

(1) Number of Pages 40
(2) Date of repair 22.11.67
(3) Initials of the Referencer 20.2.68

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1025	Press
~~B.P. No.~~		~~Mis.~~
Dated 7-7-1875-196.		

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
7th July 1875.*

No. 85. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th May 1875, No. 1,415:—

Read the following letter from R. J. MELVILLE, Esq., Acting Collector of the Chingleput District, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 17th April 1875, No. 189:—

I HAVE the honor to forward, for the Board's perusal, original report (to be returned) received from the Acting Sub-Collector, dated 12th instant, No. 201, containing his views on the Mirassi question, which is now engaging the attention of Government.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From C. S. CROLE, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector, to R. W. BARLOW, Esq., Collector of Chingleput, dated 12th April 1875, No. 201.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge copy of Board's Proceedings, dated 12th February, containing your report on Mirassi tenures, and forwarded to me for my information. A few days afterwards the remarks of the Director of Revenue Settlement thereon were received with the Board's order on both communications.

2. Under ordinary circumstances, I should be the last to canvass the opinions of my superior. Even in this important matter were the difference in views slight, instead of being diametrically opposed. I should hesitate long before disputing your position. But, after as diligent and extended inquiries, and as much deliberation as I have been able to give the subject during the three weeks which have intervened since I received the Board's Proceedings, it seems to me a duty I owe the Government that before they sanction proposals which I honestly believe to be misconceived, they should have before them views derived from seven years' experience as Sub-Collector of this district.

3. The *origo mali* appears from the various references to be that the chronic state of arrears and the frequency of resort to coercive process has attracted the attention, first of the Government of Madras, and subsequently in a despatch of 1874 drew animadversions from the Secretary of State.

4. Among many reasons adduced to account for the position of bad eminence in these matters occupied by the District of Chingleput, the "*Mirassi system*" is the only one seriously urged in the various papers before me. Accordingly it is to the improvement of that system that you point the Board as a panacea.

5. For this purpose you advocate two measures—

(1.) The recognition of the right of Mirassidars to Swatantrams from Payikaris, hereafter acquiring puttās.

(2.) The grant of sub-receipts to tenants in the Samatayam holding.

6. The Director argues—and in my opinion properly argues—against the adoption of the second of these, as being an unwarrantable interference between landlord and tenant, and I am strongly of opinion that our troubles in regard to Mirassi have only begun, if we recognize any one but the holder of the putta as the tenant of Government. Until his sub-tenant produces the decree of a competent Court, showing his right to the land in his holding apart from his Mirassidar, we should look to the latter alone to pay what is due to Government for "his occupation of its soil;" and it needs little demonstration to prove that fiscal and other allied considerations apart, it would be very impolitic to allow these under-tenants to think that they have any real grievance not inseparable from their position as tenants.

7. The Director proposes, in lieu of your remedy, to sub-divide according to the Mirassi shares the land entered in the Samatayam putta. As I shall show below, this putta has little to do with the arrears; but, even if it had, I ask how sub-division could assist us in their prompt

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collection. Sub-division means several, perhaps a hundred persons to be asked for the assessment instead of one. It means the collection of 100 items for one, and, in default, the same number of demands and attachments with the subsequent procedure following thereon multiplied accordingly. At present the Samadayam putta really gives no trouble whatever. I adduce, in proof, the frequent complaint that a sub-tenant's offer of assessment was refused in the interests of a Mirassidar. It must be remembered that the property of each Mirassidar in the village is jointly and severally responsible for the whole of the assessment due on the putta in question, and, as a matter of fact, it is found in practice in the sub-division to be the best putta in the village from a collection point of view.

8. In what I have said above, I exclude the cases of a very few villages, in which decisions of the High Court have produced confusion and bad spirit. Katrambakam and Navalur in Conjeveram Taluq are two. In such villages the tricks and frauds detailed by you *do* prevail, but the same might have taken place anywhere else, and the description is not applicable to any but an insignificant minority. The private lands also of Mirassidars are in the hands of tenantry to a much longer extent than is supposed. If you interfere with the tenantry of the one class, why let alone the other? I maintain that both in regard to private and Samadayam sub-tenancy, a very fair and practical understanding exists. Witness the entire absence of rent suits between the parties.

9. The Director endorses your calculation that "one-third" "30 per cent." of the gross cultivated area is, in this district, held on Samadayam putta. This assertion so startled me that I ordered 100 Curnams of the Chingleput Taluq in my camp for the Jamabundi where I received the Board's Proceedings under reply, to compile a statement setting forth the extent of holdings of that sort in their villages. I also caused a similar account to be prepared for forty villages in the Madrantakum Taluq. The result was 2.75 per cent. and not 30.

10. More than that. Out of that 2.75 per cent. only .50 is held by under-tenants, the remainder (2.25) being in the direct occupation of Mirassidars, and, consequently, to the former and smaller fraction alone can your remarks apply. I append a statement showing full particulars. The villages were not selected ones.

11. I submit that a glance at it will prove beyond shadow of doubt that the Samadayam putta is no cause of the arrears in this district, and, consequently that, even if the Director is able to sub-divide, which I much doubt, such a step will afford no assistance, but rather produce immediate, though probably not eventual, harm to the prompt collection of revenue. I have shown cause for this opinion above.

12. With regard to the second remedy for the ills of the district, some plan of enforcing payment of the fees called Swatantrams to Mirassidars, I regret also to have to offer an opinion adverse to yours. I do this with the greater diffidence, as this is the measure of relief from which the Director expects, not only to secure prompt collections and prevent arrears, but actually to change the face of the district, by bringing under cultivation a large portion of the variously estimated 375,000 or 154,000 acres now lying waste for want of sanction to such a proposal.

13. The Board might well be "surprised to find that there is so simple a remedy for an evil of such magnitude." I would respectfully submit that great evils were never yet removed by small remedies, and would suggest, as throwing considerable, *in limine*, doubt on the present proposal, that it is singular that, if such a simple plan afford any fair prospect of success, it should have occurred to only one of the many officers who have served in this district, many of them otherwise able men.

14. I agree with you in adopting the word "Payikaris" for persons other than Mirassidars; but for a different reason from the one assigned by you. As in these days nothing would ever lead the Government to interfere between Mirassidars and those holding under them as tenants, any inquiry into disputes arising between Mirassidars, and such persons may safely be left to the Civil Courts, according to whose decisions we register. The "Payikari" with whom we have to

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do, is a person not a Mirassidar put in by Government to cultivate waste left on its hands by the Mirassidars relinquishing or neglecting it.

15. The only intricate question involved in this district appertains to the sub-tenant class. The Payikari question with which alone Government has to deal is really one of the simplest conceivable.

16. Mr. Place found no less than 1,827 out of the 17,821 shares, into which the Jaghire was divided, held by such persons. They were called "*Kani kudis*." A village called Petappur in Madrantakum Taluq even now has them. There were also a large number in possession of holdings, not being recognized shares or Pangus, from time immemorial. This large body has been swelled by continual accretions, as waste was, from time to time, assigned to outsiders owing to its refusal by the Mirassidars.

17. I shall not now stop to discuss the minute differences which Mr. Place discovered between these Payikaris and the Mirassidars. They have all along really been the same in the eye of the Government, but it will be one of the effects of Mr. Puckle's proposal to exact from Payikaris taking up land in future the payment of Swatantrams to Mirassidars to put an end to this equality. I undertake to show clearly that this step, besides being a retrogression from the policy laid down by Government making every class, caste and creed equal, is not required, and is founded on a misconception of the Mirassi question. I maintain also that it argues ill for the success of the new settlement about which Mr. Puckle is taking so much pains.

18. I crave indulgence while I go into a little necessary detail to support my positions.

19. In the first place, this remedy was proposed by Mr. Fane so far back as 1868, and on turning to his long report, I find that the arguments now adduced, which had struck me as not unfamiliar, are all the old ones set forth by him. The proposals were negatived by the Board of the day.

20. In plain terms the Government are asked to buy off the resistance now offered by the Mirassidars to the independent cultivation of the waste by outsiders (Payikaris), by taking steps to enforce payment by the latter to the former of Swatantrams (fees), to which it is supposed they have a right that cannot now be gainsaid. I shall, hereafter, adduce proof that so far from this, it has never yet been in existence, and has yet to be established.

21. Mr. Puckle has convinced himself on the evidence adduced in his report that the non-payment of these fees is the sole cause of the backward state of this district and of the large extent of waste. He estimates, and his estimate may be accepted, that supposing the really available waste were fully cultivated by outsiders, the Mirassidars of each village would be the richer by Rupees 25 *per annum* on the average.

22. I shall suppose that the difficulty of settling who is a Mirassidar, and for what portion of his holding each so-called Mirassidar is one in reality, and in what portion he holds no such right; I shall suppose, I say, that this difficulty to me insurmountable, is successfully met. Take Tirukatchur alluded to by Mr. Puckle. The number of persons styling themselves Mirassidars is in that village fifty-eight. I ask the Board to consider whether it is consonant with their experience of human nature to credit the assertion that the Mirassidars of that village would, to-morrow, allow a Durkhasdar from, say, Madras to be settled on their waste lands, which would then pass permanently out of their power, for the almost inappreciable benefit accruing from the payment to each of them of Annas 12 *per annum*.

23. The right over this waste has been truly described as "much cherished and long contested." It is futile to believe that the value of such a right can possibly be represented by a sum so paltry as not to suffice to keep the Mirassidars in betel and nut.

24. The Government will ere long find itself woefully mistaken if, by the retrograde step of setting up two different classes of cultivators, they expect to see the end of the struggle between Mirassidars and Payikaris and the final security to this district of good cultivation, peace, prosperity and progress. I fearlessly maintain that the Mirassidars consulted by Mr. Puckle never really intended to comply with his terms. They were glad of an opportunity of

reviving a groundless claim, and they left to the future the decision of what course they would pursue on the attempted introduction of the hateful Payikari into the fields of their village; an event staved off from time immemorial by the adoption of the simple expedients left open to them.

25. The cause of the large extent of waste is to be sought for in as different a direction as its cure. I shall now attempt as plain an exposition of these as I am able.

26. We know little or nothing of the revenue history of the district of the Jaghire before its grant to the Company in 1763. From that date up to 1784, it was impossible, owing to the unsettled state of the country, to introduce any satisfactory system. At the latter date we are told that most of the cultivators had fled to Madras, and, as regards the remainder, that the wars of the Carnatic left little but the bones of its former inhabitants.

27. Many expedients were tried for ameliorating its condition until November 1794, when Mr. Place was put in charge of the Jaghire, and had set him the task of constructing a system which, while being as nearly as possible in conformity with former usage, would secure a proper revenue to the Company.

28. Everything was in a state of chaos. Rights were undefined and the administration in disorder. In reducing this disorder to order, he recognized the resident inhabitants in their holdings, and the village system being then the one institution which had survived the storm of anarchy and misrule, each village was treated with fiscally in the light of a little close republic, as it was. I may remark that the mass of the cultivators were either Vellalas or Brahmins, and I need hardly remind you, that these two castes represent two historical facts—the first, a gradual and peaceful colonization, the second, a victorious irruption—and that both belong to ages whose history can now be traced only by reading the semi-religious fables still extant by the light of the occasional gleams shed on them by living facts.

29. Mr. Place has detailed the inquiries which he instituted in two admirable reports. It is as clear as noon-day, from these papers, that the Mirassi system and a gross rental are inseparable parts of the system he exhumed and introduced.

30. Each village was divided into so many shares. The holders of these shares cultivated each year as much of the village lands belonging to their Puṅgus, as they were able or as the season permitted. For this purpose they employed farm laborers (Padiyals), or contracted with sub-tenants (Payikaris or Sugavasis). The shareholders were held responsible for the realization of a fair revenue from the village, and made up from the common fund the shortcomings of individual members.

31. It is obvious that the only difficulty was to see that the ryots did not imperil the revenue by leaving cultivable lands waste. This difficulty has continued down to the present day. The founders of the system, however, had no hesitation as to the remedy to be applied. In such a case the waste "escheated to Government."

32. Under the system of joint village rentals, the Mirassi system was in its perfection. It amounted to a contract between the owners of full shares in the village as a body, and the Government: for the payment to the latter of the revenue of the village. The Mirassidars were to take their own way of getting this done, and as long as they performed their part of the contract, and a fair revenue was paid to Government, it clearly was not competent to the latter to dispute the Mirassidars' claim to the cultivable waste against outsiders. They let it out in their own way. In like manner, the village community claimed full rights over quarries, jungles, fisheries, and immemorial waste. The claim is intelligible, I think, under the above explanation.

33. The system was one suited to a barbarous age, an unsettled country, and a Government needing money and little sedulous of the future. It was too rough and unequal, however, to stand long before our ideas of justice and policy, for it entailed a system of rack-rent fatal to thrift and progress, under which the industrious had to make up for the shortcomings of his less energetic or careful co-sharer. It soon gave way to an individual settlement with each ryot on the Dittum system. It was, however, the Mirassi system pure and simple, and the individual settlement gave the first blow to it.

34. All claims, then, now put forth by Mirassidars, must be considered with reference either first to the Mirassi system exhumed by Mr. Place, and sanctioned by the Government of 1795 to 1799, or, second, to concessions, if such there be subsequently made by Government. For all rights possessed by the cultivators were derived from rules laid down by Government for the guidance of Revenue officers and ryots alike. These were clearly acts of State within the province of the Government.

35. Let us see then how Mr. Place defines the Mirassidar of 1799. I quote from paragraphs 702, 703 and 704 of his final report to the Board, dated 6th June 1799.

"The following definition, therefore, of Mirassi or property in land seems to be deducible from the discussions that have passed on it."

"That it is a right to the use and substance of the soil, vested in the present proprietor, his heirs and successors so long as he does and can cultivate it and pays the dues of Government and is obedient to its authority; and that when he does not or cannot cultivate his lands; when he withholds the dues of Government or is disobedient to its authority, such parts as he neglects, or, in the latter case, the whole, escheats to Government who may confer it on whom it pleases."

"The potential part of the definition although essential hereafter should now be construed favorably, for the state of the population is so low that a man's abilities on that account alone may not concur with his will. But when population, as may reasonably be expected within a few years, should have considerably increased, and any proprietor may, if he chooses, procure laborers for the culture of the whole of his lands, a failure to do so, should incur the penalty of losing them; for whether it proceeds from obstinacy or real inability, the forfeiture is not only justifiable, but a duty enjoined on Government on this principle, that it must not allow any individual to possess land for the purpose of keeping it waste; and farther, as I have before said, that as the revenue of the State is derived immediately from the cultivators of lands, it ought not to suffer from the caprice or inertia of an individual."

36. Who will say that every square yard of waste land has not so escheated to Government years and years ago? If this is so, Government is right in treating all Puttadars, whether claiming to be Mirassidars or not, as standing in exactly the same position to it. There is no difference whatever in the nature of their holdings *quoad* Government. On the other hand, if these lands are held not to have so escheated, the Durkhast Rules are totally illegal, for the Government would, in that case, have no power to grant away the waste in perpetuity to outsiders, this being an infraction of undoubted Mirassi right.

37. Again, in paragraphs 99 and 100 of the final report, we have the position of the old Mirassidar clearly stated as follows:—

"Mirassi is a right to use the thing and enjoy it so long as the condition annexed to that enjoyment is performed; in other words so long as the rent is paid in money or in kind."

"Nor does this interpretation of property at all interfere with the just rights of Government, for the condition is clear and explicit, that the Mirassidar must cultivate or procure the means of cultivating his lands, and if he neglects to perform that condition, they escheat to the lord, who may give them to whomsoever he pleases."

38. The Government had previously laid down its views as follows in Minutes of Consultation, dated 8th January 1796, and it has been dumb on the question from that day and this: It declared that "the actual property in the soil was vested in the State," and the Mirassi of a village was defined to be a preference of cultivation derived from hereditary residence but subject to the right of Government as the superior lord of the soil in what way it chooses for the cultivation of its own lands."

39. It must be remembered that the above extracts contain Mr. Place's modified definition arrived at after several years of close observation, and present the results of his painstaking inquiries into the relations of Government and the Mirassidar. It must, likewise, be borne in mind that the Government never receded from the position taken up in the above-quoted resolution.

40. It is incontestable then that, taken in the manner most favorable to the Mirassidar, the system amounted merely to a contract between Government and the Mirassidars for securing the full revenue of the village. If that condition were broken, the rights of the Mirassidars ceased *ipso facto*. In that view, it appears inexpedient to ask Government to secure for them the payment of Swatantrams by Payikaris placed by Government to cultivate waste lands, the duty of cultivating which lay on the Mirassidars, and has been notoriously neglected by them for years, to the very great detriment of the Government revenue, and the general welfare of the district.

41. Moreover, from the earliest times of our administration, it was the custom to give cowles to Payikaris for waste which the Mirassidars persistently neglected to cultivate. Only the other day, I came upon a case of this sort during a visit I paid to Isur, an out-of-the-way village in the Madrantakum Taluq, to make inquiries into the general subject. The total holding beriz of that village is Rupees 1,600, and out of that sum, Rupees 107, I think, is due to a cowle granted by Mr. Place himself to Payikaris for the above reason. Not a single Pie of Swatantram has ever been paid to the Mirassidars on it. Properly so. The Government considered its contract with them at an end. It stepped in and took measures to secure the revenue. In these days, however, the Board are asked to behave differently on the ground of a usage, of which I respectfully maintain there is not only no evidence, but which is conclusively disproved by facts. For, if in any such cases Swatantrams are or ever have been paid, they are unknown to me, and must be the exceptions which prove the rule. I am aware that there are decisions of the Civil Courts both ways. For that reason I have not discussed them, for the question has never been gone into by any Court with that full knowledge of the subject which would repay an analysis of any of the judgments on record.

42. As to the Government having made subsequent concessions, the reverse is the case. Almost every claim set up by Mirassidars has been disallowed. They have lost their right over fisheries. The Government has declared it will not brook interference with mines and quarries. It levies seigniorage on wood cut in jungles. In 1853-59, it forced the Mirassidars to declare once for all how much land they desire to cultivate, and issued puttass styled at first Mirassi puttass for that extent. In 1863, even that petty concession to ancient custom was withdrawn, when the Board directed that the distinctive headings of Mirassi and Payikari puttass should cease, and that all puttass should be distinguished by a number, and the name of the Puttadar only. In G. O., No. 796, dated 1st June 1870, it was finally declared that the Mirassidars have no right whatever to compensation for waste lands (the same on which it is proposed to levy Swatantrams) taken up for a public purpose. This rang the death-knell of the whole system—Mirassi then became a mere name, a disembodied shade, which need frighten no officer, properly supported, and prepared to do his duty.

43. All that remains for Government now is to exercise this ghost by ordering that the word "Mirassidar" shall be used no more in official documents; that "Puttadar" be substituted; and by declaring that great loss has accrued from the neglect or inability of the Mirassidars for years past to provide for the cultivation of waste; and that consequently the privileges secured to them on that condition are at an end; that henceforth land is free, and will be granted to the first applicant; and that Government will recognize no distinction among its tenants, who will henceforth be indiscriminately styled Puttadars.

44. If this suggestion were adopted, I am certain that land would pass into the hands of those able and willing to cultivate it and pay the assessment on it promptly, and that false hopes and ill-founded claims being at an end, and the prop on which a rotten system rests thus removed, half the trouble and all the frivolous objections, by which the Revenue officer is now trammelled in granting land and receiving the assessment, would disappear along with it.

45. If my proposition regarding the futility of maintaining the *status quo* be disputed, let the Board ask any one now to single out the Mirassidars from the Puttadars of a village of more than ten puttass.

46. A Mirassi share consists of the number of shares assigned to the village in the ancient Pangumalie Account, which I must observe, to begin with, is not now recognized by Government. The owner of a fraction of one of the shares, i. e., a fraction whose division is 16, 32, 64, &c., used also to be considered a Mirassidar. It follows then, that the Mirassi right departs from every piece of land, other than a recognized fraction detached from its original Pangu by sale for arrears, private sale (Kandakrayam,) by transfer, or by relinquishment. Almost every holding is now composed of odds and ends of Pangus acquired in some of these ways, and has no relation whatever to any Pangu.

47. The so-called Mirassidars themselves would be the first to admit that their possessions have no reference to the old Pangumalai, and to express their inability to distinguish the lands in which they are Mirassidars from those in which they are not. This fact, and not a large body of Sugavasis, groaning under supposed wrongs, is the cause of a great portion of the Samadayam puttass. Mirassidars object to a Payikari Durkhast, and the land is made over to them in proportion to their shares. But none of them know their shares. So it goes into the Samadayam putta, and eventually, after much talking and arguing and making of terms, it passes into the possession of some of them, who, as I have shown, and not Payikaris, form the bulk of the cultivators under the Samadayam putta.

48. To show, farther, what I mean, I shall take the case of a village whose Mirassi has from the above causes admittedly disappeared. I refer to the Kasba Village of Madurantakum, paying an assessment of over Rupees 10,000. Mr. Place in paragraph 89 of his report, dated 6th June 1799, states that it and its dependant villages were then divided among fifty-two Mirassidars. At the present day, there is not one holding any recognized share. The villagers admit that there is no Mirassi.

49. This has been the fate of Mirassi in every other district of the Presidency. In Tinnevely, South Arcot, Madura, and even in Tanjore; in which it is described as having been at one time even more pretentious than in Chingleput. The only vestige of it left, remains under the orders of the Board and Government. The Durkhast Rules say that the option of taking up waste lands applied for by an outsider shall be first allowed to the resident cultivators. This is the sole remains of the ancient system. The same here.

50. Why then, it will be asked, the vast extent of waste, and whence the heavy arrears and the difficulty in collecting the revenue? I can discern for the former no sufficient reason but bad habit. From the time of the Dubashes up to the present, there has always been a powerful body of officials in the Presidency Town in a position to procure at least a favorable hearing for any pretensions put forward. The Government, ever generously ready to protect and foster the vested interests of the cultivator, has looked upon the Chingleput District with special interest. Owing to the above circumstances, and its nearness to Madras, disputes, claims, and complaints, which would never be heard of beyond the four walls of a Moffussil Collector's Cutcherry, have been ordered to be inquired into, investigated, weighed, and decided with a careful tenderness, and too often with expressions of hesitation, and doubt, and even admissions of the exceptional nature of the tenure of land in this district.

51. Out of this, there has grown up a custom of asserting pretensions regarding Mirassi which really have no foundation except in assertion. I have pointed out, for instance, how in regard to Swatantrams, the Mirassidars have no claims whatever when they have not themselves provided the Payikari. They find it impossible as enlightenment advances, and as labor is more and more drawn towards the Presidency Town, to procure Payikaris to take up the waste and hold under them on any tenure less favorable than can be obtained from Government. The fellows are earning good wages in Madras. Many of the class from which they were originally drawn have risen into good position. The Mirassidars, however, think them insolent, curse the present administration, and determine that if they cannot make anything of the waste themselves, neither shall any one else. They hope against hope, of course, that, failing subservient tenants some of the family will prosper in trade or the Government service, and that then will come the reward of

all their pains. The waste will at last be taken up and added to the family property. A Payikari therefore, though as good in other respects as themselves, has come to be hated and to be considered the enemy of the future advancement and the destroyer of the ancient dignity and position of the family of each Mirassidar of the village.

52. The continued success of the many means which have been employed to keep out the hated Payikari from taking part in the cultivation of the village, has re-acted on the district in this way, that, by preventing competition, it has taken away the stimulus to honest labor and the desire for improving holdings. The Mirassidars secure from intrusion, are utterly supine and indolent. Many of them are absentees, and hardly ever visit their lands, which are let to others. Many have sunk *pari passu* with their continued exclusiveness, until the Chingleput District, which, from its superiority in having a fine market at its door, first rate communications, a very favorable climate and rain-fall, and many other advantages, should have been the best, has become the most wretched and the poorest in the Presidency.

53. My remedy for this great evil, as stated above, is to make the land free. There would be a little grasping at first, owing to the rush which would be made by the Mirassidars upon every field they have any chance of being able ever to cultivate. This, however, would soon cure itself, and the land finding its way into the hands of persons willing to improve it, the general prosperity and progress which would result would soon far more than counterbalance any temporary derangement.

54. There is another way. When a Durkhast is presented, let an upset price of two years' revenue be put on the waste, and let it then be sold to the highest bidder. A similar course, except the upset price, is even now pursued in applications for waste, bought in by Government at auction for arrears of revenue. People take care of what they pay for; Government will get good cultivators, and even Mirassidars will hesitate before investing a tangible sum in the pursuit of what they will come sooner or later to see is a hopeless chimera. Much of the coercive process is due to the reckless struggle for waste, when a Payikari gives a Durkhast for it. If the Mirassidar secures it, he too often finds that he has not the means of cultivating it to advantage. It remains waste. He can't pay the assessment. Part of his holding (or, may be, his household goods) is sold by Government in default. On the other hand, if the Payikari, often a pauper, is successful, a similar result often teaches him too late the folly of his ambition to cultivate when he has no capital. He disappears when the inevitable time for payment arrives. Coercive process in this case is a sham. The land is sold and is bought in by Government at a nominal sum, there being of course no bidders. This latter case is of very frequent occurrence.

55. I have now shown I trust successfully that the Samadayam putta is not the cause of any difficulty in collections; that we cannot interfere by separate registration between a Mirassidar and his sub-tenants, for this would lead us to interfere with his private putta next; that Mirassidars have no sort of right whatever to Swatantrams, when Government, for the security of the revenue, grants a putta to a Payakari for waste; and that this is quite a new and unheard of claim. Finally, I have traced the revenue system up to date, giving the result of seven years' intimate acquaintance with such matters and close inquiries into the inner life of the people; and I have made a proposal for the redemption of the waste which, I am convinced, is just and known to be feasible.

56. Having then showed how the arrears do *not* arise, and what is *not* the cause of coercive process, I beg indulgence for a very short account of what is.

57. If virtue were not always forced to be its own reward, the Government might justly expect that the tenderness and consideration with which it has treated the claims of the Mirassidars would have produced an easy-going district, the ryots sleek, the revenue paid with punctuality, and arrears and coercive process unknown. It is admitted that the opposite condition of things has been realised in fact.

58. What I have said regarding the effect of the Mirassi claims, in producing waste and keeping the district poor, applies without reserve to all unirrigated (dry) waste. In regard to irrigated (wet) waste, however, it must be regarded as one only of two causes.

59. The other and a very important one is the state of the irrigation works. I respectfully submit that Government is assuming a very grave responsibility in respect to the condition of these works. There are 1,563 irrigation works in the 1,600 square miles forming the Sub-division. There are of all sorts river channels, flood and spring; large tanks with perennial supply; ordinary tanks, whose supply is uncertain, but the chances fair; and small tanks often badly situated, whose supply is precarious. The total number as taken by me at last Jammabadi is 128 channels and 1,435 tanks of all sorts. The general condition of all these works is one of neglect and ruin.

60. It is not necessary to explain the causes of this in any great detail in this place. It may, however, be well to indicate two: 1st, the impracticable constitution of the Department of Public Works, and 2nd the totally insufficient sum annually devoted to repair.

61. The consequence of the latter is that, even in good years, much land is left waste, purely owing to the disrepair of the irrigation works; while, in any season at all unfavorable, the amount of waste becomes enormous and tends seriously to retard the material progress of a district, where there are already too many similar agencies at work. Every owner of property sets aside a certain percentage to provide against accident and to meet deterioration, and the repair of wear and tear. With this view the foresight of former Governments set aside a certain portion of the revenue, under the title of Yeri Merah, or tank cess, which, with the Kudimaramut or village labor which ryots were bound to render, was considered sufficient for the proper up-keep of works.

62. This arrangement is, however, now quite forgotten. Allotments are now made on no such system. Only the above cess continues to be collected. The consequence of this is that most of the works are more or less in ruins, that hardly a single one is efficient, and that some are almost obliterated from neglect. The ryot is left in despair and poverty. To realise the wherewithal to meet the Government demands, even the straw, which should support his cattle through the hot months, and supply manure for his fields, is carted off to Madras and sold. The cattle have thus deteriorated till it has become the worst breed probably to be seen anywhere, and they are so enfeebled that disease, which is hardly ever absent, finding an easy prey sweeps them off in immense numbers. Here we come to another cause of the waste, a reaction from the main one. The destruction to cattle produces inability to cultivate, waste, loss of revenue, poverty and backwardness, compared with other districts. Moreover, the soil of the district is itself generally of inferior quality and easily exhausted. Large tracts are miled with soda and lime. Scientific improvement has yet to be tried. The ryot does nothing towards this end. Even ordinary manuring and rest are not universal if water is available.

63. I gave as my first cause the impracticable constitution of the Department Public Works. This hardly needs proof. The state of the works is sufficient justification for the desertion. The upper portion of the staff seems to be too strong and the subordinate establishment much too weak. It is notorious that the department is in extremely bad odour with the ryots, and no wonder, when they trace their poverty, rightly or wrongly, to its alleged incapacity and neglect. It is consequently not *en rapport* with the cultivators, who decline to render it any assistance, or to have anything to do with it. They even go so far as to refuse to take from it the contracts for the repair of the village works.

64. For this state of things I have frequently urged the transfer of ordinary repair and minor new works to the Revenue Department, under whom the villagers would gladly execute them. This plan has also been sanctioned by the Secretary of State as far back as 1868.

65. I am also strongly of opinion that Government should set apart a certain percentage of the revenue of each village to be devoted exclusively to the repair and renewal of its irrigation works, and that the Collector and Sub-Collector should have power, when making the annual

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settlement, to allot from the fund so created a sum sufficient to maintain the works of each village in efficiency. An Overseer attached to the office could take the necessary measurements and frame, in conjunction with the office staff, the necessary estimate, which would then be forwarded to the Tahsildar for execution. This is a simple scheme which would be intelligible to the people, and remove a great reproach. Government would have little trouble in framing rules to secure discretion in the exercise of the power thus granted to the Collector and his subordinates, and proper supervision of their proceedings.

66. There is no doubt that some part—a considerable part—of the difficulty in collections is produced by the poverty, whose causes I have described. Unless therefore the tax-gatherer, in the shape of the Tahsildar, is sharp and can collect the assessment before the Government share of crop leaves the village, it becomes an arrear most difficult to recover, for the Mirassidars, who reside in their villages, are often poor and in debt, and in any case too ready to spend in marriages and other costly luxuries the money which, on the sale of their grain, should have been set aside to meet the Government demand. Those who are absentees, on the other hand, are represented by pauper rackrented tenants, and the produce, once allowed to leave the village, there is then nothing on which to levy the kist except the land; and here again a most troublesome arrear is produced, requiring correspondence with the Collectors of Madras and elsewhere, diversified by frivolous objections to the demand or attachment, set forth with all the arts known to the law agents of the town.

67. To prevent these things, to ensure punctuality in the payment of collection of kists, I have striven earnestly for years. I have had, however, to contend with some of the very worst specimens of the Tahsildars peculiar to this district, and for a long time every effort seemed to be in vain. The officers in question are all wedded, for reasons which are best known to themselves, to the idea that the normal state of a taluq should be one of arrear, and when hard pressed will give any number of great reasons why no one has ever been able to collect the revenue of late years in this district. Chief among them the spectre Mirassi right is always dished up. As I was perfectly well aware that, except in the indirect way of producing poverty, this did not exist as a cause, it was a matter of little difficulty to see that, until the old staff was weeded out, improvement was impossible.

68. There are now in charge of the Madrantakum and Conjeveram Taluqs two men of a different stamp. The Chingleput Tahsildar has just retired after a course of conduct worthy of the old school to which he belonged. This has always been the most wretched and troublesome taluq in the district. Seeing plainly last December that prompt measures were required I relieved the Tahsildar of the duty of collecting the revenue and took it myself. Arrears for many faslis were outstanding, and the accounts were in great confusion. I have reduced them to order.

69. The following is a statement of how matters stood in Madrantakum, the largest taluq in the district, on the 31st March:—

	Beriz.	Collection, including the sum recommended for remission up to 31st March.	Balance.
	RS.	RS.	RS.
Arrears at the close of Fasli 1283 ...	44,637	44,392	245
Kist up to the end of March, Fasli 1284 ...	2,79,335	2,74,842	4,493
Total...	3,23,972	3,19,234	4,738

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The balance on the same date in the previous ten years was as follows:—
Statement showing the state of balance in the Madrantakum Taluq during the last ten Faslis on the 31st March of each Fasli.

Fasli.	Arrears.	Current.	Total.
	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
1274 ...	22,026 6 3	77,167 8 1	99,193 14 4
1275 ...	22,787 3 5	36,855 7 3	59,642 10 8
1276 ...	12,856 2 4	82,317 12 3	95,173 14 7
1277 ...	17,609 4 7	88,702 5 7	1,06,311 10 2
1278 ...	33,529 2 10	83,480 3 5	1,17,009 6 3
1279 ...	32,425 0 9	1,11,815 14 10	1,44,240 15 7
1280 ...	30,569 7 8	1,77,154 4 2	2,07,723 11 10
1281 ...	31,259 8 11	1,83,692 10 7	2,14,952 3 6
1282 ...	21,672 5 9	1,28,202 6 9	1,49,874 12 6
1283 ...	36,454 9 2	86,674 13 10	1,23,129 7 0
1284 ...	* 7,168 12 4	4,493 1 11	11,661 14 3

but really 4,738 only

* Rupees 6,722-15-4 has been recommended for remission, and the remainder, Rupees 245-13-0, is the balance to be collected.

Words are useless in the face of such figures.

70. It seems slightly absurd, from its very palpableness when stated, but my third proposition is, that a great portion of the arrears and coercive process is due to want of promptness which had grown into a custom on the part of the Tahsildars of this district. Want of promptitude breeds arrears, which again require coercive process for their realization, and I can conceive nothing more detrimental to the welfare of a district, or more demoralizing to the ryot, than the frequent recourse to selling the holdings of persons who would never have been in default but for the incapacity or neglect of the officers of Government.

71. Another great defect in the administration of this district which tends to the same end is that the office of headman (Monigar) in villages is honorary and non-hereditary. I have frequently brought this point to notice. The Monigars are supposed to make the collections, and to be responsible for punctual remittance of the various kists. Having neither pay, position, nor hereditary dignity to lose, these officers have got out of the way of performing this duty; and, until within the last two years or so, every rupee of revenue had to be collected by the taluq subordinates, who were compelled for this purpose to visit each village. The position of the Monigar should clearly be assimilated to that of the headman of the other Tamil Districts. I have made a beginning, and they are now working much better under promise that their offices will be properly endowed and constituted during the new settlement now in progress under Mr. Puckle's auspices; and it is noticeable that, in the Madrantakum Taluq, when this system was first introduced, and is in most complete working order, the collections are also more punctual than elsewhere, and the arrears nominal merely.

72. Another point. The kists do not represent in practice the periods when the ryot has any crop to realize. They stand as below:—

November ...	5 per cent.
December ...	10 do.
January ...	15 do.
February ...	20 do.
March ...	20 do.
April ...	20 do.
May ...	10 do.
Total...	100

5
2
6
3

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The bulk of the ryots reap nothing till January. It is their convenience we must principally consider. The well-to-do can pay at any time. A theoretically perfect scale of kists is no boon to them, and they would prefer receiving visits from the tax-gatherer as seldom as possible. The months, when the cultivators generally have reaped their harvest and are in funds, are the first four of the year. It would expedite work, and would be considered a boon by the people if three of the present kists were omitted, and the Kistbundi re-arranged as follows:—

January	20 per cent.
February	25 do.
March... ..	30 do.
April	25 do.

73. I have now explained my views in detail. I have tried to show grounds for my statement that the waste and the backward state of the district are produced—

(1.) By the vain hope, cherished by the representatives of the old Mirassidars, that Government will somehow yield to their preposterous claims, and that somehow, and at some time or other, things will so turn out as to give them the means of taking up the waste lands, from which they consider that no stone should be left unturned to exclude outsiders.

(2.) By the success of this manoeuvre, excluding the competition of the willing and monied cultivator, and producing indolence, sloth, and carelessness of improvement.

(3.) By the ruined state of the irrigation works. In conjunction with these then I attribute the bad collections, the chronic arrears, and the consequent necessity for frequent recourse to coercive process to the two following causes.

(4.) The indifference, incapacity or corruption of former Tahsildars causing them to neglect collections.

(5.) The honorary and non-hereditary nature of the office of village headmen are Monigar.

74. My remedies are simple and are quite within the power of Government to apply at once.

1st.—A clear declaration that Government will not recognise Mirassi rights, because it is non-existent.

2nd.—To make the land free, or at least to put an upset price of two years assessment on any piece of land durkhasted for, and then sell it to the highest bidder.

3rd.—The transfer of ordinary irrigation repairs and minor new works to the Revenue Department.

4th.—Under each work the fixing a percentage of the revenue to be set aside for its up-keep.

5th.—That Government should itself more closely watch collections, and rigorously punish any dereliction in this respect on the part of revenue officers of all grades. Have no arrears and there will be no coercive process.

6th.—The erection of the appointment of headmen into a hereditary office, and provision for its payment by the immediate introduction of the Village Cess Act of 1864. This need not wait for the introduction of the new settlement. It can be done at once on the basis of the assessment now existing, in the same way as the Road Cess is levied.

7th.—A modification of the existing Kistbundi.

75. I have the honor to request that you will forward this report to the Board of Revenue.

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ENCLOSURE No. 2.

Madrantacum Taluq.

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz for Fasli 1284.	Samudayam Putta Beriz.	As per Holding of the Mirassidars in Samudayam.	As per Holding of the Payakaries in Samudayam.
		RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
114	Sirunavalur	644 4 10	25 15 8	15 5 10	10 9 10
214	Gudalur	872 11 10	106 0 8	45 9 4	60 7 4
112	Vasemtavadi	328 10 6	4 3 11	4 3 11	...
313	Pulikkoradu	321 1 3	...	...	...
32	Porayur	1,159 0 4	...	...	...
146	Ilanumanda Cuppam	79 4 4	8 1 9	...	8 1 9
152	Acchekattu	106 13 8	15 12 1	2 9 4	13 2 9
141	Kattri Chery	348 9 9	36 6 7	36 6 7	...
137	Madranticum	5,215 6 6	...	...	...
142	Membacam	597 6 11	11 11 4	10 9 10	1 1 6
195	Puliyeeeranangottai	376 13 10	10 7 8	10 7 8	...
204	Kulamangulam	138 2 0	1 3 4	1 13 4	...
198	Kurumbarai	315 13 9	3 2 4	3 2 4	...
220	Vilnarayanallur Omai	580 5 10	29 15 7	24 12 10	5 2 9
207	Pakang	1,848 4 7	10 6 11	0 1 11	10 4 0
210	Thenmariputtur	37 4 8	10 7 10	10 7 10	...
197	Polambacam	777 13 10	...	...	...
201	Chadaravedu	83 10 4	...	...	...
202	Mudhugarai	224 13 11	...	...	...
36	Malnankaranai	581 15 2	50 8 8	44 9 1	5 15 7
205	Nettappakam	461 6 4	7 4 4	4 13 9	2 13 4
136	Marappakkam	2,114 12 2	29 8 11	15 3 0	14 5 11
206	Nelvoy	140 10 3	...	...	...
33	Unamalai	830 4 5	0 9 4	0 9 4	...
194	Avilimedur	297 8 7	81 5 2	81 5 2	...
20	Sirunallur	609 3 2	...	...	...
184	Endattur	762 9 7	13 7 3	13 7 3	...
183	Ladakaranai	588 12 9	15 14 0	15 14 0	...
69	Kattukkaranai	501 3 10	151 12 2	72 13 8	78 14 6
70	Orattur	1,032 10 10	26 6 1	3 13 0	22 9 1
121	Mogalvady	491 6 3	10 14 0	0 14 3	9 15 9
43	Kattugudalur	467 14 8	23 5 2	23 5 2	...
45	Aghili	878 0 5	2 15 3	2 15 3	...
119	Munamalaippattu	87 8 3	...	...	...
71	Tolnanel	271 4 10	...	...	...
151	Karanguly	2,115 3 7	201 8 5	168 3 0	33 5 5
138	Mulli	221 6 0	13 9 0	9 4 9	4 4 3
153	Vilagham	96 6 10	...	...	...
147	Tundam	97 0 3	5 15 4	...	5 15 4
150	Aringundram	2,262 9 5	27 13 0	27 13 0	...
	Total...	28,969 9 3	937 11 9	650 10 5	287 1 4

12th April 1875.

(Signed) C. S. CROLE,
Acting Sub-Collector.

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7th July 1875.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.
Chingleput Taluq.

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz of each village for Fasli 1284.	Samudayam Putta Beriz.	As per Holding of the Mirassidars in Samudayam Lands.	As per Holding of the Payakarices in Samudayam.
		RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
12	Kilavedu	303 6 4	1 15 11	1 15 11	...
13	Pulleri	297 2 11	54 7 4	44 6 9	10 0 7
14	Tuycun	625 13 8	9 8 5	9 8 5	...
15	Alagasamudram	808 0 5	33 5 2	33 5 2	...
25	Nemmili	1,772 2 5	42 8 9	0 8 9	42 0 0
29	Vallam	789 1 5	0 9 7	0 9 7	...
115	Vencatapuram	787 0 7	0 12 7	0 12 7	...
325	Attur	5,920 6 9	...	...	...
18	Volatur	3,514 7 3	2 4 10	...	2 4 10
19	Nariaiyeri	178 6 11	...	...	...
21	Vedanarayanapuram	248 11 4	...	...	...
23	Puduppakam	1,032 3 0	...	...	...
27	Vembakam	768 7 8	...	...	...
78	Punnappattu	257 9 2	...	...	...
89	Anur	2,390 11 10	0 6 4	...	0 6 4
90	Elimichampattu	639 9 11	...	...	...
98	Vudayembakam	1,039 10 10	...	...	...
16	Logandy	973 6 10	115 11 9	115 11 9	...
17	Adanilagam	278 7 0	40 13 1	40 13 1	...
20	Tirumany	808 9 1	...	...	...
22	Mosivakam	907 14 6	23 0 7	...	23 0 7
32	Sanikkalim	305 9 10	...	...	...
79	Paupadinakuttam	758 7 0	0 3 9	...	0 3 9
82	Salayur	1,663 8 11	62 6 6	62 6 6	...
87	Vattivakam	266 11 3	...	...	...
88	Narasanguppam	9 8 7	...	...	...
91	Mambakam	279 5 5	...	...	...
92	Kanakambattu	256 4 2	2 15 6	2 15 6	...
66	Melmanappakkam	725 13 7	13 12 6	13 12 6	...
85	Villimbakam	2,068 6 5	3 1 3	0 15 1	2 2 2
39	Nallur	618 3 5	14 7 6	14 7 6	...
48	Andikuppam	140 9 2	...	...	...
55	Mullikolattur	642 9 3	12 13 10	12 13 10	...
58	Karanai	316 9 3	115 12 5	115 12 5	...
61	Kuluppantandalam	948 11 2	55 15 2	55 15 2	...
64	Puliyur	629 11 3	49 6 1	49 6 1	...
102	Sadras	151 12 3	...	...	...
103	Vumiri	125 0 5	12 13 11	12 13 11	...
117	Kokkilimedu	652 4 5	11 9 7	11 9 7	...
33	Varagadam	2,022 4 8	41 14 0	41 14 0	...
34	Acheumakam	180 5 2	...	...	...
36	Pulikkundram	231 10 5	8 14 2	8 14 2	...
40	Orattur	377 5 8	8 11 6	...	8 11 6
41	Egai	461 11 8	147 11 5	147 11 5	...
42	Anuvatampallam	173 14 7	3 14 9	3 14 9	...
43	Perianippedu	249 2 1	...	...	...
44	Sinnanippedu	207 12 6	3 3 7	3 3 7	...
45	Kattakkalini	111 14 9	...	...	...
50	Kanucuttungal	104 7 5	...	...	...
51	Kalingalumlaikuppam	16 3 3	...	...	...
59	Kalippakam	380 10 6	2 12 6	2 12 6	...
60	Temdaria	881 9 5	21 0 9	...	21 0 9
62	Melputtur	272 10 6	18 9 11	18 9 11	...

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Chingleput Taluq.—(Continued.)

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz of each village for Fasli 1284.	Samudayam Putta Beriz.	As per Holding of the Mirassidars in Samudayam Lands.	As per Holding of the Payakarices in Samudayam.
		RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
68	Talambedu	1,126 6 8	157 3 10	157 3 10	...
69	Keraippakam	312 12 4	...	...	...
70	Kangayemkuppam	65 14 0	...	...	...
71	Madalamkuppam	202 15 3	2 4 0	...	2 4 0
73	Nanalur	200 8 9	1 14 5	1 14 5	...
75	Narappakam	438 10 5	1 0 6	1 0 6	...
76	Taitalur	693 13 8	...	...	...
80	Veerskuppam	289 1 8	...	...	...
83	Kandigai	22 2 11	...	...	...
171	Rudrakoti	167 11 2	13 8 8	...	13 8 8
172	Nachamedu	56 12 5	...	...	...
326	Irumlidi	222 5 0	...	...	...
8	Thenur	532 0 2	8 0 8	8 0 8	...
95	Tirukkativendram	1,649 6 2	30 14 9	13 1 3	17 13 6
63	Nandunantagal	613 12 2	...	...	...
104	Meyur	381 6 0	...	...	...
26	Memappakam	1,459 0 6	85 0 6	85 0 6	...
112	Gurunamedu	1,145 13 4	9 8 8	9 8 8	...
113	Vembakam	1,247 12 15	0 4 5	0 4 5	...
114	Dasarikolattur	291 10 2	...	...	...
116	Kangadu	472 9 9	...	...	...
72	Edayattur	563 6 5	2 6 7	2 6 7	...
74	Vilagam	791 14 0	...	...	...
84	Timmur	261 0 9	...	...	...
37	Aringundram	902 14 8	201 1 4	201 1 4	...
47	Kottimangalum	195 2 1	...	...	...
1	Gundur	442 7 2	14 9 4	...	14 9 4
2	Mummai	112 11 0	...	...	...
3	Arattangal	158 5 6	...	...	...
4	Kantalur	117 11 5	2 13 2	2 13 2	...
5	Edayankadumantagal	161 3 9	10 1 1	10 1 1	...
7	Patranakam	393 12 3	25 11 3	12 13 9	12 13 6
9	Melamyur	1,114 7 10	1 2 5	1 2 5	...
10	Alapakam	206 13 9	0 14 11	0 14 11	...
11	Hanumandaputteri	136 0 3	...	...	...
24	Ammanambakam	751 10 3	4 8 5	4 8 5	...
31	Chingleput	72 12 3	14 0 4	14 0 4	...
35	Kamlayapuram	...	...	...	...
38	Amappakam	116 7 4	...	...	...
46	Karuppangadu	165 7 2	...	...	...
53	Ecchur	610 3 6	8 2 7	8 2 7	...
56	Veerapuram	1,243 4 6	55 1 5	55 1 5	...
119	Ayappakam	768 10 5	24 5 7	17 5 7	7 0 0
120	Kudinayalur	114 1 1	...	...	...
121	Manamai	1,462 2 3	1 9 1	1 9 1	...
122	Kadumbadi	902 13 0	...	...	...
123	Melkuppam	197 7 8	...	...	...
100	Saidamungalum	220 5 3	15 14 6	15 14 6	...
Total...		64,367 15 1	1,629 13 4	1,451 13 10	177 15 6

12th April 1875.

(Signed) C. S. CROLE,
Acting Sub-Collector.

WITH this letter the Acting Collector of Chingleput submits a report by Mr. Crole, Acting Sub-Collector, giving his views with reference to the papers on the Mirassi question disposed of in Board's Proceedings, 12th February 1875, No. 324, and G. O., 13th April 1875, No. 590, R. D.

2. Mr. Crole attributes the backward state of the district and the extent to which recourse to coercive process has been necessary, in part only to the opposition of the Mirassidars to the occupation of waste lands, based on the vain hope of Government interference. He regards the Mirassi right as a chimera, declares that it is non-existent in reality, and recommends that it be decidedly and once for all repudiated, and the preferential claim of the Mirassidars to waste land disallowed. He thinks that waste land applied for should be sold by auction, and he observes that the right of Mirassidars to Swatantrams at best depends upon their having furnished the Paiyikari. He is of opinion that it is a retrograde step to attempt to resuscitate Mirassi claims, and contrary to policy and fairness to recognize differences between classes of cultivators.

3. There is more of assertion than of argument in Mr. Crole's statements on the subject of Mirassi right. There can be no doubt that it exists, notwithstanding many years of persistent effort to crush it; that it is of great antiquity, as is indeed implied by Mr. Crole's own expressions regarding it; and that it is dearly cherished. But it is unnecessary to discuss this matter at present, since the Government have decided that the experiment of recording and recognizing Mirassi lands and those liable to payment of Swatantram fees to the Mirassidars shall be tried, and the Director of Revenue Settlement is engaged in carrying out the order. Mr. Crole's most confident assertion, *viz.*, that no one can say in any large village who are Mirassidars or what is Mirassi land, is, the Board are informed by Mr. Puckle, completely contrary to his experience in the 55 villages in which the work has been carried out up to date. The old Mirassi shares or pangus have become attached to definite lands, and there is not the least difficulty in identifying the Mirassi pangus lands, the existing shareholders, or the proportionate value of each share.

4. His assertion that there will be difficulty in the sub-division of the Samudayam lands is also disproved by experience as the shareholders are found to be eager to divide. The Board cannot concur in Mr. Crole's view that the difficulty of collection will be increased by sub-division; for though there will be more puttass to collect upon there will be no difficulty in fixing the responsibility and ascertaining who is the real defaulter, and this is the impediment experienced at present. Mr. Crole seems to be right as to the relative extent of the Samudayam holdings, which, as stated by him, are under three per cent. of the whole.

5. It is probably true that the unsatisfied claims of Mirassidars to dues on waste lands is not the sole cause of the evils which it is sought to remedy; but it is one cause, and the removal of it will probably have a good effect.

6. The causes which in Mr. Crole's opinion have been most operative are the ruinous condition of the irrigation works, owing to the impracticable constitution of the Public Works Department, and to insufficient allotments for repairs; the inefficiency of Tahsildars and want of promptness of demand, whereby arrears

were allowed to accumulate; the condition of the Village Monigars, who are not hereditary, and who are unpaid; and a bad Kistbundy.

7. As to the first, he suggests the transfer of the repair work to the Revenue Department and the assignment of a per-centage on the revenue for outlay on repairs. The works are unquestionably in much need of repair, and the annual allotments for their up-keep insufficient; but Mr. Crole's suggestions have been repeatedly made, and have been negatived after full discussions. His remarks as to want of promptness in collection are undoubtedly well founded, and he shows that results of the most satisfactory and creditable kind can be obtained by really zealous and efficient officers. Much depends on the up-keep of the individual collection and balance account in the taluq cutcherries, so that process for each kist can be made out and issued immediately on the receipt of monthly remittances from the villages.

8. The condition of the Village Monigars is an admitted evil, but a scheme to improve it will be prepared in connection with the new settlement.

9. The Board agree with Mr. Crole in his remarks regarding the Kistbundy. He suggests four kists, January, February, March, and April, of 20, 25, 30, and 25 per cent., respectively. The Board think per-centage kists, which are not so easily understood by the mass of the people as Anna kists are objectionable. The general question of the revision of kists is under consideration, and orders will be separately issued. The Chingleput kists will be then dealt with.

((True Copies and Extract))

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Acting Secretary.

No. 86.

ORDER THEREON, 7th July 1875, No. 1,925.

Land Revenue, No. 4.

RECORDED.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. MACGREGOR,
Acting Secretary to Government.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

No.

10

From

B! of Rev.

Dated

25th May

1875

FOR ORDERS.

Mr. Cullen's paper is full of assertions and contradictions. & he cannot get over the recognition by the Chief Law of the instantaneous rights whenever these cases come into court. He is I think right about the Moningars - & the Kisti but there are being dealt

I do not see that any orders are needed on this paper. The bill of 12 lbs. 75th has disposed of the main subject. The instant case is the same as the land. The village established & his questions are under disposal by

Call. 11876 20107

REVENUE

THE BOARD OF REVENUE

21st July 1875

Post

Mail

G. O., 21st July 1875, No. 1025.

JULY

No. 8586

These papers are the original papers of the Board of Revenue. They are not to be used for any other purpose. The Board of Revenue is not responsible for the loss of these papers.

the 1st. The P.W.
question is a
general one. It
constantly engages
the attention of the
Dept. [initials]

with. The condition of
the irrigation works & the
D.P. W. are general questions

I do not consider that
any orders are required
on Mr. Baker's letter
which may be recorded
[initials]

Quite agree
Record [initials]
2/7

THE HON. THE SECRETARY OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT
SOUTH AFRICA

FOR ORDERS.

Despatch

No. 1,415.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 25th May 1875.

Read the following letter from R. J. MELVILLE, Esq., Acting Collector of the Chingleput District, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 17th April 1875, No. 189:—

I HAVE the honor to forward, for the Board's perusal, original report (to be returned) received from the Acting Sub-Collector, dated 12th instant, No. 201, containing his views on the Mirassi question, which is now engaging the attention of Government.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From C. S. CROLE, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector, to R. W. BARLOW, Esq., Collector of Chingleput, dated 12th April 1875, No. 201.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge copy of Board's Proceedings, dated 12th February, containing your report on Mirassi tenures, and forwarded to me for my information. A few days afterwards the remarks of the Director of Revenue Settlement thereon were received with the Board's order on both communications.

2. Under ordinary circumstances, I should be the last to canvass the opinions of my superior. Even in this important matter were the difference in views slight, instead of being diametrically opposed, I should hesitate long before disputing your positions. But, after as diligent and extended inquiries, and as much deliberation as I have been able to give the subject during the three weeks which have intervened since I received the Board's Proceedings, it seems to me a duty I owe the Government that before they sanction proposals which I honestly believe to be misconceived, they should have before them views derived from seven years' experience as Sub-Collector of this district.

3. The *origo mali* appears from the various references to be that the chronic state of arrears and the frequency of resort to coercive process has attracted the attention, first of the Government of Madras, and subsequently in a despatch of 1874 drew animadversions from the Secretary of State.

4. Among many reasons adduced to account for the position of bad eminence in these matters occupied by the District of Chingleput, the "*Mirassi system*" is the only one seriously urged in the various papers before me. Accordingly it is to the improvement of that system that you point the Board as a panacea.

5. For this purpose you advocate two measures—

(1.) The recognition of the right of Mirassidars to Swatantrams from Payikaris, hereafter acquiring puttas.

(2.) The grant of sub-receipts to tenants in the Samatayam holding.

6. The Director argues—and in my opinion properly argues—against the adoption of the second of these, as being an unwarrantable interference between landlord and tenant, and I am strongly of opinion that our troubles in regard to Mirassi have only begun, if we recognize any one but the holder of the putta as the tenant of Government. Until his sub-tenant produces the decree of a competent Court, showing his right to the land in his holding apart from his Mirassidar, we should look to the latter alone to pay what is due to Government for "his occupation of its soil;" and it needs little demonstration to prove that fiscal and other allied considerations apart, it would be very impolitic to allow these under-tenants to think that they have any real grievance not inseparable from their position as tenants.

7. The Director proposes, in lieu of your remedy, to sub-divide according to the Mirassi shares the land entered in the Samatayam putta. As I shall show below, this putta has little to do with the arrears; but, even if it had, I ask how sub-division could assist us in their prompt

collection. Sub-division means several, perhaps a hundred persons to be asked for the assessment instead of one. It means the collection of 100 items for one, and, in default, the same number of demands and attachments with the subsequent procedure following thereon multiplied accordingly. At present the Samadayam putta really gives no trouble whatever. I adduce, in proof, the frequent complaint that a sub-tenant's offer of assessment was refused in the interests of a Mirassidar. It must be remembered that the property of each Mirassidar in the village is jointly and severally responsible for the whole of the assessment due on the putta in question, and, as a matter of fact, it is found in practice in the sub-division to be the best putta in the village from a collection point of view.

8. In what I have said above, I exclude the cases of a very few villages, in which decisions of the High Court have produced confusion and bad spirit. Kattrambakam and Navalur in Conjevaram Taluq are two. In such villages the tricks and frauds detailed by you *do* prevail, but the same might have taken place anywhere else, and the description is not applicable to any but an insignificant minority. The private lands also of Mirassidars are in the hands of tenantry to a much longer extent than is supposed. If you interfere with the tenantry of the one class, why let alone the other? I maintain that both in regard to private and Samadayam sub-tenancy, a very fair and practical understanding exists. Witness the entire absence of rent suits between the parties.

9. The Director endorses your calculation that "one-third" "30 per cent." of the gross cultivated area is, in this district, held on Samadayam putta. This assertion so startled me that I ordered 100 Curnams of the Chingleput Taluq in my camp for the Jamabundi where I received the Board's Proceedings under reply, to compile a statement setting forth the extent of holdings of that sort in their villages. I also caused a similar account to be prepared for forty villages in the Madrantakum Taluq. The result was 2.75 per cent. and not 30.

10. More than that. Out of that 2.75 per cent. only .50 is held by under-tenants, the remainder (2.25) being in the direct occupation of Mirassidars, and, consequently, to the former and smaller fraction alone can your remarks apply. I append a statement showing full particulars. The villages were not selected ones.

11. I submit that a glance at it will prove beyond shadow of doubt that the Samadayam putta is no cause of the arrears in this district, and consequently that, even if the Director is able to sub-divide, which I much doubt, such a step will afford no assistance, but rather produce immediate, though probably not eventual, harm to the prompt collection of revenue. I have shown cause for this opinion above.

12. With regard to the second remedy for the ills of the district, some plan of enforcing payment of the fees called Swatantrams to Mirassidars, I regret also to have to offer an opinion adverse to yours. I do this with the greater diffidence, as this is the measure of relief from which the Director expects, not only to secure prompt collections and prevent arrears, but actually to change the face of the district, by bringing under cultivation a large portion of the variously estimated 375,000 or 154,000 acres now lying waste for want of sanction to such a proposal.

13. The Board might well be "surprised to find that there is so simple a remedy for an evil of such magnitude." I would respectfully submit that great evils were never yet removed by small remedies, and would suggest, as throwing considerable, *in limine*, doubt on the present proposal, that it is singular that, if such a simple plan afford any fair prospect of success, it should have occurred to only one of the many officers who have served in this district, many of them otherwise able men.

14. I agree with you in adopting the word "Payikaris" for persons other than Mirassidars; but for a different reason from the one assigned by you. As in these days nothing would ever lead the Government to interfere between Mirassidars and those holding under them as tenants, any inquiry into disputes arising between Mirassidars, and such persons may safely be left to the Civil Courts, according to whose decisions we register. The "Payikari" with whom we have to

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do, is a person not a Mirassidar put in by Government to cultivate waste left on its hands by the Mirassidars relinquishing or neglecting it.

15. The only intricate question involved in this district appertains to the sub-tenant class. The Payikari question with which alone Government has to deal is really one of the simplest conceivable.

16. Mr. Place found no less than 1,827 out of the 17,821 shares, into which the Jaghire was divided, held by such persons. They were called "*Kani kudis*." A village called Petappur in Madrantakum Taluq even now has them. There were also a large number in possession of holdings, not being recognized shares or Pangus, from time immemorial. This large body has been swelled by continual accretions, as waste was, from time to time, assigned to outsiders owing to its refusal by the Mirassidars.

17. I shall not now stop to discuss the minute differences which Mr. Place discovered between these Payikaris and the Mirassidars. They have all along really been the same in the eye of the Government, but it will be one of the effects of Mr. Puckle's proposal to exact from Payikaris taking up land in future the payment of Swatantrams to Mirassidars to put an end to this equality. I undertake to show clearly that this step, besides being a retrogression from the policy laid down by Government making every class, caste and creed equal, is not required, and is founded on a misconception of the Mirassi question. I maintain also that it argues ill for the success of the new settlement about which Mr. Puckle is taking so much pains.

18. I crave indulgence while I go into a little necessary detail to support my positions.

19. In the first place, this remedy was proposed by Mr. Fane so far back as 1868, and on turning to his long report, I find that the arguments now adduced, which had struck me as not unfamiliar, are all the old ones set forth by him. The proposals were negatived by the Board of the day.

20. In plain terms the Government are asked to buy off the resistance now offered by the Mirassidars to the independent cultivation of the waste by outsiders (Payikaris), by taking steps to enforce payment by the latter to the former of Swatantrams (fees), to which it is supposed they have a right that cannot now be gainsaid. I shall, hereafter, adduce proof that so far from this, it has never yet been in existence, and has yet to be established.

21. Mr. Puckle has convinced himself on the evidence adduced in his report that the non-payment of these fees is the sole cause of the backward state of this district and of the large extent of waste. He estimates, and his estimate may be accepted, that supposing the really available waste were fully cultivated by outsiders, the Mirassidars of each village would be the richer by Rupees 25 *per annum* on the average.

22. I shall suppose that the difficulty of settling who is a Mirassidar, and for what portion of his holding each so-called Mirassidar is one in reality, and in what portion he holds no such right; I shall suppose, I say, that this difficulty to me insurmountable, is successfully met. Take Tirukatchur alluded to by Mr. Puckle. The number of persons styling themselves Mirassidars is in that village fifty-eight. I ask the Board to consider whether it is consonant with their experience of human nature to credit the assertion that the Mirassidars of that village would, to-morrow, allow a Durkhasdar from, say, Madras to be settled on their waste lands, which would then pass permanently out of their power, for the almost inappreciable benefit accruing from the payment to each of them of Annas 12 *per annum*.

23. The right over this waste has been truly described as "much cherished and long contested." It is futile to believe that the value of such a right can possibly be represented by a sum so paltry as not to suffice to keep the Mirassidars in betel and nut.

24. The Government will ere long find itself woefully mistaken if, by the retrograde step of setting up two different classes of cultivators, they expect to see the end of the struggle between Mirassidars and Payikaris and the final security to this district of good cultivation, peace, prosperity and progress. I fearlessly maintain that the Mirassidars consulted by Mr. Puckle never really intended to comply with his terms. They were glad of an opportunity of

reviving a groundless claim, and they left to the future the decision of what course they would pursue on the attempted introduction of the hateful Payikari into the fields of their village; an event staved off from time immemorial by the adoption of the simple expedients left open to them.

25. The cause of the large extent of waste is to be sought for in as different a direction as its cure. I shall now attempt as plain an exposition of these as I am able.

26. We know little or nothing of the revenue history of the district of the Jaghire before its grant to the Company in 1763. From that date up to 1784, it was impossible, owing to the unsettled state of the country, to introduce any satisfactory system. At the latter date we are told that most of the cultivators had fled to Madras, and, as regards the remainder, that the wars of the Carnatic left little but the bones of its former inhabitants.

27. Many expedients were tried for ameliorating its condition until November 1794, when Mr. Place was put in charge of the Jaghire, and had set him the task of constructing a system which, while being as nearly as possible in conformity with former usage, would secure a proper revenue to the Company.

28. Everything was in a state of chaos. Rights were undefined and the administration in disorder. In reducing this disorder to order, he recognized the resident inhabitants in their holdings, and the village system being then the one institution which had survived the storm of anarchy and misrule, each village was treated with fiscally in the light of a little close republic, as it was. I may remark that the mass of the cultivators were either Vellalas or Brahmins, and I need hardly remind you, that these two castes represent two historical facts—the first, a gradual and peaceful colonization, the second, a victorious irruption—and that both belong to ages whose history can now be traced only by reading the semi-religious fables still extant by the light of the occasional gleams shed on them by living facts.

29. Mr. Place has detailed the inquiries which he instituted in two admirable reports. It is as clear as noon-day, from these papers, that the Mirassi system and a gross rental are inseparable parts of the system he exhumed and introduced.

30. Each village was divided into so many shares. The holders of these shares cultivated each year as much of the village lands belonging to their Pungus, as they were able or as the season permitted. For this purpose they employed farm laborers (Padiyals), or contracted with sub-tenants (Payikaris or Sugavasis). The shareholders were held responsible for the realization of a fair revenue from the village, and made up from the common fund the shortcomings of individual members.

31. It is obvious that the only difficulty was to see that the ryots did not imperil the revenue by leaving cultivable lands waste. This difficulty has continued down to the present day. The founders of the system, however, had no hesitation as to the remedy to be applied. In such a case the waste "escheated to Government."

32. Under the system of joint village rentals, the Mirassi system was in its perfection. It amounted to a contract between the owners of full shares in the village as a body, and the Government: for the payment to the latter of the revenue of the village. The Mirassidars were to take their own way of getting this done, and as long as they performed their part of the contract, and a fair revenue was paid to Government, it clearly was not competent to the latter to dispute the Mirassidars' claim to the cultivable waste against outsiders. They let it out in their own way. In like manner, the village community claimed full rights over quarries, jungles, fisheries, and immemorial waste. The claim is intelligible, I think, under the above explanation.

33. The system was one suited to a barbarous age, an unsettled country, and a Government needing money and little sedulous of the future. It was too rough and unequal, however, to stand long before our ideas of justice and policy, for it entailed a system of rack-rent fatal to thrift and progress, under which the industrious had to make up for the shortcomings of his less energetic or careful co-sharer. It soon gave way to an individual settlement with each ryot on the Dittum system. It was, however, the Mirassi system pure and simple, and the individual settlement gave the first blow to it.

34. All claims, then, now put forth by Mirassidars, must be considered with reference either first to the Mirassi system exhumed by Mr. Place, and sanctioned by the Government of 1795 to 1799, or, second, to concessions, if such there be, subsequently made by Government. For all rights possessed by the cultivators were derived from rules laid down by Government for the guidance of Revenue officers and ryots alike. These were clearly acts of State within the province of the Government.

35. Let us see then how Mr. Place defines the Mirassidar of 1799. I quote from paragraphs 702, 703 and 704 of his final report to the Board, dated 6th June 1799.

"The following definition, therefore, of Mirassi or property in land seems to be deducible from the discussions that have passed on it."

"That it is a right to the use and substance of the soil, vested in the present proprietor, his heirs and successors so long as he does and can cultivate it and pays the dues of Government and is obedient to its authority; and that when he does not or cannot cultivate his lands; when he withholds the dues of Government or is disobedient to its authority, such parts as he neglects, or, in the latter case, the whole, escheats to Government who may confer it on whom it pleases."

"The potential part of the definition although essential hereafter should now be construed favorably, for the state of the population is so low that a man's abilities on that account alone may not concur with his will. But when population, as may reasonably be expected within a few years, should have considerably increased, and any proprietor may, if he chooses, procure laborers for the culture of the whole of his lands, a failure to do so, should incur the penalty of losing them; for whether it proceeds from obstinacy or real inability, the forfeiture is not only justifiable, but a duty enjoined on Government on this principle, that it must not allow any individual to possess land for the purpose of keeping it waste; and farther, as I have before said, that as the revenue of the State is derived immediately from the cultivators of lands, it ought not to suffer from the caprice or inaction of an individual."

36. Who will say that every square yard of waste land has not so escheated to Government years and years ago? If this is so, Government is right in treating all Puttadars, whether claiming to be Mirassidars or not, as standing in exactly the same position to it. There is no difference whatever in the nature of their holdings *quoad* Government. On the other hand, if these lands are held not to have so escheated, the Durkhast Rules are totally illegal, for the Government would, in that case, have no power to grant away the waste in perpetuity to outsiders, this being an infraction of undoubted Mirassi right.

37. Again, in paragraphs 99 and 100 of the final report, we have the position of the old Mirassidar clearly stated as follows:—

"Mirassi is a right to use the thing and enjoy it so long as the condition annexed to that enjoyment is performed; in other words, so long as the rent is paid in money or in kind."

"Nor does this interpretation of property at all interfere with the just rights of Government, for the condition is clear and explicit, that the Mirassidar must cultivate or procure the means of cultivating his lands, and if he neglects to perform that condition, they escheat to the lord, who may give them to whomsoever he pleases."

38. The Government had previously laid down its views as follows in Minutes of Consultation, dated 8th January 1796, and it has been dumb on the question from that day and this: It declared that "the actual property in the soil was vested in the State," and the Mirassi of a village was defined to be a preference of cultivation derived from hereditary residence but subject to the right of Government as the superior lord of the soil in what way it chooses for the cultivation of its own lands."

39. It must be remembered that the above extracts contain Mr. Place's modified definition arrived at after several years of close observation, and present the results of his painstaking inquiries into the relations of Government and the Mirassidar. It must, likewise, be borne in mind that the Government never receded from the position taken up in the above-quoted resolution.

40. It is incontestable then that, taken in the manner most favorable to the Mirassidar, the system amounted merely to a contract between Government and the Mirassidars for securing the full revenue of the village. If that condition were broken, the rights of the Mirassidars ceased *ipso facto*. In that view, it appears inexpedient to ask Government to secure for them the payment of Swatantrams by Payikaris placed by Government to cultivate waste lands, the duty of cultivating which lay on the Mirassidars, and has been notoriously neglected by them for years, to the very great detriment of the Government revenue, and the general welfare of the district.

41. Moreover, from the earliest times of our administration, it was the custom to give cowles to Payikaris for waste which the Mirassidars persistently neglected to cultivate. Only the other day, I came upon a case of this sort during a visit I paid to Isur, an out-of-the-way village in the Madrantakum Taluq, to make inquiries into the general subject. The total holding beriz of that village is Rupees 1,600, and out of that sum, Rupees 107, I think, is due to a cowle granted by Mr. Place himself to Payikaris for the above reason. Not a single Pie of Swatantram has ever been paid to the Mirassidars on it. Properly so. The Government considered its contract with them at an end. It stepped in and took measures to secure the revenue. In these days, however, the Board are asked to behave differently on the ground of a usage, of which I respectfully maintain there is not only no evidence, but which is conclusively disproved by facts. For, if in any such cases Swatantrams are or ever have been paid, they are unknown to me, and must be the exceptions which prove the rule. I am aware that there are decisions of the Civil Courts both ways. For that reason I have not discussed them, for the question has never been gone into by any Court with that full knowledge of the subject which would repay an analysis of any of the judgments on record.

42. As to the Government having made subsequent concessions, the reverse is the case. Almost every claim set up by Mirassidars has been disallowed. They have lost their right over fisheries. The Government has declared it will not brook interference with mines and quarries. It levies seigniorage on wood cut in jungles. In 1858-59, it forced the Mirassidars to declare once for all how much land they desire to cultivate, and issued puttass styled at first Mirassi puttass for that extent. In 1863, even that petty concession to ancient custom was withdrawn, when the Board directed that the distinctive headings of Mirassi and Payikari puttass should cease, and that all puttass should be distinguished by a number and the name of the Puttadar only. In G. O., No. 796, dated 1st June 1870, it was finally declared that the Mirassidars have no right whatever to compensation for waste lands (the same on which it is proposed to levy Swatantrams) taken up for a public purpose. This rang the death-knell of the whole system—Mirassi then became a mere name, a disembodied shade, which need frighten no officer, properly supported, and prepared to do his duty.

43. All that remains for Government now is to exorcise this ghost by ordering that the word "Mirassidar" shall be used no more in official documents; that "Puttadar" be substituted; and by declaring that great loss has accrued from the neglect or inability of the Mirassidars for years past to provide for the cultivation of waste; and that consequently the privileges secured to them on that condition are at an end; that henceforth land is free, and will be granted to the first applicant; and that Government will recognize no distinction among its tenants, who will henceforth be indiscriminately styled Puttadars.

44. If this suggestion were adopted, I am certain that land would pass into the hands of those able and willing to cultivate it and pay the assessment on it promptly, and that false hopes and ill-founded claims being at an end, and the prop on which a rotten system rests thus removed, half the trouble and all the frivolous objections, by which the Revenue officer is now trammelled in granting land and receiving the assessment, would disappear along with it.

45. If my proposition regarding the futility of maintaining the *status quo* be disputed, let the Board ask any one now to single out the Mirassidars from the Puttadars of a village of more than ten puttass.

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46. A Mirassi share consists of the number of shares assigned to the village in the ancient Pangumalie Account, which I must observe, to begin with, is not now recognized by Government. The owner of a fraction of one of the shares, i. e., a fraction whose division is 16, 32, 64, &c., used also to be considered a Mirassidar. It follows then, that the Mirassi right departs from every piece of land, other than a recognized fraction detached from its original Pangu by sale for arrears, private sale (Kandakrayam,) by transfer, or by relinquishment. Almost every holding is now composed of odds and ends of Pangus acquired in some of these ways, and has no relation whatever to any Pangu.

47. The so-called Mirassidars themselves would be the first to admit that their possessions have no reference to the old Pangumalai, and to express their inability to distinguish the lands in which they are Mirassidars from those in which they are not. This fact, and not a large body of Sugavasis, groaning under supposed wrongs, is the cause of a great portion of the Samadaya puttass. Mirassidars object to a Payikari Durkhast, and the land is made over to them in proportion to their shares. But none of them know their shares. So it goes into the Samadaya puttass, and eventually, after much talking and arguing and making of terms, it passes into the possession of some of them, who, as I have shown, and not Payikaris, form the bulk of the cultivators under the Samadaya puttass.

48. To show, farther, what I mean, I shall take the case of a village whose Mirassi has from the above causes admittedly disappeared. I refer to the Kasba Village of Madurantakum, paying an assessment of over Rupees 10,000. Mr. Place in paragraph 89 of his report, dated 6th June 1793, states that it and its dependant villages were then divided among fifty-two Mirassidars. At the present day, there is not one holding any recognized share. The villagers admit that there is no Mirassi.

49. This has been the fate of Mirassi in every other district of the Presidency. In Tinnevely, South Arcot, Madura, and even in Tanjore, in which it is described as having been at one time even more pretentious than in Chingleput. The only vestige of it left, remains under the orders of the Board and Government. The Durkhast Rules say that the option of taking up waste lands applied for by an outsider shall be first allowed to the resident cultivators. This is the sole remains of the ancient system. The same here.

50. Why then, it will be asked, the vast extent of waste, and whence the heavy arrears and the difficulty in collecting the revenue? I can discern for the former no sufficient reason but bad habit. From the time of the Dubashes up to the present, there has always been a powerful body of officials in the Presidency Town in a position to procure at least a favorable hearing for any pretensions put forward. The Government, ever generously ready to protect and foster the vested interests of the cultivator, has looked upon the Chingleput District with special interest. Owing to the above circumstances, and its nearness to Madras, disputes, claims, and complaints, which would never be heard of beyond the four walls of a Mofussil Collector's Cutcherry, have been ordered to be inquired into, investigated, weighed, and decided with a careful tenderness, and too often with expressions of hesitation, and doubt, and even admissions of the exceptional nature of the tenure of land in this district.

51. Out of this, there has grown up a custom of asserting pretensions regarding Mirassi which really have no foundation except in assertion. I have pointed out, for instance, how in regard to Swatantrams, the Mirassidars have no claims whatever when they have not themselves provided the Payikari. They find it impossible as enlightenment advances, and as labor is more and more drawn towards the Presidency Town, to procure Payikaris to take up the waste and hold under them on any tenure less favorable than can be obtained from Government. The fallows are earning good wages in Madras. Many of the class from which they were originally drawn have risen into good position. The Mirassidars, however, think them insolent, curse the present administration, and determine that if they cannot make anything of the waste themselves, neither shall any one else. They hope against hope, of course, that, failing subservient tenants some of the family will prosper in trade or the Government service, and that then will come the reward of

all their pains. The waste will at last be taken up and added to the family property. A Payikari therefore, though as good in other respects as themselves, has come to be hated and to be considered the enemy of the future advancement and the destroyer of the ancient dignity and position of the family of each Mirassidar of the village.

52. The continued success of the many means which have been employed to keep out the hated Payikari from taking part in the cultivation of the village, has re-acted on the district in this way, that, by preventing competition, it has taken away the stimulus to honest labor and the desire for improving holdings. The Mirassidars secure from intrusion, are utterly supine and indolent. Many of them are absentees, and hardly ever visit their lands, which are let to others. Many have sunk *pari passu* with their continued exclusiveness, until the Chingleput District, which, from its superiority in having a fine market at its door, first rate communications, a very favorable climate and rain-fall, and many other advantages, should have been the best, has become the most wretched and the poorest in the Presidency.

53. My remedy for this great evil, as stated above, is to make the land free. There would be a little grasping at first, owing to the rush which would be made by the Mirassidars upon every field they have any chance of being able ever to cultivate. This, however, would soon cure itself, and the land finding its way into the hands of persons willing to improve it, the general prosperity and progress which would result would soon far more than counterbalance any temporary derangement.

54. There is another way. When a Durkhast is presented, let an upset price of two years' revenue be put on the waste, and let it then be sold to the highest bidder. A similar course, except the upset price, is even now pursued in applications for waste, bought in by Government at auction for arrears of revenue. People take care of what they pay for; Government will get good cultivators, and even Mirassidars will hesitate before investing a tangible sum in the pursuit of what they will come sooner or later to see is a hopeless chimera. Much of the coercive process is due to the reckless struggle for waste, when a Payikari gives a Durkhast for it. If the Mirassidar secures it, he too often finds that he has not the means of cultivating it to advantage. It remains waste. He can't pay the assessment. Part of his holding (or may be, his household goods) is sold by Government in default. On the other hand, if the Payikari, often a pauper, is successful, a similar result often teaches him too late the folly of his ambition to cultivate when he has no capital. He disappears when the inevitable time for payment arrives. Coercive process in this case is a sham. The land is sold and is bought in by Government at a nominal sum, there being of course no bidders. This latter case is of very frequent occurrence.

55. I have now shown I trust successfully that the Samadayam putta is not the cause of any difficulty in collections; that we cannot interfere by separate registration between a Mirassidar and his sub-tenants, for this would lead us to interfere with his private putta next; that Mirassidars have no sort of right whatever to Swatantrams, when Government, for the security of the revenue, grants a putta to a Payakari for waste; and that this is quite a new and unheard of claim. Finally, I have traced the revenue system up to date, giving the result of seven years' intimate acquaintance with such matters and close inquiries into the inner life of the people; and I have made a proposal for the redemption of the waste which, I am convinced, is just and known to be feasible.

56. Having then showed how the arrears do *not* arise, and what is *not* the cause of coercive process, I beg indulgence for a very short account of what is.

57. If virtue were not always forced to be its own reward, the Government might justly expect that the tenderness and consideration with which it has treated the claims of the Mirassidars would have produced an easy-going district, the ryots sleek, the revenue paid with punctuality, and arrears and coercive process unknown. It is admitted that the opposite condition of things has been realised in fact.

58. What I have said regarding the effect of the Mirassi claims, in producing waste and keeping the district poor, applies without reserve to all unirrigated (dry) waste. In regard to irrigated (wet) waste, however, it must be regarded as one only of two causes.

59. The other and a very important one is the state of the irrigation works. I respectfully submit that Government is assuming a very grave responsibility in respect to the condition of these works. There are 1,563 irrigation works in the 1,600 square miles forming the Sub-division. There are of all sorts: river channels, flood and spring; large tanks with perennial supply; ordinary tanks, whose supply is uncertain, but the chances fair; and small tanks often badly situated, whose supply is precarious. The total number as taken by me at last Jammabadi is 128 channels and 1,435 tanks of all sorts. The general condition of all these works is one of neglect and ruin.

60. It is not necessary to explain the causes of this in any great detail in this place. It may, however, be well to indicate two: 1st, the impracticable constitution of the Department of Public Works, and 2nd the totally insufficient sum annually devoted to repair.

61. The consequence of the latter is that, even in good years, much land is left waste, purely owing to the disrepair of the irrigation works; while, in any season at all unfavorable, the amount of waste becomes enormous and tends seriously to retard the material progress of a district, where there are already too many similar agencies at work. Every owner of property sets aside a certain percentage to provide against accident and to meet deterioration, and the repair of wear and tear. With this view the foresight of former Governments set aside a certain portion of the revenue, under the title of Yeri Merah, or tank cess, which, with the Kudimaramut or village labor which ryots were bound to render, was considered sufficient for the proper up-keep of works.

62. This arrangement is, however, now quite forgotten. Allotments are now made on no such system. Only the above cess continues to be collected. The consequence of this is that most of the works are more or less in ruins, that hardly a single one is efficient, and that some are almost obliterated from neglect. The ryot is left in despair and poverty. To realise the wherewithal to meet the Government demands, even the straw, which should support his cattle through the hot months, and supply manure for his fields, is carted off to Madras and sold. The cattle have thus deteriorated till it has become the worst breed probably to be seen anywhere, and they are so enfeebled that disease, which is hardly ever absent, finding an easy prey sweeps them off in immense numbers. Here we come to another cause of the waste, a reaction from the main one. The destruction to cattle produces inability to cultivate, waste, loss of revenue, poverty and backwardness, compared with other districts. Moreover, the soil of the district is itself generally of inferior quality and easily exhausted. Large tracts are miled with soda and lime. Scientific improvement has yet to be tried. The ryot does nothing towards this end. Even ordinary manuring and rest are not universal if water is available.

63. I gave as my first cause the impracticable constitution of the Department Public Works. This hardly needs proof. The state of the works is sufficient justification for the *desertion*. The upper portion of the staff seems to be too strong and the subordinate establishment much too weak. It is notorious that the department is in extremely bad odour with the ryots, and no wonder, when they trace their poverty, rightly or wrongly, to its alleged incapacity and neglect. It is consequently not *en rapport* with the cultivators, who decline to render it any assistance, or to have anything to do with it. They even go so far as to refuse to take from it the contracts for the repair of the village works.

64. For this state of things I have frequently urged the transfer of ordinary repair and minor new works to the Revenue Department, under whom the villagers would gladly execute them. This plan has also been sanctioned by the Secretary of State as far back as 1868.

65. I am also strongly of opinion that Government should set apart a certain percentage of the revenue of each village to be devoted exclusively to the repair and renewal of its irrigation works, and that the Collector and Sub-Collector should have power, when making the annual

settlement, to allot from the fund so created a sum sufficient to maintain the works of each village in efficiency. An Overseer attached to the office could take the necessary measurements and frame, in conjunction with the office staff, the necessary estimate, which would then be forwarded to the Tahsildar for execution. This is a simple scheme which would be intelligible to the people, and remove a great reproach. Government would have little trouble in framing rules to secure discretion in the exercise of the power thus granted to the Collector and his subordinates, and proper supervision of their proceedings.

66. There is no doubt that some part—a considerable part—of the difficulty in collections is produced by the poverty, whose causes I have described. Unless therefore the tax-gatherer, in the shape of the Tahsildar, is sharp and can collect the assessment before the Government share of crop leaves the village, it becomes an arrear most difficult to recover, for the Mirassidars, who reside in their villages, are often poor and in debt, and in any case too ready to spend in marriages and other costly luxuries the money which, on the sale of their grain, should have been set aside to meet the Government demand. Those who are absentees, on the other hand, are represented by pauper rackrented tenants, and the produce, once allowed to leave the village, there is then nothing on which to levy the kist except the land; and here again a most troublesome arrear is produced, requiring correspondence with the Collectors of Madras and elsewhere, diversified by frivolous objections to the demand or attachment, set forth with all the arts known to the law agents of the town.

67. To prevent these things, to ensure punctuality in the payment of collection of kists, I have striven earnestly for years. I have had, however, to contend with some of the very worst specimens of the Tahsildars peculiar to this district, and for a long time every effort seemed to be in vain. The officers in question are all wedded, for reasons which are best known to themselves, to the idea that the normal state of a taluq should be one of arrear, and when hard pressed will give any number of great reasons why no one has ever been able to collect the revenue of late years in this district. Chief among them the spectre Mirassi right is always dished up. As I was perfectly well aware that, except in the indirect way of producing poverty, this did not exist as a cause, it was a matter of little difficulty to see that, until the old staff was weeded out, improvement was impossible.

68. There are now in charge of the Madrantakum and Conjeveram Taluqs two men of a different stamp. The Chingleput Tahsildar has just retired after a course of conduct worthy of the old school to which he belonged. This has always been the most wretched and troublesome taluq in the district. Seeing plainly last December that prompt measures were required I relieved the Tahsildar of the duty of collecting the revenue and took it myself. Arrears for many faslis were outstanding, and the accounts were in great confusion. I have reduced them to order.

69. The following is a statement of how matters stood in Madrantakum, the largest taluq in the district, on the 31st March:—

	Beriz.	Collection, including the sum recommended for remission up to 31st March.	Balance.
Arrears at the close of Fasli 1284	44,637	44,392	245
Kist up to the end of March, Fasli 1284	2,79,335	2,74,842	4,493
Total...	3,23,972	3,19,234	4,738

The balance on the same date in the previous ten years was as follows:—

Statement showing the state of balance in the Madrantakum Taluq during the last ten Faslis on the 31st March of each Fasli.

Fasli.	Arrears.	Current.	Total.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1274 ...	22,026 6 3	77,167 8 1	99,193 14 4
1275 ...	22,787 3 5	86,855 7 3	1,09,642 10 8
1276 ...	12,858 2 4	82,317 12 3	95,175 14 7
1277 ...	17,609 4 7	88,702 5 7	1,06,311 10 2
1278 ...	33,529 2 10	83,480 3 5	1,17,009 6 3
1279 ...	32,425 0 9	1,11,815 14 10	1,44,240 15 7
1280 ...	30,569 7 8	1,77,154 4 2	2,07,723 11 10
1281 ...	31,259 8 11	1,83,692 10 7	2,14,952 3 6
1282 ...	21,672 5 9	1,28,202 6 9	1,49,874 12 6
1283 ...	36,454 9 2	86,674 13 10	1,23,129 7 0
1284 ...	7,168 12 4	4,493 1 11	11,661 14 3

but really 4,738 only.

* Rupees 6,722-15-4 has been recommended for remission, and the remainder, Rupees 245-13-0, is the balance to be collected.

Words are useless in the face of such figures.

70. It seems slightly absurd, from its very palpableness when stated, but my third proposition is, that a great portion of the arrears and coercive process is due to want of promptness which had grown into a custom on the part of the Tahsildars of this district. Want of promptitude breeds arrears, which again require coercive process for their realization, and I can conceive nothing more detrimental to the welfare of a district, or more demoralizing to the ryot, than the frequent recourse to selling the holdings of persons who would never have been in default but for the incapacity or neglect of the officers of Government.

71. Another great defect in the administration of this district which tends to the same end is that the office of headman (Monigar) in villages is honorary and non-hereditary. I have frequently brought this point to notice. The Monigars are supposed to make the collections, and to be responsible for punctual remittance of the various kists. Having neither pay, position, nor hereditary dignity to lose, these officers have got out of the way of performing this duty; and, until within the last two years or so, every rupee of revenue had to be collected by the taluq subordinates, who were compelled for this purpose to visit each village. The position of the Monigar should clearly be assimilated to that of the headman of the other Tamil Districts. I have made a beginning, and they are now working much better under promise that their offices will be properly endowed and constituted during the new settlement now in progress under Mr. Puckle's auspices; and it is noticeable that, in the Madrantakum Taluq, when this system was first introduced, and is in most complete working order, the collections are also more punctual than elsewhere, and the arrears nominal merely.

72. Another point. The kists do not represent in practice the periods when the ryot has any crop to realize. They stand as below:—

November ...	5 per cent.
December ...	10 do.
January ...	15 do.
February ...	20 do.
March ...	20 do.
April ...	20 do.
May ...	10 do.
Total...	100

The bulk of the ryots reap nothing till January. It is their convenience we must principally consider. The well-to-do can pay at any time. A theoretically perfect scale of kists is no boon to them, and they would prefer receiving visits from the tax-gatherer as seldom as possible. The months, when the cultivators generally have reaped their harvest and are in funds, are the first four of the year. It would expedite work, and would be considered a boon by the people if three of the present kists were omitted, and the Kistbundi re-arranged as follows :—

January	...	...	...	20	per cent.
February	...	...	...	25	do.
March	...	...	...	30	do.
April	...	...	...	25	do.

73. I have now explained my views in detail. I have tried to show grounds for my statement that the waste and the backward state of the district are produced—

(1.) By the vain hope, cherished by the representatives of the old Mirassidars, that Government will somehow yield to their preposterous claims, and that somehow, and at some time or other, things will so turn out as to give them the means of taking up the waste lands, from which they consider that no stone should be left unturned to exclude outsiders.

(2.) By the success of this manoeuvre, excluding the competition of the willing and monied cultivator, and producing indolence, sloth, and carelessness of improvement.

(3.) By the ruined state of the irrigation works. In conjunction with these then I attribute the bad collections, the chronic arrears, and the consequent necessity for frequent recourse to coercive process to the two following causes.

(4.) The indifference, incapacity or corruption of former Tahsildars causing them to neglect collections.

(5.) The honorary and non-hereditary nature of the office of village headmen are Monigar.

74. My remedies are simple and are quite within the power of Government to apply at once.

1st.—A clear declaration that Government will not recognise Mirassi rights, because it is non-existent.

2nd.—To make the land free, or at least to put an upset price of two years assessment on any piece of land durkhasted for, and then sell it to the highest bidder.

3rd.—The transfer of ordinary irrigation repairs and minor new works to the Revenue Department.

4th.—Under each work the fixing a percentage of the revenue to be set aside for its up-keep.

5th.—That Government should itself more closely watch collections, and rigorously punish any dereliction in this respect on the part of revenue officers of all grades. Have no arrears and there will be no coercive process.

6th.—The erection of the appointment of headmen into a hereditary office, and provision for its payment by the immediate introduction of the Village Cess Act of 1864. This need not wait for the introduction of the new settlement. It can be done at once on the basis of the assessment now existing, in the same way as the Road Cess is levied.

7th.—A modification of the existing Kistbundi.

75. I have the honor to request that you will forward this report to the Board of Revenue.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

Madrantacum Taluq.

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz for Fasl 1284.	Samudayam Putta Beriz.	As per Hold- ing of the Mirassidars in Samu- dayam.	As per Hold- ing of the Payakaries in Samu- dayam.
		RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
114.	Sirunavalur	644 4 10	25 15 8	15 5 10	10 9 10
214	Gudalur	872 14 10	106 0 8	45 9 4	60 7 4
112	Vasentavadi	328 10 6	4 3 11	4 3 11	...
313	Pulikkoradu	324 1 3	...	...	...
32	Porayur	1,159 0 4	...	...	...
146	Hanumanda Cuppam	79 4 4	8 1 9	...	8 1 9
152	Acchekattu	106 13 8	15 12 1	2 9 4	13 2 9
141	Kattri Chery	348 9 9	26 6 7	36 6 7	...
137	Madrantacum	5,215 6 6	...	...	...
142	Membacam	597 6 11	11 11 4	10 9 10	1 1 6
195	Puliyeeeranangottai	376 13 10	10 7 8	10 7 8	...
204	Kulamangulam	138 2 0	1 3 4	1 13 4	...
198	Kurumbarai	315 13 9	3 2 4	3 2 4	...
220	Vilnarayanallur Omai	580 5 10	29 15 7	24 12 10	5 2 9
221	Pakang	1,848 4 7	10 6 11	0 1 11	10 4 0
207	Thenmariputtur	37 4 8	10 7 10	10 7 10	...
197	Polambacam	777 13 10	...	...	...
201	Chadaravedu	83 10 4	...	...	...
202	Mudhugarai	224 13 11	...	...	...
36	Malunankaranai	581 15 2	50 8 8	44 9 1	5 15 7
205	Nettappakam	461 6 4	7 4 4	4 13 9	2 13 7
136	Marappakkam	2,114 12 2	29 8 11	15 3 0	14 5 11
206	Nelvoy	140 10 3	...	...	...
33	Unamalai	830 4 5	0 9 4	0 9 4	...
194	Avilimedur	297 8 7	81 5 2	81 5 2	...
20	Sirunavalur	609 3 2	...	...	...
184	Endattur	762 9 7	13 7 3	13 7 3	...
183	Ladakaranai	588 12 9	15 14 0	15 14 0	...
69	Kattukkaralai	501 3 10	151 12 2	72 13 8	78 14 6
70	Orattur	1,032 10 10	26 6 1	3 13 0	22 9 1
121	Mogalvady	491 6 3	10 14 0	0 14 3	9 15 9
43	Kattugudalur	467 14 8	23 5 2	23 5 2	...
45	Aghili	878 0 5	2 15 3	2 15 3	...
119	Munamalaippattu	87 8 3	...	...	...
71	Tolnanel	271 4 10	...	...	...
151	Karanguly	2,115 3 7	201 8 5	168 3 0	33 5 5
138	Mulli	221 6 0	13 9 0	9 4 9	4 4 3
153	Vilagham	96 6 10	...	...	...
147	Tundam	97 0 3	5 15 4	...	5 15 4
150	Aringundram	2,262 9 5	27 13 0	27 13 0	...
	Total...	28,969 9 3	937 11 9	650 10 5	287 1 4

12th April 1875.

(Signed) C. S. CROLE,
Acting Sub-Collector.

26970/92800/3

ENCLOSURE No. 3.
Chingleput Taluq.

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz of each village for Fasli 1284.			Samudayam Putta Beriz.			As per Holding of the Mirassidars in Samudayam Lands.			As per Holding of the Payakarries in Samudayam.		
		RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.
12	Kilavedu	303	6	4	1 15	11		1 15	11				
13	Pulleri	297	2	11	54	7	4	44	6	9	10	0	7
14	Tuycun	625	13	8	9	8	5	9	8	5			
15	Alagasamudram	808	0	5	33	5	2	33	5	2			
25	Nemmili	1,772	2	5	42	8	9	0	8	9	42	0	0
29	Vallam	789	1	5	0	9	7	0	9	7			
115	Vencatapuram	787	0	7	0	12	7	0	12	7			
325	Attur	5,920	6	9									
18	Volatur	3,514	7	3	2	4	10				2	4	10
19	Nariaiyeri	178	6	11									
21	Vedananayanapuram	248	11	4									
23	Puduppakam	1,032	3	0									
27	Vembakam	768	7	8									
78	Punnappattu	257	9	2									
89	Anur	2,390	11	10	0	6	4				0	6	4
90	Elimichampattu	639	9	11									
98	Vudayembakam	1,039	10	10									
16	Logandy	973	6	10	115	11	9	115	11	9			
17	Adanilagam	278	7	0	40	13	1	40	13	1			
20	Tirumany	808	9	1									
22	Mosivakam	907	14	6	23	0	7				23	0	7
32	Sanikkalim	305	9	10									
79	Paupadinakuttam	758	7	0	0	3	9				0	3	9
82	Salayur	1,663	8	11	62	6	6	62	6	6			
87	Vattivakam	266	11	3									
88	Narasanguppam	9	8	7									
91	Mambakam	279	5	5									
92	Kanakambattu	256	4	2	2	15	6	2	15	6			
66	Melmanappakkam	725	13	7	13	12	6	13	12	6			
85	Villimbakam	2,068	6	5	3	1	3	0	15	1	2	2	2
39	Nallur	618	3	5	14	7	6	14	7	6			
48	Andikuppam	140	9	2									
55	Mullikolattur	642	9	3	12	13	10	12	13	10			
58	Karanai	316	9	3	115	12	5	115	12	5			
61	Kuluppantandalam	948	11	2	55	15	2	55	15	2			
64	Puliyur	629	11	3	49	6	1	49	6	1			
102	Sadras	151	12	3									
103	Vumiri	125	0	5	12	13	11	12	13	11			
117	Kokkilimedu	652	4	5	11	9	7	11	9	7			
33	Varagadam	2,022	4	8	41	14	0	41	14	0			
34	Acheumakam	180	5	2									
36	Pulikkundram	231	10	5	8	14	2	8	14	2			
40	Orattur	377	5	8	8	11	6				8	11	6
41	Egai	461	11	8	147	11	5	147	11	5			
42	Anuvatapallam	173	14	7	3	14	9	3	14	9			
43	Perianippeddu	249	2	1									
44	Sinnanippeddu	207	12	6	3	3	7	3	3	7			
45	Kattakkalini	111	14	9									
50	Kanucuttam	101	7	3									
51	Kalingalumlaikuppam	16	3	3									
59	Kalinipakam	380	10	6	2	12	6	2	12	6			
60	Temdaria	881	9	5	21	0	9				21	0	9
62	Melputtur	272	10	6	18	9	11	18	9	11			

Chingleput Taluq.—(Continued.)

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz of each village for Fasli 1284.			Samudayam Putta Beriz.			As per Holding of the Mirassidars in Samudayam Lands.			As per Holding of the Payakarries in Samudayam.		
		RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.
68	Talambedu	1,126	6	8	157	3	10	157	3	10			
69	Keraippakam	312	12	4									
70	Kangayemkuppam	65	14	0									
71	Madalamkuppam	202	15	3	2	4	0				2	4	0
73	Nanalur	200	8	9	1	14	5	1	14	5			
75	Narappakam	438	10	5	1	0	6	1	0	6			
76	Taitalur	693	13	8									
80	Veerskuppam	289	1	8									
83	Kandigai	22	2	11									
171	Rudrakoti	167	11	2	13	8	8				13	8	8
172	Nachamedu	56	12	5									
326	Irumlidi	222	5	0									
8	Thenur	532	0	2	8	0	8	8	0	8			
95	Tirukkalivendram	1,649	6	2	30	14	9	13	1	3	17	13	8
63	Nandunantangal	613	12	2									
104	Meyur	381	6	0									
26	Memappakam	1,459	0	6	85	0	6	85	0	6			
112	Gurunamedu	1,145	13	4	9	8	8	9	8	8			
113	Vembakam	1,247	12	15	0	4	5	0	4	5			
114	Dasarikolattur	291	10	2									
116	Kangadu	472	9	9									
72	Edayattur	563	6	5	2	6	7	2	6	7			
74	Vilagam	791	14	0									
84	Timmur	261	0	9									
37	Aringundram	902	14	8	201	1	4	201	1	4			
47	Kottimangalum	195	2	1									
1	Gundur	442	7	2	14	9	4				14	9	4
2	Mummai	112	11	0									
3	Arattangal	158	5	6									
4	Kantalur	117	11	5	2	13	2	2	13	2			
5	Edayankadumantangal	161	3	9	10	1	1	10	1	1			
7	Patranakam	393	12	3	25	11	3	12	13	9	12	13	6
9	Melamyur	1,114	7	10	1	2	5	1	2	5			
10	Alapakam	206	13	9	0	14	11	0	14	11			
11	Hanumandaputteri	136	0	3									
24	Anmanambakam	751	10	3	4	8	5	4	8	5			
31	Chingleput	72	12	3	14	0	4	14	0	4			
35	Kamlayapuram												
38	Amappakam	116	7	4									
46	Karuppangadu	165	7	2									
53	Ecchur	610	3	6	8	2	7	8	2	7			
56	Veerapuram	1,243	4	6	55	1	5	55	1	5			
119	Ayappakam	768	10	5	24	5	7	17	5	7	7	0	0
120	Kudiyayalur	114	1	1									
121	Manamai	1,482	2	9	1	9	1	1	9	1			
122	Kadumbadi	202	13	0									
123	Melkuppam	197	7	8									
100	Saidamungalum	220	5	3	15	14	6	15	14	6			
Total...		64,367	15	1	1,629	13	4	1,451	13	10	177	15	6

12th April 1875.

(Signed) C. S. CROLE,
Acting Sub-Collector.

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With this letter the Acting Collector of Chingleput submits a report by Mr. Crole, Acting Sub-Collector, giving his views with reference to the papers on the Mirassi question disposed of in Board's Proceedings, 12th February 1875, No. 324, and G. O., 13th April 1875, No. 590, R. D.

2. Mr. Crole attributes the backward state of the district and the extent to which recourse to coercive process has been necessary, in part only to the opposition of the Mirassidars to the occupation of waste lands, based on the vain hope of Government interference. He regards the Mirassi right as a chimera, declares that it is non-existent in reality, and recommends that it be decidedly and once for all repudiated, and the preferential claim of the Mirassidars to waste land disallowed. He thinks that waste land applied for should be sold by auction, and he observes that the right of Mirassidars to Swatantrams at best depends upon their having furnished the Paiyikari. He is of opinion that it is a retrograde step to attempt to resuscitate Mirassi claims, and contrary to policy and fairness to recognize differences between classes of cultivators.

3. There is more of assertion than of argument in Mr. Crole's statements on the subject of Mirassi right. There can be no doubt that it exists, notwithstanding many years of persistent effort to crush it; that it is of great antiquity, as is indeed implied by Mr. Crole's own expressions regarding it; and that it is dearly cherished. But it is unnecessary to discuss this matter at present, since the Government have decided that the experiment of recording and recognizing Mirassi lands and those liable to payment of Swatantram fees to the Mirassidars shall be tried, and the Director of Revenue Settlement is engaged in carrying out the order. Mr. Crole's most confident assertion, *viz.*, that no one can say in any large village who are Mirassidars or what is Mirassi land, is, the Board are informed by Mr. Puckle, completely contrary to his experience in the 55 villages in which the work has been carried out up to date. The old Mirassi shares or pangus have become attached to definite lands, and there is not the least difficulty in identifying the Mirassi pangu lands, the existing shareholders, or the proportionate value of each share.

4. His assertion that there will be difficulty in the sub-division of the Samudayam lands is also disproved by experience as the shareholders are found to be eager to divide. The Board cannot concur in Mr. Crole's view that the difficulty of collection will be increased by sub-division; for though there will be more puttass to collect upon there will be no difficulty in fixing the responsibility and ascertaining who is the real defaulter, and this is the impediment experienced at present. Mr. Crole seems to be right as to the relative extent of the Samudayam holdings, which, as stated by him, are under three per cent. of the whole.

5. It is probably true that the unsatisfied claims of Mirassidars to dues on waste lands is not the sole cause of the evils which it is sought to remedy; but it is one cause, and the removal of it will probably have a good effect.

6. The causes which in Mr. Crole's opinion have been most operative are the ruinous condition of the irrigation works, owing to the impracticable constitution of the Public Works Department, and to insufficient allotments for repairs; the inefficiency of Tahsildars and want of promptness of demand, whereby arrears

were allowed to accumulate; the condition of the Village Monigars, who are not hereditary and who are unpaid; and a bad Kistbundy.

7. As to the first, he suggests the transfer of the repair work to the Revenue Department and the assignment of a percentage on the revenue for outlay on repairs. The works are unquestionably in much need of repair and the annual allotments for their up-keep insufficient; but Mr. Crole's suggestions have been repeatedly made and have been negatived after full discussions. His remarks as to want of promptness in collection are undoubtedly well founded, and he shows that results of the most satisfactory and creditable kind can be obtained by really zealous and efficient officers. Much depends on the up-keep of the individual collection and balance account in the Taluq Catcheries, so that process for each kist can be made out and issued immediately on the receipt of monthly remittances from the villages.

8. The condition of the Village Monigars is an admitted evil, but a scheme to improve it will be prepared in connection with the new settlement.

9. The Board agree with Mr. Crole in his remarks regarding the Kistbundy. He suggests four kists, January, February, March, and April, of 20, 25, 30, and 25 per cent., respectively. The Board think percentage kists, which are not so easily understood by the mass of the people as Anna kists are objectionable. The general question of the revision of kists, is under consideration, and orders will be separately issued. The Chingleput kists will be then dealt with.

(True Copies and Extract.)

H. H. H.
Acting Secretary.

To the Acting Collector of Chingleput.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
.. to the Director of Revenue Settlement.

Ed. J. Tulloch.

34. Memoirs No 6. 1875

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Recd: 1875: 242

No 2205

1875

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 25th May 1875, No. 1,415.

Copy of 1875
Encl.

Received 11th June 1875

MA

No. 1,415.

Mirassat Venues—of Cingaleput District.—
Remarks passed with reference to letter from
Sub-Collector reporting on the evils arising
from — and suggesting measures different from
those proposed by Collector to remedy them.

W. H. 1875