

ADDRESSES, &c.

• PRESENTED TO

AND

REPLIES MADE

BY

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

ON HIS SEVENTH TOUR.

July 1892.

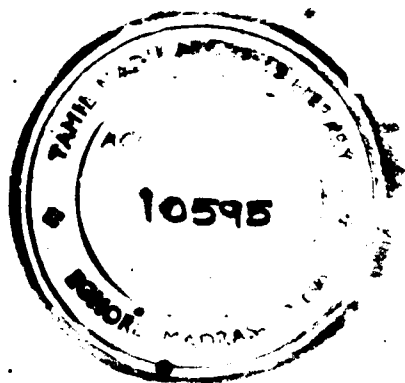
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ADDRESSES, &c., PRESENTED TO AND REPLIES MADE BY HIS
EXCELLENCY THE LORD WENLOCK ON HIS SEVENTH TOUR.

Address from the Rate-payers of Wálajánagar.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the rate-payers of Wálajánagar, most respectfully beg to approach Your Excellency to welcome you in our midst, on the occasion of Your Excellency's visit to this district, and to express our heart-felt thanks for the manifold advantages which Your Excellency's short but benign administration of this Presidency as the representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty The Queen-Empress, whose memorable, beneficent and the glorious reign which is the admiration of all of us, has conferred on us. The Pálár causeway which is one of the most important works of public utility, marking the epoch of this year and whose opening ceremony is pre-eminent among the other causes of Your Excellency's gracious visit, is a longfelt desideratum which Your Excellency has been pleased to supply us with; and it would in no small measure tend to promote the commerce and the convenience of the travellers in these portions of the district. It would also associate Your Excellency's name with our district for posterity. Feeling assured that we would enlist Your Excellency's sympathy, like thousands of people in the sister district, to whom is accorded Your Excellency's good will, we avail ourselves of this favorable opportunity of drawing Your Excellency's attention to some of our grievances in the humble hope of obtaining the redress therefor at Your Excellency's hands. In this connection to fully impress Your Excellency with the magnitude of our grievance it will be none the less important to give a short history of this so-called town, portraying to Your Excellency its present condition as compared with the past. It was built towards the close of the last century by Rayoji, a sagacious Brahmin Minister of Mahomed Ali, a reputed Nawab of the Carnatic, and he called it Wallajah after his name to perpetuate the name of his beloved master. Ever since, the significance of the town rose by leaps and bounds. As far back a date as two score and ten years when the port of Bombay afforded little facility for the landing of goods sent from different parts of this peninsula, as well as from the continent, the merchandise passed through this town. Traders from different places flocked hither in numbers and carried on trade in grains, cotton, and areca-nuts. It had then eleven pettahs for the purposes of trade; each pettah had as many trading houses and sometimes double the number and each trading house worked up with a capital of nearly 4 or 5 lakhs of rupees. Weaving in silk and cotton, dyeing and carpet-making and manufacture of oil chiefly employed the people. It was then the greatest commercial emporium in the provinces south of the Kistna and was replete with every luxury. It then enjoyed an enviable reputation. "Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis." With the construction of a harbour in Bombay and a network of railways, the trade dwindled down considerably giving way to other commercial centres. There is now hardly any trace of those pettahs and trading houses, and all that could now remind us of its former prestige are its beautifully-arranged streets and well-built houses which are far and few between. The sites of ruined houses in every nook and corner, nay, even in the trunk road, will strike the traveller with the idea of the past grandeur of the town. The descendants of those merchants, many of whom returned to the places whence they came, coveted by the supercilious idea of remaining where their ancestors lived, are withering away their estates with no source of income. And every year would see some houses vacated and sold or distrained and sold to the Municipality, the rate-payers being too poor to pay even their house-rents. With the establishment of a Municipality here, a new era of hardships and oppression has dawned upon the rate-payers. A few artisans and traders with no more income than would meet a bare sustenance for them would be all that could be reckoned among the traders. These impoverished men are on the one side ground down by heavy professional tax, while on the other side the cessation of the plying of their trade would entail starvation upon them. The decennial increase of 10 per cent. of the population is the important statistics which would indicate the increase of the prosperity of the town; but with this Municipality this is a failure, for in the census of 1871 there were about 12,000 persons, while in 1881 there were 10,300, and in 1891 the same number. The reduction of a High school here to the standard of the Middle school, a steady decrease in the number of the postal letters and the consecutive reports of the sanitary inspector declaring that the sanitation of the town is due to its broad streets but that the population is becoming thinner and thinner, are all undeniable proofs that the town has only a retrograde step towards attaining any improvement. When Young India, in all its important towns, indulges in tall talks about representative institutions, why the rate-payers of this place should be disgusted with such institution very mercifully granted to them, would be inferred from the strains of our imagination, and would suggest to Your Excellency that this august corporation is to us a powerful engine of misery, and a replacement of this institution by a major union would be

all that is desirable. Placed as we are under the care of W. J. H. Le Fanu, Esq., C.S., a model Collector, who has always the interest of the people of his district at heart, we feel confident that he will fully endorse our opinion in the matter. We humbly request Your Excellency to give your serious consideration to this our humble prayer and to relieve us from the trammels of the Municipality. In conclusion we once more crave Your Excellency's permission to express our loyalty and gratitude. Praying for Your Excellency's long life and prosperity.

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I have to thank you very much for the kind manner in which you welcome me here to your district, and for the words in which you express your sentiments of loyalty and affection towards Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress. It has given me much pleasure to be present here at such an interesting ceremony as the opening of the Pálar Causeway, which must be of enormous benefit to this particular part of the country. While I am here, I find you have taken the opportunity of coming forward and bringing to my notice what you consider to be a very serious state of affairs in your town and ask that your Municipality should be done away with and that you should have a different form of self-Government applied to you from that we all hoped you would find yourselves progressing under. Of course, the points which you bring to my notice are those which naturally strike anybody as being of considerable importance; and all I can promise you is that I shall take your petition into my most careful consideration, and we will see, if possible, if Government can come to your relief in the manner in which you ask for. I am not prepared at the present moment to give any more definite assurance than that what you have brought to my attention will be most seriously and carefully considered. Gentlemen, I thank you again very much for the address you have presented me.—
13th July 1892.

Address from the Inhabitants of Ranipet Union.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We, the inhabitants of Ranipet Union, do most respectfully and affectionately welcome Your Excellency to this our ancient historic town. Ranipet was formerly an important military centre, where both European and Native regiments were quartered. It was built in 1771, by the then Nawab Sadatulla Khan in honour of Desingy Rajah of Ginjee who possessed very great valour but was vanquished by the Nawab. The Rajah's widow committed suttee, and out of respect for the valour of the Rajah and for his devotion to the Rani, the Nawab built this town and gave it the name Ranipet. This town can boast of having sent to Vellore a detachment of troops in 1806, under the command of Colonel Gillespie, which successfully quelled the mutiny that was then prevailing there. We are happy that the worthy representative of Her Gracious Majesty Queen, Empress of India, has been pleased to favour his poor but loyal subjects of this part of the country with his kind visit this day, to perform the pleasant ceremony of opening the Pálar Causeway. The Pálar has been running in its bed for many a long century and weary men and jaded animals have struggled across whirling currents or burning sands—a stream of hardship and suffering happily to be brought to a termination by this day's proceedings. But it does not seem to have commended itself to, or to have been thought practicable by, our previous administrators to construct a bridge or causeway across this river to relieve the poor men and animals of their daily toil. Alike when the current is running or the summer sun scorching the sands of its bed, the difficulty experienced by man and beast in crossing the Pálar can scarcely be imagined. And now it is Your Excellency's good fortune to add the blessings that will come to the people of this district from the opening of this much needed causeway to the many other blessings and benefits conferred upon this country during Your Excellency's administration. We cannot adequately express our gratitude for the many good works in general done by your wise Government and for the Pálar Causeway in particular. Grand Town Halls, Senate Houses and Telegraph and Post Offices are, no doubt, signs of wise and good Government. But to us the causeway seems to be a work more immediately connected with the relief of the poor agricultural and trading classes of this country. We, therefore, thank and congratulate Your Excellency on the happy conclusion to which you have brought the construction of this work. We, therefore, again most sincerely and heartily welcome Your Excellency to this place on this happy occasion. We beg leave of Your Excellency to say in this connection a word about our good and energetic Collector, Mr. W. J. H. Le Fanu. We have to thank him for the wise and kindly steps he has taken in inaugurating the plan and carrying it through completion. As a wise and useful representative of the people in the capacity of President of the North Arcot District Board, he taught his people through the members of his Board the necessity and feasibility of constructing the causeway and as a wise Minister to Your Excellency he laid before you the proposal and plan of the causeway and obtained the sanction and the necessary funds for it from your generous hands. We cannot say how deeply we are indebted to Mr. Le Fanu for his having been the immediate cause of this work and for his having taken all the steps and trouble incidental to the accomplishing of this grand result,

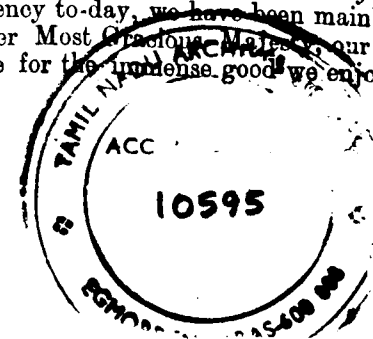
not to mention the great interest he takes in the general well-being of his subjects. It would be ungrateful on our part if, on this occasion, we do not thank Mr. Swaminatha Iyer, B.A., Vice-President of the District Board, for the invaluable help rendered by him in his capacity. We were at first loath to trouble Your Excellency with any suit. But the happy presence of Your Excellency here in our midst has encouraged us to submit at your feet a prayer that we have long been wishing to make. It is for the transferring of the Court of District Munsif of Sholinghur to this town. When Wárajápet was flourishing with its extensive trade and arts, Ranipet enjoyed a great celebrity and some opulence as a cantonment, a majority of its inhabitants living by some service or other. But when the trading and manufacturing energies were gone from Wárajápet when the family of the Arcot Nawab left for Madras, and the troops were withdrawn from Ranipet, this town lost all its grandeur and its material resources. Although the population of this Union amounts to about 8,000, a considerable portion of this number has no means of earning their bread. This town, however, enjoys a good climate with a good water-supply from the Pálar. The railway runs within four miles of Ranipet and there are buildings in this place, some belonging to Government and others to private individuals, which may be used as a court-house with convenience. We are humbly of the opinion that the transfer of the District Munsif's Court from Sholinghur to Ranipet will greatly enhance the material resources of this town as well as of Wárajápet; nor need Government undergo any cost for a building. The village of Sholinghur in which the Court is now held is at a considerable distance from the railway and is in several respects far less convenient as the seat of the Munsif than Ranipet. We therefore pray that Your Excellency may be pleased to direct our Collector and District Judge to give their opinion on the matter, and, if it seems best to Your Excellency, that our prayer may eventually be granted. We feel very thankful to Your Excellency for having held out your hand to accept this our humble memorial. In conclusion, we pray that God Almighty may grant Your Excellency long life and prosperity. We pray for the long life and prosperity of our Gracious Majesty Queen, Empress of India, and her children, and we also pray for the permanence in this country of the wise and civilised Government of Great Britain on which the sun never sets.

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I have to thank you very much for the address which you have just presented from the town of Ranipet, which is naturally to be very much affected by the causeway the opening of which we are here to inaugurate. You point out that your town has been in existence for over a hundred years, and naturally such an event as this occurring just at your very doors must affect you most considerably, and be of the utmost consequence and importance to you. I am glad to see that you give every credit to Mr. Le Fanu, Collector of the district, for the manner in which he has worked in procuring for you this great and beneficent undertaking; and I am sure you are only giving credit where credit is due, when you say that it is to his untiring efforts that you owe the success of this causeway. I am very glad to be here to hear myself how much you appreciate the efforts which he has put forth, and how you all recognise most fully the work he has done in this particular direction. At the same time you take the opportunity of my being present here to point out one matter which you think requires alteration and will benefit your town, namely, that the Munsif's Court should be transferred from Sholinghur to Ranipet. (His Excellency looked at a map). You see Ranipet is on the very extreme south end and Sholinghur is not very far but near the centre and you have not, I understand, advanced any strong reasons for the transfer; but I understand that by an alteration of the various districts, Ranipet might be very usefully the centre of a District Munsif's Court. Mr. Sewell, who knows these matters well, has explained to me that it will be quite possible to reconstitute these various districts with very great advantage. In connection with this matter two points will have to be considered—(1) What view the High Court may take, for they are responsible for the administration of justice in the Munsifs' Courts; and (2) What view the Government may take as regards laying out large sums of money and starting out a new Court. However, all these points will be carefully looked into, and if it is possible to meet your wishes, you may depend on it that we will do what we can, provided it is fair and just to all parties. Gentlemen, I am very much obliged to you for the address presented and for the kind words expressed on this occasion.

Address from the Arcot Union Panchayat.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—It is with feelings of unalloyed pleasure that we, the members of the Arcot Union Panchayat, representing the public of Arcot, respectfully beg permission to approach Your Excellency with this humble address to offer a hearty welcome on this auspicious occasion of Your Excellency's presence in our midst. Need we say that in seeking the privilege of an interview with Your Excellency to-day, we have been mainly influenced by a desire to express our loyalty and love to Her Most Gracious Majesty, our beloved mother, the Empress of India, and our sincere gratitude for the immense good we enjoy under



Her benign sway. We are fully alive to the innumerable blessings bestowed upon us by the British Government, under whose paternal protection Providence has placed us, and we dare say that no Government is so solicitous about the welfare of the people committed to its charge as the British. Nothing would better illustrate this care and tenderness for the governed than the provision of this causeway, to open which Your Excellency condescended at no small sacrifice of personal comfort and ease and which is an additional boon to the manifold blessings that have already been conferred upon us and other people. It may not be out of place here to mention in connection with this causeway that the idea of constructing it first struck our beloved Collector, Mr. W. J. H. Le Fanu, when he came here for the first time in the year 1887, and saw how toilsome it was both for men and cattle to cross the broad Pálár. The sufferings of the foot-passengers under the mid-day sun in the heated sand and the labour of the bullocks when dragging heavily-laden carts from one bank to the other, at once roused the merciful feelings of our ever benevolent Collector to remove these hardships. When he made a longer stay at Arcot subsequently on jamabundy business, and again personally witnessed the miseries of both the men and animals, he resolved to submit proposals for the construction of the causeway, and the ready sanction of Your Excellency's Government enabled him to accomplish within a period of less than 2 years this necessary project, with which we are exceedingly happy to feel Your Excellency's name will be associated from this day in the minds of all the people both young and old. We tender our heart-felt thanks to our energetic and popular Collector, not only for the various administrative changes that he introduced in the several departments under his control, but also for the unexpected joy he has been instrumental in giving us by requesting Your Excellency to be present this morning at this once historically famous town of Arcot, the old capital of the Carnatic. In conclusion, we devoutly hope and pray that Your Excellency may, for many long years, be preserved with health and strength to sustain the responsibilities of your exalted position. We regret we have not been fortunate enough to be favoured with the august presence of Her Excellency Lady Wenlock on this happy occasion. However, we beg Your Excellency to convey our best wishes to her.

His Excellency's Reply.

GENTLEMEN,—I have to thank you very much for the address which you have just read to me, and for the kind way in which you welcome me and for the extremely kind manner in which you speak of how the Government has been doing its best in providing a large work for the benefit of the people of this district. Such a work as we are here to open to-day is a work which has been pointed out to be as really as useful as many of what are considered very much larger and more important public works. There is no doubt that means of communication and the facilities for opening them out in this country are as important as in many others, because not only is the commerce and trade of the various districts connected by such a causeway as this carried on with greater facilities than otherwise, but it also enables the people and the unfortunate animals who carry on this trade to do their work with less suffering and less inconvenience. Therefore, it is naturally a work which we all look upon with the greatest pleasure and delight. We must congratulate all those who have been interested in the work, and nobody, I believe, more than Mr. Le Fanu. I am glad you point out how you appreciate the efforts which he has put forth in bringing it to a successful issue, and that the people of this district are evidently aware what an excellent work he has accomplished. The only thing I regret is that the causeway should be called after my name; I think it would be very much more appropriate if it were called after him, because he has done more than anybody else to bring about its completion. I should have been more pleased if it were so, and unless there is time to alter—

Mr. Le Fanu (interrupting)—No, No, Sir.

His Excellency continuing:—I must say it has given me much pleasure to be here and to have my name associated with it, though I say it is rather unfortunate that it should not be called after Mr. Le Fanu who has done so much in bringing it about, and I think it would be only right if it were called after him. However, as you say, he has brought it about and we are all here to-day to open the great work. I thank you very much for the manner in which you have come forward and welcomed me to the district, and I can only say that it has given me great pleasure to be present to-day. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Le Fanu then said:—

YOUR EXCELLENCY.—It is with singular pleasure that, on behalf of the officers and inhabitants of this district, I welcome your presence amongst us this day. Thrice before Your Excellency has come to visit us on a mission of mercy at a time when the land was shadowed with trouble. It has pleased God to cause this to pass away, and, if we may argue from the past, many years of smiling plenty are in store for Southern India before our successors will have to grapple with famine. Your Excellency's first visit was to Wandiwash, immortalised by the undaunted valour of Flint and his little band. This, your fourth visit, is to Arcot, illumined in its decadence by the illustrious achievements of Clive and his noble comrades of the Old Const Army. The times are much changed since the site upon which we stand rang to the salvos of

artillery or shook under the tramp of hostile battalions. We have met together to-day to record the completion of a work of peace, which, I trust, may be of lasting benefit to the town of Arcot and to many interests and industries involved. The chief lesson to be learnt from periods of distress, such as that from which we are just emerging, is the necessity for extended irrigational facilities and for improved communications. Permit me, Sir, to say that the manner in which Your Excellency, when but recently arrived in this country, grasped the importance of well irrigation, has been the admiration of the Public Service. This district has already largely profited by the generous measures initiated in this direction by Your Excellency's Government, and hopes still more largely to profit by the same in the future. It is in connection with improved communications that we have met here to-day. It is an old story how the Madras Railway was carefully aligned so as to afford the least possible facilities to the great towns of the districts which it serves. (Laughter.) This is a misfortune beyond remedy. There was, however, in this district, one invincible difficulty which the maker of this railway had to contend with, namely, the fact that it had to run parallel, for some seventy miles, to the River Pálár. It could not, like Sir Boyle Roche's historical bird, be at both sides of the river at once; and so we find that, while inviting customers from Tirutani, Sholinghur, Wálájapet and Ranipet, remote Chittoor and Gudiyátam on the north, it left Arcot, and that important emporium Vellore, neglected on the south. The Pálár, impassable in floods, is nearly so during the dry season, which comprises eleven months of the year. The deputations that preceded me have imparted to Your Excellency the difficulties experienced by man and beast in crossing the Pálár; so I shall not trouble you with any observations thereon; but I will add that, not only for these reasons, but also as a matter of famine insurance, it is desirable that impediments to traffic should be removed, as also on strategic grounds. In times of famine, food may be carried from one place to another with great rapidity, and had this causeway been in existence in the days of Rajah Saheb, he would probably have made matters unpleasantly hot for Clive, in his watch post close by on the Delhi Darwaza; or, possibly, Clive might have made matters hot for Rajah Saheb. It is not only here at Arcot that the river bars traffic, but also between Pallikonda and Gudiyátam, as also between Conjeeveram and Abdullapuram, on the Chingleput frontier. Similar obstructions exist as regards the western portion of Gudiyátam at Ambur, and again at Vániyambádi large tracts of fertile country being thinly populated and undeveloped, because there is no proper outlet for produce. On the Cheyar a similar state of things exists at Tiruvattur, and the traffic between the sacred towns of Tirupati and Tiruchanur is in like manner impeded by the Swarnamukhi. I am very grateful indeed for the kind words you have spoken with regard to the causeway being named after myself. I had special reasons for asking Your Excellency to be sponsor to the "Wenlock Causeway." When I first mentioned the undertaking, 15 months ago, Your Excellency took a cordial interest in it, and held out hopes, which of course are not binding on Your Excellency in Council, that possibly Provincial Funds might come to the aid of the District Board in remedying the difficulties felt at other river crossings. I have to thank Your Excellency, not only for the sacrifice of personal convenience which your presence here entails, but also for the kindness which has allowed your name to be given to the causeway. We, Sir, who have called this work into existence, are not devoid of that gratitude which has been defined as "a keen sense of favours to be received." With a prudence not altogether unknown in non-official life, we have sought to secure for our bantling an influential godfather. Further, not satisfied with having begotten the said bantling, for whom Your Excellency will stand sponsor to-day, the District Board, like Grandgousier, is anxious to "fall to the making of another," or rather of several more. Now Your Excellency cannot well confer on your name-child a Cashmere shawl or a commission in the Guards, but, in compassion for his youth and loneliness, you may help him to sister causeways on each side; and when, as it undoubtedly will, the District Board again approaches the Cerberus which guards Provincial Treasures—perhaps I ought to say the local "Throne of Grace"—a kind word from Your Excellency may do much to obtain a favourable hearing for the application. It may interest Your Excellency to know that your name-child is already 3,268 feet long and 16 feet broad. The sandy riverbed was excavated to a depth of 4½ feet; a bed of concrete 1 foot thick was then laid down, on which were constructed three parallel walls of rough stone in mortar, connected at intervals by cross-walls of the same material, the intercostal spaces being filled in with sand. The covering is of burnt stone, in mortar, laid on edge. He was estimated to cost Rs. 55,000, and has been constructed within the estimate—possibly an unprecedented result. The actual working time occupied in completing the contract was about one year, and, if we had had our present experience, it would not have exceeded the "statutory period" of 9 months. The contractors were M.R.Ry. S. Raghava Chariar and W. S. Tiruvengkataswami Mudaliar. My esteemed friend, the Jaghirdar of Arni, has generously volunteered to furnish your name-child with a complete set of lamps, forestalling in so doing, by two days, our public spirited host of the day, Rai Bahadur Dhanakoti Mudaliar. It is my duty now to request Your Excellency to crown the work by laying the last stone, and to confer your name upon the Hero of the day. In ending my address I congratulate you, Sir, by saying that it is not necessary that you should make any reply to it.

