

CONFIDENTIAL.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

CONFERENCE OF COLLECTORS

HELD AT

OOTACAMUND.

AUGUST 1915.

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1915

Government of Madras.

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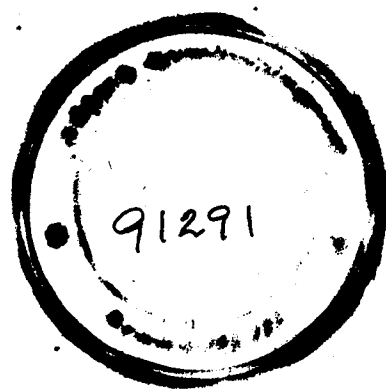


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OFFICERS INVITED TO BE PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE OF COLLECTORS AT OOTACAMUND FROM 23RD TO 28TH AUGUST 1915.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE
COLLECTORS' CONFERENCE, 1915.

[Note:— Items printed in capital letters are subjects the discussion relating to which will be formally opened by the Collector concerned. In other cases there will be no formal opening.]

Monday, the 23rd August 1915.

Subjects.	Initiated by
1. RELIEF TO COLLECTORS	Mr. R. B. Wood.
2. Selection of personal assistants to Collectors	Mr. Aziz-ud-din Sahib.
3. Termination of deputy collectors' probation	"
4. Vernacular tests of deputy collectors	"
5. Training and transfer of junior officers and improvement of their knowledge of the vernaculars.	Mr. A. F. G. Mosecardi.
6. Use of horses by revenue officers	Mr. H. L. Braidwood.
7. Daily allowance of tahsildars and deputy tahsildars ...	Mr. Aziz-ud-din Sahib.
8. Collectors' printing press	Mr. R. B. Wood.

Tuesday, the 24th August 1915.

9. COLLECTORS AND DISTRICT FOREST OFFICERS.	Mr. F. R. Hemingway.
10. WORKING OF THE DIFFERENTIAL WATER-RATE SYSTEM.	Mr. N. Macmichael.
11. SIMPLIFICATION OF JAMABANDI	Mr. J. M. Turing.

Wednesday, the 25th August 1915.

12. SYSTEM OF APPOINTING VILLAGE OFFICERS.	Mr. J. M. Turing.
13. Tahsildars' powers with regard to village staff ...	Mr. H. L. Braidwood.
14. WORKING OF THE MADRAS ESTATES LAND ACT, 1908.	Mr. N. Macmichael.
15. Possibility of improving the Madras Survey and Boundaries Act, 1897.	Mr. R. B. Wood.
16. Survey and regular lines in municipalities	"
17. Village house-site survey	"

Thursday, the 26th August 1915.

18. Reversion of village-site to Government [and assessment of backyards].	Mr. R. B. Wood.
19. Improvement of rural sanitation	Mr. H. L. Braidwood.
20. Non-official presidents and vice-presidents of district and taluk boards.	Mr. R. B. Wood.
21. Constitution of district and taluk boards	Mr. C. A. Innes.
22. Maintenance of inter-district roads	
23. Education and local boards	Mr. H. L. Braidwood.

SECRETARIAT NOTES ON SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION
AT THE COLLECTORS' CONFERENCE, 1915.

[In so far as the Secretariat notes in this collection of papers embody criticisms as distinguished from historical matter, it must be understood that such criticisms are merely intended to facilitate discussion and must not be regarded as representing the views of Government.]

Subject 1.—RELIEF TO COLLECTORS.

Mr. R. B. Wood's note is couched in the following terms :—

I divide my subject into seven main heads, viz. :—

- (1) Meaning of the phrase "in closer touch with his district"?
- (2) Is there a vast amount of routine which Collectors could be usefully relieved of?
- (3) Difficulties of getting rid of the above routine work.
- (4) The proper use of the personal assistant is based on the key note "responsibility".
- (5) Close inter-working of the Collector and the personal assistant is essential.
- (6) Comparative advantages of personal assistant and additional district magistrate.
- (7) The ideal arrangement for a heavy district would be an additional district magistrate and a huzur deputy collector.

2. *Meaning of the phrase "in closer touch with his district".*—With reference to the necessity of enabling the Collector to keep "in closer touch with his district"—

- (a) by relieving him of unnecessary routine
- (b) by the employment of a personal assistant—

I believe that there is a lot of cant in the phrase, and that it is used to discredit Collectors in comparison with the Collectors of the "good old times" which never existed.

Does it mean that a Collector should go to native parties, musical entertainments, school shows, and other miscellaneous functions: spend days out shooting in the villages: and come into personal contact with the people as much as possible, remaining in ignorance of the office subjects and files of papers except the most important ones?

3. *Is there a vast amount of routine which Collectors could be usefully relieved of?*

I divide routine work into three heads :—

- A. Files which are routine from beginning to end, or at least which deal with subjects of which the principles are so clear and well known that they may be considered to be routine.
- B. Files which may at any time rise above routine. These overlap with A.
- C. Files which are absolutely easy and pure routine, but which the Collector or the District Magistrate alone is competent to pass orders on under the law.

Prominent instances are treasure trove cases, criminal revision cases, income-tax cases, water-rate and encroachment appeals, village officers' appeals. These are the cases, especially those under the Criminal Procedure Code and the Income-tax Act, which weigh heaviest.

4. *Difficulties of getting rid of the above routine work.*—Of the above, the first need not go to the Collector at all: the second usually should go to him, if they are to be kept straight: the third can only be taken from him by a change in the Acts, but if this could be done it would give immense relief.

The advantage of the additional district magistrate is that he can take the Criminal Procedure Code cases.

As the Collector must take all the non-routine work, most of the subjects which give files under B, and all the routine work under C, it is obvious that it is exceedingly difficult to give a personal assistant his fair share of work.

5. *The proper use of the personal assistant is based on the key note "responsibility".*—It is waste of time to make him a superior sarishtadar and further this tends to demoralize the sarishtadar.

6. *Close inter-working of the Collector and the personal assistant is essential.*—For this reason especially, I prefer the additional district magistrate.

7. *Comparative advantages of personal assistant and additional district magistrate.*—The additional district magistrate can take Criminal Procedure Code work: and, having the same social customs and education as the Collector (I assume they are of the same race), they work naturally more easily and with more identity of outlook. He deals with sub-magistrates and with district board work better than the personal assistant does, and with more authority.

The personal assistant is likely to strengthen the working of the office, but often only at the expense of the sarishtadar, who sinks to the position of a head clerk.

The personal assistant is probably more amenable to orders than an additional district magistrate.

The additional district magistrate is much more liable to constant shifting.

This last point is the real objection to this officer. He must of course be somewhat senior as he is in authority over the other divisional officers in the district: and this means that the additional district magistrate's post is merely a short stepping stone to that of Collector or Judge. The only remedy is to give him Collector's or Judge's pay whenever a junior is promoted to act in those grades: as was done in Mr. Vibert's case at Madura.

8. *The ideal arrangement for a heavy district would be an additional district magistrate and a huzur deputy collector,* the latter to take charge of the office, take routine files in the Collector's subjects, look after the establishment, and

Act, 1914, gives Collectors authority to delegate to their personal assistants "any of the powers granted to them by any regulation now in force or that may hereafter be enacted."

3. A cardinal feature of the system of personal assistants is the discretion given to Collectors to employ these officers as they think fit; the method of employment, it is thought, must vary with the personal equations of the Collector and his assistant.

4. Paragraph 8 of Mr. Wood's note refers to the connected topic of the need for relief to divisional officers especially when over-burdened by judicial work. So far as concerns magisterial work, the District Magistrate can sometimes give relief by the exercise of his statutory power to transfer cases from the file of one magistrate to that of another. With regard to rent suits under the Madras Estates Land Act, 1908, Government have frequently recognized the need for additional help and there are usually at least two or three deputy collectors employed on special duty of this character.

Subject 2.—SELECTION OF PERSONAL ASSISTANTS TO COLLECTORS.

Mr. Aziz-ud-din's proposal is that "in districts where appointments of personal assistants have been sanctioned, the Collector should have full discretion to choose for the appointment any one of the deputy collectors on general duties posted by Government to his district." He states the reasons for the proposal in the following terms:—

As far as I can see there is no reason why a personal assistant deputy collector should be on a different footing from the other general duty deputy collectors in the same district. Under Board's Standing Order No. 119 Collectors are competent to transfer deputy collectors on general duty from one division to another within their districts. A similar privilege may be conceded to them in regard to their personal assistants. The Collector has the best opportunity of judging, having regard to local circumstances, which of the deputy collectors in the district is most competent to be his personal assistant. Cases might arise where, for some reason or other, a personal assistant posted to a district is not quite suitable as a personal assistant but might make a good officer in charge of a division. For effecting the necessary change the Collector has,

Subject 3.—TERMINATION OF DEPUTY COLLECTORS' PROBATION.

Mr. Aziz-ud-din's specific proposal is that "before a deputy collector on probation is reverted to his former appointment as tahsildar, etc., or before the probation is otherwise ceased, he must be given a warning as to what he is deficient in and an opportunity to rectify himself, if necessary, by placing him under a Collector other than the one who made the first report against him."

The grounds for this proposal are stated in the following terms :—

An officer appointed to be deputy collector is entrusted with responsible executive and judicial functions. He cannot be expected to discharge these satisfactorily and with the necessary amount of independence, if he has the fear always before him that the particular Collector, under whom he serves, has the power to get him reverted, without his being allowed even an opportunity of knowing what there is against him and of either explaining or rectifying it.

2. There is a rule in Bengal—*vide* correspondence embodied in Government Endorsement No. 1331/E-13-1, Revenue, dated 6th June 1913—which requires that all officers shall be informed of unfavourable comments in reports of superior officers. There is no reason for denying this privilege to the officers in this Presidency.

3. Unless the officer condemned knows the defect for which he has been found fault with, he cannot possibly endeavour to reform himself. It is undesirable to keep him in this state of ignorance having regard to the recently enunciated policy of the Government of India that an officer once condemned should not be condemned for ever. As matters now stand, when a condemned officer is transferred or is relegated to his former post, even the Collector of the district to which he is transferred or in which he is reverted to his former post is not apprised of the shortcomings which led to the condemnation of the officer concerned. The result is that the Collector is not in a position to watch the subordinate concerned with regard to his particular failing and to find out whether he has remedied his drawback.

Secretariat note.

The procedure commended is in practice frequently adopted by Government and instances can readily be cited of warnings to officers considered wanting in specified respects, of special arrangements to secure the opinion of a second Collector and of retrials of deputy collectors once reverted as unfit. But it seems clearly inexpedient to lay down any hard and fast rule on the subject. When the Bengal rule which Mr. Aziz-ud-din cites was considered by the Madras Government at the instance of the Secretary of State, the conclusion arrived at in G.O. No. 250, Public, dated 2nd March 1914, was as follows :—

It should be left to the discretion of the authority receiving a report to communicate the whole or a portion or the substance of it to the officer to whom it applies. An inflexible rule requiring the communication of all unfavourable remarks would be to the detriment of administrative efficiency.

In these circumstances each case should, it is thought, be dealt with on its merits. A warning and a further opinion are alike superfluous, if the officer whose fitness for the post of deputy collector is in question has been guilty of acts or omissions which, in the opinion of Government, clearly show him to be below the standard of capacity and integrity required of members of the Provincial Civil Service.

Subject 4.—VERNACULAR TESTS OF DEPUTY COLLECTORS.

Mr. Aziz-ud-din Sahib's views on this subject are stated in the following note:—

The rule requiring the passing of the vernacular test in two languages as a condition precedent to the appointment as deputy collector of an officer already in service may be done away with; the old rule requiring him to pass it before confirmation and within a period of about two years deserves to be restored.

In Board's Proceedings Mis. (Confidential) No. 2654-C 130, dated 17th July 1912, Collectors have been asked not to recommend persons who have not passed both tests for inclusion in the list of deputy collectors.

2. An officer who serves as tahsildar in a district whose vernacular is his mother tongue has hardly any facilities for qualifying himself in a second vernacular. A language is best learnt by the officer being posted to a district where it is the vernacular.

3. Indian Civil Service officers, deputy collectors directly recruited and district munsifs are not required to satisfy this condition before appointment. There is no reason why officers already in service who are of proved merit and ability should not be similarly appointed. The old rule, as far as my knowledge goes, did not cause any inconvenience either to the public or to the State. As a rule, the officers concerned were able to pass the examination in the second vernacular within the prescribed time and if there were any exceptions, they were few and far between.

4. The enforcement of the rule prevents a Collector from recommending deserving officers serving under him who qualify themselves in every respect except this.

5. A zealous and hard-working tahsildar especially in charge of a heavy taluk does not find time to read for the second language tests, whereas a junior tahsildar in charge of a light taluk or one whose sense of duty to his work is indifferent is able to get through the test with ease. It is unfair that the promotion of the former should be denied or delayed because of his failure to pass the language test.

Secretariat note.

The rule to which Mr. Aziz-ud-din takes exception, viz., that the vernacular tests must be passed *before* appointment to the post of deputy collector, was introduced by G.O. No. 949, Public, dated 13th October 1910. The old rule had led to constant requests for exemption and where, as was often the case, the grounds put forward were insufficient, the consequence was supersession or reversion. The change in the rules was made for the express purpose of obviating the discussion of such requests and the discontent caused by their refusal. It is now well understood that candidates for the post of deputy collector must qualify in two languages before they can hope to be appointed, and, so far as the information available in the Secretariat goes, the new rule works smoothly and has given no valid ground for complaint. Having been in force for five years the rule is well understood and operates as an inducement to revenue officers to obtain the prescribed language qualification before they reach the higher grades in the rank of tahsildar.

As a minor criticism it may be observed that district munsifs are required to pass the third-class vernacular test in one language before appointment, unless they have graduated in a vernacular.

*Subject 5.—TRAINING AND TRANSFER OF JUNIOR OFFICERS AND IMPROVEMENT
OF THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE VERNACULARS.*

Mr. Moscardi's views are indicated in the following notes:—

Meaning of getting into touch with district? Not only knowing what is printed in the gazetteer or acquaintance with prominent vakils at headquarters. District, from the point of view of revenue officer, means the people who pay the land revenue. Getting into touch with them involves two things: (i) long residence in district; (ii) ability to speak to them. Thus I arrive at the necessity for less transfer and better training.

2. Training at present not practical—what is the use of examination in whole of criminal and revenue law?—does any one presume to know the books?—any one acting on such presumption must be constant nuisance to Government.—Fact is, all work is done with books.—With more experience, work gets easier, but books never dispensed with.

3. One thing cannot be picked up by experience, viz., the language.—Who wants the language as much as we do? Only missionaries—these how trained?—importance of our officers being able to talk—uselessness to people of deaf and dumb officer—useful to people means useful to Government. But a man can pass examinations without ability to converse and can converse without passing examinations—this wrong—missionary scheme right scheme for us. One language, five hours a day for one year and nothing else—teacher to be paid by Government.

If any examinations necessary, then only in speaking and reading manuscripts; no need for us to write anything. No need to select people with odd vulgar speech—the ordinary speech of the farmers is the right speech for us.

4. If an officer required to learn a second language, he should be put off all duty to learn it for a year five hours a day—higher standard in second language is now sheer waste of time and trouble, mere purposeless annoyance, utterly

Subject 6.—USE OF HORSES BY REVENUE OFFICERS.

Mr. Braidwood states his views on the subject in the following terms :—

Under Board's Standing Order No. 125, paragraph 4 (Volume I, page 226), district officers from tahsildars upwards have to keep and maintain at least one serviceable riding horse or pony.

The rule, as it stands, does not compel them to use the horse. It is notorious that some officers never ride. Some of them keep a useless horse (commonly called a "T.A. horse"). Others, especially tahsildars, keep none and escape liability by pretending to own or pretending to purchase one if the omission is noticed.

It is suggested that the rule ought to be revised so as to compel the officers covered by it to make a practice of riding or should be altogether rescinded. A vague rule of this kind, which can be evaded, is only demoralizing.

2. The present tendency of revenue officers, i.e., Collectors and divisional officers, is to use motor cars rather than horses. This is encouraged by Government by the grant of advances to Collectors for the purchase of cars. A proposal has recently been made to extend this concession to divisional officers. It is doubtful whether this tendency is not against the public interest.

3. The use of horses is not encouraged at all. Advances are not obtainable for their purchase. If it is considered desirable to encourage the use of horses, such advances might be given.

4. Also the stringency of the interpretation of Article 1000 of the Civil Service Regulations regarding trainage of horses might be relaxed. At present trainage of horses in the district cannot be drawn except to *save time* (*vide* also Board's Standing Order, Volume II, page 415). The rules consider only the supposed interest of the public; they do not consider the safety

should usually be the case—there should, it is thought, be no great difficulty in obtaining the sanction of the Board to their standardization, in which case they will be printed as a matter of course at the Government Press, Madras.

5. In this view of the case the difficulty complained of would seem to be reduced to the case of "special forms" the necessity for which cannot be foreseen. Such cases are presumably rare and hardly seem to warrant a revision of the rules laid down in pursuance of the recommendations of the committee appointed in 1906, especially as the main ground of complaint is merely that "time has to be wasted in making out a case for the approval of the Board." This essential preliminary incidentally furnishes an economical check the value of which is not negligible.

Subject 9.—COLLECTORS AND DISTRICT FOREST OFFICERS.

Mr. Hemingway's proposal is "to modify the relations between the Collector and the District Forest Officer so as to bring them more into harmony with the relations between the District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police."

He explains the grounds of this proposal in the following words :—

As things are at present the Collector deals with or purports to deal with a great many matters which are purely forestry and little if at all connected with the general administration. In many cases the Collector signs long reports on forest matters which are entirely the work of his District Forest Officer. This has, I think, two unfortunate effects. Firstly, the Collector's work is increased by having to understand and assimilate a great deal of matter in which he has no particular interest and in which there is no need that he should be interested. The addition to his work in a district like Coimbatore on this account is very considerable. In the second place the system has a discouraging effect on the District Forest Officer, who is, in form at any rate, not responsible for a great deal of his own work and, in form at any rate, receives no manner of credit for it. I know some of our best forest officers have the greatest dislike to this system.

Subject 12.—THE SYSTEM OF APPOINTING VILLAGE OFFICERS.

Mr. Turing's comments on the present system are couched in the following terms:—

Apart from jamabandi revision I think the most essential of all reforms from the district officer's point of view is a thorough re-casting of the law and procedure relating to village officers, in fact the wholesale modification of the present hereditary system in the direction of a mere commonsense arrangement either with or without abandoning the hereditary principle.

2. I think these two Acts, Act II of 1894 and Act III of 1895, together with the Board of Revenue's rules regarding appeals, etc., have produced most undesirable results. However admirable in theory, they really result in most complicated rules of procedure and in a mass of appeals and litigation, which benefits nobody except the local vakils and affords a most undesirable outlet for the Indian passion for litigation over absolute trifles. It involves too an expenditure of time alike by the Board and by every Collector and divisional officer which is absolutely ridiculous, when it is remembered that the whole matter concerns the appointment of our lowest-paid class of revenue officers, and that in no case is the efficiency of such servants to perform their duties ever in dispute in these cases. I think the hereditary system as now worked is incompatible with the efficiency or discipline of the village officers, and it is certainly *unbusinesslike* to an extent that is almost incredible. I sent up a case to the Board the other day of six years' litigation over a dozen village offices which had involved work on the High Court, District Judge, Sub-Judge, Board of Revenue, Collector, divisional officer and an estate receiver.

3. I may add that the hereditary principle is not and cannot ever be fully compatible with the requirements we now insist on in the matter of examination qualifications, survey training, etc.

4. I should myself be inclined to retain the hereditary principle in the case of village munsifs in the modified form described below, but to abolish it entirely in the case of karnams. Anyway, if it is retained at all, it should prove more effective, and quite as consistent with Hindu family

Subject 14.—WORKING OF THE MADRAS ESTATES LAND ACT, 1908.

Mr. Macmichael states his proposals in the following terms:—

Procedure (Chapter XV).—The procedure in the trial of rent suits under the Act is unnecessarily complicated. The amounts involved in each suit are usually very small. Rent suits should be tried summarily like small cause suits.

Record-of-rights and settlement of rents (Chapter XI).—The Act provides for the settlement of rents being made after the completion of the survey and of the record-of-rights. This procedure causes unnecessary delay and expense. In many cases the record-of-rights is merely a means of securing a settlement of rents; this is the case in Ganjam. There appears to be no reason why a settlement of rents should not be ordered without having to go through the preliminary and expensive process of preparing a record-of-rights. This in fact is simply the procedure followed in ryotwari tracts. The value of a record-of-rights is very problematical; at the best, in practice, it is hardly more conclusive than the settlement register in a Government village. The Act should be amended so as to allow of a settlement of rents being ordered without the preparation of a record-of-rights. The provision in the chapter that the survey should be carried out under the Madras Survey and Boundaries Act, 1897, should be omitted, and the revenue officer should be authorized to make such survey and demarcation as he sees fit, the procedure being regulated by rules framed under the Act.

Secretariat note.

Jurisdiction and procedure.—Mr. Macmichael's proposal is that suits and applications should be "tried summarily like small cause suits." The procedure of small cause courts in the mufassal is governed by Chapter IV of the Provincial Small Cause Courts Act, 1887, which makes the provisions of the Civil Procedure Code generally applicable subject to certain important restrictions set out in section 7 of the Code itself and in Order No. I in the first schedule appended to the Code.

Subject 16.—SURVEY AND REGULAR LINES IN MUNICIPALITIES.

Mr. Wood states his views on the subject in the following terms:—

The revised rules for regular lines in municipalities should be expedited; and the work of laying down final regular lines should be pushed on. In order to enlist the proper co-operation of councils, and to provide them with funds for acquiring private strips of land where necessary, they should be allowed to sell strips behind the regular lines to the house-owners at the market price which they have to pay, and free of ground rent.

Secretariat note.

The order referred to by Mr. Wood is apparently G.O. No. 1487 M., dated 14th August 1912, wherein Government stated that orders would issue "in the Revenue Department amending the existing rules relating to regular line operations, so as more clearly to define their scope and purpose". With their Reference No. 2103, dated 23rd September 1912, the Board of Revenue submitted revised rules in regard to regular line operations.

The question was then subjected to discussion, with especial reference to the limitations imposed by sections 164, 165 and 165-A of the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1884 (as amended by Madras Act III of 1897). There were allusions to the confusion produced by dealing simultaneously with encroachments and with the regular line; it was observed that the final adjudication of a question of encroachment might take years and that the conclusions arrived at might affect the legality and appropriateness of regular lines laid down meanwhile on an assumption which was ultimately found to be unwarranted. Even if these objections were to some extent met by a change of procedure, it was pointed out that at best the potential advantages of laying down a regular line were dependent on the chances of demolition, dilapidation or destruction by fire. It was further suggested that municipal councils might be tempted to make some revenue by disposing of portions of streets under section 165-A, a course which might hereafter cost them dear. Lastly, it was observed that the problems raised by the process of making a

Subject 17.—VILLAGE HOUSE-SITE SURVEY.

Mr. Wood's suggestion is conveyed in the following terms:—

Cannot the streets and poramboke in village nattams be surveyed? This seems essential if the pressure on the open communal land and the increased over-crowding is to be checked.

Secretariat note.

Roads and streets in villages included within unions are now surveyed as separate units at the cost of the local boards concerned under G.O. No. 121 L., dated 19th January 1914. The Survey Committee has come to the conclusion that within village-sites in general it should suffice to survey "Public Works Department channels, local fund roads and any other really important cart-tracks and to mark public wells as "details." Anything beyond this, in the Committee's opinion, comes under the head of an urban survey and should be dealt with under the rules applicable to such surveys. Mr. Wood's suggestion will necessarily receive consideration in connection with paragraph 27 of the Survey Committee's report when the Board's remarks thereon are received.

2. The mapping of the details of streets and lanes in village-sites is of little practical use at present owing to the small scale of village maps—16 inches or 8 inches to the mile—and to the fact that the survey records supplied to the Revenue Department do not include the measurements of such details. The mapping of village-site on a separate sheet and larger scale would be expensive, but this may be considered expedient as an aid to the prevention of encroachments.

**Subject 18.—REVERSION OF VILLAGE SITE TO GOVERNMENT AND ASSESSMENT
OF BACKYARDS.**

Mr. Wood, who limits his remarks to the first question, namely, the reversion of village site to Government, states his views in the following terms:—

Cannot house-site in nattam revert to Government if left unbuilt upon by the owner? When house-site was originally set apart for houses, ought we to quietly allow the private owners to convert it into cocoanut topes, market gardens, etc., and *pro tanto* decrease the site available for house building? A good deal of the insanitary condition of the villages is due to this.

Secretariat note.

Reversion of village site to Government.

In the form, of * patta issued for house-sites in villages under the rules laid down in Board's Standing Order No. 21, a condition is inserted stipulating that if the site is not built upon within the time specified in the patta or if the building is subsequently abandoned for a period of one year, the Government shall have the right to re-enter forthwith and to take possession of the site or the site and building, as the case may be. Thus, no difficulty should arise in case of house-sites assigned under the rules. But what Mr. Wood presumably has in mind is the common case of house-sites, not covered by any written grants, which have been in occupation from periods prior to the promulgation of the house-site rules. In such cases it is doubtful whether it would now be feasible to evict the occupiers on the ground that the land has been diverted from its legitimate use.

2. Paragraph 4 of Board's Standing Order No. 21 while permitting "the cultivation of vegetables, tobacco, etc., within the recognized limits of backyard included in a house-site," lays down that persons cultivating

Subject 22.—MAINTENANCE OF INTER-DISTRICT ROADS.

Secretariat note.

This subject has not been brought forward by any particular Collector, but the Government desire to invite expressions of opinion on the following issues:—

(i) Whether there is at present a lack of co-ordination between the different districts in the matter of maintaining through lines of road communication? Does, for instance, one district maintain a trunk road in reasonable order and the next district either neglect it or maintain it at a very much lower standard?

(ii) Is closer co-operation between local boards in this matter necessary and desirable, and if so, what steps can be suggested to ensure such co-operation?

(iii) If co-operation is held to be necessary, should all inter-district roads be so dealt with, or should any system of common action and common supervision be confined to certain selected trunk roads excluding others which, though they pass from one district to another, are not regarded as main arteries through the Presidency?

It is *not* intended to raise the issue of provincial *versus* district board maintenance of trunk roads.

is in a position to decide as to a probationer's fitness for confirmation after only a three months' trial as a station-house officer. The real defect now, I believe, is that the sub-inspectors are confirmed too easily. I cannot explain the large proportion of comparatively useless officers on any other hypothesis. I would extend the period of practical training to at least two years. At least one year should be spent in charge of a station and at the end of the period the District Superintendent of Police personally should inspect the station. He should examine each and every case diary and note on the quality of the investigation. If his report is unsatisfactory the probationer should be given a further trial for another year, and if at the end of that year he is still found unsatisfactory his services should be dispensed with. The main thing is not to confirm a "rotter". But if this mistake is made, as I am afraid it has been made, I would rigorously apply the principles laid down in paragraph 85 of the Commission's report regarding the removal of inefficient officers.

I have done my best to avoid intemperate irresponsible criticism and have merely ventured to draw attention to a few obvious points bearing on an enormously important problem, and to make one or two obvious suggestions for improvement. I am afraid that my remarks are open to the criticism that while the cry has been much the wool has been little, but my main object in bringing the subject forward was to elicit the experience of the other more experienced District Magistrates present.

Subject 25.—DISTRICT MAGISTRATES AND CRIMINAL ADMINISTRATION.

Secretariat note.

The subject has not been brought forward by any particular officer, but the Government desire to have the following questions discussed:—

- (i) What measures District Magistrates take to keep themselves informed of the state of crime in their districts?
- (ii) Do they take any action if they find that crime is increasing or that the police are failing to detect offences?

Subject 26.—PROVISION OF LAND FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF CRIMINAL TRIBES.

Secretariat note.

This subject has not been brought forward by any particular officer, but the Government wish to have the point discussed. There are still a number of criminal tribes to be settled, but the difficulty of finding extents of land is hindering progress. It is believed that, if the Collectors gave their minds to it, it would be possible to find unoccupied blocks of fairly good agricultural land in most districts.

Subject 27.—RAILWAY TERMINAL TAX.

Mr. R. B. Wood's note.

Mr. Wood suggests, with reference to local and municipal taxation, the following new tax for municipalities, viz., a railway station tax of three pies on every passenger arriving in or leaving a municipal railway station, the tax being collected by adding *pro tanto* to the price of the tickets issued by the railway. No one would feel this tax, and the result would be for the Tanjore municipalities:—

						RS.
Kumbakōnam	...	...	...	...	...	30,000 a year.
Negapatam	...	...	...	...	...	21,000 "
Tanjore	...	...	...	...	...	27,000 "
Mayavaram	...	...	...	...	...	19,000 "
Tiruvalur	...	...	...	...	...	19,000 "

Such a tax would be supremely useful for providing a fund as interest on large loans for the improvement of municipal areas.
