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Revenue (1899) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

G.O., No. 387

DATED 26th January 99

[Despatch Abstract.]

Recording Board's Progs communicating to all Collectors for information and guidance, G.O. on Mr. Meyer's proposals for the grant of increased powers to Tahsildars, Dy. Tahsildars and other subordinate Revenue officials; conferring as a tentative measure on all village headmen in the Dts. of Bellary, Kistna Tanjore and N. Arcot the power to issue distraint notices Nos under Act II of 1864 and requesting the Collectors of these Dts to report on certain points as to the advisability of permanently investing village headmen with such power.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
	1177	R 21-3-99					
Gp	3312	Revenue	18-9-99				

Revenue (1899) Department.

CURRENT No. 523

R No 351

SECR. 20 MAR 99 REV. DEPT.

From The Board of Revenue, Land Revenue, Madras.

Order Mis No 387 dated 26th Jany 1899.

Recorded.

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Prop No. 351

Dated 20th December 1898.

Received 20th January 1899

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Spare copies —

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T.P.Nair 24-1-99

SUBJECT.

Communicating to all Collectors, for information and guidance, Government Order on Mr. Meyer's proposals for the grant of increased powers to Tahsildars & Dy. Tahsildars & other subordinate Revenue officials; conferring, as a tentative measure, on all village headmen in the districts of Bellary, Kistna, Tanjore, & North Arcot the power to issue distraint notice No. 1 under Act II of 1864, & requesting the Collectors of these districts to report, on 1st June next as to the advisability of permanently investing village headmen with such p

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
Cp	680	Rev	14-11-98

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1898.

Board of Revenue

(Land Revenue),

MADRAS.

Printed January th, 1899.

Proceedings, No. 351, 20th December 1898.

DECEMBER.

Communicating to all Collectors, for information and guidance, Government Order on Mr. Meyer's proposals for the grant of increased powers to Tahsildars, Deputy Tahsildars and other subordinate Revenue officials; conferring, as a tentative measure, on all village headmen in the districts of Bellary, Kistna, Tanjore and North Arcot the power to issue distraint notice No. 1 under Act II of 1864, and requesting the Collectors of these districts to report, on 1st June next, as to the advisability of permanently investing village headmen with such power.

(2) to grant leave to stamp-vendors up to three months on a substitute to be appointed by them.

Mr. Macleod (Trichinopoly) suggests that the appointment and leave of stamp-vendors might rest entirely with Tahsildars; but I am not prepared to go so far as this, as the commission earned by vendors is sometimes considerable.

10. I have already proposed in my letter No. Extra B.—Tour, dated the 12th October 1897, that Tahsildars should have power to fine their Revenue Inspectors up to one rupee.

11. The powers referred to in paragraphs 4 to 8 and in paragraph 9 (2) above, may also be granted to Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge, who are in most respects Tahsildars in all but name; but those which relate to village officers they will of course exercise, like the Tahsildars, only with reference to Government villages which may be included within their charges, which are for the most part zamindari divisions, nor would I give them the power of fining Revenue Inspectors.

12. Under Board's Proceedings, No. 147 of 15th May 1895, dependent Deputy Tahsildars, including Stationary Sub-Magistrates, possess, like Tahsildars, the power of granting leave to their peons up to fourteen days and of doing the same with reference to masalchies and sweepers. I would give them the powers I propose in paragraphs 4 (*c*) and 5 to confer on Tahsildars in regard to peons and menial servants of their own offices. In other matters the extended powers I suggest should, I think, be confined to Tahsildars and independent Deputy Tahsildars.

13. (*B*) *Powers to be conferred on Tahsildars in regard to other administrative matters.*—Under Standing Order No. 30, Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars have full competence (subject to appeal to the Divisional officer) in respect to ordinary darkhasts for assessed lands; but under paragraph 18 of the Standing Order, though darkhasts for unassessed lands may be made to the Tahsildar, &c., concurrently with the Divisional officer, the disposal thereof rests with the latter only. In the majority of cases the grant of such applications is undesirable, the lands being close to irrigation works or channels, required for some communal or State purpose, and so forth. In such cases I would allow the Tahsildar or Deputy Tahsildar power to reject the application reporting to the Divisional officer for further action by the latter only where he thinks that it ought to be complied with.

14. The power to pass further orders in regard to lands which have been bought in by Government owing to want of bids at sales for arrears of revenue and which are entered in a special register maintained in the Taluk office, now rests with the Divisional and Jamabandi officers—*vide* paragraph 3 of Standing Order, No. 110 and paragraph 55 of Board's Proceedings, No. 255, Settlement, dated 27th June 1893. I would allow Tahsildars to order the re-sale of such lands, when circumstances show that they are likely to fetch an adequate amount, without reference to superior authority. The confirmation of the sale will of course rest with the Divisional officer, who will likewise retain the power of striking the lands off the special list as having no special value and replacing them under the ordinary darkhast rules.

15. I would allow Tahsildars to order the payment of ready money allowances for religious institutions, which are usually paid by beriz deduction, from the kist collections of some village other than the one from the beriz of which the payment has been sanctioned, in all cases where the collection of kist in the latter village has been suspended or postponed, or where its full demand has been realized and remitted before application is made by the trustees for payment of the allowance. At present application is made to the Board when such a case arises.

16. Under paragraph 9 of Standing Order, No. 226 (old edition) as re-issued in Board's Proceedings, No. 592 of 13th October 1893, Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars are authorized—

(1) to sanction the granting of copies of village accounts by karnams;

(2) to grant copies of their own records in transfer of registry and darkhast cases which they have disposed of, and in departmental enquires relating to the conduct of village officials and the succession to village offices.

I would now further allow them to grant copies to persons interested of—

(*a*) applications for relinquishment of lands;

(*b*) paimash accounts; and

(*c*) final orders passed by them (with any evidence that may have been formally recorded) in any case which it is within their competence to dispose of.

17. I would likewise authorize Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars to grant copies of the Collector's or Divisional officer's jamabandi orders to the parties concerned for purposes of appeal or reference. These latter orders, when not passed on the village accounts themselves, are, as a rule, part of the taluk records, and a request for copies to the officer who passed them leads almost invariably to a reference to the Tahsildar, which would be saved by my present proposal.

18. Under Board's Proceedings, No. 459, dated 16th December 1895, Land Revenue, and G.O., No. 142, dated 24th March 1896, the power of ordering the destruction of useless records in Taluk offices has been transferred from the Collector to the Divisional officer. I think that we might go a step further and allow Tahsildars to destroy such of their records as are clearly ripe for destruction under the appendix to Standing Order No. 219 (old edition) without the previous reference to the Divisional officer, which is now necessary. The instructions laid down as to the period for which each class of papers, which is to be eventually destroyed, should be previously retained in the records, are clear and minute, and the long lists now sent up only cause additional work in the higher office.

Mr. Andrew (Tanjore) thinks that if this power were given, papers which ought to be kept might be destroyed; but it seems to me far more likely that Tahsildars will err in the other direction and keep papers which the records would be well rid of. As to the intentional loss or destruction of an important paper, that unfortunately is apt to happen even under the present system. Nothing is easier than to plead that the missing paper "got into the wrong dufter," and so forth, and the only way to check papers of this kind disappearing is, if that occurs, to punish the officer responsible for their safe custody.

I do not of course intend that the Divisional officer shall cease to interest himself in the taluk records; but his interest can be best displayed by personal inspection which is worth any number of returns.

19. The purchase of dufter cloths for records is another matter in regard to which Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars might well be granted further powers I would allow them to procure these articles on their own authority within a lump grant to be allotted by the Collector. They might also sell on their own responsibility the waste paper of their offices.

20. Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge should be allowed to apply direct to the Treasury Deputy Collector to have copies of approved forms, which are urgently required, printed for them at the District Press. This is what is at present done, I learn, in North Arcot; but in most districts the indents go needlessly through the Divisional officer.

21 [illegible]gards trees I would allow Tahsildars—

[illegible] order and confirm the sale of withered and felled trees on wastes and poramb[illegible] other than river and channel banks under the control of the Public Works Department, or Imperial and Local Fund roads;

(2) to lease out on their own authority the usufruct of scattered fruit-bearing trees on porambokes and wastes.

These powers need not affect the crediting of tree revenue to "Forests" wherever this is now done.

22. They should likewise have the power of ordering the sale of pound manure, or of the right to collect it, and of confirming such sales. Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge might do this also.

23. Under section 57 of Act II of 1864, when a defaulter in respect of the general land revenue or of any other item of revenue which is realizable under this Act, owes his arrears in one district but owns property which it is desirable to proceed against in respect thereto in another, it is necessary that the matter should pass

through the hands of the two Collectors. I would allow the Tahsildar of the taluk in which the arrear has accrued (including under this term Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge) to send a notice direct to the Tahsildar of the taluk in which coercive process is to be taken. The Collectors are merely post offices in such a case, and, as the amendment of the Act is now under contemplation, * the present is a good opportunity for pressing upon Government the necessary alteration in section 57.

* G.O., No. 845, Revenue, dated 6th October 1897.

Similarly—and this can be done without legislation—I would allow Tahsildars and independent Deputy Tahsildars to enter into direct correspondence with like officers in other districts in matters such as the whereabouts and solvency of a defaulter and so forth, when the making of such enquiries through Divisional officers and Collector is merely a matter of red-tape.

24. Lastly, I come to the question of the sub-division of survey fields. The power to sanction sub-divisions was on the Board's recommendation to be conferred on Tahsildars under G.O., No. 142, Revenue, dated 24th March 1896; but the Collector of Kistna having represented that the check exercised by Divisional officers in this matter was a valuable one, and that the work was likely to suffer without it, and the great majority of other Collectors having on reference made to them by the Board taken the same view, the proposed extension of powers was recalled—*vide* Board's Proceedings, No. 344 of 11th September 1896. I venture to doubt, however, whether the ordinary Divisional officer does, as a matter of fact, do much in the way of scrutinizing the sub-division sketches sent up to him from the taluks, and think that the best method of checking the Tahsildar's work in this direction would be to have a certain number of sub-divisions in each taluk examined and reported on from time to time by the district surveyor. I would, therefore, allow a Collector to confer at his discretion the power of sanctioning sub-divisions of survey fields on any Tahsildar whom his Divisional officer is prepared to recommend as fit to exercise it, subject of course to the power of withdrawing such power, if the district surveyor's inspection, or other evidence, shows it to have been carelessly exercised. In this shape the proposal would not, I think, be open to the criticisms to which the extension of the power to Tahsildars as a body was.

25. I have indicated in paragraphs 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22 and 23 how far the proposals falling under this group and dealt with in paragraphs 13 to 24 above should also be made applicable to Deputy Tahsildars.

26. *Section II—Taluk Sarishtadars and Head Accountants.*—The position of the Taluk Head Accountant in respect of office control during the Tahsildar's absence from his cusba formed, soon after this class of officers was called into existence, the subject of the Board's Proceedings noted in the margin, the result of which may be summarised as follows:—

Board's Proceedings, No. 460, dated 23rd August 1892.
Board's Proceedings, No. 549, dated 28th September 1892.
Board's Proceedings, No. 606, dated 24th October 1892.
Board's Proceedings, No. 86, dated 23rd February 1893.
Board's Proceedings, No. 298, dated 2nd June 1893.

The Taluk Head Accountant is to be principally employed on treasury and account work. He will have general charge of the office during the Tahsildar's absence on circuit; but papers requiring disposal must be sent out to the Tahsildar and fair copies of the Tahsildar's orders must be signed by the Stationary Sub-Magistrate as Deputy Tahsildar.

27. I venture to think that in their anxiety to prevent the Tahsildar getting rid of his office work by going out on tour (Board's Proceedings, No. 298, dated 2nd June 1893), and probably also to prevent the new Taluk Head Accountants from deeming themselves anything but the absolute subordinates of the Tahsildar, † these orders went too far, and that they have led to the Taluk Head Accountant, who ought, I submit, to be the personal assistant of the Tahsildar rather than a

† The old Taluk Sarishtadars, it will be remembered, were, as a rule, the equals of the Tahsildars in criminal administration (both being generally second-class Magistrates) and this position sometimes led to friction in respect of revenue matters.

mere head clerk, falling too much into the latter category. To overburden the Tahsildar with petty details of office work while he is on circuit is to make touring distasteful to him, and to prevent his time while on tour being used to the best advantage; while having to take fair copies of orders to the Stationary Sub-Magistrates for signature wastes the time of the taluk subordinates, it being notorious that the man who brings these papers is often kept waiting for a long time till the Sub-Magistrate can divert his mind from the case on which he happens to be engaged. Further, there is the general loss of time caused by sending out to the Tahsildar in camp a number of routine papers which could be perfectly well disposed of by a "personal assistant" at head-quarters—the position I would have the Taluk Accountant occupy.

28. I would, therefore, allow Taluk Head Accountants, and of course the Taluk Sarishtadars who still survive, to exercise the following powers during the Tahsildar's absence from head-quarters:—

(1) To sign fair copies of drafts passed by the Tahsildar.

(2) To send simple but urgent routine replies to higher offices and to issue urgent orders to village officers, sending in each case the office copy of such reply or orders to the Tahsildar's camp for his counter-initials.

(3) To hold enquiries in regard to the heirs of deceased pensioners and yeomiahdars, and also kist collection enquiries, provided that no final orders are passed in any such case without the Tahsildar's approval.

(4) To send under his initials into the record the papers requiring to be "lodged," "filed" or "recorded," provided that the "recorded" papers have been seen by the Tahsildar.

(5) To issue notices Nos. 1 and 3 under Act II of 1864 (notices of distraint and of sale of moveable property).

(6) To issue stationery and forms to village officers on their indent.

(7) To grant, where necessary, a day's casual leave to the taluk gumastahs and peons.

29. *Section III—Revenue Inspectors.*—The following additional powers might be granted to these officers:—

(1) To issue notice No. 1 (demand for arrears followed on non-compliance by distraint of moveables) under Act II of 1864 for the villages of their range. This is, I understand, already being done in Chingleput, Salem and North Arcot, and under the Act (section 5) the Collector may empower any of his subordinates to act in this behalf. The power will be useful when the Revenue Inspector visits a village and finds the kists in arrears.

(2) To grant leave up to five days to the village officers, sending copies of their orders to the Tahsildar for information.

(3) To order transfer of patta when both the parties to the transfer reside, and the property is situated, within the Inspector's range and the parties jointly present the application. At present the Inspector has this power only when the application is presented to him by both the parties in the village concerned (Standing Order No. 20, paragraph 7).

(4) To sell inferior trees such as babul, &c., which have fallen or withered, and are estimated to fetch not more than Rs. 5, without reference to the Tahsildar.

30. *Section IV—Village Headmen.*—I would allow these officers also (*vide* paragraph 29 *supra*) to issue distraint notices (No. 1) under Act II of 1864 on their own authority. It is apprehended by some of the Collectors whom I have consulted that the power will be abused to the detriment of the village munsif's personal enemies; but I fail to see how this would be the case more than under the present system. At present these notices, which are in the first place requisitions for payment of arrears and only operate as an authority to distrain when the requisition is not at once complied with (section 8 of the Act), are made out by the village officers and sent up to the taluk for signature. In the kist season they come in in shoals and the Tahsildar is obliged to sign them with very little scrutiny. If, therefore, the munsif is determined to get a distraint notice served undeservedly, he is pretty certain to be able to effect his evil purpose under the present system. My proposal would put the responsibility on his own shoulders, while it would relieve the taluk office of an immense

amount of scriptory work which the existing system involves. For example, an addition to the receipt, supposed scrutiny, signing and despatch of the notices, the particulars in regard to the processes issued from the taluk office have to be entered there in process registers. There would also be a precious saving of time in the heavy kist months. At present nothing is more common than for a village munsif, on being called to task for heavy arrears, to make the execuse (true or false) that he could not get back his No. 1 notices in proper time from the taluk.

It must be remembered, moreover, that any person aggrieved by improper procedure on the part of a village munsif will still have full facilities for complaint to higher authorities and it is to the punishment which follows upon such complaints, when they are shown to have been well founded, that we must look for the best guarantee of abuse of power by village officers.

31. If, however, the Board hesitates to at once prescribe the general adoption of my proposal, I would suggest that it be tried first in selected districts, the Collectors of which are not unfavourable to the experiment and judged by its results there.

32. I would further allow village headmen to grant leave to menial village servants for a period not exceeding seven days at a time and twenty days in the year, provided that satisfactory arrangements were made (of course without extra charge to the Village Service Fund) for the performance of work by a substitute.

33. As the proposals which form the subject of this letter relate to matters in which actual district experience is particularly valuable, I have added a note (Appendix A) showing the opinion thereon of the Collectors whom I have been able to consult personally, and the gist of the suggestions on points I have dealt with, I have received independently from other Collectors.

I also append, for convenience of reference, a summary (Appendix B) of my proposals in Part I regarding additional powers to be granted to Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars.

ENCLOSURE.

APPENDIX A.

Mr. Wynne .. .. .. North Arcot.
„ Tremenheere .. .. Nilgiris.
„ Bradley .. .. Coimbatore.
„ Mounsey .. .. Salem.
„ Andrew .. .. Tanjore.
„ Scott .. .. .. Nellore.

Views of Collectors on the proposals made in the letter.—I have had the advantage of personally consulting the marginally-noted Collectors in respect of my proposals, and have received from them a general assent thereto qualified by the remarks below :—

Section I, Tahsildars.

Powers proposed to be granted.	Collector's remarks.
Paragraph 4.—Powers in respect of appointment, removal, &c., of certain classes of non-pensionable servants.	Mr. Tremenheere would restrict these to Tahsildars. I propose (paragraphs 11 and 12) to give them to Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge also and to confer certain powers in regard to their own office peons and menials on other Deputy Tahsildars.
Paragraph 8.—To suspend village officers for grave breach of duty pending the final orders of the Divisional officer and to appoint temporary substitutes for periods not exceeding three months.	Mr. Tremenheere would give Tahsildars power to appoint substitutes for suspended village officers only for one month.
Paragraph 9.—To grant leave to stamp-vendors up to three months on a substitute to be appointed by them.	Mr. Scott would extend the period to six months.
Paragraph 10.—To fine Revenue Inspectors up to one rupee.	Messrs. Wynne, Tremenheere and Andrew do not approve.
Paragraph 15.—To order the payment of religious service allowances from the kist collections of villages other than those out of the revenue of which they are payable.	Mr. Wynne doubts whether this is not opposed to the orders of the Secretary of State. Those orders only forbid the payment of religious service allowances direct from the treasury, and there is nothing to prevent their being paid by beriz deduction from the revenue of villages other than those originally settled.

Powers proposed to be granted.	Collector's remarks.
Paragraph 18.—To destroy such of the records as are ripe for destruction under the Appendix to Standing Order No. 219 (Old Edition) without reference to the Divisional-officer.	Mr. Tremenheere doubts whether this proposal will work well. Mr. Andrew thinks that the Divisional-officer's sanction should be obtained. Not unfrequently Tahsildars recommend papers for destruction which are not time-expired. Mr. Scott would require a list to be submitted to the Divisional-officer.
Paragraph 21.—To lease out the usufruct of scattered fruit-bearing trees on porambokes and wastes without obtaining the sanction of the District Forest-officer.	Mr. Tremenheere thought that the leasing out of the usufruct of Government trees was a source of constant annoyance to the owners of herds of goats in Bellary in reference to Acacia pods, and that the power should not be delegated to Tahsildars.

Section III, Revenue Inspectors.

Paragraph 29 (2).—To grant leave up to five days to the village officers sending copies of the orders to the Tahsildar for information.	Mr. Scott doubts whether this would work well.
Paragraph 29 (4).—To sell inferior trees of small value without reference to the Tahsildar.	Messrs. Wynne and Tremenheere doubt whether this proposal would work well.

Section IV, Village Headmen.

Paragraph 30.—To issue demand notices on their own authority for the recovery of arrears of land revenue and cesses.	Messrs. Tremenheere, Mounsey and Andrew think that the power may be abused in some cases.
Paragraph 32.—To grant leave to menial village servants for a period not exceeding 7 days at a time and 20 days in the year.	Mr. Scott is of opinion that the power might be abused and that its abuse would be difficult to check.

2. From other Collectors I have had the following independent suggestions with reference to matters included in my proposals :—

Reference to my letter.	Collector's independent suggestions.
Paragraph 4.—Appointment by Tahsildars of certain classes of non-pensionable servants.	Mr. Macleod (Trichinopoly) suggests that Tahsildars should appoint irrigation cess establishment on pay of over Rs. 5 subject to the veto of the Divisional-officer, but does not say up to what limit this would be done. I presume he refers to maistries and peons.
Paragraph 5.—Grant of leave to taluk peons by Tahsildars.	Mr. Castlestuart Stuart (South Arcot) proposes to allow Tahsildars to grant leave to peons and to appoint substitutes for one month. Messrs. H. A. Stuart (Bellary) and Batten (Kistna) would extend to three months the maximum period for which taluk peons may be granted leave and substitutes appointed.
Paragraph 7.—Grant of leave to village officers.	Messrs. Castlestuart Stuart (South Arcot), H. A. Stuart (Bellary) and Batten (Kistna) propose that the period up to which Tahsildars can grant leave may be extended to three months and that they may also be empowered to appoint substitutes in the case of all classes of village offices.
Paragraph 9.—Grant of casual leave to Revenue Inspectors up to 5 days at a time. Grant of leave to stamp-vendors.	Mr. H. A. Stuart (Bellary) proposes to confer this power on Tahsildars. Mr. Macleod (Trichinopoly) would allow Tahsildars both to appoint and to grant leave to stamp-vendors. Mr. Macleod (Trichinopoly) would give this power to Tahsildars.
Paragraph 13.—Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars to be able to reject applications for unassessed lands in cases where their assignments is objectionable.	
Paragraph 17.—Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars may grant copies of orders passed at Jamabandi on village accounts without reference to higher authority.	Mr. Castlestuart Stuart proposes to confer this power on Tahsildars and states that in practice copies of Jamabandi orders are being granted by the Tahsildars of his district.

Reference to my letter.	Collector's independent suggestions.
Paragraph 21.—Tahsildars may order and confirm the sale of withered and felled trees on Government wastes and porambokes and lease out the usufruct of fruit-bearing trees standing thereon.	Messrs. Macleod (Trichinopoly) and Batten (Kistna) have made this proposal.
Paragraph 22.—Tahsildars may order and confirm the sale of pound manure.	Messrs. Macleod (Trichinopoly) and Batten (Kistna) have made this proposal.

APPENDIX B.

Summary of powers proposed to be conferred on Tahsildars, &c.

N.B.—The powers are primarily intended for Tahsildars. They would be allowed to Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge and others only to the extent (if any) specified in brackets below each item.

Tahsildars should have power.

1. To appoint, grant leave to, and remove the following classes of non-pensionable servants, as well as pensionable office sweepers and masalchies :—

(*a*) Special process-servers entertained under Madras Acts II of 1864 and I of 1889 ;
(*b*) Pound Kavalgars ;
(*c*) Sweepers and masalchies in Taluk offices ;
(*d*) Village menials in districts which do not strictly come within the scope of the Hereditary Village Offices Act III of 1895 ; and
(*e*) Menial servants on the minor irrigation and irrigation cess establishment (paragraph 4).

(These powers may be conferred on Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge ; but in the case of the village menials referred to in clause (*d*), they will, like the Tahsildars, exercise the power with reference to Government villages only. Other Deputy Tahsildars might be given the power of appointment, removal, &c., in regard to the sweepers and masalchies of their offices [paragraphs 11 and 12]).

2. (*a*) To grant their peons leave up to three months and appoint substitutes when necessary.

(To be exercised also by all Deputy Tahsildars [paragraphs 11 and 12]).

(*b*) To grant privilege leave to taluk gumastahs in case the leave does not involve the appointment of a substitute.

(To be exercised also by Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge [paragraph 11]).

(*c*) The statement of leaves so granted to be submitted quarterly instead of monthly and include both peons and taluk gumastahs (paragraphs 5 and 6).

3. To grant leave to village officers up to three months and to appoint acting men where necessary, submitting half-yearly statements of such leaves, and appointments for the Divisional-officer's confirmation with reference to section 10 of Act III of 1895 and section 7 of Act I of 1889 (paragraph 7).

(Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge may be allowed to exercise this power in regard to Government villages included within their charges [paragraph 11]).

4. (*a*) To suspend village officers for grave breach of duty pending the final orders of the Divisional-officer and to appoint temporary substitutes for a period not exceeding three months.

(To be exercised also by Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge in respect of Government villages [paragraph 11]).

(*b*) To suspend any of their peons for grave misconduct up to a period of one month pending report to the Divisional-officer (paragraph 8).

(To be exercised also by Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge [paragraph 11]).

5. To grant casual leave up to five days at a time and ten days in a year to Taluk Head-Accountants and Revenue Inspectors and to grant leave to stamp-vendors up to three months on substitutes to be appointed by them (paragraph 9).

(Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge may be allowed to grant leave to stamp-vendors up to three months on substitutes to be appointed by them [paragraph 11]).

6. To fine Revenue Inspectors up to one rupee (paragraph 10).

7. To have power to reject applications for unassessed lands without reference to the Divisional-officer in all cases where the grant of them on patta is objectionable (paragraph 13).

(To be exercised also by all Deputy Tahsildars [paragraph 13]).

8. To order the resale of lands bought in by Government at sales for arrears of revenue, whenever it is considered desirable to do so (paragraph 14).

9. To order, whenever necessary, the payment of religious service allowances from the collections of villages other than those out of the revenue of which they are payable (paragraph 15).

10. To grant copies to persons interested of applications for relinquishment of lands, paimash accounts and final orders passed by them on matters within their competence with any evidence formally recorded, as well as of jamabandi orders required for purposes of appeal or reference (paragraphs 16 and 17).

(To be allowed also to all Deputy Tahsildars [paragraphs 16 and 17]).

11. To destroy such of their records as are ripe for destruction under the appendix to Standing Order No. 219 (Old Edition) without reference to higher authority (paragraph 18).

12. To purchase dufter cloths for their records within a lump grant to be allotted by the Collector, and also to sell on their own responsibility the waste paper of their offices (paragraph 19).

(To be extended to Deputy Tahsildars generally [paragraph 19]).

13. To apply direct to the Treasury Deputy Collector to have approved forms which are urgently required printed at the District Press (paragraph 20).

(To extend to Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge [paragraph 20]).

14. To order and confirm the sale of withered and felled trees on wastes and porambokes other than those under the control of the Local Fund and Public Works Departments and to lease out on their own authority the usufruct of fruit-bearing trees (paragraph 21).

15. To order and confirm the sale of pound manure or of the right to collect it (paragraph 22).

(May be exercised also by Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge).

16. To address Tahsildars in other districts direct in reference to the collection of arrears, &c., section 57 of Act II of 1864 being modified so as to permit of execution of processes under the Act in this way (paragraph 23).

(Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge to have similar powers [paragraph 23]).

17. To sanction the sub-division of survey fields when such power has been specially conferred upon them by the Collector (paragraph 24).

Resolution—No. 385, dated 11th November 1897.

Submitted for the orders of Government. The proposals have been discussed by the Full Board at a meeting at which Mr. Meyer was present.

2. Mr. Meyer preludes his proposals for the grant of increased powers to Tahsildars and other revenue subordinates with the remark that the Tahsildar of the present day is, both in intelligence and *morale*, superior to the Tahsildar of the old school for whom the numerous restrictions, embodied in the existing rules and orders, were prescribed, and that the great improvement in the class from which the official ranks are now recruited, renders it advisable to remove, or at any rate to loosen, the departmental fetters which were formerly required to safe-guard the administration. The Board accepts Mr. Meyer's premises, but would add thereto the corollary that the selection of these officers will require to be made with redoubled care, if the increased powers are to be granted to them, while their prospects of future promotion must be assured. The goal, to which all efficient Tahsildars must press forward is an appointment as Deputy Collector, and every Deputy Collector's post which is given to an officer not a Tahsildar must *pro tanto* detract from the prospects of all Land Revenue subordinates. The selection of Deputy Collectors is, at present, entirely in the hands of Government, but the Board ventures to invite attention to the above aspect of the system of recruitment.

3. The Board is in general accord with Mr. Meyer in regard to the proposals formulated in the above letter, and resolves to submit them to Government with the following remarks :—

Paragraph 3 *A.*—Complete control over the lower subordinates in his office may be given to the Tahsildars, and to Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge, if it is clearly understood that, with the exception of masalchis, sweepers, and other menials, who may happen to come upon the pension list, the power does not extend to pensionable posts. For instance, the appointment and control of taluk peons should, as at present, be in the hands of the Divisional-officer. This is stipulated by Mr. Meyer, and the Board merely wishes to emphasize the point.

Paragraph 10.—The question of allowing Tahsildars to fine Revenue Inspectors has already been dealt with in paragraph 20 of Board's Proceedings, No. 365, dated 1st November 1897. The Board observes that Messrs. Wynne, Tremenheere and Andrew do not approve of this proposal.

Paragraph 15 (*To allow Tahsildars to pay religious allowances from the collections of any village by beriz deduction*).—The only objection to this proposal is the possibility of complications in the accounts. The annual list of beriz deductions is submitted to the revenue branch of the Collector's office and is not checked on the treasury side. The Board, however, considers that it will suffice to rule that, whenever the Tahsildar exercises the proposed power, he shall record a formal order to that effect, and shall send a copy of the said order to each of the villages in question and a third copy to the Collector for record.

Paragraph 18 (*Destruction of useless records in taluk offices*).—The power to destroy records which, under the rules, have become ripe for destruction, may be delegated to Tahsildars as proposed, but a careful list of all such papers should, as at present, be prepared and should be endorsed by the Tahsildar himself with the necessary orders. This list must be preserved in the taluk office and will form the record from which it can be ascertained whether any particular paper has been destroyed under proper authority.

Paragraphs 21—22 (*Power to sell withered trees, to lease out scattered trees, and to sell pound manure*).—If it be the practice in any district to require the orders of the Collector or Divisional-officer on these matters, the Board considers that the Collector would do well to delegate the necessary powers to Tahsildars, subject to due arrangement for audit and control. Where the control of the trees is under the District Forest-officer, the Collector can exercise his discretion in deciding whether report is necessary.

Paragraph 23 (*Collection of arrears in other districts*).—This matter will be dealt with in reporting upon the Bill to amend Act II of 1864.

Paragraph 24 (*Sanction to sub-divide survey fields*).—The ultimate decision of this question depends upon the future position to be occupied by the Survey Department and by such establishment as the Government may retain for the upkeep of survey marks. The matter was fully discussed in Board's Proceedings, No. 354, dated 18th September 1896, which is still under the consideration of Government. The objects of the present system of control are specified in the letters recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. 149, dated 20th April 1896, to which Mr. Meyer refers. If the Government decides to employ a surveyor in each taluk under the supervision of a Survey Deputy Collector, the initial control over sub-divisions need not go beyond the Tahsildar, and on this understanding the Board accepts Mr. Meyer's proposal. The Board fears that sub-division work is very badly performed at present and no method has yet been devised for preserving the karnam's sub-division sketches so that they shall be available for ready reference.

Section II—Paragraphs 26 *to* 28 (*Taluk Sarishtadars and Head Accountants*).—Mr. Meyer calls in question the decision recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. 298, dated 2nd June 1893. The Board's main object in issuing the said order was to concentrate the Head Accountant's energies on accounts and allied matters. These form his legitimate duties, but the Board has no objection to the present proposals. It must, however, be stipulated that the Tahsildar's personal control over all matters, other than mere routine, must not be diminished: for instance the Taluk Head Accountant's power—paragraph 28 (4)—to send papers into the record must not be exercised in regard to petitions until the Tahsildar has had an opportunity of seeing the file: the Board would, therefore, add to Mr. Meyer's rule the proviso that no petition should be lodged or filed without being shown to the Tahsildar.

Sections III and IV.—The Board concurs with Mr. Meyer. The proposed change in regard to No. 1 notices is more imaginary than real. These notices are at present drawn up in the village and the Tahsildar's check at this stage is little more than nominal. But it must be clearly understood that no notices are to be issued before the kists fall due, and Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors should be required to carefully check the work of village headmen in view to the enforcement of this rule.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) L. D. SWAMIKANNU,
for Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to W. S. Meyer, Esq., I.C.S.

Order—No. 680, Revenue, dated 14th November 1898.

Miscellaneous.

With the above Proceedings the Board of Revenue submits for the orders of Government Mr. Meyer's proposals for the curtailment of work in Revenue offices by the grant of increased powers to Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars and other subordinate revenue officials. The proposals will be dealt with below *seriatim*.

2. *I. Tahsildars and (where noted) Deputy Tahsildars.*

A. Powers as to minor subordinates —

(i) *To appoint, grant leave to and remove the following classes of non-pensionable office-sweepers and masalchis :—*

(*a*) *Special process-servers entertained under Madras Acts II of 1864 and 1889 ;*
(*b*) *Pound kavalgars ;*
(*c*) *Sweepers and masalchis in taluk offices ;*
(*d*) *Village menials in Government villages in districts which do not strictly come within the scope of the Hereditary Village Offices Act III of 1895 ; and*
(*e*) *Menial servants on the minor irrigation and irrigation cess establishments.*

It is proposed that these powers may be conferred on *Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge* as well as on Tahsildars. *Other Deputy Tahsildars including Stationary Sub-Magistrates* might it is suggested be given similar powers in regard to sweepers and menial servants of their own offices.

These proposals are approved. But the Government considers that a distinction should be made between Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars, and that in the case of the latter they should be required to report to the Divisional officer for information the appointments they make and the punishments they inflict.

It must be distinctly understood that the delegation of these powers and those referred to below will in no way diminish the responsibility of the Divisional officer for the administration of his division, nor deprive him of the general power of initiative revision and control which he can always exercise whenever he finds that it is necessary or that the orders of his subordinates are incompatible with public interests.

(ii) *That all Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars (including Stationary Sub-Magistrates) be empowered to grant their peons leave up to three months and appoint substitutes when necessary subject to the submission of a quarterly statement to the Divisional officer.*—This proposal is approved.

(iii) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge be empowered to grant privilege leave to taluk gumastahs in case the leave does not involve the appointment of a substitute.*—The Government considers the proposed delegation inexpedient.

(iv) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge should have power to grant to village officers of Government villages leave up to three months and to appoint acting men where necessary submitting half-yearly statements of such leaves and appointments for the Divisional officer's confirmation with reference to section 10 of Act III of 1895 and section 7 of Act I of 1889.*—The proposal is approved. The Government, however, considers that a half-yearly statement would afford little check and that the return should be submitted monthly to the Divisional officer.

(v) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge should be empowered to suspend village officers of Government villages for grave breach of duty pending the final orders of the Divisional officer and to appoint temporary substitutes for a period not exceeding three months.*—The Government considers that it is not desirable that Tahsildars or Deputy Tahsildars should have this authority.

(vi) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge should be empowered to suspend their peons up to a period of one month pending report to the Divisional officer.*—The proposal is approved.

(vii) *That Tahsildars be empowered to grant casual leave up to five days at a time and ten days in a year to Taluk Head Accountants and Revenue Inspectors.*—The proposal is approved as far as regards the grant of casual leave to Revenue Inspectors. The Government considers that the grant of casual leave to Taluk Head Accountants should continue to vest in the Divisional officer.

(viii) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge be empowered to grant leave to stamp vendors up to three months on substitutes to be appointed by the Tahsildar or Deputy Tahsildar.*—The proposal is approved.

(ix) *That Tahsildars should be empowered to fine Revenue Inspectors up to one rupee.*—The proposal has been negatived in paragraph 2 (10) of G.O., No. 282, dated 18th May 1898.

3. *B. Powers in regard to other administrative matters*—

(i) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars should be empowered to reject applications for unassessed lands without reference to the Divisional officer in all cases where the grant of them on patta is objectionable.*—The proposal is approved.

(ii) *That Tahsildars should be empowered to order the resale of land bought in by Government at sales for arrears of revenue whenever it is considered desirable to do so.*—The proposal is approved.

(iii) *That Tahsildars should be empowered to order whenever necessary the payment of religious service allowances from the collections of villages other than those out of the revenue of which they are payable.*—The proposal is approved subject to the communication of the order to the villages concerned and to the Collector, as recommended by the Board of Revenue.

(iv) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars be allowed to grant to persons interested copies of applications for relinquishment of lands, paimash accounts and final orders passed by them on matters within their competence, with any evidence formally recorded, as well as of jamabandi orders required for purposes of appeal or reference.*—The proposal is approved.

(v) *That Tahsildars be empowered to destroy such of their records as are ripe for destruction under the appendix to Standing Order No.* 219 *(old edition) without reference to higher authority.*—The proposal is approved. But it must be distinctly understood that it is the duty of the Divisional officer to see that the power is properly exercised. Divisional officers should whenever they examine a taluk office scrutinise the list of the records destroyed which as the Board recommends should be carefully prepared and endorsed by the Tahsildar himself. A question about the matter should be added to the list of questions which call attention to the important points to be attended to in the inspection of taluk offices.

(vi) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars be empowered to purchase dufter cloths for their records within a lump grant allotted by the Collector and also to sell on their own responsibility the waste paper of their offices.*—The proposal is approved.

(vii) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge be allowed to apply direct to the Treasury Deputy Collector to have printed at the District Press approved forms which may be urgently required.*—The proposal is accepted.

(viii) *That Tahsildars should be empowered to order and confirm the sale of withered and felled trees on waste and poramboke lands other than those under the control of the Local Fund and Public Works Departments and to lease out on their own authority the usufruct of fruit-bearing trees.*—The Government considers that Tahsildars should only be authorised to sell the usufruct of fruit-bearing trees.

(ix) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge should have power to order and confirm the sale of pound manure or of the right to collect it.*—The proposal is approved.

(x) *That Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in independent charge should have power to address Tahsildars in other districts in reference to the collection of arrears.*—This proposal has been dealt with in G.O., No. 438, dated 6th August 1898.

(xi) *That Tahsildars should be empowered to sanction division of survey fields when such power has been specially conferred upon them by the Collector.*—As pointed out by the Board the decision of this question depends on the future position to be occupied by Survey department and the Government considers that until this is settled the existing practice by which such sub-divisions are sanctioned by Divisional officers should continue.

4. *II. Taluk Sarishtadars and Taluk Head Accountants.*—It is proposed that these officers should be allowed to exercise the following powers *during the Tahsildar's absence from head-quarters*:—

(i) *To sign fair copies of drafts passed by the Tahsildar.*—The proposal is approved.

(ii) *To send simple but urgent routine replies to higher offices and to issue urgent orders to village officers sending in each case the office copy of such reply or order to the Tahsildar's camp for his counterinitials.*—The proposal is approved. But as questions may arise as to what are routine matters and what not, the Tahsildar should make out a list showing the cases in which this power can be exercised by the Head Accountant or Taluk Sarishtadar. The list should be submitted for the previous approval of the Divisional officer.

(iii) *To hold enquiries in regard to the heirs of deceased pensioners and yeomiahdars, and also in regard to kist collection matters, provided that no final orders are passed in any such case without the Tahsildar's approval.*—This proposal is approved, subject to the condition that the Tahsildar's responsibility is in no way lightened thereby, and that the final decision in every such case should always be the Tahsildar's.

(iv) *To send under his initials into the record room papers requiring to be "lodged" "filed" or "recorded" provided that the "recorded" papers have been seen by the Tahsildar.*—The Government considers the proposal inexpedient. The Head Accountant or Sarishtadar may, however, facilitate the disposals of such papers by writing the above specified orders on papers to be finally approved by the Tahsildar.

(v) *To issue notices Nos.* 1 *and* 3 *under Act II of* 1864 *(notices of distraint and of sale of movable property.*—The proposal is approved.

(vi) *To issue stationery and forms to village officers on their indent.*—The proposal is approved.

(vii) *To grant, where necessary, a day's casual leave to the taluk gumastahs and peons.*—This proposal is approved; but a copy of every such grant should be submitted to the Tahsildar.

Tahsildars should be given distinctly to understand that the delegation of powers in respect of any of the matters dealt with in this paragraph will in no way relieve them of their responsibility in the matter specified.

5. *III. Revenue Inspectors.*—It is proposed to delegate to these officers the following powers:—

(i) *To issue notice I (demand for arrears followed on non-compliance by distraint of movables) under Act II of* 1864 *for the villages in their range.*—The proposal is approved.

(ii) *To grant leave up to five days to the village officers sending copies of their orders to the Tahsildar for information.*—The Government considers the proposed delegation inexpedient.

(iii) *To order transfer of patta when both the parties to the transfer reside and the property is situated within the Inspector's range and the parties jointly present the application.*—The Government considers that the present rule under which the Inspector has the power only when the application is presented to him in person by the parties in the village concerned is sufficient and that any extension of the power in the direction proposed is undesirable.

(iv) *To sell without reference to the Tahsildar trees which have fallen or withered and are estimated to fetch not more than Rs.* 5.—Such authority would be liable to abuse and the Government considers that it should not be granted.

6. *IV. Village Headmen.*—It is proposed to give these officers the following powers:—

(i) *To issue distraint notices No.* 1 *under Act II of* 1864 *on their own authority subject to the clear understanding that no notices are to be issued before the kists fall due.*—The Government approves of the proposal. The power should at first be conferred as a tentative measure in a few districts to be selected by the Board.

(ii) *To grant leave to menial village servants for a period not exceeding seven days at a time and twenty days in a year while satisfactory arrangements are made for the performance of work by a substitute.*—The proposal is approved.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. S. FORBES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue).
„ W. S. Meyer, Esq., I.C.S.

Copy to the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture).

RESOLUTION—No. 351, dated 20th December 1898.

Communicated to all Collectors for information and guidance.

2. The power to issue distraint notice No. 1 under Act II of 1864, subject to the proviso mentioned in paragraph 6 IV (i) of the Government Order read above, will, as a tentative measure, be conferred on all village headmen in the districts noted in the margin. The Collectors of these districts are requested to report, on 1st June next, as to the advisability of permanently investing village headmen with such power.

Bellary.	Tanjore.
Kistna.	North Arcot.

3. The Board will carry out in due course such corrections in its Standing Orders as are rendered necessary in consequence of the Government Order read above.

(True Copy and Extract.)

Lovell Davidson
Acting Secretary.

To all Collectors (Divisional officers, Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars).
„ the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
„ the Separate Revenue Department.
„ the Settlement Department.
„ the Forest Section.
„ the Conservators of Forests.

Exd. W. D'Moss.

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LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.								
STATEMENT WITH DITTO.								
PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL.								

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