

Govt. of {1891} Madras.  
REVENUE.

No. 1124 W of 22 April 1891

Communicated to  
the Suptg Engineer  
T. binde

1st of A.C. S.

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G.O., 11th April 1891, No. 296.

APRIL.

Season.

Board's Proceedings submitting letter from  
the Collector of Chingleput submitting remarks  
on the state of the — in the district.

With order

Sd/- T. binde

Sd/- T. binde

C. D. for S

11TH APRIL 1891, No. 296, REVENUE.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.  
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 25th March 1891, No. 167 :—

MR. CLOGSTOUN.

Read—the following letter from J. H. A. TREMENHEERE, Esq., Acting Collector of the Chingleput District, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated Saidápet, 17th March 1891, Reference on No. 884-Eng. :—

In continuation of my letter, No. 698-Eng., dated 5th March 1891, I have the honor to submit the following remarks on the state of the Chingleput district.

2. *Sub-Collector's division.*—Here, as indeed throughout the district, there is no change since my last report, except that, on the one hand, the ragi crop under wells is nearing maturity, while, on the other, pasturage is drying up and the water in cattle ponds is getting very low.

3. I have already, as instructed by the Board, commenced minor irrigation works costing Rs. 2,000 in Chingleput and Rs. 1,000 in Madurántakam, and this will have come as a welcome relief to the over-stocked labor-market.

4. In Chingleput Rs. 3,020 have been advanced for digging wells, and some Rs. 4,500 is expected to be advanced this month. The corresponding figures for Madurántakam are 6,320 and 6,000. The number of wells under construction cannot be accurately reported this week.

5. *Saidápet.*—With reference to paragraph 5 of Board's Proceedings, No. 102, dated 24th February 1891, I beg to forward in original the report of my Deputy Collector on the paupers of Poonamallee. The last three paragraphs describe a number of villages he has visited. After allowances made for exaggeration in the representations made to him, it does not appear that there is at present any distress calling for the immediate opening of relief works. Rupees 4,600 was placed at his disposal only four weeks ago to open more minor irrigation works, and twenty of them are said to be in rapid progress. The Divisional-officer has not properly reported on advances for digging wells, but, out of a grant of Rs. 13,500, the balance at the beginning of March was only Rs. 8,370, and the Tahsildar stated that he could not surrender any of this.

NOTE.—Balance on this day, 17th March 1891, being Rs. 3,330.

6. In paragraph 8 the Deputy Collector touches on a subject which may, as well be treated of here for the whole district—water-supply for men and cattle.

7. The water-level of most parts of the district is near the surface, while wells are numerous and well supplied. Of course the water-level has sunk with the deficiency of rain, but even now over much of the affected tracts it ranges in depth from 8 to 15 feet. It is thought in some quarters that by a little clamour Government will be induced to step in and deepen the wells; but at present I see nothing which the people themselves and the District Board cannot deal with.

8. There is no subject in which so much pressure is put upon inspecting officers as the deepening of the cattle ponds. Whatever village is visited, the first cry is still the same—the *kulam*; the wealthiest ryots are the most importunate, and the demand spreads to their influential relatives in Madras and makes its way into the press. But in a drought it is useless to excavate such ponds as are not supplied with springs; and even for such, the outlay required would, as the Deputy Collector says,

be enormous. It is throwing away money to spend less on a pond than Rs. 200 to 500 and the number which might be taken in hand may be roughly estimated at 500. Of course, in a late stage of a famine, such works would be useful as supplying labor, when remunerative works are nearing exhaustion; but the question is whether now we are to take labor off irrigational work, which gives some return for the capital spent and provides a food-supply, and put it on ponds for ensuring a supply of water for cattle, which are owned by not the poorest of the people. I think not. Not many ponds have dried up at present, but, without rain, the drought will develop by May.

9. *Ponnéri*.—For this taluk also the proper figures for Land Improvement Loans have not been submitted; but out of a total grant of Rs. 18,000, the balance on the 1st March was Rs. 14,860, of which none could be surrendered. The effect of the special establishment has not been felt until this month when it is certain that at least a large proportion of the latter sum will be advanced.

10. Besides five minor irrigation works, the embankment of the Arni river supplied labor to the numbers shown in the appended statement. The fluctuations and generally low numbers are due to the constant change of locality as the embankment progresses.

11. The Executive Engineer, Buckingham Canal, whom I had addressed respecting the diversion of the canal near Pulicat, informed me that he does "not propose to give employment on famine-relief works

to other than those coolies specially sent" by the Revenue Department. I pass over the inapplicability of the phrase "famine relief" when there is not a famine and wish to make a representation on this policy, which, I understand, is perhaps about to be affirmed by the Board and by Government. I venture this criticism with deference, and of course, if the policy is adopted, I shall do my best to make it a success.

12. In the first place we must have officers to issue tickets. Each of them must go round a number of villages, select, as I understand, those whom a contractor would not employ, and to these sick, weakly or aged people issue tickets. It is expected, if I am not mistaken, that these poor things will gratefully wend their way for perhaps some 10 or 15 miles, present their tickets and be taken on the works. It seems to me they will do nothing of the kind, but will either tear up the ticket or part with it to some able-bodied person. Then the Inspector, as the next step, will be obliged to persuade and promise, until he may (or may not) succeed in organizing a personally conducted excursion.

13. Now how does this compare in point of ease in working, with the almost automatic system we have at Ponnéri and Kadur? We open the works; people come; if too many come, we can increase the task of the able-bodied gangs. It may be asked, if people come to these works, why will they not come to works under the other system. The answer is twofold: first, the doubt whether they will be accepted if they come; secondly, under the come-if-you-please system it is found in practice that only the able-bodied come, and out of their excess earning help to support their infirm kinsfolk. I now drop the comparison, which I hope needs no further apology.

13-A. *Tiruvallūr*.—On the 11th a thunderstorm gathered near the Nāgalāpuram hills, with a rainfall of a third of an inch from Uttukōtei eastward to Tarachi, and one-tenth of an inch at Tiruvallūr. No rain to speak of fell a few miles east of Tarachi.

14. In its Proceedings, dated 24th February, No. 101, the Board remarked (paragraph 4) that a work had been opened at Kannipperu on 17th February and that works at Uttukōtei and Kagavakkam would shortly be started. This was based upon paragraph 17 of my report printed in Board's Proceedings, dated 24th February, No. 102, where I quoted the Executive Engineer as writing that he had arranged to give out the former work on the 17th, and would see what could be done with regard to the others. In these references, I would observe, it clearly appears, that the works were ordinary contract works, but it was obviously meant and expected that they would, to some extent, relieve the pressure. On the 25th February the Commissioner

wrote to me to get the Public Works Department to start these works as quickly as possible, and I took steps accordingly. On the 4th March Mr. Burlton informed me that he supposed neither the Kagavakkam nor the Kannipper contractors would get under weigh for a month, and spoke of its being impossible to execute a certain other work departmentally without additional establishment. In answer to another letter, he wrote on the 6th that he had ordered

\* Since commenced.

put in hand sharp. At this stage I received a disquieting demi-official letter from the Deputy Collector about the Periapalayam tract and started on the 9th morning to inspect it. While there with him I received his official report, dated the 8th, in which he thus expressed his fears even more strongly: "I am of opinion that starvation has fairly commenced."

15. Accompanied by Mr. Pinto, whom I asked to show me the worst villages he had been to, I inspected on the 9th Kannipper (173) and three villages due south of it; on the 10th, Tandalam (162), Sulmeni (160) and Palavakkam (212) on the road to Uttukōtei, and north of it, Sengarai (210), Kayadai (205) and Mukkarambakkam (201); on the 11th Senjiagaram (239) and Tarachi (227) on the road to Uttukōtei, and striking south-east from Palavakkam, Kalpattu (156) and Vengal (107); and on the 12th, Magaral (86) south of the Kortalayār in the fork of the roads, Karanei (87) and Kodavali (88). I forward in an appendix my notes, in which I have striven as far as possible to get definite facts.

16. In this tract the circumstances of the villages vary considerably. In some there is a good deal of ground-nut grown, which is now being harvested; in some the extent of cultivation, chiefly under wells, amounts to over 200 acres; in others there is no ground-nut and perhaps only 10 acres under wells. In very few villages is there sufficient employment for all the laborers even now in the ground-nut harvest; nor will the case be materially altered in 15 to 20 days' time when the ragi and other well crops come to maturity. These crops look in wonderful condition, but the population is based on the larger demand for labor made by rice cultivation and on higher wages than are paid at present. I should say at a rough estimate that a quarter of the laborers cannot be employed, and those who get employment (excepting the padials or farm laborers on fixed pay) have their wages largely reduced.

17. This state of things has led the poorest classes to fall back on unusual food. The rice crop is generally weeded of a large seeded grass called *māvaragu* (powder-millet), but the withering of the rice has this year preserved the grass, and its seeds have been most gratefully used. The ordinary field-ant collects and takes to its holes the seeds of many other grasses; and many persons are engaged in digging up these holes and making use of the seeds, which include those of grasses called arivrutthan, matthan-kay (*Cynosurus Egyptius*), nari-val (*Dactylis spicata*) and kudirei-kolambu (horse's hoof). I saw a good deal of these seeds and saw the method of collection. Generally, three persons work together—one digs, one takes out the seeds mixed with the earth, and the third separates the seeds from the earth; but the day's work gives a very scanty meal.

17-A. With such expedients it is to be expected that the physical condition of the poorest classes would wear the appearance of starvation; yet it is not so. Of the people of the 17 villages inspected by me, my notes show as follows:—

*Kannipper*.—Except a few syphilitic and other old cases, no case deserved notice.

*Purivakkam*.—One Pariah boy looks anæmic; four or five Pariah women and children are beginning to fall off.

General appearance of 40 women and 57 children of other classes, slightly, if it all, below par.

*Perumudivakkam*.—Of 29 men and boys, seven seem anæmic, of whom two are old cases. Of 18 women and 27 children, they might be called rather low; but three Irula women with five children seem on the turn from good to bad.

*Nei-veli*.—Of 54 men and boys (ryots), one man below condition. Of 103 women and children, 7 or 8 getting low.

The Pariahs in fair condition.

*Tandalam*.—Twenty men seen; condition fair.

*Sulméni*.—No remark.

*Palāvakkam*.—A prosperous village.

*Sengarei*.—Satisfactory.

*Pariahs*.—Six men all right; 12 women and 14 children; here, perhaps, a slight falling off, but nothing definite.

*Kayadai*.—Eighty-three Pariahs examined; condition normal.

*Pudukuppam*.—(Hamlet of Mukkambakkam).—Ryots, all right. Pariahs, men and boys as usual, women, as usual or a trifle below par.

*Senjiagaram*.—As usual.

*Turachi*.—Paracheri. Out of 117 persons, five boys seem below par, but their fathers possess cattle; a girl and a baby have fever; two children seem rather pulled down; the rest as usual; but perhaps there is a very slight falling off in the women and children.

*Kalpattu*.—No remark.

*Vengal*.—No distress.

*Mágaral*.—A good deal of distress, but no perceptible falling off in physical appearance.

*Karanei*.—Women and children not being properly nourished. The Deputy Collector thinks they are on the turn, and he may be right. A very poor village, with only 10 acres under wells. Balance of kist Rs. 200, of which I stopped the collection.

*Kodavali*.—Women and children perhaps a trifle below par.

18. The result of my inspection was to convince me that this tract cannot now afford to rely upon labour supplied by contract works, but must have departmental work at once. For this I believe Mr. Burlton requires another overseer, and I beg

\* The Superintending Engineer has telegraphed be addressed to give him \* one. The work I would suggest is the repair of the

† Of this, Rs. 1,750 is for unskilled work. Vadamadurei tank, for which an estimate for Rs. 2,410† has been sent to the Superintending Engineer, to be followed by the repair of the Vadamadurei and Kaga-vakkam supply-channels. A regular programme will be sent in two days.

19. I enclose a statement showing the number of persons employed on the several works.

#### ENCLOSURE.

From M.R.Ry. T. N. RAMACHANDRA AIYAR Avargal, B.A., Deputy Collector, General Duties, Chingleput District, to the Collector of the Chingleput District, dated Konnur, 10th March 1891, Ref. on No. 348-Eng.

With reference to your personal instructions and to your reference on No. 118-S.L.R., received on the 8th instant, I have the honor to report as follows.

2. I left Saidápet on the morning of the 2nd instant and reached Poonamallee in the afternoon. On my arrival there, I asked the Deputy Tahsildar if he was aware of any increased influx of paupers there, and he said no. I then wanted to see Major Woodhouse and enquired about his whereabouts, when I learnt that he had just then left Poonamallee on ten days' leave. I have thus not had the advantage of ascertaining from him personally all about the paupers regarding whom he wrote to you. I understood, however, that his clerk as well as the Police station-house officer and the cantonment sanitary inspector could give me all the required information. I then sent word to the latter two officers to meet me next day at the Cantonment Magistrate's office. On going there next morning and making the needful enquiry, I learnt that the beggars who troubled Major Woodhouse were mostly residents of the cantonment and that only two of them were recent arrivals from outside. I asked the head constable to try and produce before me some of the beggars and waited for them for some time, employing my time in the meanwhile in

examining the sub-treasury. Only one beggar, an old woman of about 70 years of age, was produced by the head constable who stated that she was one of the two persons who had come from outside. I then entered into a conversation with her, in the course of which, she stated that she was living in Bangalore before and came to Poonamallee about 4 or 5 months ago, that she had a house at Poonamallee but that its occupants would not allow her to enter it, and that she had consequently to lead the life of a beggar. I then left the place and came away to my residence, leaving instructions with the head constable and the Sanitary Inspector to collect all the beggars in the evening when, I said, I would call again at the Cantonment Magistrate's office.

3. Accordingly, I went there again in the evening and found 13 paupers collected together and kept ready for my inspection. Two of them were males and were suffering from corrosive leprosy. The remaining 11 were all females of different ages ranging from 30 to 70. They all looked well enough for their age; 3 of them especially, who were Mahomedan women, looked strong and healthy and were comparatively younger. They were also well clothed. One of the paupers has a son who lives by cooly work, but his earnings are stated to be barely sufficient for his own maintenance. Another has an unmarried daughter who cannot appear in public and she maintains herself and her daughter by what she is able to earn by begging. The others denied having any relatives in Poonamallee. All of them admitted, however, that they have been living in the cantonment from their infancy and that they had all along earned their livelihood by begging. The old woman who was produced before me the previous day as a foreign beggar admitted now that she had been in Poonamallee for the last 10 or 12 months. When I asked these people as to why, instead of begging from house-to-house, they should not work in private houses as sweepers, &c., and earn their bread more honorably, they replied, "Well, Sir, we are not accustomed to such kind of work—we have managed to pull on well enough these so many years by begging. Why should we do sweepers work now?"

4. I asked the head constable and the Sanitary Inspector whether these were all the paupers who appeared before Major Woodhouse. They said that there were some more but that they were not forthcoming as they had gone about begging. The Cantonment Magistrate's clerk who was now present informed me that the beggars who appeared before Major Woodhouse were about 25 in number and that besides the two foreign paupers above referred to, there were a few others who were not residents of the cantonment and who had come from other villages. He could give me, however, no information as to where they were and why they had left their villages, but stated that they never afterwards turned up before the Cantonment Magistrate.

5. Not contented with these inquiries, I drove through the streets of the cantonment more than once, but could notice no large number of paupers. I saw a stray one here and there and that was all. From all that I have been able to learn from others and see for myself, I am led to conclude that the paupers, regarding whom Major Woodhouse made a reference to you, are mostly, if not wholly, resident mendicants of the place, that they are habitual beggars and not "season" paupers if I may so call them, and that there is at present no increased influx of paupers into the cantonment from outlying villages. A number of military pensioners draw their pensions from the sub-treasury here every month. Large payments are also made monthly by the Commandant to soldiers and others of the Military Department. On these occasions, I understand, the paupers under reference invariably appear and beg for a few pices from each pensioner, &c. In this way they get a few annas each every month and it is also possible that they do some light work occasionally for wages though they would not admit it before me. When the money obtained in these ways is spent, they of course resort to begging. It is just possible that in a season like this their profession of begging does not pay them so well as hitherto, but the fact of their having been able to get on for so many years, coupled with their general disinclination to do some work, and thereby earn their bread shows that they are not so destitute of means or resources as they are apt to be mistaken and that they are not yet hard pinched.

6. So much for the paupers of Poonamallee. Now I shall briefly describe what I observed in the other villages inspected by me. The greater portion of the tract I visited during my halt of three days at Poonamallee is comprised in the triangular block bounded by the western trunk road on one side, by the Porur-Tirunageswaram road on another, and by the Chembrambakkam tank on the third. The villages outside this block, which I inspected, are Sennirkuppam on the north, Porur, Valasaravakkam and Ramapuram on the east; and Venkatapuram and Kunnathur on the south. Leaving Poonamallee I went to Nemam on the 6th instant and left it on the evening of the 8th idem. During these three days I inspected the whole of the tract bounded on the north by the Coovum river, on the west by the Tiruvallúr and Conjeeveram taluks, on the south by the western trunk road to Conjeeveram, and on the east by a line drawn at right angles to the western trunk road from the point where the road to Tiruvallúr branches. In most of the villages I visited there was some cultivation or other going on, chiefly ragi or navarai, but the extent of such cultivation was but small and proportionate to the number and capacity of the wells in existence. This gives occupation to a limited number of pariahs and other laborers in each village. The importance of the extension of these wells cannot be overrated; the ryots would appear to readily appreciate their advantages at this time, for I had only to mention the matter to them to induce them to apply for loans in large numbers. In two or three days 23 applications were made to me for the aggregate sum of Rs. 4,125 and I am confident that many more will

come in shortly. Such of the laborers as are not employed on cultivation earn their livelihood by doing cooly work such as reaping paddy which is going on in some places, breaking stones, &c., or by making and selling *bratties*, by cutting grass, &c. These people, however, do not seem to get sufficient work everywhere. The parayars of Kunnathur, Malayambakam and Ramapuram villages and the vanners or pallies, &c., of Ramapuram (a hamlet of Karunakara-cheri) and Anakattucheri (a hamlet of Soranjeri) represented to me that they were in want of work. The ryots of Meyyur also would appear to be in want of employment. Some of them now go to Nemam where the tank is under repairs by the Public Works Department, but this work, they said, would soon terminate.

7. I have made special inquiries as to the prevalence of any sickness among the labouring classes due to starvation or other cause and am glad to state that, with the solitary exception of the paracheri at Kudappakam—the westernmost village of this taluk—all the villages I visited enjoy perfect freedom from any sickness whatever. In the Kudappakam paracheri, however, fever has been prevalent for the last two weeks or so and there are at present 14 patients suffering from it. I sent for a few pariahs, one of whom was suffering from the fever, and questioned them as well as the village officers as to the cause of the sickness. None suggested that it was due to starvation and the pariahs I saw did not seem to me to have been starving, though they said that their daily earnings were very small owing to paucity of work. The hospital assistant at Poona-mallee has been instructed to proceed to the spot forthwith and to report to me his opinion as to the cause of the sickness.

8. Now I come to a matter which is of vital importance to the people as well as the cattle. It is water-supply. This is generally inadequate in most villages. The tanks are dry in many places and it is scarcely necessary to add that the cattle are in consequence put to inconvenience. It would be something if at least the supply in wells was sufficient for all requirements. This, unfortunately, is not the case. At Meyyur, a village just south of Kudappakam above referred to, there are about 20 or 30 houses, but there are only two wells in each of which there is less than half a foot of water. The result is that the people are put to great difficulty. There are two tanks, one of which is quite dry and the other contains a small quantity of muddy water which is not fit even for cattle to drink. The cattle are consequently driven to a pool of water in the limits of Conjeeveram taluk and at a distance of about a mile and a half from the village. When that pool also dries up, suffering will become intense. As for the people, they cannot get the required supply from the two wells above referred to and consequently resort to a spring at a distance excavated in the bed of a channel which feeds the Nemam tank. The water obtained from this spring is muddy and quite unfit for drinking purposes, but they cannot be prevented from making use of it until other provision is made. The nearest place where they can get good water is the tank at Kudappakam, but this is at a distance of about a mile and the people will not go that distance because they cannot realize the importance of having good water to drink. Further, the supply in this tank will also fail two or three weeks hence. A similar difficulty is felt at Irulappalairam, a hamlet of Kuttambakam. Amudurmedu, another village, which consists only of a few pariah huts, suffers from the same difficulty. The supply of water in the other villages I have yet visited will last for a while yet, but by the end of this month it must fail in many places unless we have some falls of rain in the meantime. The question of the improvement of water-supply, therefore, demands serious consideration now. As it affects not one or two villages, but a large number of them, the outlay involved must be enormous and quite beyond the power of the Taluk or even the District Board to meet. It seems, therefore, necessary to bring the matter to the notice of the Board of Revenue and Government, if this has not already been done, in order that they may be prepared to face the situation. As regards the improvement of the water-supply in Meyyur and the other two places mentioned above, I have called for estimates from the Deputy Tahsildar. As soon as they are received I shall start the Board.

9. I note below the result of my inquiries regarding the following paracheries which are included in the list you gave me in person:—

(1) *Valasaravakkam*.—There are about 45 houses containing a population of about 240. No sickness or starvation here. There are about 10 acres of ragi cultivation which give employment to some of the pariahs. Cutting grass and cooly work provide work for the rest. No work available in tanneries now. The water-supply for people is fair for the present. There is a big well (Doravu) which contains about 3 feet of water and the water is good. There is a *kasam* close by which contains some supply useful for cattle.

(2) *Ramapuram*.—About 30 houses here. Population about 180. No sickness or starvation; 10 acres of ragi cultivation; cutting grass and cooly work give employment to those who are not engaged in cultivation. No work available in tanneries now. No sales of cattle for want of means have yet occurred. Two wells exist at present, and they contain about 2 feet of water. There is a tank at a short distance which, if deepened, would be useful for both the Sudras and the Pariahs.

(3) *Kocur, Chinnapannicheri and Periapannicheri*.—These paracheries are better off. No sickness; sufficient work available for the present.

(4) *Nattam (Kunnathur)*.—About 100 houses and 650 population. Fifty acres of ragi cultivation going on which give employment to some. The rest go to other villages in quest of work and return home in the evening. Grass-cutting is not resorted to by these pariahs. They make *bratties* and take them to Pallavaram and other places for sale. On some days they get no work at all, when it would seem that they forego the night meal. The monegar is aware of two instances in which cattle were sold for want of means of subsistence. There is a single well which contains 7 feet of water. It did not get dried up even during the famine of 1876-77. There is a tank which contains about 3 feet of water. This will be useful for cattle. No sickness among the people or the cattle.

(5) *Kollacheri*.—This village is purely a paracheri. It contains 28 houses and a population of 185. Four acres of ragi and 4 acres of paddy cultivation. This gives employment to about 10 persons. Others do cooly work, such as breaking stones, &c. Work is not available always. No sickness. There is but a single well; but quite close to the house site is an *odai* in which springs are dug.

*Resolution*—dated 25th March 1891, No. 167.

Submitted to Government.

2. There has been no improvement in the prospects since the date of the last report. Prices have remained stationary, and there has been no fall of rain, except a trifling quantity in a portion of the Tiruvallur taluk on the 11th instant. At the headquarters station of the taluk it registered one-tenth of an inch, while in the tract from Uttukotai eastward to Tarachi, it was about a third of an inch.

3. In the affected parts of the sub-division (Chingleput—Madurantakam taluks chiefly) ragi under wells is coming to maturity, while pasturage is drying up and water in cattle-ponds is getting low. Minor irrigation works, estimated to cost Rs. 3,000, have been started, and these with the private construction of wells, which appears to be going on on a considerable scale, will doubtless afford means of livelihood to those who are in need of work. Loans for the construction of wells have already been advanced to the extent of over Rs. 9,000 in the two taluks and a further sum of Rs. 10,500 is expected to be similarly advanced before the end of the month. In addition to these, the Public Works Department are removing silt from the Buckingham canal on which 200 men were employed on the 14th instant.

4. *Saidapet taluk*.—At Poonamallee, the Deputy Collector met with some professional beggars who expressed themselves to be unwilling to work for wages. He has not met with any cases of starvation, but, as remarked by the Collector, the Deputy Collector's visits were confined chiefly to villages near the Chembrambakam tank. The Deputy Collector refers to the necessity for improving the water-supply, but the Collector is opposed as a general rule to money being spent upon such improvements at the early stages of distress.

There is no reason to apprehend any general failure of water-supply such as is hinted at by the Deputy Collector. In exceptional cases some contribution might be made from Local Fund to enable the villagers to improve the water-supply.

5. Some Rs. 4,600, have been allotted for expenditure on minor irrigation works in this taluk, and twenty tanks are reported to be under repair. The villagers are eager to construct wells on a large scale, and they have already taken loans to the extent of more than Rs. 10,000, and there was on the 17th instant, still a balance of Rs. 3,300, which will doubtless be soon lent. The construction of these wells, in addition to the minor irrigation works already in progress will suffice to meet the demand for labor at all events for a time.

6. *Ponneri taluk*.—About Rs. 3,140 were advanced for the construction of wells up to the 1st instant and with the aid of the special establishment recently entertained, in the Collector hopes to utilize the balance, Rs. 14,860, before the end of the month. In addition to the embankment of the Arni, five minor irrigation works are in progress in this taluk, and the number of coolies employed on all the works on the 21st of this month was 1,528. With reference to the Collector's remarks in paragraphs 11 to 13, his attention will be drawn to the instructions of Government in paragraph 1 of G.O., dated 2nd February 1891, No. 67, under which "all who seek for work, whether capable of performing a full task for an able-bodied laborer or not, must be admitted." The Board learns that the letter of the Executive Engineer to which the Collector refers

in paragraph 11 was not intended to have the meaning given to it by the Collector; and instructions issued on the 24th instant by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation make it quite clear that all applicants for work are to be employed on the canal.

7. *Tiruvallūr taluk*.—There was some delay owing to the want of overseers in starting some large irrigation works in the north of the taluk, but the Board understands that this want has since been met. On the 21st current, five major irrigation works were under repair by the Public Works Department with 442 coolies, and 26 minor works under the supervision of the Revenue Department with 599 coolies. From the Collector's report portions of the Peryapalam tract appear to be in a bad condition. Some of the poorer classes are living upon insufficient food. In some of these villages, ground-nut harvest is going on, while in some others the ragi under wells is expected to be ripe for harvest in a fortnight or so. There is a good deal of ground-nut in some villages and none in others, while the area under ragi varies from below 10 to 200 acres. Neither the present ground-nut harvest, nor the expected harvest of ragi and other well crops, "can give sufficient employment for all the laborers." The Collector considers that a quarter of the laboring classes cannot get employment; and that those who get it (excepting the farm servants on fixed pay) have their wages largely reduced, the consequence being that the poorest classes are thrown back upon unusual food, such as the seeds of "mavaragu," a weed largely found in rice fields which have withered this year, and the seeds of other grasses preserved by ants, and some few were seen by the Collector who were falling off in condition.

Mr. Tremenhoe is of opinion that the tract in question cannot now afford to rely upon labor supplied by contract works, and recommends that the repairs of the Vadamadurei tank should be undertaken at once as a departmental work to be followed by the repairs of Vadamadurei and Kagavakkam supply-channels. An estimate, amounting to Rs. 2,410, for the repairs of the tank, which includes Rs. 1,750 for unskilled labor, appears to have been already sent to the Superintending Engineer. The necessary orders for the immediate commencement of these, and other large works that may be necessary, have already been issued in G.O., dated 18th March 1891, No. 213.

8. No report of either the Sub-Collector or the Tiruvallūr Divisional Deputy Collector has been forwarded to the Board. In future the reports of inspections made by all the Divisional officers should be submitted to the Board. The condition of the people in the affected villages should be carefully noticed and prompt intimation should be given to the Board should the necessity for granting gratuitous relief manifest itself in any particular tract.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) P. RAJARATNA MUDALIAR,  
Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.  
,, Collector of the Chingleput District.  
,, Land Revenue Department.

ORDER—dated 11th April 1891, No. 296, Revenue.

Miscellaneous.

Recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. A. GALTON,  
Secretary to Government.

To the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture.  
,, the Public Works Department.

Exd. T. K. Narayana Aiyangar.

80 Copies.

Gobt. of {1891} Madras.  
REVENUE.

No 1124 Wd/22 April 1891

Communicated to  
the Suptg Engineer  
I circle.

1st of A.C. S.

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G.O., 11th April 1891, No. 296.

APRIL.

Season.

Board's Proceedings submitting letter from  
the Collector of Chingleput submitting remarks  
on the state of the — in the district.

With order

Lt. I circle

Lt. II circle

C. D. for I

Gobt. of {1891} Madras.  
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With order

Lt. II circle

Lt. V circle

C. D. for I

Gobt. of {1891} Madras.  
REVENUE.

No 1124 Wd 22 Apr 1891

Communicated to  
the Suptg Engineer  
Chingle

144 A.C. I

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G.O., 11th April 1891, No. 296.

APRIL.

Season.

Board's Proceedings submitting letter from  
the Collector of Chingleput submitting remarks  
on the state of the — in the district.

With order

Sd/- T. Kinch

Sd/- II Kinch

C. D. for I

11TH APRIL 1891, No. 296, REVENUE.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.  
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement,  
Land Records and Agriculture), dated 25th March 1891, No. 167 :—

MR. CLOGSTOUN.

Read—the following letter from J. H. A. TREMENHEERE, Esq., Acting Collector  
of the Chingleput District, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue  
Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agricul-  
ture, dated Saidápet, 17th March 1891, Reference on No. 884-Eng. :—

In continuation of my letter, No. 698-Eng., dated 5th March 1891, I have the  
honor to submit the following remarks on the state of the Chingleput district.

2. *Sub-Collector's division.*—Here, as indeed throughout the district, there is no  
change since my last report, except that, on the one hand, the ragi crop under wells  
is nearing maturity, while, on the other, pasturage is drying up and the water in  
cattle ponds is getting very low.

3. I have already, as instructed by the Board, commenced minor irrigation  
works costing Rs. 2,000 in Chingleput and Rs. 1,000 in Madurantakam, and this will  
have come as a welcome relief to the over-stocked labor-market.

4. In Chingleput Rs. 3,020 have been advanced for digging wells, and some  
Rs. 4,500 is expected to be advanced this month. The corresponding figures for  
Madurantakam are 6,320 and 6,000. The number of wells under construction  
cannot be accurately reported this week.

5. *Saidápet.*—With reference to paragraph 5 of Board's Proceedings, No. 102,  
dated 24th February 1891, I beg to forward in original the report of my Deputy  
Collector on the paupers of Poonamallee. The last three paragraphs describe a  
number of villages he has visited. After allowances made for exaggeration in the  
representations made to him, it does not appear that there is at present any distress  
calling for the immediate opening of relief works. Rupees 4,600 was placed at his dis-  
posal only four weeks ago to open more minor irrigation works, and twenty of them are  
said to be in rapid progress. The Divisional-officer has not properly reported on  
advances for digging wells, but, out of a grant of Rs. 13,500, the balance at the begin-  
ning of March was only Rs. 8,370, and

NOTE.—Balance on this day, 17th March 1891, being Rs. 3,330. the Tahsildar stated that he could not  
surrender any of this.

6. In paragraph 8 the Deputy Collector touches on a subject which may as well  
be treated of here for the whole district—water-supply for men and cattle.

7. The water-level of most parts of the district is near the surface, while wells  
are numerous and well supplied. Of course the water-level has sunk with the defi-  
ciency of rain, but even now over much of the affected tracts it ranges in depth  
from 8 to 15 feet. It is thought in some quarters that by a little clamour Government  
will be induced to step in and deepen the wells; but at present I see nothing which  
the people themselves and the District Board cannot deal with.

8. There is no subject in which so much pressure is put upon inspecting officers  
as the deepening of the cattle ponds. Whatever village is visited, the first cry is  
still the same—the *kulam*; the wealthiest ryots are the most importunate, and the  
demand spreads to their influential relatives in Madras and makes its way into the  
press. But in a drought it is useless to excavate such ponds as are not supplied with  
springs; and even for such, the outlay required would, as the Deputy Collector says,

be enormous. It is throwing away money to spend less on a pond than Rs. 200 to 500 and the number which might be taken in hand may be roughly estimated at 500. Of course, in a late stage of a famine, such works would be useful as supplying labor, when remunerative works are nearing exhaustion; but the question is whether now we are to take labor off irrigational work, which gives some return for the capital spent and provides a food-supply, and put it on ponds for ensuring a supply of water for cattle, which are owned by not the poorest of the people. I think not. Not many ponds have dried up at present, but, without rain, the drought will develop by May.

9. *Ponnéri*.—For this taluk also the proper figures for Land Improvement Loans have not been submitted; but out of a total grant of Rs. 18,000, the balance on the 1st March was Rs. 14,860, of which none could be surrendered. The effect of the special establishment has not been felt until this month when it is certain that at least a large proportion of the latter sum will be advanced.

10. Besides five minor irrigation works, the embankment of the Arni river supplied labor to the numbers shown in the appended statement. The fluctuations and generally low numbers are due to the constant change of locality as the embankment progresses.

11. The Executive Engineer, Buckingham Canal, whom I had addressed respecting the diversion of the canal near Pulicat, informed me that he does "not propose to give employment on famine-relief works to other than those coolies specially sent" by the Revenue Department. I pass over the inapplicability of the phrase "famine relief" when there is not a famine and wish to make a representation on this policy, which, I understand, is perhaps about to be affirmed by the Board and by Government. I venture this criticism with deference, and of course, if the policy is adopted, I shall do my best to make it a success.

12. In the first place we must have officers to issue tickets. Each of them must go round a number of villages, select, as I understand, those whom a contractor would not employ, and to these sick, weakly or aged people issue tickets. It is expected, if I am not mistaken, that these poor things will gratefully wend their way for perhaps some 10 or 15 miles, present their tickets and be taken on the works. It seems to me they will do nothing of the kind, but will either tear up the ticket or part with it to some able-bodied person. Then the Inspector, as the next step, will be obliged to persuade and promise, until he may (or may not) succeed in organizing a personally conducted excursion.

13. Now how does this compare in point of ease in working, with the almost automatic system we have at Ponnéri and Kadur? We open the works; people come; if too many come, we can increase the task of the able-bodied gangs. It may be asked, if people come to these works, why will they not come to works under the other system. The answer is twofold: first, the doubt whether they will be accepted if they come; secondly, under the come-if-you-please system it is found in practice that only the able-bodied come, and out of their excess earning help to support their infirm kinsfolk. I now drop the comparison, which I hope needs no further apology.

13-A. *Tiruvallūr*.—On the 11th a thunderstorm gathered near the Nāgalāpūram hills, with a rainfall of a third of an inch from Uttukotei eastward to Tarachi, and one-tenth of an inch at Tiruvallūr. No rain to speak of fell a few miles east of Tarachi.

14. In its Proceedings, dated 24th February, No. 101, the Board remarked (paragraph 4) that a work had been opened at Kannipperu on 17th February and that works at Uttukotei and Kagavakkam would shortly be started. This was based upon paragraph 17 of my report printed in Board's Proceedings, dated 24th February, No. 102, where I quoted the Executive Engineer as writing that he had arranged to give out the former work on the 17th, and would see what could be done with regard to the others. In these references, I would observe, it clearly appears, that the works were ordinary contract works, but it was obviously meant and expected that they would, to some extent, relieve the pressure. On the 25th February the Commissioner

wrote to me to get the Public Works Department to start these works as quickly as possible, and I took steps accordingly. On the 4th March Mr. Burlton informed me that he supposed neither the Kagavakkam nor the Kannipper contractors would get under weigh for a month, and spoke of its being impossible to execute a certain other work departmentally without additional establishment. In answer to another letter, he wrote on the 6th that he had ordered

\* Since commenced.

\* Kannipper and Kagavakkam tanks to be

put in hand sharp. At this stage I received a disquieting demi-official letter from the Deputy Collector about the Periapalayam tract and started on the 9th morning to inspect it. While there with him I received his official report, dated the 8th, in which he thus expressed his fears even more strongly: "I am of opinion that starvation has fairly commenced."

15. Accompanied by Mr. Pinto, whom I asked to show me the worst villages he had been to, I inspected on the 9th Kannipper (173) and three villages due south of it; on the 10th, Tandalam (162), Sulmeni (160) and Palavakkam (212) on the road to Uttukotei, and north of it, Sengarai (210), Kayadai (205) and Mukkarambakkam (201); on the 11th Senjiagaram (239) and Tarachi (227) on the road to Uttukotei, and striking south-east from Palavakkam, Kalpattu (156) and Vengal (107); and on the 12th, Magaral (86) south of the Kortalayār in the fork of the roads, Karanei (87) and Kodavali (88). I forward in an appendix my notes, in which I have striven as far as possible to get definite facts.

16. In this tract the circumstances of the villages vary considerably. In some there is a good deal of ground-nut grown, which is now being harvested; in some the extent of cultivation, chiefly under wells, amounts to over 200 acres; in others there is no ground-nut and perhaps only 10 acres under wells. In very few villages is there sufficient employment for all the laborers even now in the ground-nut harvest; nor will the case be materially altered in 15 to 20 days' time when the ragi and other well crops come to maturity. These crops look in wonderful condition, but the population is based on the larger demand for labor made by rice cultivation and on higher wages than are paid at present. I should say at a rough estimate that a quarter of the laborers cannot be employed, and those who get employment (excepting the padials or farm laborers on fixed pay) have their wages largely reduced.

17. This state of things has led the poorest classes to fall back on unusual food. The rice crop is generally weeded of a large seeded grass called *māvaragu* (powder-millet), but the withering of the rice has this year preserved the grass, and its seeds have been most gratefully used. The ordinary field-ant collects and takes to its holes the seeds of many other grasses; and many persons are engaged in digging up these holes and making use of the seeds, which include those of grasses called arivrutthan, matthan-kay (*Cynosurus Egyptius*), nari-val (*Dactylis spicata*) and kudirei-kolambu (horse's hoof). I saw a good deal of these seeds and saw the method of collection. Generally, three persons work together—one digs, one takes out the seeds mixed with the earth, and the third separates the seeds from the earth; but the day's work gives a very scanty meal.

17-A. With such expedients it is to be expected that the physical condition of the poorest classes would wear the appearance of starvation; yet it is not so. Of the people of the 17 villages inspected by me, my notes show as follows:—

*Kannipper*.—Except a few syphilitic and other old cases, no case deserved notice.

*Purivakkam*.—One Pariah boy looks anæmic; four or five Pariah women and children are beginning to fall off.

General appearance of 40 women and 57 children of other classes, slightly, if it all, below par.

*Perumudivakkam*.—Of 29 men and boys, seven seem anæmic, of whom two are old cases. Of 18 women and 27 children, they might be called rather low; but three Irula women with five children seem on the turn from good to bad.

*Nei-veli*.—Of 54 men and boys (ryots), one man below condition. Of 103 women and children, 7 or 8 getting low.

The Pariahs in fair condition.

*Tandalam*.—Twenty men seen; condition fair.

*Sulméni*.—No remark.

*Palavakkam*.—A prosperous village.

*Sengarei*.—Satisfactory.

*Pariahs*.—Six men all right; 12 women and 14 children; here, perhaps, a slight falling off, but nothing definite.

*Kayadai*.—Eighty-three Pariahs examined; condition normal.

*Pudukkuppam*.—(Hamlet of Mukkambakkam).—Ryots, all right. Pariahs, men and boys as usual, women, as usual or a trifle below par.

*Senjiagaram*.—As usual.

*Tarachi*.—Paracheri. Out of 117 persons, five boys seem below par, but their fathers possess cattle; a girl and a baby have fever; two children seem rather pulled down; the rest as usual; but perhaps there is a very slight falling off in the women and children.

*Kalpattu*.—No remark.

*Vengal*.—No distress.

*Mágaral*.—A good deal of distress, but no perceptible falling off in physical appearance.

*Karanei*.—Women and children not being properly nourished. The Deputy Collector thinks they are on the turn, and he may be right. A very poor village, with only 10 acres under wells. Balance of kist Rs. 200, of which I stopped the collection.

*Kodavali*.—Women and children perhaps a trifle below par.

18. The result of my inspection was to convince me that this tract cannot now afford to rely upon labour supplied by contract works, but must have departmental work at once. For this I believe Mr. Burlton requires another overseer, and I beg that the Public Works Department may be addressed to give him \* one. The work I would suggest is the repair of the

\* The Superintending Engineer has telegraphed for one to South Arcot.

† Of this, Rs. 1,750 is for unskilled work.

Vadamadurei tank, for which an estimate for Rs. 2,410† has been sent to the Superintending Engineer, to be followed by the repair of the Vadamadurei and Kaggavakkam supply-channels. A regular programme will be sent in two days.

19. I enclose a statement showing the number of persons employed on the several works.

#### ENCLOSURE.

From M.R.Ry. T. N. RAMACHANDRA AIYAR Avargal, B.A., Deputy Collector, General Duties, Chingleput District, to the Collector of the Chingleput District, dated Konnur, 10th March 1891, Ref. on No. 348-Eng.

With reference to your personal instructions and to your reference on No. 118-S.L.R., received on the 8th instant, I have the honor to report as follows.

2. I left Saidápet on the morning of the 2nd instant and reached Poonamallee in the afternoon. On my arrival there, I asked the Deputy Tahsildar if he was aware of any increased influx of paupers there, and he said no. I then wanted to see Major Woodhouse and enquired about his whereabouts, when I learnt that he had just then left Poonamallee on ten days' leave. I have thus not had the advantage of ascertaining from him personally all about the paupers regarding whom he wrote to you. I understood, however, that his clerk as well as the Police station-house officer and the cantonment sanitary inspector could give me all the required information. I then sent word to the latter two officers to meet me next day at the Cantonment Magistrate's office. On going there next morning and making the needful enquiry, I learnt that the beggars who troubled Major Woodhouse were mostly residents of the cantonment and that only two of them were recent arrivals from outside. I asked the head constable to try and produce before me some of the beggars and waited for them for some time, employing my time in the meanwhile in

examining the sub-treasury. Only one beggar, an old woman of about 70 years of age, was produced by the head constable who stated that she was one of the two persons who had come from outside. I then entered into a conversation with her, in the course of which, she stated that she was living in Bangalore before and came to Poonamallee about 4 or 5 months ago, that she had a house at Poonamallee but that its occupants would not allow her to enter it, and that she had consequently to lead the life of a beggar. I then left the place and came away to my residence, leaving instructions with the head constable and the Sanitary Inspector to collect all the beggars in the evening when, I said, I would call again at the Cantonment Magistrate's office.

3. Accordingly, I went there again in the evening and found 13 paupers collected together and kept ready for my inspection. Two of them were males and were suffering from corrosive leprosy. The remaining 11 were all females of different ages ranging from 30 to 70. They all looked well enough for their age; 3 of them especially, who were Mahomedan women, looked strong and healthy and were comparatively younger. They were also well clothed. One of the paupers has a son who lives by cool work, but his earnings are stated to be barely sufficient for his own maintenance. Another has an unmarried daughter who cannot appear in public and she maintains herself and her daughter by what she is able to earn by begging. The others denied having any relatives in Poonamallee. All of them admitted, however, that they have been living in the cantonment from their infancy and that they had all along earned their livelihood by begging. The old woman who was produced before me the previous day as a foreign beggar admitted now that she had been in Poonamallee for the last 10 or 12 months. When I asked these people as to why, instead of begging from house-to-house, they should not work in private houses as sweepers, &c., and earn their bread more honorably, they replied, "Well, Sir, we are not accustomed to such kind of work—we have managed to pull on well enough these so many years by begging. Why should we do sweepers work now?"

4. I asked the head constable and the Sanitary Inspector whether these were all the paupers who appeared before Major Woodhouse. They said that there were some more but that they were not forthcoming as they had gone about begging. The Cantonment Magistrate's clerk who was now present informed me that the beggars who appeared before Major Woodhouse were about 25 in number and that besides the two foreign paupers above referred to, there were a few others who were not residents of the cantonment and who had come from other villages. He could give me, however, no information as to where they were and why they had left their villages, but stated that they never afterwards turned up before the Cantonment Magistrate.

5. Not contented with these inquiries, I drove through the streets of the cantonment more than once, but could notice no large number of paupers. I saw a stray one here and there and that was all. From all that I have been able to learn from others and see for myself, I am led to conclude that the paupers, regarding whom Major Woodhouse made a reference to you, are mostly, if not wholly, resident mendicants of the place, that they are habitual beggars and not "season" paupers if I may so call them, and that there is at present no increased influx of paupers into the cantonment from outlying villages. A number of military pensioners draw their pensions from the sub-treasury here every month. Large payments are also made monthly by the Commandant to soldiers and others of the Military Department. On these occasions, I understand, the paupers under reference invariably appear and beg for a few pies from each pensioner, &c. In this way they get a few annas each every month and it is also possible that they do some light work occasionally for wages though they would not admit it before me. When the money obtained in these ways is spent, they of course resort to begging. It is just possible that in a season like this their profession of begging does not pay them so well as hitherto, but the fact of their having been able to get on for so many years, coupled with their general disinclination to do some work, and thereby earn their bread shows that they are not so destitute of means or resources as they are apt to be mistaken and that they are not yet hard pinched.

6. So much for the paupers of Poonamallee. Now I shall briefly describe what I observed in the other villages inspected by me. The greater portion of the tract I visited during my halt of three days at Poonamallee is comprised in the triangular block bounded by the western trunk road on one side, by the Porur-Tirunageswaram road on another, and by the Chembrambakkam tank on the third. The villages outside this block, which I inspected, are Sennirkuppam on the north, Porur, Valasaravakkam and Ramapuram on the east; and Venkatapuram and Kunnathur on the south. Leaving Poonamallee I went to Nemam on the 6th instant and left it on the evening of the 8th idem. During these three days I inspected the whole of the tract bounded on the north by the Coovum river, on the west by the Tiruvallúr and Conjeeveram taluks, on the south by the western trunk road to Conjeeveram, and on the east by a line drawn at right angles to the western trunk road from the point where the road to Tiruvallúr branches. In most of the villages I visited there was some cultivation or other going on, chiefly ragi or navarai, but the extent of such cultivation was but small and proportionate to the number and capacity of the wells in existence. This gives occupation to a limited number of pariahs and other laborers in each village. The importance of the extension of these wells cannot be overrated; the ryots would appear to readily appreciate their advantages at this time, for I had only to mention the matter to them to induce them to apply for loans in large numbers. In two or three days 23 applications were made to me for the aggregate sum of Rs. 4,125 and I am confident that many more will

come in shortly. Such of the laborers as are not employed on cultivation earn their livelihood by doing cooly work such as reaping paddy which is going on in some places, breaking stones, &c., or by making and selling *bratties*, by cutting grass, &c. These people, however, do not seem to get sufficient work everywhere. The parayars of Kunnathur, Malayambakam and Ramapuram villages and the vanners or pallies, &c., of Ramapuram (a hamlet of Karunakara-cheri) and Anakattucheri (a hamlet of Soranjeri) represented to me that they were in want of work. The ryots of Meyyur also would appear to be in want of employment. Some of them now go to Nemam where the tank is under repairs by the Public Works Department, but this work, they said, would soon terminate.

7. I have made special inquiries as to the prevalence of any sickness among the labouring classes due to starvation or other cause and am glad to state that, with the solitary exception of the paracheri at Kudappakam—the westernmost village of this taluk—all the villages I visited enjoy perfect freedom from any sickness whatever. In the Kudappakam paracheri, however, fever has been prevalent for the last two weeks or so and there are at present 14 patients suffering from it. I sent for a few pariahs, one of whom was suffering from the fever, and questioned them as well as the village officers as to the cause of the sickness. None suggested that it was due to starvation and the pariahs I saw did not seem to me to have been starving, though they said that their daily earnings were very small owing to paucity of work. The hospital assistant at Poonamallee has been instructed to proceed to the spot forthwith and to report to me his opinion as to the cause of the sickness.

8. Now I come to a matter which is of vital importance to the people as well as the cattle. It is water-supply. This is generally inadequate in most villages. The tanks are dry in many places and it is scarcely necessary to add that the cattle are in consequence put to inconvenience. It would be something if at least the supply in wells was sufficient for all requirements. This, unfortunately, is not the case. At Meyyur, a village just south of Kudappakam above referred to, there are about 20 or 30 houses, but there are only two wells in each of which there is less than half a foot of water. The result is that the people are put to great difficulty. There are two tanks, one of which is quite dry and the other contains a small quantity of muddy water which is not fit even for cattle to drink. The cattle are consequently driven to a pool of water in the limits of Conjeeveram taluk and at a distance of about a mile and a half from the village. When that pool also dries up, suffering will become intense. As for the people, they cannot get the required supply from the two wells above referred to and consequently resort to a spring at a distance excavated in the bed of a channel which feeds the Nemam tank. The water obtained from this spring is muddy and quite unfit for drinking purposes, but they cannot be prevented from making use of it until other provision is made. The nearest place where they can get good water is the tank at Kudappakam, but this is at a distance of about a mile and the people will not go that distance because they cannot realize the importance of having good water to drink. Further, the supply in this tank will also fail two or three weeks hence. A similar difficulty is felt at Irulappalairam, a hamlet of Kuttambakam. Amudurmedu, another village, which consists only of a few pariah huts, suffers from the same difficulty. The supply of water in the other villages I have yet visited will last for a while yet, but by the end of this month it must fail in many places unless we have some falls of rain in the meantime. The question of the improvement of water-supply, therefore, demands serious consideration now. As it affects not one or two villages, but a large number of them, the outlay involved must be enormous and quite beyond the power of the Taluk or even the District Board to meet. It seems, therefore, necessary to bring the matter to the notice of the Board of Revenue and Government, if this has not already been done, in order that they may be prepared to face the situation. As regards the improvement of the water-supply in Meyyur and the other two places mentioned above, I have called for estimates from the Deputy Tahsildar. As soon as they are received I shall start the needful works and meet the outlay from the provision in the next year's budget of this Taluk Board.

9. I note below the result of my inquiries regarding the following paracheries which are included in the list you gave me in person:—

(1) *Valasaravakkam*.—There are about 45 houses containing a population of about 240. No sickness or starvation here. There are about 10 acres of ragi cultivation which give employment to some of the pariahs. Cutting grass and cooly work provide work for the rest. No work available in tanneries now. The water-supply for people is fair for the present. There is a big well (Doravu) which contains about 3 feet of water and the water is good. There is a *kasam* close by which contains some supply useful for cattle.

(2) *Ramapuram*.—About 30 houses here. Population about 180. No sickness or starvation; 10 acres of ragi cultivation; cutting grass and cooly work give employment to those who are not engaged in cultivation. No work available in tanneries now. No sales of cattle for want of means have yet occurred. Two wells exist at present, and they contain about 2 feet of water. There is a tank at a short distance which, if deepened, would be useful for both the Sudras and the Pariahs.

(3) *Kocur, Chinnapannicheri and Periapannicheri*.—These paracheries are better off. No sickness; sufficient work available for the present.

(4) *Nattam (Kunnathur)*.—About 100 houses and 650 population. Fifty acres of ragi cultivation going on which give employment to some. The rest go to other villages in quest of work and return home in the evening. Grass-cutting is not resorted to by these pariahs. They make *bratties* and take them to Pallavaram and other places for sale. On some days they get no work at all, when it would seem that they forego the night meal. The monegar is aware of two instances in which cattle were sold for want of means of subsistence. There is a single well which contains 7 feet of water. It did not get dried up even during the famine of 1876-77. There is a tank which contains about 3 feet of water. This will be useful for cattle. No sickness among the people or the cattle.

(5) *Kollacheri*.—This village is purely a paracheri. It contains 28 houses and a population of 185. Four acres of ragi and 4 acres of paddy cultivation. This gives employment to about 10 persons. Others do cooly work, such as breaking stones, &c. Work is not available always. No sickness. There is but a single well; but quite close to the house site is an odai in which springs are dug.

*Resolution*—dated 25th March 1891, No. 167.

Submitted to Government.

2. There has been no improvement in the prospects since the date of the last report. Prices have remained stationary, and there has been no fall of rain, except a trifling quantity in a portion of the Tiruvallūr taluk on the 11th instant. At the headquarters station of the taluk it registered one-tenth of an inch, while in the tract from Uttukotai eastward to Tarachi, it was about a third of an inch.

3. In the affected parts of the sub-division (Chingleput—Madurantakam taluks chiefly) ragi under wells is coming to maturity, while pasturage is drying up and water in cattle-ponds is getting low. Minor irrigation works, estimated to cost Rs. 3,000, have been started, and these with the private construction of wells, which appears to be going on on a considerable scale, will doubtless afford means of livelihood to those who are in need of work. Loans for the construction of wells have already been advanced to the extent of over Rs. 9,000 in the two taluks and a further sum of Rs. 10,500 is expected to be similarly advanced before the end of the month. In addition to these, the Public Works Department are removing silt from the Buckingham canal on which 200 men were employed on the 14th instant.

4. *Saidāpet taluk*.—At Poonamallee, the Deputy Collector met with some professional beggars who expressed themselves to be unwilling to work for wages. He has not met with any cases of starvation, but, as remarked by the Collector, the Deputy Collector's visits were confined chiefly to villages near the Chembrambakam tank. The Deputy Collector refers to the necessity for improving the water-supply, but the Collector is opposed as a general rule to money being spent upon such improvements at the early stages of distress.

There is no reason to apprehend any general failure of water-supply such as is hinted at by the Deputy Collector. In exceptional cases some contribution might be made from Local Fund to enable the villagers to improve the water-supply.

5. Some Rs. 4,600, have been allotted for expenditure on minor irrigation works in this taluk, and twenty tanks are reported to be under repair. The villagers are eager to construct wells on a large scale, and they have already taken loans to the extent of more than Rs. 10,000, and there was on the 17th instant, still a balance of Rs. 3,300, which will doubtless be soon lent. The construction of these wells, in addition to the minor irrigation works already in progress will suffice to meet the demand for labor at all events for a time.

6. *Ponneri taluk*.—About Rs. 3,140 were advanced for the construction of wells up to the 1st instant and with the aid of the special establishment recently entertained, the Collector hopes to utilize the balance, Rs. 14,860, before the end of the month. In addition to the embankment of the Arni, five minor irrigation works are in progress in this taluk, and the number of coolies employed on all the works on the 21st of this month was 1,528. With reference to the Collector's remarks in paragraphs 11 to 13, his attention will be drawn to the instructions of Government in paragraph 1 of G.O., dated 2nd February 1891, No. 67, under which "all who seek for work, whether capable of performing a full task for an able-bodied laborer or not, must be admitted." The Board learns that the letter of the Executive Engineer to which the Collector refers

in paragraph 11 was not intended to have the meaning given to it by the Collector; and instructions issued on the 24th instant by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation make it quite clear that all applicants for work are to be employed on the canal.

7. *Tiruvallūr taluk*.—There was some delay owing to the want of overseers in starting some large irrigation works in the north of the taluk, but the Board understands that this want has since been met. On the 21st current, five major irrigation works were under repair by the Public Works Department with 442 coolies, and 26 minor works under the supervision of the Revenue Department with 599 coolies. From the Collector's report portions of the Peryapalam tract appear to be in a bad condition. Some of the poorer classes are living upon insufficient food. In some of these villages, ground-nut harvest is going on, while in some others the ragi under wells is expected to be ripe for harvest in a fortnight or so. There is a good deal of ground-nut in some villages and none in others, while the area under ragi varies from below 10 to 200 acres. Neither the present ground-nut harvest, nor the expected harvest of ragi and other well crops, "can give sufficient employment for all the laborers." The Collector considers that a quarter of the laboring classes cannot get employment; and that those who get it (excepting the farm servants on fixed pay) have their wages largely reduced, the consequence being that the poorest classes are thrown back upon unusual food, such as the seeds of "mavaragu," a weed largely found in rice fields which have withered this year, and the seeds of other grasses preserved by ants, and some few were seen by the Collector who were falling off in condition.

Mr. Tremenhoe is of opinion that the tract in question cannot now afford to rely upon labor supplied by contract works, and recommends that the repairs of the Vadamadurei tank should be undertaken at once as a departmental work to be followed by the repairs of Vadamadurei and Kagavakkam supply-channels. An estimate, amounting to Rs. 2,410, for the repairs of the tank, which includes Rs. 1,750 for unskilled labor, appears to have been already sent to the Superintending Engineer. The necessary orders for the immediate commencement of these, and other large works that may be necessary, have already been issued in G.O., dated 18th March 1891, No. 213.

8. No report of either the Sub-Collector or the Tiruvallūr Divisional Deputy Collector has been forwarded to the Board. In future the reports of inspections made by all the Divisional officers should be submitted to the Board. The condition of the people in the affected villages should be carefully noticed and prompt intimation should be given to the Board should the necessity for granting gratuitous relief manifest itself in any particular tract.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) P. RAJARATNA MUDALIAR,  
Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.  
,, Collector of the Chingleput District.  
,, Land Revenue Department.

ORDER—dated 11th April 1891, No. 296, Revenue.

Miscellaneous.

Recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. A. GALTON,  
Secretary to Government.

To the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture.  
,, the Public Works Department.

Exd. T. K. Narayana Aiyangar.

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