that we here in Madras are grossly neglecting our duty. I designate this letter at once as absolutely malicious and a downright falsehood. I am sorry if I have been betrayed into any undue warmth, but naturally I feel warm about it. To say that because the Governor and his Councillors happen at a particular time to be in the Western part of the Presidency instead of the Eastern, and they thus cease on that account to take any interest in the other parts of the Presidency, is false. So long as I have any interest in the affairs of Madras, I shall spare no pains to improve the condition of the people entrusted to my care, and there is nothing that I can possibly do that will be spared in meeting the reasonable wishes of the people of this country. I thank you very much for the manner in which you have listened to the remarks I have made. I think they are not in any way too strong and that you will understand the position in which I have been placed by these scurrilous statements, and I hope you will agree with me in designating such statements as being absolutely and wickedly untrue.

Address of the Residents of the Town of Tirupur.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the residents of the town of Tirupur, beg, with the deepest reverence, to take this unprecedented opportunity of according your Excellency a hearty and sincere welcome to our town. We are fully sensible of the laudable motives which actuated your Excellency's present tour, and while on the one hand we shall be lamentably wanting in our duty should we omit to tender our warmest gratitude for them, on the other, we shall be doing a great injustice to our feelings if we allowed such an unparalleled opportunity to slip away without our taking the liberty to reveal our wants and grievances. We are further emboldened in doing so by the firm conviction that representations of this kind are acceptable to your Excellency's gracious wishes.

We may be permitted to mention that Tirupur, which a couple of decades ago was a petty village, enshrouded in obscurity, is now—thanks to the Railway—a town daily rising in importance. It has become a busy mart for merchandize of all sorts and cotton in principal. It forms the mercantile key, as it were, of the three important taluks of Dhárapuram, Palladam and Udamalpet, as they are solely dependent upon it—whether for exports or imports. The population of the town, which in 1881 was 3,681, has, during the succeeding 10 years, risen to 5,146—a plain fact which bears irrefutable testimony to its rapid strides in advancement. Under these circumstances, it cannot but be intensely melancholy to us to think that its present prosperity should be marred, and its future progress hampered by an indescribable difficulty in respect of the most essential necessary of life, to wit, the water-supply. This scarcity of water in Tirupur is unfortunately a matter of yearly recurrence, the differences being one of degree. The putting of the Kangasamudram tank, which is situated at a distance of about two miles from Tirupur, and which now lies in a ruined and neglected condition, into a thorough state of order, is calculated to vanquish this serious difficulty, and thus suppress our chronic anxiety. The accumulation of water in this tank will, by the raising of embankments and dams, be a perpetual source of supply to the Jammanai channel which flows hard by Tirupur. The water-supply of Tirupur, moreover, will not be its sole beneficial result. The advantages of such a measure, from an agricultural point of view, will also be considerable. An area extending at least over 400 acres is in a position to be irrigated by this tank when restored to order. The outlay of a few thousand rupees will thus have the two-fold effect of warding off a danger of great gravity from the people and substantially benefiting a large number of ryots.

Though Tirupur and the villages adjoining it have not yet been officially brought under the category of affected tracts, yet it is far from inaccurate to say that scarcity, with its consequent distress, has not decidedly made its appearance in this part of the taluk also. Tirupur and its vicinity do not enjoy immunity from the dire consequences of the general failure of rain in the taluk which is the cause of such widespread misery. This has led some patriotic residents of Tirupur to take prompt steps to open a relief kitchen at their expense and all the requisite arrangements for this purpose have already been made. In our humble opinion, time has come for making the opening of relief work, at least, expedient and desirable. This would seem to afford an additional facility and a fitting opportunity for the work above recommended being carried out. A double boon will thus be conferred on a large number of your Excellency's loyal suffering subjects. We earnestly pray for your Excellency's gracious consideration of this matter. Our present intense anxiety and our firm conviction in the anticipated results form our plea for our so persistently pressing the matter on your Excellency's kind notice.

We may venture to add that next in importance to the above work—the opening of roads from Tirupur to Uttukuli and to Mangalam as relief works—will be deserving of consideration, as the present difficulty in traffic, in consequence of their absence, is very great and their opening will be a source of unbounded convenience.

The other matter which we crave permission to bring to your Excellency's notice is the advisability of transferring all public offices to Tirupur and making it the head-quarters of the taluk. Its relative importance over Palladam, its larger population, its increasing trade, and its accessibility by rail eminently fit it for such a purpose in preference to Palladam. We believe that the expediency of such a step was recognized even by the District authorities long ago and proposals made to that effect. For some reason or other, of which we are unaware, the proposal yet seems to be on the *tapis*—at any rate no practical result has yet ensued.

We would pray that effect be given to this proposal. Should this arrangement be discarded as inexpedient on any grounds, then we may be permitted to suggest, as an alternative, the location here of a Deputy Tahsildar's office and Sub-Magistrate's court as well as a Registration office. This will vastly conduce to the convenience of the residents of Tirupur and its vicinity.

In conclusion, we earnestly pray that your Excellency's benevolent rule may prove an immortal blessing to Her Majesty's loyal subjects and that your Excellency and Lady Wenlock may enjoy long life and prosperity.—*Tirupur, 4th September 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to thank you very much for the address which you have just presented to me and read, giving me a welcome to your town of Tirupúr on my way through to visit such taluks of Coimbatore as, at the present moment, require the careful attention of the authorities. I am glad to find on coming here a town increasing in importance and population and I hope it may continue at the present rate until it becomes a town of still greater importance. Naturally being placed on the railway it is in an advantageous position and more fitted to maintain continued progress than other towns away from the line of railway. You point out certain matters which you think require consideration on the part of the authorities. Mentioning them as you do one after another, you will perhaps allow me to go through them in order. First of all you allude to the scarcity of water which you feel here and say that Kangasamudram tank, about two miles from the town, if put in repair, would be a suitable means of providing a better supply of water. All I can say about it is that I will have inquiry made into this matter and see how far your wishes can be met. I understand this complaint of yours is well-founded and that your water-supply is not all it should be. The question of putting the tank in repair is a large one and is purely an engineering matter, and it will be for the Government to decide, when the estimates are sent up, whether they are reasonable and can be sanctioned. I will have this looked into and you will receive a reply as soon as information is received. You mention that in Tirupúr and the villages adjoining a certain amount of distress is beginning to make itself felt, so much so that several influential inhabitants have come together and considered it advisable to raise subscriptions towards opening a kitchen. My information goes to show that, in the opinion of the authorities, the time has hardly arrived for that. The opening of a kitchen here is perhaps a little premature, but I am assured this matter will be carefully watched, and, if necessary, proper steps will be taken. In the meantime, I might suggest if those gentlemen would like to place their collections in the hands of the Head Assistant Collector, I am sure he will bring his experience to bear and will thereby enable you to feed a larger number of persons, because his experience in these matters would enable him to manage the affair without any waste at all. I merely throw out this suggestion; naturally I have great diffidence in asking gentlemen who have so generously come forward, to spend their money in other ways than they think right. At the same time it strikes me that is a good way of carrying out what you wish to have done. I have already told you, if the distress should become more severe or more intense, the Government authorities will take care that this particular part of the district will be as carefully watched and protected as the other parts. You then ask for two roads, which you think might be a good means of employing labour at the present time. These are roads, I am told, which run parallel with the railway and such means of communication are very seldom required. There are other roads, I am informed, in the district which are of much more importance and require attention first. If necessary, and it should be found advisable, these roads will not be forgotten. At present there are more important roads for the Collector to look after in the matter of affording relief. As regards the transference of the public offices to Tirupúr, I am told this is question that has been gone into thoroughly, and, after careful consideration, I am sorry to say for your sakes, the authorities have come to the conclusion that this would not be a proper step. They say Tirupúr is far less central than Palladam which is a slightly larger town. The matter has been thoroughly considered and after a full inquiry it was obliged to be dropped. I am sorry to disappoint you in this respect. No doubt we must look at the matter from the whole and not from a party point of view. One town may suffer at the expense of another, it is quite true, but we have to look to the interest of the whole community. In this matter it seems to me the only way in which the Government can decide properly is to leave Palladam the chief centre. As regards the next point about the Deputy Tahsildar's office, I am told that there is a Deputy Tahsildar and also a Sub-Registrar at Avanáshi, which is much more important from a revenue point of view on account of the wet cultivation, although further away from the head-quarters (Palladam). Therefore, in laying this district out, it has been found necessary to make the various towns which you allude to the various points from which the administration has to be carried on. Under the present circumstances, I am afraid it would be difficult to disturb the present arrangement. I beg to thank you very much for the manner in which you have received me and the loyal and gracious address you have presented. I am sure it has given me much pleasure to go through your town and find it such a large centre of prosperity and general well-being. I only hope it may long continue so, and that the next time I visit Tirupúr I may find it still continuing in the same way.

Address of the Inhabitants of Palladam.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—It is with feelings of profoundest gratitude and most genuine loyalty that we beg, with the utmost deference, to approach your Excellency as the August Representative of our Most Beloved Sovereign Her Most Gracious Majesty, The Empress of India, on this occasion of your visit to the Palladam taluk. It is no exaggeration to say that

the present generation, as much, perhaps, as posterity, cannot, and will not, fail to be justly proud of the historical importance of so extraordinary an occasion, for, the arrival of a Presidential Governor to this out-of-the-way corner of Her Majesty's Indian Dependency, and the display of so much solicitous sympathy for the distressed, do, and perhaps will, stand unique in the uneventful annals of Palladam. Such being the case, while, on the one hand, we cannot but fondly embrace this golden opportunity of laying our wants before your Excellency in person, on the other, the rarity of the opportunity must be pleaded as our excuse for the address being longer than we would otherwise have wished.

2. It is no secret that the almost universal occupation of the people of this taluk, as of India in general, is agriculture, an occupation in which fortunately for the agricultural population of this Presidency, your Excellency is reputed to take a peculiar interest and to possess a particular proficiency. We look upon it as a happy and promising omen that it should have been reserved for a ruler so well versed in the solution of agricultural problems to make a personal inspection of our agriculturally ever unfortunate and at present sorely distressed taluk, and thus to decide on the spot its disadvantages and wants and effectually devise their remedy.

3. The generally unfertile nature of the soil, the dry character of the taluk dependent almost exclusively on rainfall (with a comparatively insignificant percentage of irrigated area), the rainless character of the climate, the scantiness of trees, the virtual absence of forests and hills (and yet the taluk not free from the claws of the Forest Department), the want of pasture lands, and withal the ignorance of the very essential principles of scientific agriculture, are the more conspicuous of the manifold difficulties that the people are destined to contend with and that make living dear and uncomfortable for man and beast alike. The taluk being so unfavorably situated by nature (enjoying the unenviable reputation of being the driest taluk in the district) and its inhabitants in general, being of the hand-to-mouth class, the adversity, though partial, of a single season, which in other parts can be borne with equanimity, here acts as a severe pinch of distress while the result of its continuance is disastrous in the extreme. Such a vicissitude the people are now sadly undergoing. They have not the means to maintain themselves with, they and their families have to starve, their land lies a parched waste, their cattle, their only treasure, are lost, having been either sold for a trifle from inability to support, or almost starved to death, in short, the poverty-stricken agriculturists are reduced to irretrievable destitution and their lot is truly deplorable. The present famine is the inevitable consequence of the successive failure of crops during the last three seasons, its only redeeming feature being the honorable presence today in our midst of your Excellency, which not only evidences the highest degree of your Excellency's solicitude for the welfare of your subjects, but also raises strong encouraging hopes in our minds that your distinguished visit will be productive of an amelioration of our sad condition.

4. To combat these perils, we would beg to suggest that the surest safeguard against famine, viz., the digging of deep unfailing wells receive particular attention in this taluk. We must express our grateful sentiments for the exceptional facilities that Government offers under the special revised rules to the borrowers, and when the people become aware of their relatively vast advantages, great benefit is certain to accrue. At the same time some modification of the rules seems to us to be desirable. The extension of the lower rate of interest to other purposes of improvement than the digging of wells is a great desideratum. The provision about the existence of private encumbrances on the land to be improved being altogether ignored, safeguards the interests of the State at the sacrifice of public rights. In our humble opinion, abstract justice requires the abrogation of a provision so detrimental to the innocent creditor, and we therefore pray for your Excellency's earnest consideration of this matter. It is a source of special gratification to us to know that the creation of a Well Irrigation Department and subsidiary proposals are now under the earnest consideration of your Excellency's Government, and we heartily wish that they will ere long receive the stamp of sanction. We may state that out of a total occupied area in the taluk amounting to about 413,000 acres, about 329,000 or 80 per cent. exclusively depends on the precarious rainfall for cultivation, which proves the vast scope for exertion in the direction indicated above, as the only preventive against actual famine.

5. The other remedy, useful to us to an appreciable extent, which we would respectfully press on your Excellency's attention is the carrying out of the Muthikulam project which has already been urged on your Excellency's notice by the Coimbatore public on the occasion of your visit to that town. There are 14 villages in this taluk representing about 3,000 acres of wet land paying an annual assessment of about Rs. 17,000 to Government depending for irrigation on the Náyil stream, as precarious for its supply as notable for its floods. That the present cultivation will be immensely benefited and the irrigated area almost doubled by the conversion of many a dry field into wet when the above project becomes a *fait accompli* appears to us to be unquestionable.

6. To relieve to some extent at least the present pressing distress of the agricultural classes, we would beg, with great respect, to urge the necessity of remission of assessment in full in all affected or partially affected tracts.

7. We are thankful to our Taluk and District authorities for having taken time by the forelock in the matter of relief works, but we apprehend, with good reason, that the rigorous stringency with which the work is departmentally exacted from the laborers divests the boon of

much of its value: it keeps away those half-starved classes for whom the work was primarily intended as relief and leaves the able-bodied alone to participate in its benefit.

8. We are equally grateful to learn that the opening of relief kitchens is also resolved upon; but we would take the liberty of reiterating what is presumably already known to your Excellency—that a large proportion of even the absolutely needy have an aversion to resort to cooked food in the kitchens—on grounds which it is unnecessary to dwell upon here—and thus though thoroughly deserving of relief, will technically be out of its pale. Assuming that the scheme of gratuitous relief in the shape of money or grain doles is, as a rule, against the views of your Excellency's Government, we would beg to suggest that, at least, a liberal relaxation of the rule in special cases be permitted and some latitude and discretion be conceded to the local authorities in dealing with cases of this type. A great deal of misery will thereby be averted and many a life saved.

9. The absence of roads in several parts of the taluk is a very widely and keenly felt want and a crying grievance calling for immediate attention and redress. The *utteries*, as they are termed, form the sole means of existing communication in them. They are, however, more an obstruction than a facility. Fearfully choked by prickly-pear they are, in most places, undoubtedly impracticable and impassable. The opening of these parts will be an invaluable favour to the inhabitants of many villages. We may be permitted to suggest that a road from Palladam to Arasampalaiyam *via* Karadibavi, and one from Súlur to Mondapalaiyam and another from Chneyur to Mondapalaiyam deserve the foremost consideration and attention.

10. The subject of railway communication forms our next concern. Palladam, though comparatively a small place, is still unpretentiously doing much trading business. It forms, besides, the route for the traffic of several other quarters. Cotton of local production which has attracted the Sowcar community from Marwar and Guzerat and which has led to the establishment of two cotton presses, one of them worked by steam, forms the staple merchandize of the taluk. About 1,500 bales of cotton equivalent to 2,000 tons are annually exported from or through Palladam town. The other exports consist of tobacco, ghee, onions, horse-gram, &c. The traffic in these articles is also considerable, while vast quantities of rice, &c., are imported into or by way of Palladam, from Tirupúr. The traffic of Udamalpet, a busy thriving place, has also to pass through Palladam, whether exported to or imported from Tirupúr. The present distance of 10 miles from the railway line is felt to be a great hardship. Its removal will be an inestimable boon to public traffic, while the importance of the measure in times of scarcity with which this taluk is so familiar can scarcely be overrated.

11. The last subject to which we would crave your Excellency's patient attention is the public nuisance of *prickly-pear*. In whatever direction one may turn one's eyes in this taluk, frightful expanses of its growth arrest the view. What is true of the taluk is, we feel sure, true of the whole district. The more one looks about, the more irresistible is the conclusion forced upon one's mind that the Coimbatore district is intended by nature, as it were, for the luxuriant growth of this detestable plant to the exclusion of other cultivation. The fact that it forms a source of relief to the pangs of hunger for the poor in times of scarcity can be, at most, but poor consolation. We would humbly commend to your Excellency's notice the desirability of some special measures being adopted for ridding the taluk of this pest.

12. We conclude with a fervent wish for your Excellency's and Lady Wenlock's long life and prosperity, and with once more expressing our warm gratitude for the interest in our welfare your Excellency has evinced by your desire of a personal knowledge of our condition which instils considerable courage into our minds, and which will enable us to face our dangers with greater fortitude in the hope of a better future.—*Palladam, 4th September 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

• His Excellency thanked the deputationists for the kind words they had addressed him on paying this visit to their town—the first time he had the opportunity of coming to this part of the country. He was glad to take this opportunity of coming here at a time when works were being carried on which required the careful attention of the Government at a period of scarcity, which, he was sorry to say, existed in that part of the district. They called his attention to the state of the people in that taluk especially. He was sorry to hear from the accounts they gave of them there was a considerable amount of distress. They first of all pointed out that theirs was an essentially dry taluk, having to depend almost entirely on the rainfall as a means of irrigation and that rain fell rarely and it was only natural that the condition of the crops and the people was necessarily always more or less precarious. The only thing that would naturally suggest itself to anybody coming there was to see what the condition of the people was and what means could be best adopted for the development of a proper system of irrigation by means of wells; but, as they alluded to that in the second paragraph, His Excellency would come to that shortly. No doubt the absence of trees might have some effect on the rainfall. Their taluk was not what might be called a forest taluk. Only a few portions were reserved by the Forest Department, yet they said the Forest Department had acted in

some way harshly when they alluded to the taluk not being free from "the claws of the department." His Lordship would like to point out to them that when they mentioned the absence of trees they ought rather to hail with satisfaction the assurance that somebody was making an attempt to increase the number of trees in the taluk and not only to increase the number of trees, but, by careful reservation, to increase the amount of fodder available in the future for the cattle in times of distress. Unless somebody took the matter in hand it was perfectly impossible to have the number of trees increased as well as fodder for useful cattle. It was impossible to say what would be the effect of opening these lands to cattle which were not worth preserving. They were all well aware that the rules of the Forest Department were relaxed in times of scarcity. To get into the reserved forest they had to pay only a small fee, which His Excellency was sure nobody would ever grudge to pay to keep alive valuable animals worth preserving. If Government could do so much in times of scarcity they had done everything. He could not see himself how it was possible for the Government to devise any scheme for keeping alive a large number of animals which were worthless. Every effort must be made to keep alive those useful for working, and breeding purposes. His Excellency understood that, in consequence of the drought, there was a difficulty in keeping the cattle alive and there were a great many instances in the taluk where cattle had been sold to traders from other parts who had taken advantage of the low prices to buy the good cattle. His Excellency wished to point out that Government would be only too glad to advance loans to the ryots on proper security for replacing the cattle they had been obliged to part with. He hoped they would be able by these means to provide themselves with the animals which they had been deprived of; he hoped that thereby they would see that Government was not taking no notice of the condition in which they were and it had placed facilities at their disposal which he hoped they would avail themselves of. He was sorry to hear what they had to say as regards the number of seasons they had gone through without much rain. He was told, though that the failure of the crops, which they alluded to, for three years had not been altogether total, there was a great deal of well cultivation carried on in the taluk and there had been at all events a certain amount saved out of the general wreck. They then pointed out that the easiest safeguard against famine was the digging of wells. He certainly agreed with them. He did not know of any means by which they could prevent the recurrence of famine except by drawing attention in times of scarcity and famine to the propriety of continuing the digging of wells. Government had placed facilities in the way of the people to enable them to get loans at a very low rate of interest. They thought that in some way these rules were not sufficiently lenient or expansive to reach all requirements. They pointed out that in some ways they might be modified. The first thing they asked in this direction was the extension of the lower rate of interest to other improvements than the digging of wells; but they did not specify what these improvements were. He would be glad to know, if they would let him, what particular objects they referred to. Perhaps they would care to amplify their address afterwards by sending a note to the Collector. It was quite possible His Lordship would be able to meet their views in this respect. They mentioned the provisions as to the existence of private encumbrances on the land to be improved being altogether ignored. His Lordship pointed out in a few words that the special well rules did not damage the position of the mortgagee, because the land upon which the money was advanced underwent undoubtedly a very considerable improvement. The land which was merely offered as a collateral security for a loan was not liable to be sold free of encumbrances, as only the land benefited was so liable, and as the outlay improved the property on which the mortgagee had advanced money there was little risk of his interest suffering except in case of failure of a well, which must be an exception. The provision that the Government claim should take priority of all encumbrances on lands improved by such loans was essential to secure Government against loss, and it was not reasonable that the tax-payer's money should be advanced by the State to benefit individuals without adequate security against loss. If such security was not given it would be impossible for the State to grant loans, as in this country it was often difficult to ascertain what encumbrances existed and heavy loss would be the result. In case of failure of the well, for which the loan had been granted, the mortgagee no doubt suffered, but such cases must be very exceptional and the State could not reasonably be expected to take the risk. He thought these words clearly showed the position was fair. There was no doubt in the event of a well being made and the ryot defaulting, the land to be sold would be much more valuable than it was before. He did not consider that the mortgagee was likely to run any risk in such an event as that occurring. They then said that they were glad that the whole subject of the creation of a Well Irrigation Department was under the consideration of Government. As regards that he was bound to say that if all other things failed it might be the duty of Government to go into this as a State measure. At present he was anxious to watch carefully the development and the working of the well rules and to remove any obstacles in the way, because he believed it was much easier and cheaper for the ryots to build wells with advances from the State than for the State to build wells itself; but if he found there was any difficulty in working these rules and the wells were not constructed as rapidly as he considered necessary, there was no doubt that the matter would have to be considered by the Government with a view to institute a State Department. They all knew that it was better that private individuals should take up this matter for their own advantage and for the advantage of the State; but they must watch carefully how the present rules worked and how far they would

succeed. They referred to the Muthikolam project which was brought to his notice when he visited Coimbatore. His Excellency felt bound to say that he was very disappointed that the report he called for then had not yet been presented. He was hurrying it forward and as soon as he got it he would know how to decide. They knew it was purely an engineering question and the Engineers would have to advise as to its feasibility or otherwise. If it was found feasible the Government would do its best to see what could be done in the matter. They then pointed out, in view of the present distress, the necessity for the remission of the assessments in full in all affected or partially affected districts. He understood that in this taluk the next kist was not due till next January. If by that time the crops proved a failure they might depend on it that the case would be most carefully considered by the Collector, who had paid particular attention to this point and he felt assured they might safely leave the matter in the Collector's hands. They then mentioned the matter of the relief works and in regard to them they said the work was being rigorously exacted, the result being that the half-starved classes were being driven away. His Excellency had gone most carefully into the matter and he felt bound to say that it could hardly be said that stringent rules were being enforced so as to drive away the half-starved classes. He found that those who were not able to come to the works in consequence of their low condition were able to be fed at all relief kitchens. This had been specially arranged so as to embrace the case of those particular persons to whom they referred. He was assured by the Medical officer of the district, who had been round the district himself, carefully examining the condition of the laborers that were on the relief works or at the kitchens, that up to the present he had seen no signs of emaciation or really severe distress. It was premature, therefore, to apply such a word as "famine" to the scarcity which existed in this part of the district. Undoubtedly there was scarcity and a considerable amount of distress; but there was no reason to apprehend anything like severe famine. He believed the works started would meet all the necessities of the case and the kitchens opened would also be sufficient. As regards those who had objections to kitchens for various reasons, His Excellency was assured that up to that time there had been no applications made on behalf of any such to any of the authorities. As they said rightly, Government did not intend at present to go so far as grain or money doles. He was afraid in that direction he could not offer them any relief. He hardly thought this was the time for the Government to take such a step. He believed that everything up to the present had been done to meet the necessity of the case. Should the distress become more severe and persons prayed for outside relief rather than go to the kitchen it would be then necessary for Government to consider how the case should be met. At present the class of persons whom they brought to his notice were hardly in such number or in such a condition as to require that particular form of relief. They then mentioned the question of roads. They said that the *itteries* were being blocked by the prickly-pear. He understood it had been brought home to those who had hedges, or *itteries*, it was absolutely their duty, as it was the duty of any proprietor adjoining a public road or way, to see that their hedges did not entrench on the road. Steps would be taken by the local authorities to impress upon these proprietors their duty in looking into this matter. This was their duty undoubtedly not only here but all over the world, and he did not think any exception could be made for people that live in this particular part of the country. As regards the making of roads, perhaps the road from Palladam to Arasampalaiyam in case of famine could be constructed and another also from Udamalpet to Satipalaiyam which would meet what they ask for. They would then have three roads on one side and a fourth new road on the other, so they would be exceedingly well served with roads. As regards the other road further north to Mondapalaiyam and Cheyur, the Engineer would look into the matter and see if he thought it could be done. When the matter was considered their suggestion would be taken note of and carefully considered. Then as to what they asked on the subject of a railway, His Excellency was afraid he could give them little encouragement in that matter. Palladam, it was true, was only 10 miles from the main line, but he was sorry to say that there were a large number of places equally important a great many more miles from the railway. When the question of railway extension was taken up by Government, these other railways would take precedence of what they suggested. They were only 10 miles from the station and should consider themselves exceedingly fortunate. The subject they alluded to was that of the prickly-pear: as to removing it from certain localities. This had received the careful attention of Government and it had come to the conclusion that it was almost impossible for Government to carry out such a work. Unless this was constantly continued, what had been done was almost a waste of labour. It appeared to him that it was the cultivator's duty to remove the prickly-pear as he would remove other noxious vegetation. He had had a great deal to do with farming and a great deal to do with removing noxious plants, and he thought that for the Government to help the private cultivator in this matter, and to undertake a work of such enormous magnitude, was almost impossible. It had been suggested in certain places that it might be found possible to set people on to cut out prickly-pear; but it had been found a better means of doing this, to offer the land to any man, who chose to go in for it, rent-free for five years to enable him to undertake the work. He could not imagine anything more difficult than to undertake this huge business by Government grants or under Government management. He quite agreed that it was an intolerable nuisance in the taluk. He asked them to send a note to the Collector on the various points raised in regard to loans under the Land Improvement Act. He begged to thank them for their address and to assure them of the pleasure he felt in being able to be present there.

Address of the Members of the Pollachi Union Panchayat.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the members of the Pollachi Union Panchayat, most respectfully beg leave to approach and to offer a most cordial welcome to your Excellency on this occasion of your arrival amongst us.

2. We are no less gratified at your Excellency's rare visit, which is made at a time of trying distress. The season has been unfavorable in the district for two successive years, and the effects of a dire distress would have been already felt had it not been for the prompt interference of the Divisional and the Taluk authorities by adopting timely measures of relief in the way of opening a large field of labour for the distressed, and in suspending the collection of land revenue; and your Excellency's remarks, in answer to the several addresses in connection with the present state of the season in the Presidency, have inspired us with a confidence that no attention would be wanting on the part of the Government to take all possible precautions to divert the worst effects of a famine.

3. The Aliyar river is the only source of irrigation of any importance in this taluk, but only a small portion of the taluk benefits by it, the major portion having to depend for its water-supply solely on rainfall. For two successive months there has been sufficient rain in the taluk excepting some parts, but this rain, it is considered, would not give immediate relief.

4. The greatest disadvantage which the people of these parts are labouring under is the want of railway communication with important centres. The opening of a railway line between Palghat and Dindigul is an urgent desideratum and will, we are sure, confer a great boon on the people and would also prove a profitable concern to the Railway authorities. The market we have in the town is the largest in the district; we regret very much to learn that your Excellency's Government cannot at present see its way to sanction the opening of the railway recommended by the Local Boards. We hope that this want will receive your Excellency's best attention and meet with your warm support on a further consideration.

5. In conclusion, we beg to offer our heartfelt thanks and to express our sincere gratitude for your Excellency's kindness and a condescension in having honored this distant place with your presence at no small personal inconvenience to your Excellency.—*Palladam, 4th September 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to thank you very much for the cordial welcome you have accorded me in coming to this place, the nearest spot in which I suppose I shall be to Pollachi taluk, while I am in this part of the country. It is a matter for special gratification to me to receive in your address an assurance that the Government officers are acting in the best interests of the people in providing relief, which, in your estimation, is sufficient up to now to meet the necessities of the case. To me it is the more gratifying to receive this assurance from you, living in this part of the country, because it is the best answer that can possibly be made to the strictures on the conduct of Government officers made by certain people in the English Press. This is the most conclusive proof, if, indeed, proof is necessary, that these strictures are entirely and absolutely untrue. I hope it may be found in a short time that relief works will no longer be required and kitchens no longer in use, and that you may receive at last the blessing withheld from you so long in the shape of a copious downpour of rain. You point out in your address that you have one river as a source of irrigation in the taluk and that you are badly off for water, having to depend on the rainfall. I hope if that is the case you will allow your attention to be directed as much as possible to the special facilities offered by Government for digging wells in your taluk and you will find the rules are such as to enable you to freely take loans, and thereby increase the number of wells, which seems to be your great want. You then refer to the distance you are from any railway communication and you point out that the Dindigul-Palghat Railway would at once remove this inconvenience. I may say for myself that nothing would please me more than to see this railway started as soon as possible; but you are well aware yourselves there is a great difficulty always in the extension of railways in this country owing to a want of money. Depend on it no effort will be wanting on my part to do all that I can to get this constructed at as early a date as is possible; if for different reasons this could not be brought about, you may depend on it, it will not be on account of failure on my part. I beg to thank you very much for the address you have presented to me and I hope that Pollachi will soon be in a prosperous condition.

Address of the Deputation sent by the Inhabitants of Dhárápuram, Coimbatore District.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We beg to accord to your Excellency a most hearty welcome to this part of the district which is only 23 miles from our place and to express our humble gratification at the privilege of welcoming your Excellency in our midst at an early

period of your Excellency's régime. The inhabitants are second to none in the Presidency in their loyalty and devotion to the government of Her Most Gracious Majesty The QUEEN-EMPERESS and in the warm and intelligent interest they evince in all matters of local and general administration. We beg leave to state that the liberal and sympathetic spirit which characterises your Excellency's recent public utterances has kindled in the minds of the people a widespread hope and belief that your Excellency's administration will be marked by practical and judicious measures in relation to the wants and aspirations of the people. We beg respectfully to bring to your Excellency's notice on this occasion the defective condition of our town in the matter of commercial enterprises and of civilization which is pointed out as follows :—

I. Dhárápúram is an important taluk in the district paying to Government land revenue Rs. 4,22,300, of which Rs. 27,300 on area of acres 2,062 including both nunja and punja is from the onsbah itself with a population of about 8,000 and is in the southern corner of, and 45 miles from, the district and 30 miles from the nearest railway station. Formerly this place was ruled by an eminent Hindu king called *Oottarakumara*, whose history is mentioned in the *Mahabharata*. A pagodah, called *Oottaraneeravaraghavasacmi*, which is still in existence, is said to have been dedicated to Vishnu by the said king after his name. Some 70 years ago this place was a district having the District and the District Munsif's courts located here, but for some reasons unknown the former was transferred to Salem and the latter to Udamalpet taluk. Ever since the transfer of the said courts, Dhárápúram has been losing its importance. In 1884, a branch line of railway from Dindigul to Palghat *via* Dhárápúram was proposed to be opened and surveyed at the cost of Government, but the work was not carried out. We regret to hear that it is to be opened through Palni instead of Dhárápúram. If it be the case, the people of this place will find no end of their difficulties and great will be their misery. When there is an urgent necessity for getting supply of grains from distant railway places, they have no means to get it in time, and even they are unable to ascertain the price of grains in time ruling in different parts of countries that have railway connection, such as Bangalore, Mysore, Vellore, &c. The want of railway and telegraph is therefore urgently needed here.

II. For the last three years there has been no timely rain, but the average rainfall during those years would nearly come to the estimated quantity that might be sufficient if fallen timely. To prove this, last year 7 inches of rain fell, all in one time in October, when people eagerly sowed seeds in dry lands by incurring debts for the purchase of the same, and punja crops that grew to a certain extent entirely withered away on account of the total absence of the subsequent rains. As regards the nunja crops, the said heavy rain of last year caused an extraordinary flood in the Amarávati that did much damage to most of the irrigation works near anicut, so much so, that not a drop of water could be allowed to flow in the irrigation channel. Calingula to the length of about 100 yards was swept away, so that it was unable to distinguish the river and the channel near the anicut. The Engineering department in charge of irrigation works were at once addressed by the ryots as well as by the Revenue authorities to effect a speedy repair, which being done in a careless manner by the Public Works Department again breached in so short a time as four days. Much time had elapsed before its second repair. There was in the meantime total failure of rain which rendered deficient supply of water in the channel to the standing nunja crops which had already suffered for two months without water. All these went to aggravate the misery of ryots who were consequently obliged to undergo a heavy loss last year as also in the 2 (two) previous years for want of timely rains. We had only one rain during this year here, but *Kodai rain* appeared to have fallen in the western districts and thereby we had water in the Amarávati sufficient to carry out the wet cultivation to a certain extent till recently; but water in the river is diminishing every day and consequently the supply of water in the channel has failed to a considerable degree. This betokens the failure of *Kodai rain* too in the western districts. Besides, the ryots are put to loss of crops these eight years owing to much indulgence being allowed to some of the ryots in the upper portion of the Amarávati, *i.e.*, Kallapuram in Udamalpet taluk, by the Public Works Department in a reckless manner without considering the interests and rights of the ryots of lower portions, *i.e.*, Dhárápúram and Karúr. One of the substantial ryots in the upper portion, named Kaniyur Krishna Iyer Avargal, availing himself of the advantage of the above indulgence, dug a new great channel from the river and thereby converted some 1,000 acres of dry lands of his into wet lands to the sad detriment of the interests and rights of the ryots of lower portion of the Amarávati, *i.e.*, Dhárápúram and Karúr. This requires your Excellency's serious consideration.

III. A bridge across the river Amarávati that runs near this town in the eastern side was proposed and subsequently appears to have been sanctioned by Government; but the work has not as yet been carried out. People travelling to and from Dhárápúram, Dindigul, Madura, Karúr and other places are experiencing much difficulty with their laden carts, bullocks, &c., in crossing it, and their sufferings are still more aggravated at the time of freshes. The immediate execution of the said bridge work at the time of present distress will be a great help to the working class of people as well as to the travellers in addition to the relief works.

IV. We moreover beg to bring to your Excellency's benign notice that a piece of ground is available to the east and west of old Palni road within the radius of 2 miles from Dhárápúram fit for constructing a tank. Should this be constructed, the same might be filled with water from the Amarávati at the time of freshes, so that water may be taken from the tank to the nunja

fields when there is scarcity of water in the channel and thereby there will be no cause of unnecessary failure of crops and loss as hitherto happened to the poor ryots and it will also be a great relief to the working poor community who stand in need of relief here if its work is carried out in this drought. This, therefore, requires your Excellency's favorable early consideration.

V. As our place was deprived of the District and the District Munsif's courts as stated above and as Udamalpet, in which the Munsif's court is now located and to which Dhárápúram is attached, is not in any way convenient to the parties for want of good drinking water there, except brackish water procurable in the deep wells which, if drunk, is productive of bad diseases, such as guinea-worm, deafness, &c., many correspondence took place between the District court and High Court some 10 years back to re-establish the District Munsif's court at Dhárápúram at the request of the people of this place and the matter was after all kept in abeyance. The arrangement then proposed in the matter was this :— The existing District Munsif's court at Udamalpet should be retransferred to Dhárápúram as before, so that Polláchi taluk, which is 25 miles to Coimbatore, and Palladam taluk now belonging to Coimbatore and the said Udamalpet be attached to the proposed District Munsif's court of Dhárápúram, in which case both the said Palladam and Udamalpet are equally 23 miles distant from Dhárápúram, and three taluks, *i.e.*, Udamalpet, Dhárápúram and Palladam will thus form a more convenient District Munsif's court without prejudice to any of the existing other District Munsifs' courts in the district. This matter being of vital importance to the well-being of the parties requires your Excellency's early favorable consideration.

Under these circumstances we most humbly and respectfully pray on behalf of the inhabitants of this place that your Excellency will be pleased to take the above matters into benign and kind consideration and issue early orders so that necessary measures may be adopted to carry out the same as early as possible and thus alleviate the grievances of your Excellency's poor but loyal subjects and protect them.

In conclusion, we beg once more to tender our grateful thanks for the honour of your Excellency's visit to this part of our district and we fervently pray your Excellency and Lady Wenlock may be blessed with long life and prosperity and a period of happy and beneficent reign in this Presidency.—*Kandalam, 5th September 1891.*

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to thank you for having come this great distance to present an address to me on my coming to this part of the country. I am sorry that time prevents me from paying a visit to your town. This is the nearest point that I could reach. As you say, I believe yours is an important town and requires careful attention on the part of the authorities; but as you have come this great distance yourselves to see me and explain to me the various points which you wish to have carefully considered by Government, I have been very happy to listen to them, though, I am afraid, I may not be able in every respect to gratify your wishes; yet you may rely on having my sympathy and on my earnest wish to do what is right in the matter. The first point which you raise in your address is in connection with the location of District Munsif's court. In regard to this matter, I am told the whole district has been so laid out that it is impossible to alter the location of any one of the District Munsifs' courts, for it would upset the whole of the district. If we are to accede to your wishes we shall have to revolutionize all the towns in which the District Munsifs' courts exist, and entirely remodel the district. As matters stand at present, it is impossible to meet your wishes in this respect. This matter has been carefully gone into, and the various courts have been carefully arranged and located. The only thing I can say, if at any time it should appear the work has become heavier, Dhárápúram, which is in itself an important centre, will not be overlooked, and, when further additions are required to the courts, Dhárápúram will be taken into careful consideration. Again, as regards the railway, I am afraid I can offer you very little hope for the diversion of the line, if ever it is made. The fact is taking the railway from Palghat to Dindigul through Dhárápúram would necessitate a very much larger outlay of money; the engineering difficulties are considerably greater, and the distance is also considerably longer. Therefore, under these circumstances, I am afraid I cannot hold out much hope to you that the railway will be taken that way. Of course the representation you make will be forwarded to the Railway authorities. I believe the matter has been thoroughly gone into, and I am afraid I can hardly hold out any hope that the line will be taken through Dhárápúram. You say you have suffered in consequence of the short fall of rain. That I am afraid has been general throughout this district. You say certain people higher up the river have been indulged in such a way as to deprive you of part of your water. I understand this question is being looked into. At all events, I promise you that people higher up stream will be limited to the amount of water which they have a right to take. I am afraid I cannot say more than that in this respect. As regards the other point which you raise about the failure of the Public Works Department in repairing this particular breach I am sorry I have not been able to get the information in time. Your address reached me only a short time ago, and though I have written for the information I have not yet got it. However,

I will have this matter looked into. The next point which you raise is in connection with the bridge across the river. I am given to understand that such a bridge would be a large and expensive business, and is hardly necessary in this place. A causeway is to be constructed which will enable the people to cross the river during the whole of the year except in the time of the high freshes. By an arrangement made for carrying away the water by two vents, the water will be run off without any trouble. This will cost exactly one-third of what the bridge would cost. Then you will naturally see that there is no use in laying out more money if you can get the same thing for less. I hope this arrangement will satisfy your desires in this direction. As regards the tank which you desire to be constructed on the east and west sides of the road, you say there is land where the tank can be constructed. Mr. Wynch has been over the map with me and has shown me what you wish. I understand the Public Works Department have estimated for the work and if that is the case there is no doubt it can be done. If relief work is wanted it appears to me to be a very suitable piece of engineering to undertake. Of course this has to be considered purely from an engineering point of view. I will, however, look into the matter as soon as I can and see what I can do. If I am not able to give you more assistance in the various points which you raise, I hope you will understand that in these matters there are other people to be considered besides the inhabitants of your particular taluk. We are bound to do even justice to all parties as far as we can. If you have rather suffered in this matter, it will be some sort of consolation to know that others are benefited. It is a poor consolation I admit. In conclusion, I beg to thank you for the address and the good wishes you have expressed for myself and Lady Wenlock. I hope and trust that the time is not far distant when you will have an acceptable downfall of rain which is very much wanted in this part of the country.

Address of the Members of the Noyil Project Committee, Coimbatore.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the members of the Noyil Project Committee, Coimbatore, beg to approach your Excellency with the following few lines with deep sense of gratitude and loyalty.

2. When we represented to your Excellency, during your Excellency's short sojourn at Coimbatore in March last, the scarcity of water in the town and taluk of Coimbatore and suggested a measure to obviate the difficulty, your Excellency was pleased to assure us that your Excellency will take individual interest in the matter and cause investigations be made as to why more water cannot be thrown into the Noyil.

3. Since then we respect your Excellency's assurance as gospel, and, as a mark of good omen, we in July last were blessed with a supply to all our tanks, which is well for domestic purposes and has enabled us to begin our cultivation and to hope for better.

4. From the present state of affairs as it relates to water-supply and the interest the Engineers Lieutenant-Colonel Drake-Brockman and Mr. Larminie and the Collector and the Treasury Deputy Collector take in the matter we have every reason to expect that this time the Noyil will positively have the chance of having its supply increased from the source indicated by us or from some other source.

5. We are happy to bring to your Excellency's notice that the Engineers who were waiting for a good season to go up the hills have now proposed to go up very soon to investigate measures to supplement the Noyil supply. On their return from the hills we beg permission to place before your Excellency further particulars on the project.

6. However, we humbly solicit your Excellency's favour to visit the place wherefrom the Noyil supply is to be supplemented, it being a scenery worth seeing and enjoying within a distance of 20 miles from Coimbatore, and personally investigate the project, so that the poor ryots may have no room whatever to doubt a further failure in the matter.

7. We also beg to add that, should the Noyil supply be increased, there will be no reason to apprehend so much distress in the Palladam taluk even.

8. In conclusion, we pray that God may bless your Excellency's most beneficial rule in this Presidency with success and your Excellency and Lady Wenlock with long life and prosperity.
—Coimbatore Railway Station, 7th September 1891.

His Excellency's Reply.

His Excellency thanked the deputation for the address. They asked him again to review the project which they had so much at heart as regards the water-supply and irrigation of Coimbatore. When he was last at Coimbatore, it was an understood thing that the matter would receive careful attention. Colonel Drake-Brockman and Mr. Larminie had been up and looked into the matter, and their report, which would soon be before the Government, would

show better than anything how the situation stood. He would read the report which ran as follows:—

"SIR,—I have the honour to inform you, with reference to the investigation for improving the supply of the Noyil river asked for by the ryots holding lands under that river, that, in conjunction with the Executive Engineer, Coimbatore division, I have, during these few days, been looking into the subject on the ground. The excavation of the Contour channel referred to in the petition presents difficulties which we consider insurmountable. The only means for affording a supply appears to be the construction of a dam and driving a tunnel through the Poratti saddle, which divides the Uttapura and the Noyil valley. This project was declared in G.O., No. 127 I., dated 1st March 1890, to be impracticable, but, with certain modifications, we have thought of introducing it; it is hoped the project may be placed before Government in such form as to warrant its being undertaken."

His Excellency continuing said that, Colonel Drake-Brockman had gone carefully over both schemes and considered that one might be found feasible, although up to that time the whole scheme had been condemned. He need hardly tell them, being intelligent men, that the matter was purely an engineering one, and, if it was found that the present scheme was one which Government would be able to take up, they might depend on Government doing all it could. His Excellency hoped that, for their sake, the scheme would be found feasible. He again thanked them for their attendance that morning and for the address that had been presented.

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