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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. / B.P. No.	391	~~Press~~ / Mis.
Dated	9. 3. 1875 ~~196~~ .	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

eedings of the *Madras Government, Revenue Department,*
9th March 1875.

Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 22nd
1874, No. 1,204 :—

Board's Proceedings, dated 21st and 22nd January 1873, Nos. 82 and 85.

lowing letter from F. PRICE, Esq., Acting Collector of Salem, to J. GROSE, Esq.,
ary to the Board of Revenue, dated 10th March 1874, No. 91.

honor to submit, for the consideration of the Board of Revenue, my scheme for
he village establishment of the Dharampuri Taluq, and, if it is approved of, I can
ch others as are ready, and make it the basis of working out the schemes for the
district.

2. As regards the grouping, I beg to state that it is the result of careful inquiry and consideratic to a period of two years. My personal knowledge of the localities has been assisted by consultation with the Tahsildar, the village-officers, and the ryots themselves. I took the opportunity of the jammabundi to do this part of the work, and revised it in the succeeding year. I believe it to be the best that could be effected. It is true that, in some instances, the groups, especially in the case of the Donnakattapatti Circle, look enormous; but intervening chains of difficult hills, Muttahs, and Agraharams scattered all over the country, and peculiarly feverish localities have rendered the task of grouping very much like fitting a puzzle together. In the case of Donnakattapatti, there are only two villages where the superior officers could be made to live; these are too close to allow of splitting it up and making two circles of it, and, even if this could be done, the separate circles would have so small a revenue as to make the entertainment of an extra Curnam a very expensive matter. The Board will observe, in the circle under consideration, that out of 25 villages, 12 are Bechirag (uninhabited). I have been all over that part of the country, and nearly every one of the villages that are inhabited is a collection of a dozen or so of wretched huts, with a few fields of cultivation around it: all else is jungle, which is never likely to be reclaimed. Pikili, which I have had to split into two, is another peculiarly situated circle, and there are many others in the same category.

Theoretically I could make a much neater looking thing of the grouping, but practically it would not be of the slightest use.

3. I have considered it necessary not only for the purpose of making the boundaries more symmetrical, but also of rendering the grouping better and more effective, to recommend the transfer of some villages from Dharampuri to Kristnagherry, and *vice versa*. I enclose a statement of the changes required to complete Dharampuri (marked A).

As things at present stand, there are villages of one taluq almost entirely surrounded by those of the other, and there are again others which are cut off from the remainder of the existing circle by a river, which in the wet weather is an impassable flood rendering communication impracticeable, and causing delay in collections and remittances.

4. In fixing the establishment of Curnams I have taken three classes, *viz.* :—

1st Class	with a beriz of	over Rs. 5,000,	Rs. 10 a-month.
2nd	do.	do.	Rs. 3,000 and under Rs. 5,000, Rs. 9 a-month.
3rd	do.	do.	under Rs. 3,000, Rs. 8 a-month.

I would have preferred the scale to be Rupees 8, 10, and 12, but with the high pay assigned to the menial servants, this would cause a deficit in the scheme or else a balance to credit too small to be safe. I think that a rupee extra a-month for each Rupees 2,000 is hardly enough, and that it would not be advisable to pay 3rd-class Curnams less than Rupees 8 per mensem.

As regards Monigars I have also taken three classes, *viz.* :—

1st Class,	at Rupees		8	per mensem.
2nd	do.	do.	7	do.
3rd	do.	do.	6	do.

I have assumed, as a general rule, that a Monigar cannot, unless the villages are pretty close, properly collect more than Rupees 2,000 a-year. It must be remembered that in this district the ryots are not wealthy like those in Nellore; that the country is very frequently jungly and broken and the villages far apart. Besides this, the class from which, for the next fifty years to come for certain, we shall have to draw our Monigars is not one which is, as a rule, intelligent or capable of doing more work than I have in my scheme assigned to a village-officer of the kind. Where there are large villages at roadsides, I have given the Monigar, in consideration of extra work as Munsif, a higher grading than if I rigidly adhered to the classification according to beriz, and where villages are close together, I have given these officers a lower class. I have also considered it necessary to raise the grade in one or two very feverish places where good men are required, and where they will not go unless paid liberal salaries.

The assessment alone is a fair enough basis upon which to classify the Curnams; but in the case of Monigars this is not advisable as an unvarying rule, for difficulty of collecting, area, population, and extra work and responsibilities as Munsif should also have weight, and, in the scheme now laid before the Board, I have considered these points to the best of my ability.

5. So far my views have been pretty nearly in accordance with those of the Board as expressed in their Proceedings, No. 912, dated 2nd June 1873. I now turn to the subject of the menial servants to whom I am not disposed, in the case of, the police, to give such high salaries as 4 Rupees a-month.

6. The inferior revenue servants, who are in this district called "Oodaris" in the north and "Kangánis" in the south, and who should, I think, be called "Tandalkarans," receive at present salaries averaging Rupees 18 per annum. I think that they might be paid a uniform salary of Rupees 3 per mensem.

7 The police are all of the Pariah caste, and are known all over the district by the name of "Toties,"—a term which, I fear, will never be eradicated by any number of orders. They might, I think, be in future officially called "Kavilkarens,"—an appellation which is intelligible in a Tamil-speaking district like this. Their salaries vary very much indeed, and run even so low, in an instance of which I know, as $\frac{3}{4}$ths of a rupee per annum. The average is very small, and in the sub-division, to the best of my recollection, it is not above Rupees 9 a-year. Although the pay of the office is so petty, it is sought after with the greatest avidity, and disputes regarding the right to it are the source of frequent and bitter quarrel. The system which in spite of every effort to put it down, holds, is that there is, say, one man registered as Toti; he has half a dozen brothers, and each of these half dozen takes a year of the work and emoluments (Morrai or turn as they call it). The consequence is that the real policeman only does duty once in seven years, and that during the remaining six, half a dozen totally irresponsible men whom one cannot punish or do anything to perform the duty. The same thing will go on if there is but one registered man with a high salary. It will be divided between the family, and the old system of turns and two men doing the work for which one is paid will go on. I have, in my experience as a Magistrate, met with several cases where a non-registered Toti (one taking his turn) has been tried for and acquitted of letting a prisoner escape, because he was not legally bound to keep the man in custody. It appears to me in every way advisable to have more men and to pay them less. Rupees 30 per annum would, I think, be ample. It is a sum far above the present average salary. If what is now paid is so much coveted as it is, it is a fair inference that it is thought sufficient. My proposal would increase this considerably, and give us a larger number of responsible men and better facilities for providing for the public security.

8. As I think that each Monigar should have no opportunity of making the excuse that some other officer had appropriated the services of the Tandalkaran, I have given one servant of this grade to each village head and one policeman to every three villages or fraction of that number. Going by population in the matter of police is not desirable in this district: where the number of the people is small, they are scattered, and the size of the range to be traversed makes up for the scantiness of the people. In some groups, I have, on account of the existence in them of important or peculiarly criminal localities, departed from the general principle, but all these are noted in the Register (marked B) transmitted herewith.

9. As regards the establishments now existing and those proposed, the Board will observe that it is only in the number of the Monigars that any considerable reduction is contemplated. It is impossible to avoid this, for at present there is in some circles a Monigar for every petty little village. The reason why the number of other village servants does not vary much is, that for some years clubbing with a view to the revision has been steadily going on. A good deal in this way was done as regards Monigars, but there were so many to deal with that the process has necessarily been slow.

10. I now turn to the question of assets.

11. The Village Service Cess of the Dharampuri Taluq amounts to Rupees 10,810-11-11. I have divided the amount of the Government grant by nine, the number of taluqs in the district. If the apportionment was made according to the land-revenue, Salem and Uttengherry would have too little, and Namkul and Trichengode too much. According to my plan, therefore, Rupees 13,333-4-0 is the amount to be taken as the supplemental grant for Dharampuri, thus giving a total of Rupees 24,143-15-11. The scale which I now transmit comes to Rupees 21,522, leaving a balance to credit of Rupees 2,621-15-11. Some margin, say Rupees 500, must be allowed, and I would propose further that a sum, amounting to about Rupees 2,000 per annum, should be reserved from the grant for the purpose of building and keeping in repair cutcherries for the Village Munsifs. There are at present no funds from which this very desirable charge can be met.

Taking the Board's scale as sketched in the Proceedings marginally noted, the total cost of the Village Establishment for Dharampuri would be Rupees 21,744. If the Board consider that the police should receive Rupees 3 per mensem instead of Rupees $2\frac{1}{2}$, the cost, according to my scale, would be Rupees 22,836, leaving a balance of only Rupees 1,307-15-11 in hand.

No. 912, dated 2nd June 1873.

ENCLOSURES Nos. 1 and 2.—Statements.

THE Board resolve to submit these proposals for revising the village establishments in Dharampuri for the orders of Government. The scheme is submitted as a "sample," and if it is approved, similar schemes will be prepared for the other taluqs of the Salem District.

2. At the end of 1872, the Collector, Mr. Longley, who is now absent on leave, submitted proposals for the Trichengode and Namkul Taluqs. His scheme grouped 377 villages into 64 in one taluq, and 271 villages into 61 in the other. There was to be a Curnam for each group paid 10, 7, or 6 Rupees. The number of men holding the office of Monigar and Munsif was to be 85 for 64 groups in Trichengode and 70 for 61 groups in Namkul, and they were to be paid 5, 4, or $3\frac{1}{4}$ Rupees. In cases where there were two of these officers in a single group, they were each to have a separate set of villages assigned to them. There were to be 317 Toties in Trichengode and 192 in Namkul who were to be paid Rupees 3 a-month and do both police and revenue work.

3. The Board directed these schemes to be reconsidered because—

(1.) The clubbing of villages seemed to have been carried too far.

(2.) The establishments were inadequately paid, though, considering the Government annual grant of Rupees 1,20,000, the Collector had not utilised the assets.

4. No subsequent report has been received with regard to Trichengode or Namkul, but Mr. Price, the Acting Collector, had prepared a scheme for Dharampuri, a part of the district with which he is familiar.

5. In this taluq, the list submitted by the Collector shows that there are 542 villages, of which 91 are uninhabited and a large proportion mere hamlets. They are at present classed in 87 divisions which seem originally to have been Curnams' charges, though now some Curnams have more than one division, and some divisions more than one Curnam. Mr. Price proposes to divide all into 50 groups. At first sight, this seems to be carrying clubbing too far, but careful consideration of the figures in the list convinces the Board that in this poor taluq of mountain

ranges between which petty hamlets are scattered thinly, the revision cannot be carried out without wholesale clubbing. The case of nearly the whole of Dharampuri, with regard to the size and character of the villages and the position of the villages with reference to each other, is very different from the case of Namkul and Trichengode, where the clubbing proposed by Mr. Longley seemed to the Board to be excessive. The highest annual revenue of any of the proposed groups is Rupees 5,003. The most doubtful case is that referred to in paragraph 2 of Mr. Price's letter. The group (No. 17 on the list) is to contain 25 villages, comprising 23,930 acres or more than 37 square miles. Four of the inhabited villages are 2½ miles, and one is 3 miles from the village in which the headman will reside; but even in this group 12 of the 25 villages are uninhabited the annual revenue is only Rupees 2,945, and the amount of Village Service Cess collected in fasli 1282 was only Rupees 128. Mr. Price has shown good reasons against sub-dividing this group, and the Board are of opinion that his judgment and knowledge of the country should be trusted as regards the rest.

6. The grouping assumes that 12 villages, with a revenue of Rupees 6,413, will be transferred from Kristnagherry to Dharampuri, and 4 villages, with a revenue of Rupees 712, from Dharampuri to Kristnagherry. Unfortunately, the survey maps of the taluqs have not been published, so that the expediency of the transfers cannot be demonstrated to the eye, but the reasons given by the Collector in paragraph 3 of his letter are satisfactory, and the Board think the transfers should be allowed.

7. There are now 81 Curnams drawing Rupees 3,959, or an average of a little more than Rupees 4 a-month. Mr. Price proposes to have 50, or one for each group paid as follows:—

5 First class, revenue more than Rupees 5,000, Rupees 10 a-month.
30 Second class, revenue from Rupees 3,000 to Rupees 5,000, Rupees 9 a-month.
15 Third class, revenue under Rupees 3,000, Rupees 8 a-month.

8. In their criticisms on similar proposals from Nellore, which are referred to in Board's Proceedings, dated 7th May 1874, No. 1,061, the Board approved of a somewhat lower scale of salaries, but the modification proposed by Mr. Price seems to be called for by the peculiar circumstances of the case. The Curnams' charges will be more extensive and more difficult to manage in Dharampuri than in Nellore. The several classes of Curnams are distributed to the groups according to the revenue of fasli 1282.

9. There are now 257 Monigars drawing Rupees 3,077, or an average of a little less than Rupee 1 a-month. Mr. Price proposes to have 87 paid as follows:—

1st Class, Rupees 8 a-month.
2nd do. do. 7 do.
3rd do. do. 6 do.

or a rupee less than Curnams, class for class. They are distributed according to a general rule that each Monigar collects Rupees 2,000 per annum, modified, when necessary, with reference to the extent of the charges and the feverishness of the locality.

10. The rates of pay which the Board approved for Nellore were Rupees 5, 6, and 7, and the reasons which induce them to approve higher rates to the Dharampuri Curnams apply to the case of the Monigars.

11. The Board have no objection to make to the distribution of the Monigars except this, that when there are two in a group one must be called the Monigar and Munsif and the other the Assistant Monigar, and the former must draw a higher salary than the latter. Mr. Longley's proposal, that each of the two should be a Munsif and have a separate set of villages assigned to him, is inadmissible. The groups are to be, for all intents and purposes, single villages, and the law determines that each village shall have one Munsif and that the headman shall be the Munsif. In some villages Mr. Price locates two Monigars of the 2nd, and in others two of the 3rd class; in all of them the Munsif and Monigar should be of the 2nd class and the Assistant Monigar of the 3rd class. This will add Rupees 288 per annum to the expenditure.

12. There are now 67 Tandalgars or collectors of kists, and 241 Toties or servants of the Munsif and Monigar, doing both revenue and magisterial work. The Tandalgars draw a little more than 10 Rupees a-year, and the Toties about Rupees 18½. Mr. Price proposes to have 87 Tandalgars paid Rupees 3 a-month, and 219 Toties paid Rupees 2½ a-month, who, he thinks, might be called "Kavalkarens." According to the views of the Board with regard to Nellore, there should be 94 Vettiyans and 154 Kavilgars paid Rupees 4 a-month.

13. Mr. Price explains that the present Tandalgars get on an average Rupees 18 a-year; that the pay of the Toties is sometimes as low as ¾ths of a rupee per annum, and never more than 9 Rupees per annum in the sub-division; that the appointment is, nevertheless, sought after with great eagerness; that the registered holder generally takes annual turns with unregistered holders,—a system which will be continued in spite of orders to the contrary; and that it is more advisable to have many men on small pay than a few men on large pay. He proposes to give a Tandalgar on Rupees 3 a-month to each Monigar, and a Kavalgar or policeman to every three villages in a group, the rule being modified by the special circumstances of the locality.

14. As already stated, Enclosure No. 1 shows that the pay of the Tandalgars in Dharampuri is, on the average, Rupees 10 per annum, whilst that of the Toties is Rupees 18½, so that there is no ground in this respect for fixing the salaries of the police servants at lower rates than those of the revenue servants. One of the great objects of the revision is to put an end to the old system under which the office of policeman is held by sharers in annual turn, though only one of the sharers is registered. The Board have no doubt that this can be effected by judicious administration *if* the pay of the office is made sufficient.

15. Altogether, the Board are of opinion that the rate of Rupees 3 a-month will be sufficient, but that this should be paid to both classes of servants. They have no objection to make to the distribution proposed by Mr. Price.

16. The word Tandalgar does not convey sufficient meaning. It will be better to call the revenue servants Vettyans as in other districts.

17. The police servants may be called Kavalgars or Taliaris as the Collector pleases, though the Board prefer the latter name.

18. It may be possible for the number of the police servants to be reduced with reference to the alterations in the scheme proposed by the Board. If it is not, the expenditure will be (for 50 groups)—

		RS.
50	Curnams...	5,280
87	Munsifs and Monigars and Assistant Monigars...	6,828
87	Vettyans	3,132
219	Taliaris	7,884
443		23,124

19. The assets are sufficient, amounting, inclusive of the Dharampuri share of the Government grant of Rupees 1,20,000 to Rupees 24,144. The question whether there will be a surplus, and, if so, what is to be done with it, may be considered after the revision in the other taluqs of the district is completed.

20. There is no group in which the proceeds of the Village Service Cess will exceed the cost of the village establishment.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,
Secretary.

No. 124. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 4th July 1874, Miscellaneous No. 4,494.

Read the following letter from J. F. PRICE, Esq., Acting Collector of Salem, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Madigherry, 5th June 1874, No. 195.

WITH reference to paragraph 3 of my letter, No. 91, of the 10th March last, I have the honor to request that you will be so good as to have the enclosed statement of villages to be transferred from the Dharampuri to the Kristnagherry Taluq substituted for that sent with the letter under reference.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

List of Villages to be transferred from the Dharampuri Taluq to the Kristnagherry Taluq.

No.	Names of Villages.	Beriz. RS.	A.	P.
1.	Kumbarahulli	712	8	0
2.	Thathrahulli	1,061	8	0
3.	Sobanoor	512	8	0
4.	Woddahulli	213	14	0
5.	Giddanahulli	264	13	0

MADIGHERRY,
5th June 1874.

(Signed) J. F. PRICE,
Acting Collector.

SUBMITTED to Government in continuation of Board's Proceedings, 22nd May 1874, No. 1,204.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,
Secretary.

No. 124-A. MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

I THINK we may safely accept Mr. Price's proposals, leaving it open to him to propose any modifications which may suggest themselves when the scheme is being actually introduced.

2. There is one point which needs notice. In some cases Assistant Munsifs are proposed. When this is owing to the size of an original village and its own hamlets, the Munsif's pay shall be increased, so that he may keep his assistant; his responsibility will thus not be weakened. When, however, the necessity arises from distant villages being grouped together, I would modify the grouping, giving a separate Munsif. The Curnam's assistant should always be his own appointment.

13th June 1874.

(Signed) J. D. SIM.

No. 124-B. MINUTE BY THE HON. W. ROBINSON, C.S.I.

UNDER the reorganisation proposed in these Proceedings of the Board the village system of the country must, as it seems to me, disappear in the taluq of Darampury; and if the "sample" be adopted most serious changes will occur throughout the district of Salem.

2. The plan provides for the substitution of large official ranges instead of numerous Indian villages; to each of which an establishment of local officers are to be appointed by the State, who, can scarcely fulfil the conditions of the ancient polity of the country or of the law as respects the hereditary character of village services. It is on the square as regards pay, &c., and perhaps commends itself on account of precision. But I think that a backward country will suffer by such organic changes, by the withdrawal of a proportion of its proper aids and supervisors, *viz.*, the heads of villages, &c.; and I am satisfied that the money to be raised under the Village Service Cess Act would be better applied, if used to maintain the social condition of the country (slightly modified with reference to obvious considerations), and to give far greater distribution to village institution than that proposed.

3. Indeed, I venture to think that the true intention of the law has, in some measure, been lost sight of in carrying it into effect under these varied schemes of reorganisation. That object was merely to secure to the real village institution those emoluments which it is entitled to under the common law of the country, in a different and more manageable form. Clubbing is permitted under the Act, but it was never intended to be largely resorted to for the object of raising salaries to a pre-concerted standard. No doubt practically this Act will be found to provide in most villages quite enough pay for the work actually required in the village, and that with fairer apportionment than we can devise. And I venture to think that the Act can be worked without serious detriment to the village rate-payer or village constitution as recognised by law.

4. I would return the scheme to the Board of Revenue for re-consideration.

5. On the papers before Government I would observe that the law knows of no Assistant Head of the village and Munsif. This berth cannot now be created, and wherever such a contingency forms part of the scheme, I would recommend—if it be adopted—that the grouping be revised and two townships constituted with smaller pay, &c.

6. The revision, which I recommend need not, I may observe, disturb Curnam's division, for these very generally include several villages under the old village system in every part of the country, and there are at present only 76 Curnams to the 500 villages in the Darampury Taluq. To some degree of clubbing for mere purposes of revenue—accounting there can be no objection whatever; but I would confine it almost entirely to this branch of the village establishment. As regards criminal and civil administration the village headship and civil Munsifship, and general village service (*Taliari* and *Vettyan*)—the custom of the country (affirmed by law) does not allow the same latitude.

17th June 1874.

(Signed) W. ROBINSON.

No. 124-C. MINUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

THE revision of village service establishments, which is now proceeding throughout the Presidency, is a matter very intimately and seriously affecting the welfare of the people; and Mr. Robinson's Minute raises a question of extreme importance—which is whether our proceedings in the conduct of this revision are not inconsistent with the real objects of the Act, and violently disturbing immemorial institutions to which the people are accustomed, which have, on the whole, worked well, and in which to effect such changes as those proposed in the present case, and which have (as it would appear) already been effected in many parts of the Presidency, is in no inconsiderable degree prejudicial to public liberty and independence, and to the general interest of the population. The subject is one to which I have not as yet had opportunity of devoting any careful or comprehensive consideration. I am as yet uninformed as to the real history and object of the Act under which these measures are taken; and before I can give an opinion as to the course which it is desirable that the Government should now pursue, it is necessary that I should have before me some account of the origin and purpose of the Act and of the proceedings which have been adopted under it.

14th January 1875.

(Signed) HOBART.

No. 124D. MINUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

THE desired information respecting the origin and purpose of the Village Service Cess Act is now before me; and, on a careful consideration of the subject, I am strongly inclined to the opinion that the course hitherto pursued by this Government in the introduction of the Act is open to very serious objection.

2. In the first place, I do not think that the manner in which effect has been given to the law consists with the avowed objects of its authors or with the intention of the Legislature in passing it. In the letter from this Government to the Government of India, applying for sanction to the Act, it was explained that the object of the Act was exclusively to provide for the payment of village officers who cannot now depend upon the payment of their fees; that "the functionaries who come under its operation will be punctually instead of nominally paid, but in all other respects their position will be left unchanged;" and in the debates on the subject in the Legislative Council this strict limitation of the object of the Act was strongly urged by the promoters of the Bill as against the objectors,—as against those who (certainly not without reason) contended that the Bill proposed to interfere with the long-established self-government and therefore suit the liberties of the people. But this limitation has most certainly been disregarded in the application of the Act. The Government has not taken, as required by the intention and (it appears to me) by the letter of the Act, existing villages or groups of villages and provided for their payment by means of a cess. It has, on the contrary, to a great extent put an end to the political existence of villages and groups of villages, and centralised their government to a degree which is in the present case represented by the substitution of 50 villages for 451; and in so doing it has of course been compelled, instead of providing (as the Act requires) for the payment of the then existing village officers, most materially to reduce the number of those who are to be paid. This amounts to nothing less than a wholesale destruction of autonomous privileges and what is more to a destruction of them which is wholly unauthorised by the law. I think it is clear that, if the Act is introduced at all into any district, either it must be applied so as strictly to maintain the existing villages and groups of villages and the number and designation of their officers, or it will be applied in complete contravention not only of the spirit but (unless I am much mistaken) of the letter of the Act of 1864.

3. But, for my own part, I entertain the most serious doubt whether the Act can be worked at all consistently with a due regard to the interests of the people.

4. In the first place, even if worked in accordance with the intention of its framers, it substitutes compulsory for voluntary payments, and so strikes at the very root of prescriptive and long-familiar rights. Self-government, with taxation imposed by a power independent of the tax-payers, is self-government only in name. Whatever may be the evil of uncertain salaries and inefficient administration, loss of independence, sacrifice of freedom, deterioration of national character, are a terrible price to pay for its removal.

5. Secondly, the Act undertakes to cure the evil of inefficient administration, but only by ensuring the payment of salaries. But this, though it makes efficient administration more probable, by no means secures it. In fact, it is clear from the information before us that the chief reason why fees are not paid, and village officers go without their salaries, is that the villagers find that the payment of fees by no means ensures the performance of the services. The services will be no more surely performed because the salaries are paid by the Government; and thus the Act will most imperfectly accomplish the very object for which it was passed.

6. Thirdly, the Act amounts to a very serious addition to the taxation of a people already (in my opinion) taxed to the utmost limit consistent with a humane and prudent policy. It is clear that those who escape the payment of fees (and that of those who do so the number is very large was a postulate of the Legislation now in question) will be losers to the precise extent of the 6½ per cent. on their assessment which is imposed by the Act, and as regards those who do not escape it, I presume that the 6½ per cent. represents in many cases a larger contribution than that which they now pay. Nor, if the case were otherwise, would the question be in this respect decided. It is one thing to be compelled to pay taxes to the Government, and another to pay fees which are more or less voluntary, and can be withheld on the ground that the services which they are intended to remunerate are never rendered. Even supposing that the amount contributed in the two cases were the same, the degree in which it is felt as a burden by the contributor is immensely different.

7. I may add (fourthly) that the Act cannot, as it would appear, be worked under the limitation which was intended by its framers. For I am led to infer from what has passed that the maximum cess of 6½ per cent. on the assessment imposed by the Act is not sufficient to provide for the remuneration of village officers, unless upon condition that the system of centralisation hitherto adopted is steadily continued. By that system, under which 451 villages have been grouped into 50, and by that system only, can the number of village officers (as it would seem) be so reduced as to bring their remuneration within the capacity of the fund to be derived from the 6½ per cent. on the assessment which the Act allows. In other words it is (as I understand) impossible to give effect to the Act in the manner intended by its authors, unless the maximum rate of taxation imposed by the Act itself is exceeded.

8. For these reasons, I submit that the Government should reconsider the course which is being pursued in respect of this Act. My own impression is that the best mode of meeting the evil which it was intended to remedy would have been to give (if possible) summary legal powers for the recovery of fees dependent on the efficiency of official services. In any case, I cannot bring myself to acquiesce in the use of powers which the Government is free to exercise or not, as it pleases, in a manner which appears to me so injurious to the welfare of the country.

18th January 1875. (Signed) HOBART.

No. 124-E. MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

As the general principles and expediency of the scheme for the reorganisation of our village service initiated by the Government of 1864 are now called in question, I will make a few remarks explanatory of it.

2. The notorious and increasing inefficiency of our village establishments had engaged the serious attention of Government long before their reorganisation on a sound basis, suited to the requirements of the times, became an absolute and immediate necessity, owing to the introduction of our present system of Police. This measure entailed a large reduction of our revenual and magisterial establishments, the doubling up of taluqs, and other arrangements which rendered it essential that the village-officers should be competent to discharge properly the various duties which, by law and the usage of the country, devolve on them, and which they are best fitted to perform. The village is the unit of our administrative system, and without an efficient village establishment, thoroughly successful administration is almost an impossibility.

Village Head.
Curnam.
Vetty.
Taliary.
Shroff.
Neergunty.
Astrologer.
Potter.
Chuckler.
Barber.
Dhoby.
Purohit.

3. The customary establishment of a normal village comprises the officers marginally noted, but it must not be supposed that every village had this establishment, some had none at all, others had but some of them. Of this normal establishment, the first six performed public duties; the others discharged services in which the villagers alone were interested. The Government scheme concerned the former only.

NOTE.—In 1872-73 the village heads disposed of 24,194 civil and 44,060 criminal cases. But of the 43,230 heads, only 29,189 exercised their powers.

4. The first or village head is the local representative of the Government, the local Judge, Magistrate, and Collector. In these capacities, though his jurisdiction and powers are limited, he disposes of a deal of petty work to the relief of higher functionaries and the great advantage of the villagers who are saved the inconvenience, &c., of resorting to distant authorities.

5. The second, the Village Curnum (whose charge sometimes extended over several villages) is the local Accountant and the general assistant of the village head.

6. The third, the Taliary, is the village Constable, and, when efficient, the most valuable co-adjutor of the regular Police; he knows all the residents and watches all strangers, and crime cannot go on in a rural village unknown to hir

7. The Vetty is the executive subordinate on the revenue side.

8. The Shroff tests the coin paid in, and the Neergunty regulates the distribution of water for irrigation.

9. It will be seen from this brief outline that the duties of these officers are primarily and chiefly public, and those of the first three are of great importance.

10. The Government limited itself to the improvement of these offices, and the principle it adopted was simply that of employing no more officers than the public service really required and remunerating these as liberally as its finances permitted and the character of their duties warranted.

11. The remuneration of village offices consisted of Inams or assignments of land held wholly or partially free of assessment and of fees of varied amount and miscellaneous character, contributed in part by the State and villagers jointly, and in part by the villagers alone. The landed Inams were found to be frittered away among so many sharers that the actual office holders often got little or nothing; the fees were often withheld altogether and very generally realised with difficulty and uncertainty. After much consideration it was determined to enfranchise the Inams on favorable terms and substitute a cess for the fees, and to apply the united proceeds to the payment of the village-officers.

12. The enfranchisement of the Inams is not now called in question, so I need not touch on that point.

13. The substitution of a cess for the fees was adopted as really the only method of providing for their due and proper realisation. The voluminous reports of Mr. Pelly on the revision of village establishments show how varied, petty, and miscellaneous they are. Their commutation into money was practically impossible. As Mr. Robinson truly remarked: "Even if the fees could be ascertained, their commutation into money-payments would present serious difficulties. We could not, in fact, in this country commute the mixed and personal fees, such as eggs, chickens, sheep, sheep's heads and skins, fees on carts and goods, &c. And, if we could, we should again be perpetuating existing inequalities and irregularities." The grain fees, of course, were commutable, but even these varied very greatly. Merely to legislate for their realisation would have proved insufficient; for however summary the process of recovery might be, the time of the village-officers would be taken up in enforcing their dues to the prejudice of their work. The only alternative was that advocated by Mr. Robinson in the same letter, *viz.*, "to abolish the fees altogether, and in lieu of them establish a light and uniform local or village Police cess rated on the land assessment. The advantages of this system," he urged, "are self-evident; all would contribute rateably to support what all benefit by; the people would be saved all vexatious interference; the cess would increase with the prosperity of the country; the Collector would realise it easily with the land-revenue; the Police could be altogether relieved from collecting their own emoluments; and Government, *acting in the interests of the community*, would be able to count on a certain resource, and to adjust the local establishments and expenditure according to the varying requirements of each locality." Mr. Robinson's proposal was limited to the Police of which he was then Inspector-General, but his words fully and accurately describe the reasons which actuated the Government, and which are further expressed in the order of 17th April 1861, No. 863, Revenue Department. The question of the rate of cess underwent much discussion and consideration. The Inspector-General of Police recommended 10 per cent. as a fair average rate for the whole Presidency, but the Government concurred with the Board of Revenue in considering 6¼ per cent. sufficient.

From Inspector-General of Police to the Board of Revenue, 26th May 1860, page 9.

Inspector-General to Revenue Board, 11th October 1861.

Revenue Board to Government, 1st February 1862.
G. O., 1st June 1863, No. 935, Revenue Department.

14. The payment of fees was by no means voluntary in olden times, though the payer latterly took advantage of the law to withhold and evade it. I cannot agree with His Lordship that our people are over-taxed, and, as evidence, I would point to our steadily-increasing revenue under heads (Stamps, Excise, Salt, Post-office, &c.,) which all betoken improved circumstances.

15. The necessity of restricting the number of officials employed to that actually required cannot, I think, be questioned. Financial considerations render it impossible, nor would it be just to saddle the State and the people in all time to come with the hosts of so-called village servants who, as time has rolled on, have quartered themselves on the Village Fund. Mr. Robinson, in his letter already referred to, says: "In a large number of districts there is a village official to every 50 or 100 of the inhabitants—one with a recognised title and position, and making some demand on the public purse or on his fellow-subjects or on both for some petty official duty he should perform. In Tinnevelly there are 10,000 village watchers alone, loafing on the people in a proportion of 1 to 130 of the inhabitants. No country," he truly remarks, "can prosper under such a load of officials, even although they are but parish potentates." The grouping of villages is but one way of arriving at the same result. It is quite a mistake to suppose that even in olden times every one of the villages entered in our returns had a complete establishment. Many had none at all; many had only some of the usual officers; many so-called villages have no house or resident inhabitants. Often the mere hamlets and suburbs of large and real "villages" have been allowed to attain a separate existence. As Mr. Robinson has declared "it is clearly inexpedient to fix or perpetuate on each such petty community the full-blown village establishments that now exist." But the grouping is a mere detail; the law does not absolutely prescribe, and the Government need not carry it out at all; certainly, no further than they consider right and necessary.

11th October 1861.

16. These were the considerations which led the Government to adopt the policy now impugned; and Act IV. of 1864 (Madras) was passed to enable a cess to be levied in lieu of Village Service Fees. Section 2 of the Act limits the application of the proceeds to "the village or group of villages or township in which such cess is imposed," and thus virtually confers on Government the power of forming groups where necessary. The rate of cess is to be determined by the Government from time to time, but is not to exceed 6¼ per cent. on the assessment, and is realisable in the same manner as arrears of revenue. The Act applies only to the "public" officers whom I have mentioned; the true *village* servants and artisans being beyond its scope.

17. A measure of this character naturally excited much discussion.

18. The chief cause of disquietude was its supposed subversion of the ancient village system of the country. That this system was good in its day need not here be disputed or argued; possibly, if we could see it as it was, we might find it not more perfect than other institutions of human creation, but no doubt it suited the times in which it flourished. Those were times of anarchy, misrule, and oppression; the villagers were obliged to unite for their own protection to resist the rapacity of tyrannical rulers or the depredations of marauding bands, or the exactions of powerful officials—united they might save themselves; disunited they were lost. This strong pressure from without kept these village associations together, and gave them strength and vitality. So long as money was forthcoming and other demands were met, the rulers of those days cared not what was done or left undone in a village. There was no administration on the part of the Government, and the villagers had to make their own arrangements for the conduct of their own affairs, the adjudication of disputes, and the protection of life and property. But times have changed; law and order have taken the place of misrule and oppression. The rights of the poor are as sacred as those of the rich and influential; education and prosperity have engendered independence, and there is no longer that community of feeling and interests—that mutual dependence that necessity for union which were the life and soul of the ancient village system. It is to these causes that the system owes its decadence; it has answered its purpose, and lived its day. Our people have out-grown it. The progress of society has removed its *raison d'être*, and we can no more revive it than we can revive the older patriarchal system as good in *its* day as obsolete *now*.

19. But even if we could revive it its revival must, in reality, be accompanied by improvements of the very nature of those to which its destruction is attributed; certainly by improvements which will altogether change its character. Take, for example, the case of village watchers.

The system was this: the village-watcher was responsible, unless he could trace the property over the bounds of his village; if he did so, the watcher of that village incurred the responsibility, and so on; if the person robbed did not get his own property back, he got somebody else's stolen for the purpose, and a system of robbery thus pervaded the district. It has insurance by mutual robbery.

My Honorable Colleague describes their relation to their employers thus: "The responsible establishment, if duly paid by the people, made good all losses incurred through their neglect. On the other hand, a recusant payer was readily brought to his senses by the loss of his bullocks. These the village-watchers, by acknowledged right, removed, and they could not be traced without the agency of the injured watcher. When he was righted, the bullocks were restored; if not, they were sold at a distant market." This responsibility for losses was abrogated in 1812, and "the ordinary operation of criminal justice is gradually, but surely, depriving the watcher of his remedy by retaliation on the property of the community." Further, we are told, what undoubtedly is still true, that "in the district of Tinnevelly the people need protection from the army of 10,000 Maraver watchers, who now assess their fellow-subjects to any rates they please to dictate." Now I ask how are we to deal with this matter and adjust the relations of the watcher and his employer? Are we to revive the watcher's responsibility for losses and allow him to redress his own wrongs by "removing" property? Are we to allow him to fix his own remuneration, as in Tinnevelly, and realise it in this simple, though somewhat summary, fashion? Are we to legalise this system of black-mail? The only remedy proposed is to organise a Punchayet in each village, which, with the concurrence of the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, is to fix the number of watchers and their pay—to raise the latter by a rate on all property leviable by very summary process, to nominate the watchers, and be responsible for the character and conduct of those whom they select. I am not very sure that this responsibility will be willingly accepted or prove more than nominal, and the whole procedure seems to me very complicated for the appointment and management of two or three village Constables; but waiving all such considerations, what, I ask, becomes of the essential principle of the village system? Is not this rather Government by an oligarchy than by the community? Again, "the interference of Government officers should then be confined to inspection and general supervision. They must satisfy themselves that the village Police is properly organised and paid, and that it is working effectively in due co-operation and correspondence with the general Police." Here again, I ask, what becomes of the leading principle of the village system—self-government? What of the villagers' privilege of appointing their own officers—their powers over the purse? As regards the village establishments generally, my Honorable Colleague says: "The action of Government should be confined to comforting and strengthening them, by indicating to the people their responsibilities in the matter, and giving to them such powers as may enable them, *under the supervision and with the aid of Government*, to give them fresh life and to place and maintain their own establishments on an effective footing in their own way; by suggesting means and improvements, and *compelling them to do what the general good requires* and immemorial custom sanctions." I submit that, with the exception of the passages which I have taken the liberty of underlining, there is nothing sufficiently definite and practical in this method of dealing with the subject, and that the effect of those passages—of the supervision, the control, and the compulsion they contemplate—will be to create something very different from the village institutions so lauded and lamented.

20. I believe it to be now impossible to revive these old and, in their day, most valuable village brotherhoods; they would be an anachronism. But municipal self-government, on principles suited to the requirements of the day and the circumstances of the people, may gradually be introduced in their stead with much benefit to the people and the Government. Sanitation, elementary education, and local improvements of all kinds, might be advantageously entrusted to local bodies, and an enactment, simpler and less pretentious than our municipal law, might be framed to enable them to undertake such functions and raise the requisite funds. In this direction much good might, I think, be done; but such a project will take many years to carry out, and I earnestly hope that the reorganisation of the portion of the village establishments, which may be called public as distinguished from the municipal or communal, may not be postponed for it.

21. Under no circumstance would I subordinate the village-head, the Curnam or the Taliary, to a village municipality. These officers have very important functions to perform, and must occupy an independent position. As remarked by the Government in 1863: "It is objectionable in principle that officers having public duties—often of an invidious character—to perform should be dependent for their remuneration on the very persons against whom they may have to act."

22. I must apologise for the length to which these remarks have run; but I am now the only person who took part in the great measure which it is now proposed to place in abeyance, without any definite and practical substitute. The new system has been introduced into Kurnool, Trichinopoly, and Tanjore, with excellent results; it is, in my judgment, the only practical method of remedying the admitted inefficiency of our village establishments, and certainly no one has yet brought forward any other plan.

23. I will now turn to the proposed revision of the village establishment of the Darampoory Taluq of the Salem District, which has given rise to this discussion. The scheme, except as regards the Curnams, is condemned as revolutionising the whole conception and destroying every condition which applies to an Indian village constitution. Now, I submit, that in the Salem District this constitution has had no real existence in our day! So far back as the period between 1801 and 1803, or seventy years ago, Colonel Read (the originator of the ryotwary system and one of our ablest officers) resumed the merahs or fees and Inams, and substituted money-payments out of the revenue which have been continued ever since. The Neerguntees and Shroffs (of whom there are very few) are alone remunerated by fees. The villages were simultaneously grouped, and hence it is that we find that 542 villages form only 87 Curnikam divisions, and have only 257 Karedars or Monegar Moonsifs, 67 Fasidalgars or Vetties, and 241 Toties or Taliaries, who, however, do revenue as well as Police work. The whole of these servants have ever since been regarded as Government servants, even hereditary succession is not recognised as a right; they are appointed, punished, and paid in exactly the same way as the other establishments, and Regulation VI. of 1831 has no operation in the district. There is thus no ancient or even modern village polity to revolutionise and overturn. We are, in fact, merely reducing a regular Government establishment to dimensions which will suffice for the transaction of business, and which we can pay properly and maintain in efficiency.

24. I concur with my Honorable Colleague that the grouping has been carried rather too far. But I submit it is scarcely fair to describe it as the conversion of 451 villages into fifty unions. The taluq, a wild hill-tract, comprises 542 villages, of which ninety-one have neither house nor resident inhabitants, the owners and cultivators of the lands living in adjacent villages. Upwards of a hundred other villages have not thirty houses or 150 inhabitants, and the position and distance of a great number shows that they are merely the hamlets or suburbs of the adjacent villages. Thus besides the ninety-one houseless villages, four consist of one house each, four others have only two houses. Other petty villages again are within two or three hundred yards of what really is a village, and evidently the parent village. Moreover, the whole 542 so-called villages have only 257 Karedars among them, so that this and not 451 is the number of recognised villages, and the number of Munsifs is not fifty but eighty-seven. Further, the 257 Karedars receive among them Rs. 3,077, or an average of 12 Rs. per annum each, while the eighty-seven Munsifs, who take their place, will receive Rs. 6,540, or Rs. 76 per annum each—a rate of pay for which we may hope to secure efficient men. There are now only sixty-seven Vetties receiving among them Rs. 678; there will be eighty-seven receiving Rs. 3,132; the present number of Taliaries is 241 receiving Rs. 4,450; the future number will be 219 receiving Rs. 6,570. The result is thus to substitute a small but sufficient number of well-paid for a large number of insufficiently-paid servants. The grouping shows evident marks of care. The most startling instance of clubbing is that noticed by the Board, *viz.*, No. 17. Here no less than twenty-five villages are united into one, but twelve of them are uninhabited; one has two houses with fifteen inhabitants; eight have not 100 inhabitants; the largest has ninty-three houses with 347

inhabitants. This group has now two Curnams, two Munsifs, two Vetties, and two Taliaries; it will have only one Curnam, the number of Munsifs and Vitties remains unaltered; that of Taliaries is increased to five, while the pay of the whole is raised from Rs. 81 to Rs. 462. At the same time, I think a few more Munsifs are required. For instance, Group 6 includes two villages, with population of 504 and 622, each a mile distant from the chief village; and the Acting Collector remarks in the margin that there is a "very bad criminal population in the circle and adjacent Muttahs." These villages should, I think, each have a Munsif and Taliary. There are some other cases in which the same course should be adopted, and I would desire the Board's attention to this. In the way of assets the Collector has not taken credit for interest on the accumulated proceeds of the cess—now about three lakhs I should suppose.

25. As regards assistants to Munsifs, the rule is that where a village with its hamlets is too large for a single Munsif, his pay should be so fixed that he may employ an assistant on his own responsibility; but when the necessity for assistance arises from a number of villages being clubbed together, then the circle should be divided into two groups. I would adopt this course in Salem. The same rule applies to Curnams. I cannot concur with my Honorable Colleague as to official recognition of the old native custom of allowing Taliaries to do duty by turns. It is fatal to efficiency and responsibility, deprives the service of the experience gained by continuous duty, and keeps a number of men from steadily settling down to some pursuit. We shall have difficulty no doubt in stopping it, and it may be some time ere we succeed; but the recognition of the practice will not, I trust, be sanctioned. We see the evils in Tinnevelly with its 10,000 robber-police, and we have experienced them in North Arcot and the Ceded Districts where the Kuttubadies were the regular dacoits of the country.

5th February 1875.

(Signed) J. D. SIM.

P.S.—With reference to paragraph 6 of His Lordship's Minute, I would explain that, under Section 52, Act II. of 1864, "fees or other dues payable by any person to or on behalf of village servants employed in Revenue or Police duties" are recoverable as arrears of revenue, but the remedy is tedious and cumbersome. I ought to have said that the ryots are bound to pay and can be made to pay their fees, though by an inconvenient procedure, not that they actually did pay them. Their amount certainly exceeds 6½ per cent. generally.

(Signen) J. D. S.

No. 124-F. MINUTE BY THE HON. W. ROBINSON, C.S.I.

I THINK that in this "sample" proposal—as in those alluded to by the Board as Mr. Longley's proposals for the Trichengode and Namkul Taluqs—the clubbing up of villages has been carried a great deal too far, inasmuch as we find that it is proposed to throw 451 inhabited villages—some no doubt small hamlets which may be very properly grouped with adjacent larger villages—into 50 village unions, with an average area of about 20 square miles and 3,816 inhabitants (total population 190,626) for each union. Apparently this is proposed, because no less sweeping application of the grouping system would provide the amount required for the pay of the full establishment* of servants which it is proposed to appoint for each union at the rates of pay which it is thought necessary to assign to each village official. Under the new arrangement about one-third† of the existing village officials would be thrown out of employment, chiefly in the higher grades.

† Establishment.	Existing.	Proposed	Decrease.
Kurnam	81	50	31
Monegar	257	87	170
Menial Servants	308	306	2
	646	443	203

2. It appears that the assets recoverable under the Act, together with the existing Government assignment on the revenue, will suffice (the small balance needs no remark) for the proposed establishment. And the future emolument would considerably exceed the amount now officially recognised as being enjoyed by the existing village servants.

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* Accountants or Kurnams. Heads of the Villages. Watchmen or Taliaries, and Revenue Runners or *Vetty*.

3. I cannot approve of this proposal. I do not share the apparent views of the Board as stated in paragraph 5 of their Proceedings in respect to clubbing villages in a poor inaccessible hilly taluq like Dharampuri. Such backward conditions seem to me to dictate (within reasonable bounds) the continuance of an administrative policy which now tends to foster development and to bring such outlying parts under State ken by more diffused village establishment; and I think that long existing conditions afford the sound basis of revision in this direction.

4. The number of *Karekars* or headmen now in existence indicates that considerable—if not sufficient—clubbing up of villages already exists. There are at present 257 heads of villages or *Karekars* to 451 inhabited villages (I omit 91 uninhabited villages), and I submit that this number is a far fairer proportion of village headmen than that proposed (50 with about 30 Assistants—a status unknown to the law).

5. Some redistribution and reduction of numbers may, no doubt, be called for by the altered circumstances of the country and financial considerations; but this general condition should, I think, be adhered to in the main as the basis for the revision of the village establishments throughout this taluq. Probably the number of villages might be reduced by the operation of clubbing up to, say, 200 or 225 villages without much popular inconvenience, and in a manner which will still sufficiently provide for the requirements and development of the country under improved village administration.

6. As regards the lower grades of the service, existing conditions again no doubt fairly represent the wants of the country, although improvement and some numerical increase may be required. On the whole, the existing (308) establishment of *Vettyans* and *Taliaries*—306 are proposed—need not be far departed from, in order to give one menial village servant at least to each of the lesser village groups, and perhaps two or more to a few large villages.

7. Nor do I think that we need be too particular about the employment of such menial servants under the headman of the village in such a manner as the exigencies of the service require. The village headman will still perform the Magisterial, Police, and Revenue duties of the village without distinction; and, by the immemorial custom of the country, he is aided more or less indiscriminately by the village runners under whatever designation. They may do so still, for the law has not altered this custom. Nor do I see that we need force any absolute separation of duty amongst the lower grades of servants. The opposite policy, indeed, appears to me to have several practical advantages to counterbalance the official precision which we would endeavour to prescribe. The practice of the country might, therefore, be allowed to continue in small villages where all the duty required of such persons would not occupy more than one man's time. Where more than one menial village servant is appointed the duty of the Police and Revenue may be severally assigned with a view to greater efficiency.

N.B.—Another custom to which I would not object is the practice of taking tours of duty and shares or tours of the emolument—as amongst the hereditary races or families of Kavilgar and Vettiyan in some districts. It is an immemorial and reasonable practice which has naturally arisen out of the conditions of society and of the country, and has some very decided advantages when the service is generally light, but often fitful and uncertain. For example, during the harvest time the whole family or race, amongst whom the Taliari emoluments and claims are distributed, watch the crops of the village in many districts, and more than one Taliari is required to prevent gang robbery. Thus the small village pay is distributed, so as really to subsidise a large family, several of whose members do all sorts of jobs for the villagers and for the State throughout the year for the pay of one.

8. Thus I propose that the future village establishment of each village shall consist of a headman as village Magistrate and Collector, with one or two village watchers or runners. And I believe that such an establishment gives an ample local resident village service for the bulk of the smaller villages or small village groups in a backward taluq like Dharampuri with its sparse and scattered population.

9. As regards the pay of the lowest grade of servants (*Vettyans* and *Taliaries*) the assets (Rs. 11,016) estimated and assigned to this class by the Board in paragraph 18 of their Proceed-

ings will probably nearly suffice to provide the full remuneration deemed advisable: and if not the deficit will be thoroughly intelligible to the recipients. It will be a rateable deduction in proportion to the deficit of village cess under the law.

10. Similarly Rs. 6,828 assigned in the same Proceedings to 87 Munsiffs (at an average of about Rs. 6½ a-month each) would much improve the existing emoluments of, say, 200 to 225 headmen as above suggested. Any deficiency will again be intelligible, and will gradually disappear as the revenue improves under their local management.

11. I must here record my dissent from the notion (which I think erroneously underlies all the proposals which have been made for reorganising village establishment with large resort to the clubbing-up system) that each village must have a full minimum establishment, and that each village servant must have a full scale of pre-arranged pay. This theory is wholly at variance with existing and immemorial conditions of the country and its village services, and it is equally unrecognised either by the letter or spirit of the law. The legislature has provided a sufficient property—rate for the use of the necessary establishment of each village in lieu of precarious and objectionable exactions, and it leaves the Government to distribute this rate amongst the existing or improved services of the villages; but it does not demand for each a fixed scale of pay. Even where the aggregate rate falls short of the scale, which it might be desirable to assign to each servant, it still provides the means of giving a fair rateable remuneration—which will improve with the advance of material prosperity—to each village official. As a general rule, I believe that a cess levied in each village, supplemented from the Government assignment on the revenue or proceeds of enfranchised Inams, will be found sufficient remuneration for all the work which the village community absolutely requires. Small villages do not impose large amount of labour on their establishments or occupy the whole time of their services.

12. As regards Kurnams the existing state of this taluq is quite in accordance with the condition of this part of the village service throughout the country. An Accountant or Kurnam is not practically a necessary part of the *resident* village service. Nor is one required—and in the great majority of districts is not present—in each village. The *Kurneek* or Accountant's charges are everywhere much clubbed up, and in Bellary (the typical district of village establishments) as many as 40 villages are included in one *Kurneek* or Accountants' charge. There is nothing in the law which abrogates the custom of the country in this respect, and clubbing may be largely resorted to in reorganising this branch of the local service.

13. In the taluq under consideration, 552 villages (including 91 uninhabited villages where cultivation is nevertheless pursued) are distributed into 81 *Kurneek* or Accountant's harges—no doubt the existing *Kurneek* distribution has guided, in some measure, the proposals before us. The 50 *Kurneek* or Accountant's ranges now proposed will probably amply suffice for all the needs of the revenue administration and other wants of an illiterate people. The proposals may perhaps be accepted—with such modification as may be deemed desirable on reconsideration—so far as this part of the local service is concerned. The rates of pay proposed are ample, and might admit of reduction if the numbers of Kurnams be increased. The Kurnams would be paid by a rateable contribution from the cess of each village included within their charge—or their salaries might be made a first charge on the Government grant of Rs. 1,20,000 from the general reserve, or on the proceeds of enfranchised Inams if any exist.

14. With these observations I would venture to submit that the proposals of the Board may be sent back for reconsideration with reference to the general principles indicated above. Mr. Puckle is proceeding to revise settlement in the district of Salem with which he is familiarly acquainted, and might be directed to re-examine the matter and submit (in communication with the Collector and Board) a new scheme based on principles at once more liberal and more consistent with the law and conditions of the country.

15. It will be seen from the above that I entirely concur in the general policy of the Government and of the law on the matter of reorganising village establishments and providing for their adequate remuneration, and I think that this policy should be actively pushed forward.

16. The operation of the Village Service Cess Act is quite compatible with the most complete maintenance of rural social condition, and will everywhere strengthen that communal bond and the local administration and self-government which it is its object to comfort.

17. I agree with the views expressed by our Honorable Colleague Mr. Sim, except as regards village institutions in general—and deprecate most earnestly any change of policy which would tend to stay or seriously interfere with, the action of the law under the Village Service Cess Act.

18. This Legislation was urgently necessary when it was passed ten years ago, as is shown by the action of Government and the debates that took place at the time. Practical experience proves that the revision it provides for is increasingly urgent *now*. In fact, the operation of the Village Service Cess Act alone can save village institutions from impending ruin, and render local administration much longer possible. We know how Bengal suffers from the decadence which has overtaken the village institutions there from causes which are very similar to what threatens ours.

19. It was my duty, prior to the discussion of this subject in 1860, to examine the records and the practical condition of nearly every district in the Presidency in respect to their village institutions. It would be impossible to conceive a matter on which the consensus of public and official opinion had been so unanimous for more than quarter of a century, as on the subject of the decadence and confusion which had overtaken this all-important part of the public administration and of village communities, because of neglect to legislate and assure their remuneration. The causes of this were but too apparent, and are operating still with increasing certainty. There was, and still is, scarcely a village where the same grievance was not the first cause of popular complaint. Indeed, a volume might be filled with the testimony of thoughtful and experienced men from all parts of the country, and with facts collected from every taluq as to the baneful effect of long neglect by Government to provide the means of maintaining and strengthening the village service. The law was, in fact, forced on the Government by conditions that precluded further reluctance to legislate in this direction. It were surely both dangerous and unwise now to give up a settled and useful policy, to which the Legislature and country have accommodated themselves, without any alternative policy, which presents the slightest hope of success in the direction so earnestly needed.

20. During ten years past all questions as to improving the position of village officers and settling their fees—which have been withheld almost everywhere—have been slurred over, because a revision under the Village Service Cess Act was certain to come soon as a part of the revenue settlement. Things are, in consequence, in so bad a condition now that it has only recently been considered necessary by Government to expedite the revision and to effect it even before the settlement in districts which have not been settled yet. There seems to me, therefore, to be no room to go back; for I am satisfied that no alternative Act for facilitating the collection of fees will work. It would make the better sort of villagers, who continue to pay the fees, suffer for the "worse sort" who have long ceased to pay them. It would not fail to revive the old order of things when village officers did their work for the means of illegal exaction which their position afforded, not for pay; and unless the village establishments are decently paid without further delay, and are brought under proper control, the very foundations of our administration will, I am afraid, become rotten. Indeed, this state of things seems to me to be coming on fast and to be the more inevitable from the general progress which is taking place.

21. I freely admit that some of the proposals which have been submitted to Government have been ill-judged and scarcely in accordance with the spirit of the law; but these matters are perfectly susceptible of rectification and restraint, and I agree with His Excellency that in future stricter attention must be paid to the provisions of the law and conditions of village life.

22. But I am unable to share His Excellency's further views, and venture to submit as regards the objection that the substitution of compulsory for voluntary payments weakens self-Government; that it appears to me that this is not *necessarily* an evil, inasmuch as Government from

outside is better than self-government in innumerable cases, amongst which are the administration of Civil and Criminal Justice, Police, and the collection of the revenue. The Statement of "Objects and Reasons" (for Act IV. of 1864) where it says, "it is besides objectionable in principle that officers having public duties often of an invidious character to perform should be dependent for their remuneration on the very persons against whom they may have to act," seems to me unanswerable. Moreover, these "voluntary payments" have most of them passed out of existence in consequence partly of the progress which good government has effected, and partly of the policy which was defined ten years ago when the Village Service Cess Act was passed. Indeed, I believe that there really is no alternative. Either the Act must be carried out or our village institutions—with such principles of self-government as they possess—must gradually cease to be, through the frauds of those who are bound to maintain them.

23. But I further submit that payment of Village Service fees never was—and in this country never can be really—voluntary. High-handed oppression of official position alone has enabled the higher classes (village heads and Accountants) to realise (where still able to do so) their dues—in many instances far in excess of what is right. And the fear of lawless rapacity has alone enforced the heavy blackmail levied under the name of remuneration by the lower orders (*Taliaries*, &c.,) of village officials, where these are still recovered. The condition of Tinnevelly is a shameful example of what the whole system of so-called voluntary contributions has consisted in. Its tolerance in any form is, I submit, now out of the question; for I think that all experience has shown that in this country our only safety lies in keeping the hand of those in office and power off the poor, and that efficiency and honesty can be secured by adequate remuneration alone.

24. I share Mr. Sim's views in respect to the taxation of the country generally. It is not burdensome, and the people greatly benefit by the maintenance of efficient local administration. On the special matter before us, I would observe that if the people may fraudulently withhold the dues of the institutions of the country at pleasure, they may doubtless lessen the taxation, but the condition of the country will be none the better on that account when its institutions are gone. In fact, the Village Service Cess Act provides, as it appears to me, relief in many respects; especially by making taxation lighter, more uniform, and more equally distributed; it stops lawless, ill-regulated, exactions by blackmail on the one hand, and fraudulent evasion of just dues with ceaseless heart-burnings on the other.

25. As regards the working of the Act, it is, as I have shown above, perfectly feasible to carry it into effect without unduly clubbing up villages and its provisions are quite compatible with comforting and strengthening existing communal conditions—while it removes evils which seem to me to be far greater than even partially interfering with the conditions of some small villages in every district.

24th February 1875. (Signed) W. ROBINSON.

No. 124-G. MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

THE subject should be referred to the Board for further consideration. I deprecate *our* prescribing the number of villages to be retained as such. I am sure 200 is far too large a number. A glance at the Collector's statement will show that very many of the so-called villages of this taluq are mere hamlets, with few inhabitants, and so near each other as not to require separate establishments. This is, however, a matter of detail which had better be left to the Board.

2. I also deprecate the union of the duties of Vetty and Taliary wherever more than one inferior servant is maintained. The original design was to group the villages in such a way that the chief village had the *full* establishment, the hamlets, where necessary, having each a resident Taliary. In some cases, of course, a village is so situated that while it does not require a full establishment, it cannot be grouped with another; in such cases it has its own Munsif and a Taliary, or a Taliary and Vetty; the Curnicum work being done by the Curnum of an adjacent group. I would not depart from this principle. Where only one inferior servant is kept, he should be the Taliary; the village will be so small that the Munsif will not need a Vetty. I would not tolerate the hap-hazard method of having work done sometimes by one man and sometimes by another. The office of Taliary is of very great importance, and should always be the recognised duty of a particular individual.

2nd March 1875. (Signed) J. D. SIM.

No. 125. ORDER THEREON, 9th March 1875, No. 391.

Miscellaneous.

THE Governor in Council is of opinion that the clubbing up of villages in these proposals has been carried a great deal too far. The Acting Third Member of the Board and Director of Revenue Settlement will be deputed to revise the scheme, for which purpose he should proceed to the district and submit a report after communicating with the Collector.

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Govt. of {1875} Madras.

REVENUE.

To

R. K. PUCKLE, Esq.,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated March 9th.

Recd. *Encl.*

G.O., 9th March 1875, *No.* 391.

MARCH.

Nos. 123—125.

Clubbing of Villages in Dharampuri Taluq, Salem District.—Observing that the — has been carried too far, and deputing the Acting Third Member of the Board of Revenue and the Director of Revenue Settlement to revise the scheme in communication with the Collector.

Revenue 1875 Depts

No. 391.

Proceedings of the
Madras Government

Dated 9th March 1875

No. 1230 125

14/2/12

391/12

1

No. 1,204.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 22nd May 1874.

Read again Board's Proceedings, dated 21st and 22nd January 1873, Nos. 82 and 85.

Read also the following letter from F. PRICE, Esq., Acting Collector of Salem, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 10th March 1874, No. 91 :—

I HAVE the honour to submit, for the consideration of the Board of Revenue, my scheme for the revision of the village establishment of the Dharampuri Taluq, and if it is approved of, I can adopt it for such others as are ready and make it the basis of working out the schemes for the rest of the district.

2. As regards the grouping, I beg to state that it is the result of careful inquiry and consideration for a period of two years. My personal knowledge of the localities has been assisted by consultation with the Tahsildar, the village officers, and the ryots themselves. I took the opportunity of the jammabundi to do this part of the work, and revised it in the succeeding year. I believe it to be the best that could be effected. It is true that in some instances the groups, especially in the case of the Donnakattapatti Circle, look enormous, but intervening chains of difficult hills, Muttahs and Agraharams scattered all over the country, and peculiarly feverish localities have rendered the task of grouping very much like fitting a puzzle together. In the case of Donnakattapatti, there are only two villages where the superior officers could be made to live; these are too close to allow of splitting it up and making two Circles of it, and even if this could be done, the separate Circles would have so small a revenue as to make the entertainment of an extra Curnam a very expensive matter. The Board will observe, in the Circle under consideration, that out of 25 villages, 12 are Bechirag (uninhabited). I have been all over that part of the country, and nearly every one of the villages that are inhabited is a collection of a dozen or so of wretched huts, with a few fields of cultivation around it: all else is jungle, which is never likely to be reclaimed. Pikili, which I have had to split into two, is another peculiarly situated Circle, and there are many others in the same category.

Theoretically I could make a much neater looking thing of the grouping, but practically it would not be of the slightest use.

3. I have considered it necessary, not only for the purpose of making the boundaries more symmetrical, but also of rendering the grouping better and more effective, to recommend the transfer of some villages from Dharampuri to Krishnagherry, and *vice versâ*. I enclose a statement of the changes required to complete Dharampuri (marked A).

As things at present stand, there are villages of one taluq almost entirely surrounded by those of the other, and there are again others which are cut off from the remainder of the existing Circle by a river, which in the wet weather is an impassable flood rendering communication impracticable, and causing delay in collections and remittances.

4. In fixing the establishment of Curnams, I have taken three classes, viz. :—

1st Class with a beriz of over Rs. 5,000, Rs. 10 a-month.
2nd do. do. Rs. 3,000 and under Rs. 5,000, Rs. 9 a-month.
3rd do. do. under Rs. 3,000, Rs. 8 a-month.

I would have preferred the scale to be Rupees 8, 10, and 12, but with the high pay assigned to the menial servants, this would cause a deficit in the scheme or else a balance to credit too small to be safe. I think that a Rupee extra a-month for each Rupees 2,000 is hardly enough, and that it would not be advisable to pay 3rd Class Curnams less than Rupees 8 per mensem.

As regards Monigars, I have also taken three classes, viz. :—

1st Class, at Rupees 8 per mensem.
2nd do. do. 7 do.
3rd do. do. 6 do.

I have assumed as a general rule that a Monigar cannot, unless the villages are pretty close, properly collect more than Rupees 2,000 a-year. It must be remembered that in this district, the ryots are not wealthy like those in Nellore; that the country is very frequently jungly and broken and the villages far apart. Besides this, the class from which, for the next fifty years to come for certain, we shall have to draw our Monigars, is not one which is as a rule intelligent or capable of doing more work than I have in my scheme assigned to a village officer of the kind. Where there are large villages at roadsides, I have given the Monigar, in consideration of extra work as Munsif, a higher grading than if I rigidly adhered to the classification according to beriz, and where villages are close together, I have given these officers a lower class. I have also considered it necessary to raise the grade in one or two very feverish places, where good men are required and where they will not go unless paid liberal salaries.

The assessment alone is a fair enough basis upon which to classify the Curnams, but in the case of Monigars this is not advisable as an unvarying rule; for difficulty of collecting, area, population and extra work and responsibilities as Munsif should also have weight, and in the scheme now laid before the Board, I have considered these points to the best of my ability.

5. So far my views have been pretty nearly in accordance with those of the Board as expressed in their Proceedings, No. 912, dated 2nd June 1873. I now turn to the subject of the menial servants, to whom I am not disposed, in the case of the Police, to give such high salaries as 4 Rupees a-month.

6. The inferior revenue servants, who are in this district called "Oodaris" in the North and "Kangánis" in the South, and who should I think be called "Tandalkarans," receive at present salaries averaging Rupees 18 per annum. I think that they might be paid an uniform salary of Rupees 3 per mensem.

7. The Police are all of the Pariah caste, and are known all over the district by the name of "Toties," a term which I fear will never be eradicated by any number of orders. They might I think be in future officially called "Kavilkarens," an appellation which is intelligible in a Tamil-speaking district like this. Their salaries vary very much indeed, and run even so low, in an instance of which I know, as ¾ths of a Rupee per annum. The average is very small, and in the Sub-division, to the best of my recollection, it is not above Rupees 9 a-year. Although the pay of the office is so petty, it is sought after with the greatest avidity, and disputes regarding the right to it are the source of frequent and bitter quarrel. The system, which in spite of every effort to put it down holds, is that there is, say, one man registered as Toti: he has half a dozen brothers, and each of these half-dozen takes a year of the work and emoluments (Morrai or turn as they call it). The consequence is that the real Policeman only does duty once in seven years, and that during the remaining six, half a dozen totally irresponsible men, whom one cannot punish or do anything to, perform the duty. The same thing will go on, if there is but one registered man with a high salary. It will be divided between the family, and the old system of turns and two men doing the work for which one is paid will go on. I have in my experience as a Magistrate met with several cases, where a non-registered Toti (one taking his turn) has been tried for and acquitted of letting a prisoner escape, because he was not legally bound to keep the man in custody. It appears to me in every way advisable to have more men and to pay them less. Rupees 30 per annum would I think be ample. It is a sum far above the present average salary. If what is now paid is so much coveted as it is, it is a fair inference that it is thought sufficient. My proposal would increase this considerably, and give us a larger number of responsible men and better facilities for providing for the public security.

8. As I think that each Monigar should have no opportunity of making the excuse that some other officer had appropriated the services of the Tandalkaran, I have given one servant of this grade to each village head and one Policeman to every three villages or fraction of that number. Going by population in the matter of Police is not desirable in this district: where the number of the people is small, they are scattered, and the size of the range to be traversed makes up for the scantiness of the people. In some groups, I have, on account of the existence in them of important or peculiarly criminal localities, departed from the general principle, but all these are noted in the Register (marked B.) transmitted herewith.

9. As regards the establishments now existing and those proposed, the Board will observe that it is only in the number of the Monigars that any considerable reduction is contemplated. It is impossible to avoid this, for at present there is in some Circles a Monigar for every petty little village. The reason why the number of other village servants does not vary much is, that for some years clubbing with a view to the revision has been steadily going on. A good deal in this way was done as regards Monigars, but there were so many to deal with that the process has necessarily been slow.

10. I now turn to the question of assets.

11. The Village Service Cess of the Dharampuri Taluq amounts to Rupees 10,810-11-11. I have divided the amount of the Government grant by nine, the number of taluqs in the district. If the apportionment was made according to the Land Revenue, Salem and Uttengherry would have too little, and Namkal and Trichengode too much. According to my plan, therefore, Rupees 13,333-4-0 is the amount to be taken as the supplemental grant for Dharampuri, thus giving a total of Rupees 24,143-15-11. The scale which I now transmit comes to Rupees 21,522, leaving a balance to credit of Rupees 2,621-15-11. Some margin, say Rupees 500, must be allowed, and I would propose further that a sum, amounting to about Rupees 2,000 per annum, should be reserved from the grant, for the purpose of building and keeping in repair Cutcherries for the Village Munsifs. There are at present no funds from which this very desirable charge can be met.

Taking the Board's scale as sketched in the Proceedings marginally noted, the total cost of the Village Establishment for Dharampuri would be Rupees 21,744. If the Board consider that the Police should receive Rupees 3 per mensem instead of Rupees 2½, the cost according to my scale would be Rupees 22,836, leaving a balance of only Rupees 1,307-15-11 in hand.

No. 912, dated 2nd June 1873.

ENCLOSURES Nos. 1 and 2.—Statements.

THE Board resolve to submit these proposals for revising the Village Establishments in Dharampuri for the orders of Government. The scheme is submitted as a "sample," and if it is approved, similar schemes will be prepared for the other taluqs of the Salem District.

2. At the end of 1872, the Collector, Mr. Longley, who is now absent on leave, submitted proposals for the Trichengode and Namkul Taluqs. His scheme grouped 377 villages into 64 in one taluq, and 271 villages into 61 in the other. There was to be a Curnam for each group paid 10, 7 or 6 Rupees. The number of men holding the office of Monigar and Munsif was to be 85 for 64 groups in Trichengode and 70 for 61 groups in Namkul, and they were to be paid 5, 4 or 3½ Rupees. In cases where there were two of these officers in a single group, they were each to have a separate set of villages assigned to them. There were to be 317 Toties in Trichengode and 192 in Namkul who were to be paid Rupees 3 a-month and do both Police and Revenue work.

3. The Board directed these schemes to be reconsidered because:—

(1.) The clubbing of villages seemed to have been carried too far.

(2.) The establishments were inadequately paid, though, considering the Government annual grant of Rupees 1,20,000, the Collector had not utilized the assets.

4. No subsequent report has been received with regard to Trichengode or Namkul, but Mr. Price, the Acting Collector, had prepared a scheme for Dharampuri, a part of the district with which he is familiar.

5. In this taluq, the list submitted by the Collector shows that there are 542 villages, of which 91 are uninhabited and a large proportion mere hamlets. They are at present classed in 87 Divisions which seem originally to have been Curnams' charges, though now some Curnams have more than one division and some divisions more than one Curnam. Mr. Price proposes to divide all into 50 groups. At first sight, this seems to be carrying clubbing too far, but careful consideration of the figures in the list convinces the Board that in this poor taluq of mountain ranges between which petty hamlets are scattered thinly, the revision cannot be carried out without wholesale clubbing. The case of nearly the whole of Dharampuri, with regard to the size and character of the villages and the position of the villages with reference to each other, is very

different from the case of Namkul and Trichengode, where the clubbing proposed by Mr. Longley seemed to the Board to be excessive. The highest annual revenue of any of the proposed groups is Rupees 5,003. The most doubtful case is that referred to in paragraph 2 of Mr. Price's letter. The Group (No. 17 on the list) is to contain 25 villages, comprising 23,930 acres or more than 37 square miles. Four of the inhabited villages are 2½ miles and one is 3 miles from the village in which the Headman will reside; but even in this group, 12 of the 25 villages are uninhabited, the annual revenue is only Rupees 2,945, and the amount of Village Service Cess collected in Fasli 1282 was only Rupees 128. Mr. Price has shown good reasons against sub-dividing this group, and the Board are of opinion that his judgment and knowledge of the country should be trusted as regards the rest.

6. The grouping assumes that 12 villages with a revenue of Rupees 6,413 will be transferred from Kristnagherry to Dharampuri, and 4 villages with a revenue of Rupees 712 from Dharampuri to Kristnagherry. Unfortunately, the survey maps of the taluqs have not been published, so that the expediency of the transfers cannot be demonstrated to the eye, but the reasons given by the Collector in paragraph 3 of his letter are satisfactory, and the Board think the transfers should be allowed.

81

7. There are [illegible] 81 Curnams drawing Rupees 3,959, or an average of a little more than Rupees 4 a-month. Mr. Price proposes to have 50, or one for each group paid as follows:—

5 First-class, Revenue more than Rupees 5,000, Rupees 10 a-month.
30 Second-class, Revenue from Rupees 3,000 to Rupees 5,000, Rupees 9 a-month.
15 Third-class, Revenue under Rupees 3,000, Rupees 8 a-month.

8. In their criticisms on similar proposals from Nellore, which are referred to in Board's Proceedings, dated 7th May 1874, No. 1,061, the Board approved of a somewhat lower scale of salaries, but the modification proposed by Mr. Price seems to be called for by the peculiar circumstances of the case. The Curnams' charges will be more extensive and more difficult to manage in Dharampuri than in Nellore. The several classes of Curnams are distributed to the groups according to the revenue of Fasli 1282.

257

9. There are now 257 Monigars drawing Rupees 3,077, or an average of a little less than Rupee 1 a-month. Mr. Price proposes to have 87 paid as follows :—

1st Class, Rupees 8 a-month.
2nd do. do. 7 do.
3rd do. do. 6 do.

or a Rupee less than Curnams, class for class. They are distributed according to a general rule that each Monigar collects Rupees 2,000 per annum, modified when necessary with reference to the extent of the charges and the feverishness of the locality.

10. The rates of pay which the Board approved for Nellore were Rupees 5, 6 and 7, and the reasons which induce them to approve higher rates to the Dharampuri Curnams apply to the case of the Monigars.

11. The Board have no objection to make to the distribution of the Monigars except this, that when there are two in a group, one must be called the Monigar and Munsif and the other the Assistant Monigar, and the former must draw a higher salary than the latter. Mr. Longley's proposal that each of the two should be a Munsif and have a separate set of villages assigned to him is inadmissible. The groups are to be for all intents and purposes single villages, and the law determines that each village shall have one Munsif and that the Headman shall be the Munsif. In some villages Mr. Price locates two Monigars of the 2nd, and in others two of the 3rd Class; in all of them the Munsif and Monigar should be of the 2nd Class and the Assistant Monigar of the 3rd Class. This will add Rupees 288 per annum to the expenditure.

67+241=308

12. There are now 67 Tandalgars or collectors of kists, and 241 Toties or servants of the Munsif and Monigar, doing both revenue and magisterial work. The Tandalgars draw a little more than 10 Rupees a-year, and the Toties about Rupees 18½. Mr. Price proposes to have 87 Tandalgars paid Rupees 3 a-month, and 219 Toties paid Rupees 2½ a-month, who, he thinks, might be called "Kavalkarens." According to the views of the Board with regard to Nellore, there should be 94 Vettiyans and 154 Kavilgars paid Rupees 4 a-month.

13. Mr. Price explains that the present Tandalgars get on an average Rupees 18 a-year, that the pay of the Toties is sometimes as low as ¾ths of a Rupee per annum and never more than 9 Rupees per annum in the Sub-division, that the appointment is nevertheless sought after with great eagerness, that the registered holder generally takes annual turns with unregistered holders, a system which will be continued in spite of orders to the contrary, and that it is more advisable to have many men on small pay than a few men on large pay. He proposes to give a Tandalgar on Rupees 3 a-month to each Monigar, and a Kavalgar or Policeman to every 3 villages in a group, the rule being modified by the special circumstances of the locality.

14. As already stated, Enclosure I. shows that the pay of the Thandalgars in Dharampuri is on the average Rupees 10 per annum, whilst that of the Toties is Rupees 18½, so that there is no ground in this respect for fixing the salaries of the Police servants at lower rates than those of the revenue servants. One of the great objects of the revision is to put an end to the old system under which the office of Policeman is held by sharers in annual turn, though only one of the sharers is registered. The Board have no doubt that this can be effected by judicious administration *if* the pay of the office is made sufficient.

15. Altogether, the Board are of opinion that the rate of Rupees 3 a-month will be sufficient, but that this should be paid to both classes of servants. They have no objection to make to the distribution proposed by Mr. Price.

16. The word Thandalgar does not convey sufficient meaning. It will be better to call the revenue servants Vettyans as in other districts.

17. The Police servants may be called Kavilgars or Taliaries as the Collector pleases, though the Board prefer the latter name.

18. It may be possible for the number of the Police servants to be reduced with reference to the alterations in the scheme proposed by the Board. If it is not, the expenditure will be (for 50 groups) :—

81
257
646

	RS.
50 Curnams...	5,280
87 Munsifs and Monigars and Assistant Monigars ...	6,828
87 Vettyans	3,132
219 Taliaries..	7,884
	23,124

19. The assets are sufficient, amounting, inclusive of the Dharampuri share of the Government grant of Rupees 1,20,000, to Rupees 24,144. The question whether there will be a surplus, and if so, what is to be done with it, may be considered after the revision in the other taluqs of the district is completed.

20. There is no group in which the proceeds of the Village Service Cess will exceed the cost of the Village Establishment.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

J Grose

Secretary.

To the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with Board's Proceedings, dated 21st and 22nd January
1873, Nos. 82 and 85, and two original statements.
,, to the Acting Collector of Salem.
Copy to the Director of Revenue Settlement.
,, to the Superintendent of Revenue Survey.

Exd. W. H. French.

MISCELLANEOUS No. 4494 REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

31/13 4

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated 4th July — 1874.

Read the following

No. 195

From

The Ag Collector of Salem

To

The Secretary to the Board of Revenue
Madras.

SIR,

With reference to para 3 of my letter No 91 of the 10th March last, I have the honor to request that you will be so good as to have the enclosed statement of villages to be transferred from the Dharampuri to the Kistnagherry Talug substituted for that sent with the letter under reference.

Salem Collector's Office,
Camp, Madigherry, 5th June 1874.

I have &c
(Signed) J. F. Price
Ag Collector

Submitted to Government in continuation

No. 1810.
No. 407

Rev. **1874.** Dept

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 22ND MAY 1874, No. 1,204.

Despd 1 June/74.

Encl. 4

G.O. 9th March/75 No 391

Received 9th June/74.

B.P. 123-95

MAY.
No. 1,204.

Village Establishments—in Dharampuri Taluq of Salem District.—Proposals for revision of—, submitted for orders of Government.

For orders
– C.C.

G.O. 9 Jany/74 No 90-91

to the size of an ordinary village and its area being small, the Monegar of this hamlet should be [illegible]; & that he may [illegible] his [illegible] [illegible] will be [illegible] not [illegible] – It being [illegible] the necessity [illegible] arises from the small villages being [illegible] Rather I would [illegible] the [illegible] – [illegible] [illegible] – in the [illegible] [illegible] should

R.C. 21/1/75 No 4 R.C. 10 Feb/75 – no 21/1/75.
G.O. 11 Jany/75 – R 15/1/75. R.C. 18/1/75

I think then we may safely accept Mr Price's proposals leaving it open to him to propose any modifications which may suggest themselves when the scheme is being actually introduced.

There is one point which needs notice. In some cases assistant Monegars are proposed. when this is owing to

123-4/74

Continuation of Board's Proceedings 22nd May 1874 No 1204.

(True Copy & Extract)

J. Grose
Secretary

To,

The Secretary to Government
Revenue Department

with one original statement.

List of Villages to be transferred from the Dharampuri taluq to the Kistnagherry taluq.

No.	Names of Villages	Beriz
1	Kumbarahulli	712-8—..
2	Thathrahulli	1061-8—.
3	Sobanoor	512-8—.
4	Woddahulli	213-14—..
5	Giddanahulli	264-13—..

Salem Collrs Office
Camp Madigherry
5 June /74.

(Sd/.) J. F. Price
Ag. Collector.

N° 2250.

Revenue 1874 department

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD
OF REVENUE.

Rec transfers [illegible]

Dated 4th July — 1874.
Despatched 6th
Recd. 7th

SUBJECT.

S.O. No. 391 - 9th March 1875.
Submitting to Government letter from Collector of Salem forwarding a revised statement of villages to be transferred from Dharampuri to Krishnagherry Taluqs.

RC 10 Feby/75. Rd. 2/3/75.
RC 21/1/75 Rd. 9 Feby/75
C 11 Jany/75. Rd. 15 Jany/75.
RC. 18/1/75. Rd. 20/1/75

No. 124.

38/18

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY THE HON. W. ROBINSON, C.S.I.

UNDER the reorganisation proposed in these Proceedings of the Board the village system of the country must, as it seems to me, disappear in the taluq of Darampury; and if the "sample" be adopted most serious changes will occur throughout the district of Salem.

2. The plan provides for the substitution of large official ranges instead of numerous Indian villages; to each of which an establishment of local officers are to be appointed by the State, who, can scarcely fulfil the conditions of the ancient polity of the country or of the law as respects the hereditary character of village services. It is on the square as regards pay, &c., and perhaps commends itself on account of precision. But I think that a backward country will suffer by such organic changes, by the withdrawal of a proportion of its proper aids and supervisors, *viz.*, the heads of villages, &c.; and I am satisfied that the money to be raised under the Village Service Cess Act would be better applied, if used to maintain the social condition of the country (slightly modified with reference to obvious considerations), and to give far greater distribution to village institution than that proposed.

3. Indeed, I venture to think that the true intention of the law has, in some measure, been lost sight of in carrying it into effect under these varied schemes of reorganisation. That object was merely to secure to the real village institution those emoluments which it is entitled to under the common law of the country, in a different and more manageable form. Clubbing is permitted under the Act, but it was never intended to be largely resorted to for the object of raising salaries to a pre-concerted standard. No doubt practically this Act will be found to provide in most villages quite enough pay for the work actually required in the village, and that with fairer apportionment than we can devise. And I venture to think that the Act can be worked without serious detriment to the village rate-payer or village constitution as recognised by law.

4. I would return the scheme to the Board of Revenue for re-consideration.

5. On the papers before Government I would observe that the law knows of no Assistant Head of the village and Munsif. This berth cannot now be created, and wherever such a contingency forms part of the scheme, I would recommend—if it be adopted—that the grouping be revised and two townships constituted with smaller pay, &c.

6. The revision, which I recommend need not, I may observe, disturb Curnam's division, for these very generally include several villages under the old village system in every part of the country, and there are at present only 76 Curnams to the 500 villages in the Darampury Taluq. To some degree of clubbing for mere purposes of revenue—accounting there can be no objection whatever; but I would confine it almost entirely to this branch of the village establishment. As regards criminal and civil administration the village headship and civil Munsifship, and general village service (*Taliari* and *Vettyan*)—the custom of the country (affirmed by law) does not allow the same latitude.

17th June 1874.

(Signed) W. ROBINSON.

8

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue
of 22d May 1874 No. 1204

2616

10

Under the reorganization herein proposed in this Proceeding the old Village System of the Country disappears entirely as respects the Taluq of Darampury - and - if the sample be adopted for other Taluqs - throughout the District of Salem - 4517 inhabited villages (many of them are doubtless small) are to be formed into 50 Official Unions or Townships with an average area of say 20 sq. miles each - the name "Village" should be abandoned

No. 174.

abandoned in these
dispositions as it indeed
when we are for all
practical purposes
revolutionizing the
whole Conception and
destroying every condition
which applies to our
Indian Village Constitution.
Of 211 Kurnams or Heads
of Villages now managing
the Existing Villages, 161 will
be dismissed from their
probably hereditary
Employment and deprived
of such emoluments as they
have ~~enjoyed~~, while
the whole menial and
hereditary Service of the
Country — though not
largely reduced in
numbers — must be
revolutionized & changed
under the sweeping alterations
proposed. The

The plan provides
for the Substitution of large
Official Ranges to which
a set of local officers are
to be appointed by the State,
who in no way fulfil
the Conditions of the ancient
polity of the Country ~~and~~
of the Law as respects being
the hereditary ~~[illegible]~~
or hereditary Village servants
of the Village. It is
on the [illegible] as regards
pay &c. and perhaps Commends
itself on account of
precision &c. But
personally I entirely
disapprove of such
measures as a matter
of good policy or sound
administration in
this Country — and I
do so especially as respects
such parties as that
under

under discussion. I
think that a backward
Country will suffer by
such organic changes by
the withdrawal of so large
a proportion of its proper
and its supervisors in
the Heads of Villages &c, and
I am satisfied that
the money to be raised
under the Village Service
Cess Act would be
far better applied
in maintaining the
social condition of the
Country (slightly modified
with reference to obvious
considerations affecting
this & other cases) and
by far greater distribution.
Indeed I venture
to think that the true
intention of the Law
has in a great measure
been lost sight of in
carrying it into effect
under

under these varied
schemes of reorganization.
That object was merely
to secure to the real hereditary
village institution the
emoluments it is entitled
to under the Common
Law of the Country — in
a different and more
manageable form. ~~That~~
~~Law~~ was not designed
to lead to the destruction
of the institution itself
in order to provide
a certain scale of pay
for official nominees
under a radically
changed constitution.
Clubbing is permitted
under the Act, but it
was never intended the ruthless
~~[illegible]~~
& most reckless
~~[illegible]~~ resorted to
~~[illegible]~~ for the object
of an institution new to the country
of raising salaries.
wd. be formed to
Practically this Act provides
in most villages quite
Enough

Enough for the work actually required to be done in the village, with fairer apportionment than we can devise. and I venture to think that the Act can be worked without detriment to the village rate payers or village establishment as [illegible] law The direction, which our administration has taken, has, I fear, reversed these conditions. Thousands of useful hereditary village servants (E. g. Trichinopoly) have been ruthlessly dismissed and the people deprived of their services under some so called reorganization. Hundreds of honestly village officers have given place to well-paid officials of an extended Township system. and the true Indian village institution

is

is in spirit & letter disappearing rapidly under these devices.

I have earnestly raised my voice against the thing for years and cannot assent to the "model" destruction before me.

I would remand it to the Board with an instruction that the Government wish the village institution maintained & comforted under the Act and are not prepared to set up a new institution.

I demur, in passing, to an argument ad hominem which too frequently finds place in the Board's ~~[illegible]~~ Proceedings on this & cognate subjects. As respects the confidence we are invited to place in the judgment of the individual Officers who submit these subversive schemes — I hold that a country knows itself best and that its institutions best indicate its wants and the disposition of its people and I am not prepared to make over either the one or the other to clever officials, whose recommendations I venture to think, sometimes show how far they are out of part sympathy with the people and their political and social being.

On the papers before Government I would observe that the Law knows of no Principal Head of the

Village and Munsif. This tenth cannot now be created and wherever such a contingency forms part of the scheme, I would recommend — if it be adopted — that the grouping be revised and two Townships constituted with smaller groups &c.

This revision, I may observe, need not disturb the Kurnam's division for these very generally include several villages under the old village system in every part of the country — he was always practically a Government servant and there are at present only 76 Kurnams to the 500 villages in the Darampury Taluq. So some degree of clubbing for mere purposes of Revenue accounting there can be no objection whatever and I would advise it; and for this purpose would allow a special arrangement in regard to (Karnikams or) Accountants' Charges - perhaps that now before the Government as respects the tiling - Everywhere - But I would confine it almost entirely to this branch.

As regards criminal & civil administration - Headship & civil Munsif and general Village Service (Talairi & Vettyan) - the Custom of the Country (affirmed by Law) does not allow the same latitude and the good of Society, I am satisfied forbids it

altogether

As regards the practice of taking turns of duty and shares or turns of the Emolument - as amongst the hereditary races or families, who hold the Office of Kaily & Vettyan, I would distinctly lay down that there is no objection whatever to an immemorial and reasonable practice which has naturally arisen out of the condition & necessity of the case. Indeed it has very decided advantages when the Service is generally light but often fitful and uncertain - e.g. - during the harvest the whole family or race have to watch the crops of the village and more than one Talairi is required

to prevent gang robbery
for the small village
pay though distributed
really subsidizes a large
family who do all sorts
of jobs for the villagers
and for the State
throughout the year.

The Magisterial
difficulty does not
really exist except in
an Attorney's mind
and even that may
be got over by the
Head man reporting
who has taken special
charge for the year.

17/1

No 124 B

Revenue 1875 Dipt

G.O. 9th March/75 No 391

No 124 B

G.O. No 391 d/ 9th March 1875

[illegible]

(P) Council 9/3

My dear Robinson

The season for camping out in such a taluq as Darampuri is passing by rapidly – if therefore it is the intention of Govt that I should go there to revise the scheme of village estabt I shall be glad of a manuscript copy of the order together with the maps & other enclosures of Price's scheme – on receipt

of these Parties start at
once – I commence the
Chingleput settlement in
the Sydapet taluq on Monday

Yrs very sincerely

R K Puckle

March 3.

39/27 6

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Nos 1816 & 2258.

From Bd of Rev:

Dated 22d May & 4th July 1874.

FOR ORDERS.

See Separate paper

W

This "revision" of Village Service establishments which is now proceeding throughout the Presidency is a matter very intimately & seriously affecting the welfare of the people; and Sir W Robinson's Minute raises

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My d Carmichael

I fancy it is with you & if so: will do the needful

J M

3/3

a question of such vast importance — when
measures are pending in the conduct
of this nature are not consistent
with the real objects of the Act,
and violently disturbing commercial
institutions ~~[illegible]~~ to which the people are
accustomed, which have on the whole
worked well, and ~~[illegible]~~ calculated to effect
such changes as those which are
proposed in the present case, and
which have (as it would appear) already

been effected in many parts of the
Presidency, is one immediately
deeply ~~[illegible]~~ prejudicial
to public liberty & independence, &
general welfare of the population.

This subject is one to which I have
not yet had ~~the~~ opportunity of devoting
any careful or comprehensive examination
I am as yet uninformed as to the
real history and object of the Act
~~[illegible]~~ under which these measures are
taken; and before I can give an
opinion as to the course which it

to prevent gang robbery   Revenue 1?

is desirable that the Government should now ~~adopt~~ pursue, it is necessary that I should have before me some account of the origin and purpose of the Act, and of the proceedings which have been adopted ~~in pursuance~~ under it.

Hobart

14/1

FOR ORDERS.

Govt. Council   No. 391

The Govr. in C. is of opinion that the classing of villages in these proposals has been carried a great deal too far, and the Board and Director of Rev. Sett. will be requested to revise the Scheme, [illegible] to [illegible] to present to the district & submit a report upon certain [illegible] to the Collector.

9 March 1875

9/3/75

391/29

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

THE revision of village service establishments, which is now proceeding throughout the Presidency, is a matter very intimately and seriously affecting the welfare of the people; and Mr. Robinson's Minute raises a question of extreme importance—which is whether our proceedings in the conduct of this revision are not inconsistent with the real objects of the Act, and violently disturbing immemorial institutions to which the people are accustomed, which have, on the whole, worked well, and in which to effect such changes as those proposed in the present case, and which have (as it would appear) already been effected in many parts of the Presidency, is in no inconsiderable degree prejudicial to public liberty and independence, and to the general interest of the population. The subject is one to which I have not as yet had opportunity of devoting any careful or comprehensive consideration. I am as yet uninformed as to the real history and object of the Act under which these measures are taken; and before I can give an opinion as to the course which it is desirable that the Government should now pursue, it is necessary that I should have before me some account of the origin and purpose of the Act and of the proceedings which have been adopted under it.

14th January 1875.   (Signed)   HOBART.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

THE desired information respecting the origin and purpose of the Village Service Cess Act is now before me; and, on a careful consideration of the subject, I am strongly inclined to the opinion that the course hitherto pursued by this Government in the introduction of the Act is open to very serious objection.

2. In the first place, I do not think that the manner in which effect has been given to the law consists with the avowed objects of its authors or with the intention of the Legislature in passing it. In the letter from this Government to the Government of India, applying for sanction to the Act, it was explained that the object of the Act was exclusively to provide for the payment of village officers who cannot now depend upon the payment of their fees; that "the functionaries who come under its operation will be punctually instead of nominally paid, but in all other respects their position will be left unchanged;" and in the debates on the subject in the Legislative Council this strict limitation of the object of the Act was strongly urged by the promoters of the Bill as against the objectors,—as against those who (certainly not without reason) contended that the Bill proposed to interfere with the long-established self-government and therefore suit the liberties of the people. But this limitation has most certainly been disregarded in the application of the Act. The Government has not taken, as required by the intention and (it appears to me) by the letter of the Act, existing villages or groups of villages and provided for their payment by means of a cess. It has, on the contrary, to a great extent put an end to the political existence of villages and groups of villages, and centralised their government to a degree which is in the present case represented by the substitution of 50 villages for 451; and in so doing it has of course been compelled, instead of providing (as the Act requires) for the payment of the then existing village officers, most materially to reduce the number of those who are to be paid. This amounts to nothing less than a wholesale destruction of autonomous privileges and what is more to a destruction of them which is wholly unauthorised by the law. I think it is clear that, if the Act is introduced at all into any district, either it must be applied so as strictly to maintain the existing villages and groups of villages and the number and designation of their officers, or it will be applied in complete contravention not only of the spirit but (unless I am much mistaken) of the letter of the Act of 1864.

3. But, for my own part, I entertain the most serious doubt whether the Act can be worked at all consistently with a due regard to the interests of the people.

4. In the first place, even if worked in accordance with the intention of its framers, it substitutes compulsory for voluntary payments, and so strikes at the very root of prescriptive and long-familiar rights. Self-government, with taxation imposed by a power independent of the tax-payers, is self-government only in name. Whatever may be the evil of uncertain salaries and inefficient administration, loss of independence, sacrifice of freedom, deterioration of national character, are a terrible price to pay for its removal.

5. Secondly, the Act undertakes to cure the evil of inefficient administration, but only by ensuring the payment of salaries. But this, though it makes efficient administration more probable, by no means secures it. In fact, it is clear from the information before us that the chief reason why fees are not paid, and village officers go without their salaries, is that the villagers find that the payment of fees by no means ensures the performance of the services. The services will be no more surely performed because the salaries are paid by the Government; and thus the Act will most imperfectly accomplish the very object for which it was passed.

6. Thirdly, the Act amounts to a very serious addition to the taxation of a people already (in my opinion) taxed to the utmost limit consistent with a humane and prudent policy. It is clear that those who escape the payment of fees (and that of those who do so the number is very large was a postulate of the Legislation now in question) will be losers to the precise extent of the 6½ per cent. on their assessment which is imposed by the Act, and as

regards those who do not escape it, I presume that the 6¼ per cent. represents in many cases a larger contribution than that which they now pay. Nor, if the case were otherwise, would the question be in this respect decided. It is one thing to be compelled to pay taxes to the Government, and another to pay fees which are more or less voluntary, and can be withheld on the ground that the services which they are intended to remunerate are never rendered. Even supposing that the amount contributed in the two cases were the same, the degree in which it is felt as a burden by the contributor is immensely different.

7. I may add (fourthly) that the Act cannot, as it would appear, be worked under the limitation which was intended by its framers. For I am led to infer from what has passed that the maximum cess of 6¼ per cent. on the assessment imposed by the Act is not sufficient to provide for the remuneration of village officers, unless upon condition that the system of centralisation hitherto adopted is steadily continued. By that system, under which 451 villages have been grouped into 50, and by that system only, can the number of village officers (as it would seem) be so reduced as to bring their remuneration within the capacity of the fund to be derived from the 6¼ per cent. on the assessment which the Act allows. In other words it is (as I understand) impossible to give effect to the Act in the manner intended by its authors, unless the maximum rate of taxation imposed by the Act itself is exceeded.

8. For these reasons, I submit that the Government should reconsider the course which is being pursued in respect of this Act. My own impression is that the best mode of meeting the evil which it was intended to remedy would have been to give (if possible) summary legal powers for the recovery of fees dependent on the efficiency of official services. In any case, I cannot bring myself to acquiesce in the use of powers which the Government is free to exercise or not, as it pleases, in a manner which appears to me so injurious to the welfare of the country.

18th January 1875. (Signed) HOBART.

Minute

Applicn. of Village S.ce Cess Act to a Taluq
in the Salem District

The desired information respecting
the origin and purpose of the Village
Service Cess Act is now before me;
and, on a careful consideration of the
subject, I am strongly inclined to
the opinion that the course hitherto
pursued by this Govt. in the
introduction of the Act is open ~~to~~ to
very serious ~~[illegible]~~ objection.
In the first place, I do not think
that the manner in which effect
has been given to the law consists

with the avowed objects of its authors, ~~and~~ or with the intention of the Legislature in passing it. In the letter from this Govt. to the Govt. of India applying for sanction to the Act, it was explained that the object of the Act was exclusively to provide for the payment of Village officers, who now cannot depend upon the payment of their fees. - that "the functionaries, who "come under its operation will be "punctually instead of nominally

"paid: but in all other respects their position will be left unchanged". And in the debates on the subject in the Legislative Council this strict limitation of the object of the Act was strongly urged by the promoters of the Bill as against the objectors, — as against those who pertinently (not without reason) contended that the Bill proposed to interfere with the long established village self-government & therefore the liberties of the people. - But this limitation has most certainly been disregarded in the application of the Act. ~~it has~~ the Govt has not taken, as required by the intention and (~~as~~ it appears to me) by the letter of the Act, existing villages ~~and~~ groups of villages, & provided for their payment by means of a cess. It has, on the contrary, to a great extent put an end to the political existence of ~~[illegible]~~ villages & groups of villages, and centralised their government to a degree which is in the present case is represented

by the substitution of 50 villages for 457; and in so doing, it has of course been compelled, instead of providing (as the Act requires) for the payment of ~~their~~ the existing Village Officers, most materially to reduce the number of them who are to be paid. This ~~appears~~ (~~and also appears~~ ~~the~~ amounts to nothing less than a wholesale destruction of ~~the~~ autonomous privileges of ~~these~~ ~~[illegible]~~ – and what is more, to a destruction of them which is wholly unauthorized by the law. I think it is clear, that if the Act is introduced at all into any district, ~~it must~~ either it must be ~~introduced~~ applied so as strictly to maintain the existing villages & groups of villages, & the number & designations of their officers, — or it ~~must~~ will be applied in complete contravention not only of the spirit, but (unless I am much mistaken) of the letter of the Act of 1861

5 But, for my own part, I entertain the most serious doubt whether the Act can be worked at all consistently with a due regard to the interests of the people.

4 In the first place, even if worked in accordance with the intention of its framers, it substitutes compulsory for voluntary payments, & so strikes at the very root of ~~the~~ ~~self-government in~~ prescriptive and long familiar rights of the people & ~~of~~ self-government with ~~[illegible]~~ taxation

imposed by a power independent of the taxpayers is self-government only in name.

Whatever may be the evil of uncertain salaries and inefficient administration, loss of independence, sacrifice of freedom, – deterioration of national character – are a terrible price to pay for its removal.

5 Secondly, the Act undertakes to cure the evil of inefficient administration, but only by ensuring the payment of salaries. But this, though it makes

efficient administration more probable, by no means secures it. In fact, it is clear from the information before us that the chief reason why fees are not paid and village officers go without their salaries is that the ~~f~~ villagers find that the payment of fees by no means ensures the performance of the services. The services will be no more surely performed because the salaries are paid by

3

the fort.; and thus the Act will
most imperfectly ~~only~~ accomplish
the very object for which it was passed.

6 Thirdly, – the Act amounts to a
very serious addition to the taxation
of a people already (in my opinion)
taxed to the utmost limit of
consistent with a humanity and
prudent policy. The Hon'ble Mr Sim
has remarked, in a Minute upon
a similar proposal, that the
villagers pay now, on account

6

391/38

of village service, more than they
will pay under the Act. – But I am
unable to see how this proposition
is to be reconciled with the fact
upon which the Act proceeds – that
the Villagers to a very great extent
decline to pay the fees to which
they are now liable. – It is clear
that those who escape the fees
(and that of those who do so
the number is very large was
a postulate of the legislation now

in question) will be losers to the precise extent of the 6 % per ct in their assessment which is imposed by the Act. Nor if the case were otherwise, would the question be in this respect decided. It is one thing to be compelled to pay taxes to the Govt; and another to pay fees which are more or less voluntary, and can be withheld on the ground that the

services which they are intended to remunerate are never rendered. Even supposing that the amount contributed in the two cases were the same, the degree in which it is felt as a burden by the contributor is immensely different.

I may add (parenthetically) that the Act cannot, as it would appear, be worked under the limitation which was intended by its framers. For I am led to infer from what

As the
village serv

has passed that the maximum cess of 6 p. cent on the assessment, imposed by the Act, is not sufficient to provide for the remuneration of village officers, unless upon condition that the system of centralisation hitherto adopted is steadily continued. By that system, under which 457 villages have been formed into fifty, and by that system only, can the number of village officers (as it would seem) be so reduced as to bring their remuneration within the capacity of the fund derived from the 6 p. cent on the assessment which the Act allows. In other words it is (as I understand) impossible to give effect to the Act in the manner intended by its authors unless the maximum rate of taxation imposed by the Act itself is exceeded.

For these reasons, I submit that the

Govt. should reconsider the course which is being pursued in respect of this Act. My own impression is that the best mode of meeting the evil which it was intended to remedy would have been to fix (if possible) summary legal powers for the recovery of fees, dependent on the efficiency of official service.

In any case, I cannot bring myself to acquiesce in the use of powers which the Govt. is free to exercise or not as it pleases, in a manner which appears to me so injurious to the welfare of the country.

Hobart
Jan 18/75

G.O. No. 391 Dt 9 March 1875.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

As the general principles and expediency of the scheme for the reorganisation of our village service initiated by the Government of 1864 are now called in question, I will make a few remarks explanatory of it.

2. The notorious and increasing inefficiency of our village establishments had engaged the serious attention of Government long before their reorganisation on a sound basis, suited to the requirements of the times, became an absolute and immediate necessity, owing to the introduction of our present system of Police. This measure entailed a large reduction of our revenual and magisterial establishments, the doubling up of taluqs, and other arrangements which rendered it essential that the village-officers should be competent to discharge properly the various duties which, by law and the usage of the country, devolve on them, and which they are best fitted to perform. The village is the unit of our administrative system, and without an efficient village establishment, thoroughly successful administration is almost an impossibility.

3. The customary establishment of a normal village comprises the officers marginally noted, but it must not be supposed that every village had this establishment, some had none at all, others had but some of them. Of this normal establishment, the first six performed public duties; the others discharged services in which the villagers alone were interested. The Government scheme concerned the former only.

Village Head.
Curnam.
Vetty.
Taliary.
Shroff.
Neergunty.
Astrologer.
Potter.
Chuckler.
Barber.
Dhoby.
Purohit.

4. The first or village head is the local representative of the Government, the local Judge, Magistrate, and Collector. In these capacities, though his jurisdiction and powers are limited, he disposes of a deal of petty work to the relief of higher functionaries and the great advantage of the villagers who are saved the inconvenience, &c., of resorting to distant authorities.

NOTE.—In 1872-73 the village heads disposed of 24,194 civil and 44,960 criminal cases. But of the 43,230 heads, only 29,189 exercised their powers.

5. The second, the Village Curnum (whose charge sometimes extended over several villages) is the local Accountant and the general assistant of the village head.

6. The third, the Taliary, is the village Constable, and, when efficient, the most valuable co-adjutor of the regular Police; he knows all the residents and watches all strangers, and crime cannot go on in a rural village unknown to him.

7. The Vetty is the executive subordinate on the revenue side.

8. The Shroff tests the coin paid in, and the Neergunty regulates the distribution of water for irrigation.

9. It will be seen from this brief outline that the duties of these officers are primarily and chiefly public, and those of the first three are of great importance.

10. The Government limited itself to the improvement of these offices, and the principle it adopted was simply that of employing no more officers than the public service really required and remunerating these as liberally as its finances permitted and the character of their duties warranted.

11. The remuneration of village offices consisted of Inams or assignments of land held wholly or partially free of assessment and of fees of varied amount and miscellaneous character, contributed in part by the State and villagers jointly, and in part by the villagers alone. The landed Inams were found to be frittered away among so many sharers that the actual office holders often got little or nothing; the fees were often withheld altogether and very generally realised with difficulty and uncertainty. After much consideration it was determined to enfranchise the Inams on favorable terms and substitute a cess for the fees, and to apply the united proceeds to the payment of the village-officers.

12. The enfranchisement of the Inams is not now called in question, so I need not touch on that point.

13. The substitution of a cess for the fees was adopted as really the only method of providing for their due and proper realisation. The voluminous reports of Mr. Pelly on the revision

of village establishments show how varied, petty, and miscellaneous they are. Their commutation into money was practically impossible. As Mr. Robinson truly remarked: "Even if the fees could be ascertained, their commutation into money-payments would present serious difficulties. We could not, in fact, in this country commute the mixed and personal fees, such as eggs, chickens, sheep, sheep's heads and skins, fees on carts and goods, &c. And, if we could, we should again be perpetuating existing inequalities and irregularities." The grain fees, of course, were commutable, but even these varied very greatly. Merely to legislate for their realisation would have proved insufficient; for however summary the process of recovery might be, the time of the village-officers would be taken up in enforcing their dues to the prejudice of their work. The only alternative was that advocated by Mr. Robinson in the same letter, *viz.*, "to abolish the fees altogether, and in lieu of them establish a light and uniform local or village Police cess rated on the land assessment. The advantages of this system," he urged, "are self-evident; all would contribute rateably to support what all benefit by; the people would be saved all vexatious interference; the cess would increase with the prosperity of the country; the Collector would realise it easily with the land-revenue; the Police could be altogether relieved from collecting their own emoluments; and Government, *acting in the interests of the community*, would be able to count on a certain resource, and to adjust the local establishments and expenditure according to the varying requirements of each locality." Mr. Robinson's proposal was limited to the Police of which he was then Inspector-General, but his words fully and accurately describe the reasons which actuated the Government, and which are further expressed in the order of 17th April1861, No. 863, Revenue Department. The question of the rate of cess underwent much discussion and consideration. The Inspector-General of Police recommended 10 per cent. as a fair average rate for the whole Presidency, but the Government concurred with the Board of Revenue in considering 6¼ per cent. sufficient.

From Inspector-General of Police to the Board of Revenue, 26th May 1860, page 9.

Inspector-General to Revenue Board, 11th October 1861.

Revenue Board to Government, 1st February 1862.
G. O , 1st June 1863, No. 935, Revenue Department.

14. The payment of fees was by no means voluntary in olden times, though the payer latterly took advantage of the law to withhold and evade it. I cannot agree with His Lordship that our people are over-taxed, and, as evidence, I would point to our steadily-increasing revenue under heads (Stamps, Excise, Salt, Post-office, &c.,) which all betoken improved circumstances.

15. The necessity of restricting the number of officials employed to that actually required cannot, I think, be questioned. Financial considerations render it impossible, nor would it be just to saddle the State and the people in all time to come with the hosts of so-called village servants who, as time has rolled on, have quartered themselves on the Village Fund. Mr. Robinson, in his letter already referred to, says: "In a large number of districts there is a village official to every 50 or 100 of the inhabitants—one with a recognised title and position, and making some demand on the public purse or on his fellow-subjects or on both for some petty official duty he should perform. In Tinnevelly there are 10,000 village watchers alone, loafing on the people in a proportion of 1 to 130 of the inhabitants. No country," he truly remarks, "can prosper under such a load of officials, even although they are but parish potentates." The grouping of villages is but one way of arriving at the same result. It is quite a mistake to suppose that even in olden times every one of the villages entered in our returns had a complete establishment. Many had none at all; many had only some of the usual officers; many so-called villages have no house or resident inhabitants. Often the mere hamlets and suburbs of large and real "villages" have been allowed to attain a separate existence. As Mr. Robinson has declared "it is clearly inexpedient to fix or perpetuate on each such petty community the full-blown village establishments that now exist." But the grouping is a mere detail; the law does not absolutely prescribe, and the Government need not carry it out at all; certainly, no further than they consider right and necessary.

11th October 1861.

16. These were the considerations which led the Government to adopt the policy now impugned; and Act IV. of 1864 (Madras) was passed to enable a cess to be levied in lieu of Village Service Fees. Section 2 of the Act limits the application of the proceeds to "the village or group of villages or township in which such cess is imposed," and thus virtually confers on Government the power of forming groups where necessary. The rate of cess is to be determined by the Government from time to time, but is not to exceed 6¼ per cent. on the assessment, and is realisable in the same manner as arrears of revenue. The Act applies only to the "public" officers whom I have mentioned; the true *village* servants and artisans being beyond its scope.

17. A measure of this character naturally excited much discussion.

18. The chief cause of disquietude was its supposed subversion of the ancient village system of the country. That this system was good in its day need not here be disputed or argued; possibly, if we could see it as it was, we might find it not more perfect than other institutions of human creation, but no doubt it suited the times in which it flourished. Those were times of anarchy, misrule, and oppression; the villagers were obliged to unite for their own protection to resist the rapacity of tyrannical rulers or the depredations of marauding bands, or the exactions of powerful officials—united they might save themselves; disunited they were lost. This strong pressure from without kept these village associations together, and gave them strength and vitality. So long as money was forthcoming and other demands were met, the rulers of those days cared not what was done or left undone in a village. There was no administration on the part of the Government, and the villagers had to make their own arrangements for the conduct of their own affairs, the adjudication of disputes, and the protection of life and property. But times have changed; law and order have taken the place of misrule and oppression. The rights of the poor are as sacred as those of the rich and influential; education and prosperity have engendered independence, and there is no longer that community of feeling and interests—that mutual dependence that necessity for union which were the life and soul of the ancient village system. It is to these causes that the system owes its decadence; it has answered its purpose, and lived its day. Our people have out-grown it. The progress of society has removed its *raison d'être*, and we can no more revive it than we can revive the older patriarchal system as good in *its* day as obsolete *now*.

19. But even if we could revive it its revival must, in reality, be accompanied by improvements of the very nature of those to which its destruction is attributed; certainly by improvements which will altogether change its character. Take, for example, the case of village watchers. My Honorable Colleague describes their relation to their employers thus: "The responsible establishment, if duly paid by the people, made good all losses incurred through their neglect. On the other hand, a recusant payer was readily brought to his senses by the loss of his bullocks. These the village-watchers, by acknowledged right, removed, and they could not be traced without the agency of theinjured watcher. When he was righted, the bullocks were restored; if not, they were sold at a distant market." This responsibility for losses was abrogated in 1812, and "the ordinary operation of criminal justice is gradually, but surely, depriving the watcher of his remedy by retaliation on the property of the community." Further, we are told, what undoubtedly is still true, that "in the district of Tinnevelly the people need protection from the army of 10,000 Maraver watchers, who now assess their fellow-subjects to any rates they please to dictate." Now I ask how are we to deal with this matter and adjust the relations of the watcher and his employer? Are we to revive the watcher's responsibility for losses and allow him to redress his own wrongs by "removing" property? Are we to allow him to fix his own remuneration, as in Tinnevelly, and realise it in this simple, though somewhat summary, fashion? Are we to legalise this system of black-mail? The only remedy proposed is to organise a Punchayet in each village, which, with the concurrence of the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, is to fix the number of watchers and their pay—to raise the latter by a rate on all property leviable by very summary process, to nominate the watchers, and be responsible for the character and conduct of those whom they select. I am not very sure that this responsibility will be willingly accepted or prove more than nominal, and the whole procedure seems to me very complicated for the appointment and management of two or three village Constables; but waiving all such considerations, what, I ask, becomes of the essential principle of the village system? Is not this rather Government by an oligarchy than by the community? Again, "the interference of Government officers should then be confined to inspection and general supervision. They must satisfy them-

The system was this: the village-watcher was responsible, unless he could trace the property over the bounds of his village; if he did so, the watcher of that village incurred the responsibility, and so on; if the person robbed did not get his own property back, he got somebody else's stolen for the purpose, and a system of robbery thus pervaded the district. It has insurance by mutual robbery.

selves that the village Police is properly organised and paid, and that it is working effectively in due co-operation and correspondence with the general Police." Here again, I ask, what becomes of the leading principle of the village system—self-government? What of the villagers' privilege of appointing their own officers—their powers over the purse? As regards the village establishments generally, my Honorable Colleague says: "The action of Government should be confined to comforting and strengthening them, by indicating to the people their responsibilities in the matter, and giving to them such powers as may enable them, *under the supervision and with the aid of Government*, to give them fresh life and to place and maintain their own establishments on an effective footing in their own way; by suggesting means and improvements, and *compelling them to do what the general good requires* and immemorial custom sanctions." I submit that, with the exception of the passages which I have taken the liberty of underlining, there is nothing sufficiently definite and practical in this method of dealing with the subject, and that the effect of those passages—of the supervision, the control, and the compulsion they contemplate—will be to create something very different from the village institutions so lauded and lamented.

20. I believe it to be now impossible to revive these old and, in their day, most valuable village brotherhoods; they would be an anachronism. But municipal self-government, on principles suited to the requirements of the day and the circumstances of the people, may gradually be introduced in their stead with much benefit to the people and the Government. Sanitation, elementary education, and local improvements of all kinds, might be advantageously entrusted to local bodies, and an enactment, simpler and less pretentious than our municipal law, might be framed to enable them to undertake such functions and raise the requisite funds. In this direction much good might, I think, be done; but such a project will take many years to carry out, and I earnestly hope that the reorganisation of the portion of the village establishments, which may be called public as distinguished from the municipal or communal, may not be postponed for it.

21. Under no circumstance would I subordinate the village-head, the Curnam or the Taliary, to a village municipality. These officers have very important functions to perform, and must occupy an independent position. As remarked by the Government in 1863: "It is objectionable in principle that officers having public duties—often of an invidious character—to perform should be dependent for their remuneration on the very persons against whom they may have to act."

22. I must apologise for the length to which these remarks have run; but I am now the only person who took part in the great measure which it is now proposed to place in abeyance, without any definite and practical substitute. The new system has been introduced into Kurnool, Trichinopoly, and Tanjore, with excellent results; it is, in my judgment, the only practical method of remedying the admitted inefficiency of our village establishments, and certainly no one has yet brought forward any other plan.

23. I will now turn to the proposed revision of the village establishment of the Darampoory Taluq of the Salem District, which has given rise to this discussion. The scheme, except as regards the Curnams, is condemned as revolutionising the whole conception and destroying every condition which applies to an Indian village constitution. Now, I submit, that in the Salem District this constitution has had no real existence in our day! So far back as the period between 1801 and 1803, or seventy years ago, Colonel Read (the originator of the ryotwary system and one of our ablest officers) resumed the merahs or fees and Inams, and substituted money-payments out of the revenue which have been continued ever since. The Neerguntees and Shroffs (of whom there are very few) are alone remunerated by fees. The villages were simultaneously grouped, and hence it is that we find that 542 villages form only 87 Curnikam divisions, and have only 257 Karedars or Monegar Moonsifs, 67 Fasidalgars or Vetties, and 241 Toties or Taliaries, who, however, do revenue as well as Police work. The whole of these servants have ever since been regarded as Government servants, even hereditary succession is not recognised as a right; they are appointed, punished, and paid in exactly the same way as the other establishments, and Regulation VI. of 1831 has no operation in the district. There is thus no ancient or even modern village polity to revolutionise and overturn. We are, in fact, merely reducing a regular Government establishment to dimensions which will suffice for the transaction of business, and which we can pay properly and maintain in efficiency.

24. I concur with my Honorable Colleague that the grouping has been carried rather too far. But I submit it is scarcely fair to describe it as the conversion of 451 villages into fifty unions. The taluq, a wild hill-tract, comprises 542 villages, of which ninety-one have neither house nor resident inhabitants, the owners and cultivators of the lands living in adjacent villages. Upwards of a hundred other villages have not thirty houses or 150 inhabitants, and the position and distance of a great number shows that they are merely the hamlets or suburbs of the adjacent villages. Thus besides the ninety-one houseless villages, four consist of one house each, four others have only two houses. Other petty villages again are within two or three hundred yards of what really is a village, and evidently the parent village. Moreover, the whole 542 so-called villages have only 257 Karedars among them, so that this and not 451 is the number of recognised villages, and the number of Munsifs is not fifty but eighty-seven. Further, the 257 Karedars receive among them Rs. 3,077, or an average of 12 Rs. per annum each, while the eighty-seven Munsifs, who take their place, will receive Rs. 6,540, or Rs. 76 per annum each—a rate of pay for which we may hope to secure efficient men. There are now only sixty-seven Vetties receiving among them Rs. 678; there will be eighty-seven receiving Rs. 3,132; the present number of Taliaries is 241 receiving Rs. 4,450; the future number will be 219 receiving Rs. 6,570. The result is thus to substitute a small but sufficient number of well-paid for a large number of insufficiently-paid servants. The grouping shows evident marks of care. The most startling instance of clubbing is that noticed by the Board, *viz.*, No. 17. Here no less than twenty-five villages are united into one, but twelve of them are uninhabited; one has two houses with fifteen inhabitants; eight have not 100 inhabitants; the largest has ninty-three houses with 347 inhabitants. This group has now two Curnams, two Munsifs, two Vetties, and two Taliaries; it will have only one Curnam, the number of Munsifs and Vitties remains unaltered; that of Taliaries is increased to five, while the pay of the whole is raised from Rs. 81 to Rs. 462. At the same time, I think a few more Munsifs are required. For instance, Group 6 includes two villages, with population of 504 and 622, each a mile distant from the chief village; and the Acting Collector remarks in the margin that there is a "very bad criminal population in the circle and adjacent Muttahs." These villages should, I think, each have a Munsif and Taliary. There are some other cases in which the same course should be adopted, and I would desire the Board's attention to this. In the way of assets the Collector has not taken credit for interest on the accumulated proceeds of the cess—now about three lakhs I should suppose.

25. As regards assistants to Munsifs, the rule is that where a village with its hamlets is too large for a single Munsif, his pay should be so fixed that he may employ an assistant on his own responsibility; but when the necessity for assistance arises from a number of villages being clubbed together, then the circle should be divided into two groups. I would adopt this course in Salem. The same rule applies to Curnams. I cannot concur with my Honorable Colleague as to official recognition of the old native custom of allowing Taliaries to do duty by turns. It is fatal to efficiency and responsibility, deprives the service of the experience gained by continuous duty, and keeps a number of men from steadily settling down to some pursuit. We shall have difficulty no doubt in stopping it, and it may be some time ere we succeed; but the recognition of the practice will not, I trust, be sanctioned. We see the evils in Tinnevelly with its 10,000 robber-police, and we have experienced them in North Arcot and the Ceded Districts where the Kuttubadies were the regular dacoits of the country.

5th February 1875. (Signed) J. D. SIM.

P.S.—With reference to paragraph 6 of His Lordship's Minute, I would explain that, under Section 52, Act II. of 1864, "fees or other dues payable by any person to or on behalf of village servants employed in Revenue or Police duties" are recoverable as arrears of revenue, but the remedy is tedious and cumbersome. I ought to have said that the ryots are bound to pay and can be made to pay their fees, though by an inconvenient procedure, not that they actually did pay them. Their amount certainly exceeds 6½ per cent. generally.

(Signen) J. D. S.

Minute

As the general principles an
expediency of the scheme for the re-organization of our Village Service initiated by the Govt. of 1864 are now called in question I will make a few remarks explanatory of it.

The notorious and increasing inefficiency of our Village establishmen
had engaged the serious attention of Govt. long before their reorganization on a sound basis suited to the requirements of the times became an absolute and immediate neceſsity owing to the introduction of our present system of Police. This measure entailed a large reduction of our revenual and Magisterial establishments - the doubling up of Talugs and other arrangements which rendered it eſsential that the Village Officers should be competent to discharge properly the various duties which by law and the usage of the

country devolve on them and which they are best fitted to perform. The village is the unit of our administrative system and without an efficient village establishment, thoroughly successful administration is almost an impossibility.

The customary establishment of a Normal village comprises the Officers marginally noted, but it must not be supposed that every Village had this establishment. some had none at all. others had but some of them. Of this Normal establishment the first 6 ~~others~~ performed public duties. the others discharged services in which the villagers alone were interested. The Govt. scheme concerned the former only.

Village Head
Curnum
Vetty
Taliary
Shroff
Neerguntty
Astrologer.
Potter
Chuckler
Barber
Dhoby
Purohit

The first or Village Head is the local representative of the Govt., the local Judge, Magistrate and Collector. In these capacities, though his jurisdiction and powers are limited he disposes of a deal of

Note. In 1872/3 the Village Heads disposed of 24,194 civil and 44,060 Criminal cases. But of these 43230 Heads only 29,189 exercised them

of petty work, to the relief of higher functionaries and the great advantages of the villagers who are saved the inconvenience &c. of resorting to [illegible] distant authorities.

The second, the Village Curnum (whose charge sometimes extended over several villages) is the local Accountant and the general Assistant of the Village Head.

The third, the Taliary, is the Village Constable and, when efficient, the most valuable coadjutor of the regular Police. he knows all the residents and watches all strangers. and crime cannot go on in a rural Village, unknown to him.

The Vetty is the executive subordinate on the Revenue side.

The shroff, tests the coin paid in, and the Neerguntty regulates the distribution of water for irrigation.

It will be seen from this brief outline that the duties of these

Officers are primarily and chiefly public - and those of the first three are of great importance -

The Govt. limited itself to the improvement of these Offices - and the principle it adopted was simply that of employing no more Officers than the public service really required and remunerating these as liberally as its finances permitted and the character of their duties warranted -

The remuneration of Village Offices consisted of Inams or assignments of land held wholly or partially free of assessment - and fees of varied amount and miscellaneous character - contributed in part by the State and villagers jointly - and in part by the villagers alone - The landed Inams were found to be frittered away among so many sharers that the actual Office holders

Often

often got little or nothing - the fees were often with-held altogether and very generally realized with difficulty and uncertainty - After much consideration it was determined to enfranchise the Inams on favorable terms and substitute a cess for the fees - and to apply the united proceeds to the payment of the Village Officers - The enfranchisement of the Inams is not now called in question so I need not touch on that point - The substitution of a cess for the fees was adopted as really the only method of providing for their due and proper realization - The voluminous reports of Mr. Pelly on the revision of Village Establishments shew how varied, petty and miscellaneous they are - Their commutation into money was practically impossible - As Mr. Robinson truly remarked "Even if the fees could

From Inspector Genl. of Police to the Bd. of Rev: 26th May 1860 page 9.

be ascertained their commutation into money payments would present serious difficulties - We could not, in fact, in this country commute the mixed and personal fees - such as eggs - chickens - sheep - sheepsheads and skins - fees on Carts and goods &c &c - And, if we could, we should again be perpetuating existing inequalities and irregularities". The grain fees of course were commutable but even these varied very greatly - Merely to legislate for their realization would have proved insufficient - for however summary the process of recovery might be, the time of the village Officers would be taken up in enforcing their dues to the prejudice of their work - The only alternative was, that advocated by Mr Robinson in the same letter

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viz "to abolish the fees altogether and in lieu of them establish a light and uniform local or village Police cess rated on the land assessment" The advantages of this system" he urged "are self evident - all would contribute rateably to support what all benefit by - the people would be saved all vexatious interference - the cess would increase with the prosperity of the country - the Collector would realize it easily with the Land Revenue - the Police could be altogether relieved from collecting their own emoluments and Govt, *acting in the interests of the Community*, would be able to count on a certain resource and to adjust the local establishments and expenditure according to the varying requirements of each locality". Mr

Robinson's proposal was limited
to the Police of which he was then
Inspector General but his words
fully and accurately describe the
the reason which actuated the
Govt. and which are further ex-
preſsed in the order of 17th April
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Inspector Genl. to Rev. Bd. 11th October 1861.

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of the Revenue which has been continued ever since – The Neergantees and Shroffs (of whom there are very few) are alone remunerated by fees – The villages were simultaneously grouped and hence it is that we find that 542 villages form only 87 Curnikam divisions and have only 257 Karedars or Monegar Moonsiffs – 67 Tasidalyars or Vetties and 241 Toties or Taliaries, who, however, do revenue as well as police work. – The whole of these servants have ever since been regarded as Govt servants – even hereditary succession is not recognized as a right – they are appointed punished and paid in exactly the same way as the other establishments, and Reg^n^ VI of 1831 has no operation in the District. There is thus no ancient or even modern village polity to revolutionize and overturn. We are in fact merely reducing a regular Government establishment to dimensions which will suffice for the transaction of business ~~without detriment to the public,~~ and which we can pay properly and maintain in efficiency.

I concur with my Hon^ble^ Colleague that the grouping has been carried rather too far – But I

I submit it is scarcely fair to describe it as the conversion of 451 villages into 50 Unions. The Talook, a wild Hill tract, comprises 542 villages of which 91 have neither house nor resident inhabitants, the owners and cultivators of the lands living in adjacent villages. Upwards of a hundred other villages have not 30 houses or 150 inhabitants, and the position and distance of a great number shows that they are merely the hamlets or suburbs of the adjacent villages. Thus besides the 91 houseless villages, four consist of one house each – four others have only two houses. Other, petty villages, again are within 2 or 3 hundred yards of what really is a village, and evidently the parent village. Moreover the whole 542 so called villages have only 257 Karedars among them, so that this, and not 451 is the number of recognized villages, and the number of Moonsiffs is not 50 but 87.

Further the 257 Karedars receive among them Rs. 3077 or an average of 12 Rs. per annum each, while the 87 Moonsiffs who take their place will receive Rs. 6540 or Rs. 76 per annum each, a rate of pay for which we may hope to secure efficant men. There are now only 67 Vetties re=ceiving among them Rs. 678 – there will be 87 receiving Rs. 3132, the present number of Taliaries is 241 receiving Rs. 4450 – the future number will be 219 receiving Rs. 6570. The result is thus to substitute a small but sufficient number of well paid for a large number of insufficiently paid servants – The grouping shows evident marks of care, the most startling instance of clubbing is that noticed by the Board, viz. No. 17. Here no less than 25 villages are united into one, but 12 of them are uninhabited – one has

has 2 houses with 15 inhabitants – 8 ha
not 100 inhabitants – the largest ha
93 houses with 347 inhabitants. Thi
group has now 2 Kurnums, 2 Moons
2 Vetties, and 2 Taliaries, it will ha
only 1 Kurnum, the number of Moons
and Vetties remains unaltered – the
of Taliaries is increased to 5, while
the pay of the whole is raised from
Rs. 81 to Rs. 462. At the same tim
I think a few more Moonsiffs are
required. For instance group 6 inclu
2 villages, with population of 504 & 62
each a mile distant from the chief
village, and the Ag: Collector remarks
in the margin that there is a "very ba
criminal population in the Circle and
adjacent Mootahs". These villages
should I think each have a Moonsiff
and Taliary. There are some other
cases in which the same course

should be adopted and I would desire the Board's attention to this. In the way of assets the Collector has not taken credit for interest on the accumulated proceeds of the cess – now about 3 lacs I should suppose.

As regards assistants to Moonsiffs the rule is that where a village with its hamlets is too large for a single Moonsiff his pay should be so fixed that he may employ an assistant on his own responsibility, but when the necessity for assistance arises from a number of villages being clubbed together, then the Circle should be divided into 2 groups. I would adopt this course in Salem. The same rule applies to Curnams.

I

I cannot concur with my Hon'ble Colleague as to official recognition of the old native custom of allowing Taliaries to do duty by turns. It is fatal to efficiency and responsibility, deprives the Service of the experience gained by continuous duty, and keeps a number of men from steadily settling down to some pursuit. We shall have difficulty no doubt in stopping it, and it may be some time ere we succeed; but the recognition of the practice will not, I trust, be sanctioned. We see the evils in Tinnevelly with its 10,000 robber-police and we have experienced them in North Arcot and the Ceded Districts where the Kuttobadies were the regular dacoits of the country.

J. D. Sim
5.2.75

With reference to para 6 of His Lordship's

Minute. I would explain
that under S. 52 Act II of
1864 "fees or other dues payable
by any person to or on behalf
of village servants employed
in Revd. or Police duties" are
recoverable as arrears of
revenue — but the remedy is
too tedious & cannot be used. ~~as~~
~~but~~ I ought to have said that
the ryots are bound to pay &
can be made to pay their fees though by an
inconvenient procedure — but
that they actually did pay
them — Their amount certainly
exceeds 6 p.c. generally

LOS

Minute by the
Hon'ble Mr. Sim

Reorganization of the
Village Service

GO 9th March /75 No. 391

No. 124 E.-

No. 124 E

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY THE HON. W. ROBINSON, C.S.I.

I THINK that in this "sample" proposal—as in those alluded to by the Board as Mr. Longley's proposals for the Trichengode and Namkul Taluqs—the clubbing up of villages has been carried a great deal too far, inasmuch as we find that it is proposed to throw 451 inhabited villages—some no doubt small hamlets which may be very properly grouped with adjacent larger villages—into 50 village unions, with an average area of about 20 square miles and 3,816 inhabitants (total population 190,626) for each union. Apparently this is proposed, because no less sweeping application of the grouping system would provide the amount required for the pay of the full establishment* of servants which it is proposed to appoint for each union at the rates of pay which it is thought necessary to assign to each village official. Under the new arrangement about one-third† of the existing village officials would be thrown out of employment, chiefly in the higher grades.

2. It appears that the assets recoverable under the Act, together with the existing Government assignment on the revenue, will suffice (the small balance needs no remark) for the proposed establishment. And the future emolument would considerably exceed the amount now officially recognised as being enjoyed by the existing village servants.

* Accountants or Kurnams. Heads of the Villages. Watchmen or Taliaries, and. Revenue Runners or *Vetty*.

† Establishment.	Existing.	Proposed.	Decrease.
Kurnam	81	50	31
Monegar	257	87	170
Menial Servants	308	306	2
	646	443	203

3. I cannot approve of this proposal. I do not share the apparent views of the Board as stated in paragraph 5 of their Proceedings in respect to clubbing villages in a poor inaccessible hilly taluq like Dharampuri. Such backward conditions seem to me to dictate (within reasonable bounds) the continuance of an administrative policy which now tends to foster development and to bring such outlying parts under State ken by more diffused village establishment; and I think that long existing conditions afford the sound basis of revision in this direction.

4. The number of *Karekars* or headmen now in existence indicates that considerable—if not sufficient—clubbing up of villages already exists. There are at present 257 heads of villages or *Karekars* to 451 inhabited villages (I omit 91 uninhabited villages), and I submit that this number is a far fairer proportion of village headmen than that proposed (50 with about 30 Assistants—a status unknown to the law).

5. Some redistribution and reduction of numbers may, no doubt, be called for by the altered circumstances of the country and financial considerations; but this general condition should, I think, be adhered to in the main as the basis for the revision of the village establishments throughout this taluq. Probably the number of villages might be reduced by the operation of clubbing up to, say, 200 or 225 villages without much popular inconvenience, and in a manner which will still sufficiently provide for the requirements and development of the country under improved village administration.

6. As regards the lower grades of the service, existing conditions again no doubt fairly represent the wants of the country, although improvement and some numerical increase may be required. On the whole, the existing (308) establishment of *Vettyans* and *Taliaries*—306 are proposed—need not be far departed from, in order to give one menial village servant at least to each of the lesser village groups, and perhaps two or more to a few large villages.

7. Nor do I think that we need be too particular about the employment of such menial servants under the headman of the village in such a manner as the exigencies of the service require. The village headman will still perform the Magisterial, Police, and Revenue duties of the village without distinction; and, by the immemorial custom of the country, he is aided

more or less indiscriminately by the village runners under whatever designation. They may do so still, for the law has not altered this custom. Nor do I see that we need force any absolute separation of duty amongst the lower grades of servants. The opposite policy, indeed, appears to me to have several practical advantages to counterbalance the official precision which we would endeavour to prescribe. The practice of the country might, therefore, be allowed to continue in small villages where all the duty required of such persons would not occupy more than one man's time. Where more than one menial village servant is appointed the duty of the Police and Revenue may be severally assigned with a view to greater efficiency.

N.B.—Another custom to which I would not object is the practice of taking tours of duty and shares or tours of the emolument—as amongst the hereditary races or families of Kavilgar and Vettiyan in some districts. It is an immemorial and reasonable practice which has naturally arisen out of the conditions of society and of the country, and has some very decided advantages when the service is generally light, but often fitful and uncertain. For example, during the harvest time the whole family or race, amongst whom the Taliari emoluments and claims are distributed, watch the crops of the village in many districts, and more than one Taliari is required to prevent gang robbery. Thus the small village pay is distributed, so as really to subsidise a large family, several of whose members do all sorts of jobs for the villagers and for the State throughout the year for the pay of one.

8. Thus I propose that the future village establishment of each village shall consist of a headman as village Magistrate and Collector, with one or two village watchers or runners. And I believe that such an establishment gives an ample local resident village service for the bulk of the smaller villages or small village groups in a backward taluq like Dharampuri with its sparse and scattered population.

9. As regards the pay of the lowest grade of servants *(Vettyans* and *Taliaries)* the assets (Rs. 11,016) estimated and assigned to this class by the Board in paragraph 18 of their Proceedings will probably nearly suffice to provide the full remuneration deemed advisable: and if not the deficit will be thoroughly intelligible to the recipients. It will be a rateable deduction in proportion to the deficit of village cess under the law.

10. Similarly Rs. 6,828 assigned in the same Proceedings to 87 Munsiffs (at an average of about Rs. 6½ a-month each) would much improve the existing emoluments of, say, 200 to 225 headmen as above suggested. Any deficiency will again be intelligible, and will gradually disappear as the revenue improves under their local management.

11. I must here record my dissent from the notion (which I think erroneously underlies all the proposals which have been made for reorganising village establishment with large resort to the clubbing-up system) that each village must have a full minimum establishment, and that each village servant must have a full scale of pre-arranged pay. This theory is wholly at variance with existing and immemorial conditions of the country and its village services, and it is equally unrecognised either by the letter or spirit of the law. The legislature has provided a sufficient property—rate for the use of the necessary establishment of each village in lieu of precarious and objectionable exactions, and it leaves the Government to distribute this rate amongst the existing or improved services of the villages; but it does not demand for each a fixed scale of pay. Even where the aggregate rate falls short of the scale, which it might be desirable to assign to each servant, it still provides the means of giving a fair rateable remuneration—which will improve with the advance of material prosperity—to each village official. As a general rule, I believe that a cess levied in each village, supplemented from the Government assignment on the revenue or proceeds of enfranchised Inams, will be found sufficient remuneration for all the work which the village community absolutely requires. Small villages do not impose large amount of labour on their establishments or occupy the whole time of their services.

12. As regards Kurnams the existing state of this taluq is quite in accordance with the condition of this part of the village service throughout the country. An Accountant or Kurnam is not practically a necessary part of the *resident* village service. Nor is one required—and in the great majority of districts is not present—in each village. The *Kurneek* or Accountant's charges are everywhere much clubbed up, and in Bellary (the typical district of village establishments) as many as 40 villages are included in one *Kurneek* or Accountants' charge. There is nothing in the law which abrogates the custom of the country in this respect, and clubbing may be largely resorted to in reorganising this branch of the local service.

13. In the taluq under consideration, 552 villages (including 91 uninhabited villages where cultivation is nevertheless pursued) are distributed into 81 *Kurneek* or Accountant's

harges—no doubt the existing *Kurneek* distribution has guided, in some measure, the proposals before us. The 50 *Kurneek* or Accountant's ranges now proposed will probably amply suffice for all the needs of the revenue administration and other wants of an illiterate people. The proposals may perhaps be accepted—with such modification as may be deemed desirable on reconsideration—so far as this part of the local service is concerned. The rates of pay proposed are ample, and might admit of reduction if the numbers of Kurnams be increased. The Kurnams would be paid by a rateable contribution from the cess of each village included within their charge—or their salaries might be made a first charge on the Government grant of Rs. 1,20,000 from the general reserve, or on the proceeds of enfranchised Inams if any exist.

14. With these observations I would venture to submit that the proposals of the Board may be sent back for reconsideration with reference to the general principles indicated above. Mr. Puckle is proceeding to revise settlement in the district of Salem with which he is familiarly acquainted, and might be directed to re-examine the matter and submit (in communication with the Collector and Board) a new scheme based on principles at once more liberal and more consistent with the law and conditions of the country.

15. It will be seen from the above that I entirely concur in the general policy of the Government and of the law on the matter of reorganising village establishments and providing for their adequate remuneration, and I think that this policy should be actively pushed forward.

16. The operation of the Village Service Cess Act is quite compatible with the most complete maintenance of rural social condition, and will everywhere strengthen that communal bond and the local administration and self-government which it is its object to comfort.

17. I agree with the views expressed by our Honorable Colleague Mr. Sim, except as regards village institutions in general—and deprecate most earnestly any change of policy which would tend to stay or seriously interfere with, the actionof the law under the Village Service Cess Act.

18. This Legislation was urgently necessary when it was passed ten years ago, as is shown by the action of Government and the debates that took place at the time. Practical experience proves that the revision it provides for is increasingly urgent *now*. In fact, the operation of the Village Service Cess Act alone can save village institutions from impending ruin, and render local administration much longer possible. We know how Bengal suffers from the decadence which has overtaken the village institutions there from causes which are very similar to what threatens ours.

19. It was my duty, prior to the discussion of this subject in 1860, to examine the records and the practical condition of nearly every district in the Presidency in respect to their village institutions. It would be impossible to conceive a matter on which the consensus of public and official opinion had been so unanimous for more than quarter of a century, as on the subject of the decadence and confusion which had overtaken this all-important part of the public administration and of village communities, because of neglect to legislate and assure their remuneration. The causes of this were but too apparent, and are operating still with increasing certainty. There was, and still is, scarcely a village where the same grievance was not the first cause of popular complaint. Indeed, a volume might be filled with the testimony of thoughtful and experienced men from all parts of the country, and with facts collected from every taluq as to the baneful effect of long neglect by Government to provide the means of maintaining and strengthening the village service. The law was, in fact, forced on the Government by conditions that precluded further reluctance to legislate in this direction. It were surely both dangerous and unwise now to give up a settled and useful policy, to which the Legislature and country have accommodated themselves, without any alternative policy, which presents the slightest hope of success in the direction so earnestly needed.

20. During ten years past all questions as to improving the position of village officers and settling their fees—which have been withheld almost everywhere—have been slurred over, because a revision under the Village Service Cess Act was certain to come soon as a part of the revenue settlement. Things are, in consequence, in so bad a condition now that it has only recently been considered necessary by Government to expedite the revision and to effect it even before the settlement in districts which have not been settled yet. There seems to me, therefore, to be no room to go back; for I am satisfied that no alternative Act for facilitating the collection of fees will work. It would make the better sort of villagers, who continue to pay the fees, suffer for the

"worse sort" who have long ceased to pay them. It would not fail to revive the old order of things when village officers did their work for the means of illegal exaction which their position afforded, not for pay; and unless the village establishments are decently paid without further delay, and are brought under proper control, the very foundations of our administration will, I am afraid, become rotten. Indeed, this state of things seems to me to be coming on fast and to be the more inevitable from the general progress which is taking place.

21. I freely admit that some of the proposals which have been submitted to Government have been ill-judged and scarcely in accordance with the spirit of the law; but these matters are perfectly susceptible of rectification and restraint, and I agree with His Excellency that in future stricter attention must be paid to the provisions of the law and conditions of village life.

22. But I am unable to share His Excellency's further views, and venture to submit as regards the objection that the substitution of compulsory for voluntary payments weakens self-Government; that it appears to me that this is not *necessarily* an evil, inasmuch as Government from outside is better than self-government in innumerable cases, amongst which are the administration of Civil and Criminal Justice, Police, and the collection of the revenue. The Statement of "Objects and Reasons" (for Act IV. of 1864) where it says, "it is besides objectionable in principle that officers having public duties often of an invidious character to perform should be dependent for their remuneration on the very persons against whom they may have to act," seems to me unanswerable. Moreover, these "voluntary payments" have most of them passed out of existence in consequence partly of the progress which good government has effected, and partly of the policy which was defined ten years ago when the Village Service Cess Act was passed. Indeed, I believe that there really is no alternative. Either the Act must be carried out or our village institutions—with such principles of self-government as they possess—must gradually cease to be, through the frauds of those who are bound to maintain them.

23. But I further submit that payment of Village Service fees never was—and in this country never can be really—voluntary. High-handed oppression of official position alone has enabled the higher classes (village heads and Accountants) to realise (where still able to do so) their dues—in many instances far in excess of what is right. And the fear of lawless rapacity has alone enforced the heavy blackmail levied under the name of remuneration by the lower orders (*Taliaries*, &c.,) of village officials, where these are still recovered. The condition of Tinnevelly is a shameful example of what the whole system of so-called voluntary contributions has consisted in. Its tolerance in any form is, I submit, now out of the question; for I think that all experience has shown that in this country our only safety lies in keeping the hand of those in office and power off the poor, and that efficiency and honesty can be secured by adequate remuneration alone.

24. I share Mr. Sim's views in respect to the taxation of the country generally. It is not burdensome, and the people greatly benefit by the maintenance of efficient local administration. On the special matter before us, I would observe that if the people may fraudulently withhold the dues of the institutions of the country at pleasure, they may doubtless lessen the taxation, but the condition of the country will be none the better on that account when its institutions are gone. In fact, the Village Service Cess Act provides, as it appears to me, relief in many respects; especially by making taxation lighter, more uniform, and more equally distributed; it stops lawless, ill-regulated, exactions by blackmail on the one hand, and fraudulent evasion of just dues with ceaseless heart-burnings on the other.

25. As regards the working of the Act, it is, as I have shown above, perfectly feasible to carry it into effect without unduly clubbing up villages and its provisions are quite compatible with comforting and strengthening existing communal conditions—while it removes evils which seem to me to be far greater than even partially interfering with the conditions of some small villages in every district.

24th February 1875.

(Signed) W. ROBINSON.

Proceedings of the
Board of Revenue d
22d May 1874 No. 1204

Reorganization of
Village Establishment
in Dharampury Taluq—
Salem District.

1. I think that in this "Sample" proposal—as in those alluded to by the Board as in Mr. Longley's proposals for the Trichengode and Namkul Taluqs—the clubbing-up of Villages has been carried a great deal too far: inasmuch as we find that it is proposed to throw 451 inhabited Villages—some no doubt small hamlets which may be very properly grouped with adjacent larger Villages—

into 50 Village Unions, with an average area of about 20 Sq miles and 3816 inhabitants (total population 190,626) for Each Union. Apparently this is proposed because no less sweeping application of the grouping System would provide the amount required for the pay of the full Establishment of Servants which it is proposed to appoint for Each Union at the rates of pay which it is thought necessary to assign to Each Village Official. Under the new arrangement about +one-third of the Existing Village Officials would be thrown out of Employment

+ Accountants or Kurnams.
Heads of the Villages
Watchmen or Taliaries
& Revenue runners or Vetty

+. Establ:	Existing	Proposed	Decrease
Kurnam	81	50	-31
Monegars	257	87	-170
Menial Servants	308	306	-2
			-203

- chiefly in the higher grades—.

2 It appears that the Assets recoverable under the Act together with Govt: Assignment on the revenue will suffice (the small balance in Excess needs no remark) for the proposed Establishment. And the future Emoluments would considerably Exceed the amount now officially recognized as being enjoyed by the Existing Village Servants.

3 I cannot approve of this proposal. I do not share the apparent views of the Board as stated in Para 5 of their Proceedings in respect to clubbing Villages in a poor inaccessible

hilly Taluq like Dharampuri. Such backward Conditions seem to me to dictate (within reasonable bounds) the Continuance of an administrative policy which now tends to foster development and to bring such outlying parts under State ken by more diffused Village Establishment. And I think that long Existing Conditions afford the sound basis of revision in this direction.

4 The number of Karekars or Headmen now in Existence indicates that Considerable — if not sufficient — Clubbing up of Villages already Exists. There are at present

257

257 Heads of Villages or Karekars to 457 inhabited Villages (I omit 91 uninhabited Villages) and I submit that this number is a far fairer proportion of Village Headmen than that is proposed (50 with about 30 assistants — a status unknown to the Law)

5 Some redistribution and reduction of number may no doubt be called for by the altered circumstances of the Country & financial Considerations, but this general condition should I think be adhered to in the main as the basis for the revision of the Village Establishment throughout this Taluq.

Probably the numbers of Villages might be reduced, by the operation of clubbing-up, to say 200 or 225 Villages without much popular inconvenience and in a manner which will still sufficiently provide for the requirements and development of the Country under improved Village administration.

6 As regards the lower grades of the Service Existing Conditions again no doubt fairly represent the wants of the Country; although improvement and some numerical increase may be required. On the whole the Existing (308) Establishment of

Vettyans

Vettyans & Salaries — 306 are proposed — need not be far departed from in order to give one menial Village Servant at least to Each of the lesser Village groups and perhaps two or more to a few large Villages

7 Nor do I think that we need be too particular about the employment of such menial Servants under the Headman of the Village in such a manner as the exigencies of the Service require. The Village Headman will still perform the Magisterial, Police and Revenue duties of the Village without distinction; and by the immemorial custom of the Country he is aided more or less indiscriminately

by the Village runners is under whatever designation. They may do so still. For the Law has not altered this Custom. Nor do I see that we need force any absolute separation of duty amongst the lower grades of Servants. The opposite policy indeed appears to me to have several practical advantages to counterbalance the official precision which we would endeavour to prescribe. The practice of the Country might therefore be allowed to continue in small Villages where all the duty required of such persons would not occupy more than one man's time. Where more than one menial Village Servant is appointed the duty of the Police and Revenue may be severally assigned with a view to greater Efficiency)

N.B. Another Custom to which I would not object is the practice of taking tours of duty and shares or tours of the Emolument - as amongst the hereditary races or families of Kavilgar and Vettiyan in some Districts. It is an immemorial and reasonable practice which has naturally arisen out of the Conditions of Society and of the Country and has some very decided advantages when the Service is generally light but often fitful & uncertain - for Example - during the harvest time, the whole family or race, amongst whom the Talari's Emoluments & claims are distributed, watch the crops of the Village in many Districts and more than one Talari is required to prevent gang robbery. Thus the small Village pay is distributed so as really to subsidise a large family, several of whose members do all sorts of jobs for the Villagers and for the State throughout

8 Thus I propose that the future Village Establishment of each Village shall consist of a Headman as Village Magistrate and Collector, with one or two Village Watchers or runners. And I believe that such an Establishment gives an ample local resident Village service for the bulk of the smaller Villages or small Village groups in a backward Taluq like Dharampure with its sparse

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9 As regards the pay of the lowest grade of Servants (Vettyans and Talyaries) the assets (Rs 11,016) Estimated & assigned to this class by the Board in Para 18 of their Proceedings will probably nearly suffice to provide the full remuneration deemed advisable, and if not the deficit will be thoroughly intelligible to the recipients. It will be a rateable deduction in proportion to the deficit of Village Cess under the Law.

10 Similarly Rs. 6,828 assigned in the same Proceedings to 87 Munsiffs

(at an average of about Rs. 6½ a month each) would much improve the existing emoluments of say 200 to 225 Headmen as above suggested. Any deficiency will again be intelligible and will gradually disappear as the Revenue improves under their local management.

11 I must here record my dissent from the notion (which I think erroneously underlies all the proposals which have been made for reorganizing Village Establishment with large resort to the clubbing up system) that each Village must have a full minimum

Establishment and that each Village Servant must have a full scale of prearranged pay. This theory is wholly at variance with existing & immemorial conditions of the Country and its Village Services and it is equally unrecognized either by the letter or spirit of the Law. The Legislature has provided a sufficient property rate for the use of the necessary Establishment of each Village in lieu of precarious and objectionable exactions and it leaves the Govt. to distribute this rate

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amongst the existing or improved Services of the Village; but it does not demand for each a fixed scale of pay — Even where the aggregate rate falls short of the Scale, which it might be desirable to assign to each Servant, it still provides the means of giving a fair rateable remuneration — which will improve with the advance of material prosperity — to each Village official. As a general rule, I believe, that a cess levied in each Village will be found sufficient remuneration for all

— Supplemented from the Govt. assignmt on the revenue or proceeds of enfranchised Inams —

work which the Village Community absolutely requires. Small Villages do not impose large amount of labor on their Establishments or occupy the whole time of their Services.

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Kurneck or Accountant Charges are everywhere much clubbed up and in Bellary (the typical District of Village Establishments) as many as 40 Villages are included in one Kurneck or Accountants' charge. There is nothing in the Law which abrogates the Custom of the Country in this respect and clubbing may be largely resorted to in reorganizing this branch of the local Service.

13 In the Taluq under Consideration 552 Villages (including 91 uninhabited Villages where cultivation is nevertheless pursued)

are distributed into 81 Kurneek or Accountants' charges — no doubt the existing *Kurneek* distribution has guided in some measure the proposals before us. The 50 Kurneek or Accountants' ranges now proposed will probably amply suffice for all the needs of the revenue administration and other wants of an illiterate people. The proposals may perhaps be accepted — with such modification as may be deemed desirable on reconsideration. So far as this part of the local service is

Concerned

391/52

Concerned. The rates of pay proposed are ample and might admit of reduction if the numbers of Kurnams be increased. The Kurnams would be paid by a rateable contribution from the cess of each village included within their charge — or their salaries might be made a first charge on the Govt. grant of Rs: 1,20,000 from the General Reserve, or on the proceeds of Enfranchised Inams if any exist.

14 With these observations I would venture to submit that the proposal

of the Board may be sent back for reconsideration with reference to the General principles indicated above. Mr. Puckle is proceeding to revise Settlement in the District of Salem with which he is familiarly acquainted and might be directed to re-examine the matter and submit (in communication with the Collector and Board) a new scheme based on principles at once more liberal and more Consistent with the Law and Conditions of the Country.

15 It will be seen from the above that I Entirely Concur in the general policy of the Government and of the Law on the matter of reorganizing Village Establishments and providing for their adequate remuneration and I think that this policy should be actively pushed forward.

16 The operation of the Village Service Cess Act is quite Compatible with the most Complete maintenance of rural Social condition and will Everywhere strengthen that Communal bond and the local administration & self-government

which it is its object to comfort.

17 I agree with the views expressed by our Honble: Colleague Mr. Sim—Except as regards, Village institutions in general— and deprecate most earnestly any change of policy which would tend to stay, or, seriously interfere with, the action of the Law under the Village Service Cess Act.

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and the debates that took place at the time. Practical experience proves that the revision it provides for is increasingly urgent now. In fact the operation of the Village Service Cess Act alone can save Village institutions from impending ruin and render local administration much longer possible. We know how Bengal suffers from the decadence which has overtaken the Village institutions there from causes which are very similar to what threatens ours

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prior to the discussion of this Subject in 1860 to Examine the records and the practical condition of nearly Every District in the Presidency in respect to their Village institutions. It would be impossible to conceive a matter on which the Consensus of public and Official opinion had been so unanimous for more than quarter of a Century as on the Subject of the decadence and helpless Confusion which had overtaken this all-important part of the public administration and of Village Communities, from neglect to legislate and assure their remuneration. The Causes of this were but too apparent and are operating still with increasing certainty. There was—& still is—Scarcely a Village where the same grievance was not the first cause of popular complaint. Indeed a Volume might be filled with the testimony of thoughtful and Experienced men from all parts of the Country, and with facts collected from

Every tating as to the baneful Effect of long neglect by Government to provide the means of maintaining and strengthening the Village Service. The Law was in fact forced on the Govt. by conditions that precluded further Reluctance to legislate in this direction. It were surely both dangerous & unwise now to give up a settled & useful policy to which the Legislature and Country have accommodated themselves - without any alternative

policy

policy which presents the slightest hope of Success in the direction so earnestly needed.

10 During 10 years past all questions as to improving the position of Village Officers and settling their fees - which have been withheld almost Everywhere - have been slurred over, because a revision under the Village Service Cess Act was certain to come soon as a part of the Revenue Settlement. Things are, in Consequence, in so bad a Condition now that it has only recently been Considered necessary by Govt. to expedite

the revision and to Effect it even before the Settlement in Districts which have not been settled yet. There seems to me therefore to be no room to go back; for I am Satisfied that no alternative Act for facilitating the Collection of fees will work. It would make the better Sort of Villagers who Continue to pay the fees suffer for the "worse sort" who have long Ceased to pay them. It would not fail to revive the old

order

order of things when Village Officers did their work for the means of illegal Exaction which their position afforded; not for pay; and unless the Village Establishments are decently paid without further delay and are brought under proper Control the very foundations of our Administration will, I am afraid, become rotten. Indeed this State of things seems to me to be coming on fast and to be the more inevitable from the general progress which is taking place.

V I freely admit that Some of the proposals which have been submitted to Government have been ill-judged and scarcely in accordance with the spirit of the Law — but these matters are perfectly susceptible of rectification and restraint — and I agree with His Excellency that in future stricter attention must be paid to the provisions of the Law and conditions of village life

2d But I am unable to share His Excellency's further views and venture to submit

As regards the objection that the substitution of compulsory for voluntary

payments weakens self-government:— that it appears to me that this is not necessarily an evil, inasmuch as Government from outside is better than self-government in innumerable cases, amongst which are the administration of civil & criminal justice, police and the collection of the revenue. The "Statement of objects and reasons" (for Act II of 1864) where it says "it "is besides objectionable "in principle that officers "having public duties "often of an invidious "character to perform "should be dependent "for their remuneration "on the very persons "against whom they may have to act" seems to me unanswerable. Moreover these "Voluntary payments" have most of them passed out of Existence in Consequence partly of the progress which good Government has Effected and partly of the policy which was defined 10 years ago when the Village Service Cess Act was passed. Indeed I believe that there really is no alternative. Either the Act must be carried out or our Village institutions — with such principles of Self-Government as they possess — must gradually cease to be through the frauds of those who are bound to maintain them.

But I further Submit that payment of Village Service fees never was — and in this Country never can be really — is Voluntary. High handed oppression of Official position alone has Enabled the higher classes (Village heads and Accountants) to realize (where still able to do so) their due — in many instances far in Excess of what is right —. And the fear of lawless rapacity has alone enforced the heavy blackmail levied under the name of remuneration by the lower orders (Taliaries &c.) of Village Officials – where these are still recovered. The Condition of Tinnevelly is a shameful example of what the whole system of so called Voluntary Contribution has consisted in. Its tolerance in any form is, I submit, now out of the question; for I think that all experience has shown that in this Country our only safety lies in keeping the hand of those in

the poor and that Efficiency and honesty Can be secured by adequate remuneration alone.

I share Mr Sim's views in respect to the taxation of the Country Generally. It is not burdensome and the people greatly benefit by the maintenance of Efficient local administration – On the Special matter befor us, I would observe that if the people may fraudulently withho the dues of the institutio of the Country at pleasur they may doubtless lesse the taxation but the Condition of the Country will be none the better on that account when its institutions are gone. In fact the Village Service Cess Act provides, as it appears to me, relief in many respects, -Especially by making taxation lighter, more uniform and more Equally distributed, t stops lawless and ll-regulated Exaction by blackmail on the one hand and fraudulent Evasion f just dues with Ceaseless heartburnings on the other - As

As regards the working of the Act, it is, as I have shown above, perfectly feasible to Carry it into Effect without unduly clubbing up Villages and its provisions are quite Compatible with Comforting and Strengthening Existing Communal Conditions while it Removes Evils which Seem to me to be far greater than Even partially interfering with the Conditions of Some Small Villages in Every District

24 J H Robinson

Revenue 1875 Dept

Minute by the Hon
W. Robinson, C.S.I.
d/ 24 Feby 1875

G O 9th March/75 No 391

No 124 F

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

THE subject should be referred to the Board for further consideration. I deprecate *our* prescribing the number of villages to be retained as such. I am sure 200 is far too large a number. A glance at the Collector's statement will show that very many of the so-called villages of this taluq are mere hamlets, with few inhabitants, and so near each other as not to require separate establishments. This is, however, a matter of detail which had better be left to the Board.

2. I also deprecate the union of the duties of Vetty and Taliary wherever more than one inferior servant is maintained. The original design was to group the villages in such a way that the chief village had the *full* establishment, the hamlets, where necessary, having each a resident Taliary. In some cases, of course, a village is so situated that while it does not require a full establishment, it cannot be grouped with another; in such cases it has its own Munsif and a Taliary, or a Taliary and Vetty; the Curnicum work being done by the Curnum of an adjacent group. I would not depart from this principle. Where only one inferior servant is kept, he should be the Taliary; the village will be so small that the Munsif will not need a Vetty. I would not tolerate the hap-hazard method of having work done sometimes by one man and sometimes by another. The office of Taliary is of very great importance, and should always be the recognised duty of a particular individual.

2nd March 1875. (Signed) J. D. SIM.

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L. O. [illegible] 2/3/75

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

I THINK we may safely accept Mr. Price's proposals, leaving it open to him to propose any modifications which may suggest themselves when the scheme is being actually introduced.

2. There is one point which needs notice. In some cases Assistant Munsifs are proposed. When this is owing to the size of an original village and its own hamlets, the Munsif's pay shall be increased, so that he may keep his assistant; his responsibility will thus not be weakened. When, however, the necessity arises from distant villages being grouped together, I would modify the grouping, giving a separate Munsif. The Curnam's assistant should always be his own appointment.

13th June 1874. (Signed) J. D. SIM.