Revenue No. 3044 of 1869
Govt. of Madras

JUDICIAL.

To

THE COLLECTOR OF TRICHINOPOLY.

&c., &c., &c.

Dated September, 1st.

Read 8th *Inst.*

G. O., 1st September 1869, No. 1454.

SEPTEMBER.
Nos. 21-25.

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21. Accepting Mr. Banbury's explanation of his absence from the Board of Trichinopoly on a visit to the Anicut bungalow.

No. 25

RECORDED.

8 Septr 69

No. 24. Read the following letter from G. BANBURY, Esq., Collector of Trichinopoly, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Trichinopoly, 18th August 1869, No. 48.

I have honour to state that my letter, which gave rise to the Government Proceedings dated 10th instant, was written from Trichinopoly where I was on the date of its despatch. I find it is not usual to repeat the word "Trichinopoly," either at the heading or foot of the letter when addressed from head-quarters; but when absent therefrom the place of despatch is invariably noted.

2. Enclosed is the required statement showing when, where, and for what purposes the Collector has been away from town during the present year.

3. As I naturally conjecture that the Government wish for information concerning the wonted visits of Collectors to the Upper Anicut, I respectfully take this opportunity of explanation, as nothing has hitherto passed officially upon this subject.

4. Government in their Proceedings, dated 16th November 1868, No. 1742, justly remark "that the Upper Anicut is in the very heart of the Trichinopoly district;" it is moreover a sort of tri-junction boundary-mark for the taluqs of Trichinopoly, Moosery, and Kulitallay* which all converge at this point. On the other side of the river just opposite the Collector's bungalow is the Railway Station of Ellamanoor, whence the trains run

* The District Map is incorrect as regards the boundary of Kulitallay, which really runs up close to the anicut.

Trichinopoly as the Adyar is to the Fort, or Vellum to Tanjore. By road it is a pleasant morning drive out, and evening drive in. The reasons why Collectors have always passed a portion of the year there are as follow:—

1.—The irrigation arrangements.

2.—Facilities for work.

3.—Health.

5. *The irrigation arrangements.*—The sources of the channels which irrigate the Collector's own taluq of Trichinopoly, in which the bungalow stands, are situated hard by the anicut, the supply and distribution of the water are in the Collector's hands, and it is not only natural but desirable that he should wish to superintend matters at what is literally "the fountain head." When "freshes" diminish the large coramboos† to replenish the then failing channels have to be constructed by the Revenue Department, not far from the anicut, and as many as a thousand labourers are engaged on the larger of these structures upon which so much land revenue depends. In bygone years the Collector always superintended these works, and his presence is as beneficial now, as it was then. The river banks, the planting in the padoogays,‡ and the irrigation establishment§ themselves all want constant looking after; and the anicut is the most natural and important point of supervision. It was close to the anicut that the dyke burst in 1866, and caused immense damage to crops and property; it was there, too, that the Ayyar bridge was thrice swept away, so I think it must be admitted that this locality requires some attention.

† Temporary dams.

‡ The space between river bed and the artificial bank.

§ Under the Collector's own management.

6. *Facilities for work.*—Trichinopoly itself is sadly unfavourable for any work requiring care and attention. It has been a sort of traditional usage to apply to the Collector when difficulties arise either public or private. Thus, although he may carefully arrange and parcel out his day at office, these plans are too frequently ruthlessly upset by visits from English residents, who, having something to say to the Collector, fail to remember that his time is far more fully occupied than their's. Then, again, notes come upon every conceivable subject. Mr. Bird complained much of this infliction, and used to speak of it to his native subordinates as the "சிட்டுகொரஞ்சு," or "scourge of chits." I remember once receiving in office almost at the same time three of these small epistles, one asking me to cash a note of Rupees 100 belonging to another circle, and therefore not payable here; another to obtain for the writer a ham of extra size, and a third to procure a wet-nurse. Not wishing to be surly and disobliging I complied with the requests, but I need not mention that such interruptions are, to say the least of it, a considerable inconvenience. In order, therefore, to obtain the necessary quiet for important papers, the Collectors have now and again resorted to the anicut, and it is approximately computed that the outturn of one day's work thus devoid of interruptions is equivalent to that of three in Trichinopoly. In a word the distance is too great to send requisitions of no moment, but sufficiently easy for any thing of consequence.

7. *Health.*—The climate of Trichinopoly has been aptly described as "four months very hot, and eight months hotter," in fact the locality has a world-wide reputation for heat; so much so that last year [illegible] Martin professionally, and he learned where I was stationed, he remarked "Truly a fearful climate, but I believe not *quite* so fatal to human life as "might be expected." The temperature at the anicut is, however, a few degrees lower, and during the freshes there may be as much as six or seven degrees difference. Moreover the little promontory upon which the Collector's bungalow is situated is green and picturesque. Thus, for years past, the Collectors have visited this spot, in order to obtain some alleviation from the pitiless glare and relentless heat of Trichinopoly. No doubt the change is beneficial to health, and, although residents in more favoured districts would turn up their noses at the Collector's retreat, still to him even the change from aridity to verdure is a great gain. Moreover the anicut is so conveniently situated that, when staying there, I have as a rule been into Trichinopoly for three days every week, thus never missing Municipal, Dispensary, and vestry meetings, visiting the Jails, &c., and looking after other matters of local interest.

8. The Board in their Standing Circular, dated 22nd September 1862, No. 6349, aver, "It rests with the Collector, at his discretion, to determine where in the dis-"trict his presence is most required, and to act accordingly," and it was doubtless under this view of the case that the long-established custom now in question was allowed to prevail. I trust that, with the above explanation, Government will still permit the practice to hold good, and I can promise that, in my case, this sanction will not be abused.

9. Finally, I beg to apologize for the length of this letter; but as the question has never been before represented, and as it affects not only myself but all future Collectors, my reply has assumed far larger proportions than I originally intended.

No. 25. ORDER THEREON, 1st September 1869, No. 1454.

It will be pointed out to Mr. Banbury that certain of the reasons assigned in his letter above recorded are scarcely indicative of a necessity for the Collector of the district passing much of his time at the Anicut bungalow, and that the quotation from the Board's Circular Orders in paragraph 8 of the letter does not apply to sojourns there. But the Government accept the explanation afforded by Mr. Banbury, and are confident that he will not prolong his visits to the Anicut bungalow in a manner detrimental to his official duties, or inconvenient to persons who should have easy access to the Collector of the district.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Collector of Trichinopoly.
" Revenue Department.
" Board of Revenue.

Exd. J. Wright.