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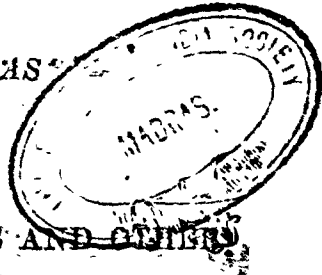
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MAJOR-GENERAL

SIR THOMAS MUNRO

BART., K.C.B.

GOVERNOR OF MADRAS



SELECTIONS FROM HIS MINUTES AND OTHER
OFFICIAL WRITINGS

EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY MEMOIR AND NOTES

BY

SIR ALEXANDER J. ARBUTHNOT, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

A NEW EDITION

WITH AN INTRODUCTION



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HIGGINBOTHAM AND CO.

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APPENDIX A.

PROCLAMATION IN THE NAME OF THE AGRICULTURISTS, MERCHANTS, AND OTHER INHABITANTS OF THE DISTRICT OF TRIPATUR.*

10th December, 1796.

RULE 1.—*Objects of the survey.*

Whereas your district has been surveyed, and the rents of it fairly ascertained, in order to secure to the Sirkár its dues, and to the industrious the advantages that accrue from the improvement of land, it is proposed to effect these salutary purposes by the following Regulations.

RULE 2.—*General divisions of lands.*

The assessment of all lands that were assessed and farmed out at the time of the survey, being fixed, they are in future to be denominated *putkutt-nellam*, or 'holdings,' and those which, not being then assessed and farmed out, remained, *nagadi-nellam*, or 'rateable lands.'

RULE 3.—*Of lands permanently rated.*

The 'putkutt-nellam' being measured and valued, the assessment of every individual field in it, when at the full rate, is *fixed for ever*; that is to say, the Government is never to require more, or receive less, nor you to pay less or more, than the present rate, unless when those fields actually 'dry' shall hereafter be converted into 'wet' by the constructing of tanks, cutting of canals, or other means that may hereafter be undertaken at your desire or with your consent, but at the expense of the Government, when the rates will be proportionably raised, according to the consequent increase of the produce, and in like manner *fixed for ever*. But if you carry on such works at your own expense; plant topes of palmyras, cocoa-nut, tamarind, mango, orange, lime, or plantain trees; gardens of betel-nut, betel-leaf, sugar-cane, or any other such productions, on which a high rent has been formerly exacted, you may depend on receiving the advantages accruing from these, and from every other improvement of your lands, while you continue to pay the established rates; those constituting, except in the case above mentioned, the annual demand upon them, on the part of the Sirkár, *for ever*. Upon these principles, you may rent out lands, which you may raise in value by tillage and manure, at rates greatly exceeding the Sirkár rates, if there be a demand for them, while you will continue to pay the fixed rates to the Sirkár for ever.

RULE 4.—*Of lands changeably rated.*

The 'nagadi-nellam' being measured by meadows or tracts, divided at some

* These are the Regulations referred to in the second note on page 3.

places only into fields, and no rent put on it, because cultivation alone gives it value, it will be divided off into fields as demanded, when the rates of it will be determined according to its actual state and the corresponding proportions of the average rates of the village to which it may belong. The assessment of the nagadi of villages in which there is little or no cultivation will be regulated by the average rates of the three nearest villages. The nagadi-nellam is generally divided on account of the variable properties acquired by cultivation, exclusive of its inherent qualities, into fallow and waste, and the former into seven descriptions, corresponding with the number of years it may have been unoccupied at the time of valuation.

As arable land is supposed rather to recover, than to lose its productive power, by lying one year fallow, and to lose it from being a longer time unoccupied, each description is to be rated as follows:—For one year's fallow, full assessment the first, and every year after; for two years' fallow, fourteen-sixteenths of the assessment the first, full assessment the second, and every succeeding year; for three years' fallow, twelve the first year, fourteen-sixteenths the second, and full assessment the third year; for five years' fallow, eight the first year, eleven-sixteenths the second, and full assessment the third year; for six years' fallow, six the first, nine-sixteenths the second, and full assessment the third year; and for seven years' fallow, four the first year, eight-sixteenths the second, and full assessment the third year. Moreover, as it is supposed that, by the time lands have been seven years fallow, they lose so much of the vegetative property they acquire by cultivation, as to approximate to the state of such as never have been cultivated, all that may be fallow a greater number of years, and all banjar or waste lands whatever, are to be rated the same; that is, one-quarter the first, one-half the second, and full assessment every succeeding year.

RULE 5.—Of taxes included in the land revenue.

The quit-rent of all 'inām' lands is to continue till the end of the current year (Fasli 1206), as at the time of the survey. All taxes levied upon castes and articles of the land-custom included in the land-rent, to remain as at the time of survey, to the end of the current year (Fasli 1206); that is, every caste or trade is to be required to pay, jointly, the same amount for the year, which will be more or less than they then paid individually, according as their number has increased or decreased while they will altogether contribute the same they did that year to Government; for which purpose, those of every village must occasionally meet to assess themselves, and not leave it to their head merchants, chetties, potails, or others, to regulate their share. Such articles as are commonly farmed out, will be given in rent to the highest bidders by the munsifs and curnums, with the sanction of the Collector, by whose pattah they will be held in farm.

RULE 6.—Rates to be exacted of the cultivating classes.

The above rates of assessment being generally equal to one-third of the 'punji' or dry, and two-fifths of the 'nanji' or wet crops, in money, and these being the portions of the produce which the ryots who divided the crops have always paid to the Government or Sirkār, their immediate lessors, they are on that account to be required of all ryots who are inhabitants of the Company's districts. As many ryots may desire to cultivate unoccupied lands after the season for sowing the principal crops usually grown in every description of the soil, from which it derives the greatest share of its value, is past, and when there is only time left to sow the inferior kinds of grain in each, only

twelve-sixteenths of the ordinary assessment of the dry, and eleven-sixteenths of the wet land, will be required for fields that may be rented after the 10th October to the end of the year.

RULE 7.—*Rates to be exacted where the land is held by castes that do not cultivate themselves.*

As there are castes who farm, and, being under the necessity of employing the ryots whose occupation is agriculture, to cultivate their lands, cannot afford the ordinary rates, four-fifths only of the ground-rent shall be required of them. This indulgence will be exclusively extended to all Brahmans, whose caste does not admit of their holding the plough, and to all persons who can prove their having served the Company as sepoya twenty years; because they are unaccustomed to labour. It will likewise be granted to such other persons as the Collector may think entitled to it from their condition, and may have stock to employ in farming. But lands so disposed of, are only to continue on such favourable terms while the original grantees may occupy them, and to be resumed by the Government whenever they part with them, that they may be included again with other lands that pay the full assessment. As these individuals thus favourably treated may be bribed to defraud the Sirkár by procuring lauds in their name for others, whoever shall be convicted of doing so, they and their accomplices, shall be fined a year's rent of the lands so obtained, and banished the district.

RULE 8.—*Rates to be exacted of refugees.*

As encouragement for refugees from the Carnatic or Balaghát to settle in the Company's territory, only half the ordinary assessment will be required of them for three years, or such other period for which lands may be granted them. The increase of population inducing this measure, ten acres of the 'dry,' and two and a half of the 'wet' land, will be given for every two ploughs or ryots; that is, half of each description for every one ryot; and in the same proportions for any number. The condition of granting lands on these terms being the grantees' residing in the Company's district, they will not be continued to any other who may purchase the lease, unless the grantée and all the ryots who immigrated with him, or an equal number, and proved to be his followers, remain in the ceded district. As a further inducement for aliens to come and live under the Company's government, the principal of every party that comes shall have the headmanship of any village he may prefer, provided the number of ploughs he may bring with him be equal to a quarter of the ploughs actually belonging to it; that there be unoccupied lands sufficient in it for the additional number of hands; and that he be qualified for that situation. If incompetent, or he should not desire it, any other person of the number, for whom the party may declare a preference, shall be appointed. As strangers from other districts belonging to the Company may pretend to have immigrated from the Carnatic or Balaghát, in order to procure lands so much underrated, whosoever shall be found guilty of such fraud, or connive at it, shall be fined a year's rent of the lands so obtained, and punished besides with the utmost severity.

RULE 9.—*Rates to be exacted of mulberry, etc., planters.*

The Company being desirous to introduce the manufacture of silk and other valuable productions, only one-sixteenth of the ordinary rates of assessment will be required for lands growing the mulberry, the Mauritius cotton, the opuntia, black pepper, coffee, cinnamon, cardamums, sandal, or other exotic plants, for the first seven years; and after that, only half of those rates,

while they continue to grow them. That being the express condition of their tenure, when such lands are appropriated to the culture of native productions, it shall be considered an infringement of the engagement on the part of the grantee, and he shall consequently be required to pay their ordinary rates for the period they may have been so appropriated. Any person who shall procure lands professedly for the culture of exotics, but designedly for native productions, thus defrauding the revenue, shall forfeit the produce, be fined a year's rent at the ordinary rates, and banished the district.

RULE 10.—*Of annual farmers and leaseholders.*

The period for which you may severally choose to rent lands, depending on a variety of circumstances, and distinctions being necessary to your understanding the condition of your respective tenures; those who agree to hold them from year to year, or for the space of one year only, are to be denominated 'annual tenants,' and those who agree to hold them for a number of years, or during the present lease, 'leaseholders.'

RULE 11.—*The conditions of tenure of annual tenants.*

The improvement of land depending on the means employed for the purpose during a succession of years, every annual holder, who may cultivate certain fields any one year, shall be allowed the privilege of occupying them the year following, and so long as he shall continue to pay regularly the established rent of them; so that such obligations as he shall enter into with the Sirkár, relative to farms, shall be considered as no longer binding upon him, than from their dates to the end of the current year, but as binding upon the Government to the end of the present lease. He must not, however, quit his village till he answers all demands upon him for the terms of the year.

RULE 12.—*The condition of tenure of leaseholders.*

Whoever, from thinking it will add to the security of their possession, or desiring to avoid the trouble of annual stipulations, shall desire to have pattaas for the whole, or for part of their land, in lease for a term of years, will in like manner be allowed the privilege of occupying them, while they continue to pay regularly the established rent; but these obligations must be considered as *mutually* binding from their dates to the end of the lease, unless they procure persons who will enter into the obligations expressed in the lease, and pay up the assessment for the term thereof.

RULE 13.—*Time prescribed for the settlement of annual tenures.*

Since the obligations entered into between the Sirkár and the yearly tenants are binding upon them for the current year only, to the end that they may extend or reduce their farms according to their circumstances, by retaining or rejecting certain fields, as they may choose, from year to year, that makes it necessary for them always to declare, during the ploughing season, what they intend to cultivate, that mutual agreements be exchanged as hereafter directed, and the rents of every farm duly collected.

RULE 14.—*Time prescribed for the settlement of lease tenure.*

As leaseholders will often desire to cultivate more lands than they may hold in lease, by the addition of some fields to their farms on annual tenure, it will be equally necessary for them, under such circumstances, to declare, during the ploughing season, what they intend to cultivate, that, mutual obligations for the current year being entered into with them on account of such lands, their rents thereon may also be registered as productive to revenue for the year.

RULE 15.—*Penalties for ploughing land without previously engaging to pay its rent.*

Whoever, having already ploughed their lands, shall neglect to report the same to their head of the village, shall be fined half the assessment, and whoever shall, after the publishing of this proclamation, proceed to cultivate lands without previously receiving a written permission, shall be deprived of the produce, or, if they should not be sown, an eighth of the assessment thereon.

RULE 16.—*The whole rent of every field to be required of whoever may plough a part of them.*

As some fields of the putkutt are left partly fallow, by reason that the poorer ryots, from want of means, cannot plough the whole; and many objections occur to the subdivision of them into plots for their accommodation, you are enjoined to occupy such fields only as you may be able to cultivate entirely; for whoever shall hereafter plough any part of a field in the putkutt, shall be required to pay the rent of the whole. The rateable land being generally in larger portions, it will be parcelled out and measured, at the time of demand, in such portions as may be desired by the candidates.

RULE 17.—*Mode of application for lands.*

All persons who desire lands to cultivate, must apply in the first instance to the heads of the village they prefer, in which they see land unoccupied, when, if permanently assessed land, they will be informed of its fixed rent; and if 'rateable,' of its assessment for the year, or portion of the average assessment of the village, according to the number of years it may have been uncultivated; or, if the village be deserted, according to the average rates of the three neighbouring villages. The next step, when they resolve to settle, is to require the heads of the village to draw out mutual agreements, specifying the said rates, field by field, for each description of land, and the condition of tenure. If of the cultivating classes, it only remains for them to sign the obligation-bonds, and give them to the munsif, who will deliver them the 'pattahs' or grants, on their receiving the Collector's signature; but if of the privileged classes, they must take the pattahs and bonds to the Collector, with such persons as may be necessary to satisfy him of the propriety of granting them the indulgent terms held out to them respectively; when, if he approve, he will sign and give them the pattahs, which will specify that a fifth of the amount will be required of those holding by virtue of their castes, half of 'emigrants,' and a sixteenth of 'totakars;' and they will then deliver the bonds or counterpart of their grants, binding them to the performance of their engagements.

RULE 18.—*Mode of obtaining advances for cultivation, etc.*

RULE 19.—*Farmers who desire it, permitted to throw up their leases the current year.*

As all the permanently assessed land of your districts was entirely disposed of in lease when the survey was made, these Regulations may seem to apply to it but partially; but as many of you, from inexperience of leases, have taken more lands in lease than you have been able to cultivate every year, and suffered, in consequence, from inability to pay up the rents of such fields as you have been obliged to leave uncultivated, it is now determined to absolve you of all engagements you entered into that year, to the end that after due consideration of your circumstances, you may rent as many fields as you think you will be able to cultivate every year in lease, and as many as you may choose to cultivate for the current year only on annual tenure.

RULE 20.—*The performance of future engagements indispensable.*

Though a consideration for your condition has induced the putting it again in your own power to accommodate yourselves, it must be understood that this indulgence is not to apply to land you may have already cultivated in the current year; for, the rent being fixed upon every field of the permanently assessed land, and that of every one in the 'rateable' being easily ascertained by the rules now laid down for that purpose, whoever ploughs a field must pay the rent of it, whether previously stipulated or not, for the current year; and whoever stipulates for one or any number of fields, must pay their rent, whether he ploughs them or not, for the period of his engagements.

RULE 21.—*Ryots to be individually answerable for the rents of their own holdings.*

The first step you take towards settling in any village must be the demanding of its heads a pattah for the lands you choose, and the giving them bonds binding yourselves to be individually answerable for the rent thereon by instalments, as may be stipulated in the revenue accounts.

RULE 22.—*Ryots to be jointly answerable for the amount of the total assessment on the village.***RULE 23.—*Mode by which ryots must indemnify themselves for advances thus made on account of defaulters.*****RULE 24.—*All the ryots' contracts to be committed to writing.*****RULE 25.—*Between ryots in partnership.*****RULE 26.—*Between ryots and their under-tenants.*****RULE 27.—*Between masters and their servants.*****RULE 28.—*Such written engagements the only legal claim upon the persons or property of the cultivators.*****RULE 29.—*Of contracts for tank repairs.***

The Government, and the country in general having sustained great losses by those whose duty it is to repair them, allowing the tanks to go entirely to ruin from the want of repairs, it is hereby resolved that whoever shall fail any one year to make the requisite repairs to the embankments, the land given him to defray the expenses thereof shall be escheated and annexed to the Government lands. As the non-performance of this contract might proceed from inability, any such person, who shall apply to the Collector for the means, shall be supplied with money at the usual rate of interest: should his agent neglect during his absence the tank intrusted to his charge, so as to incur the above forfeiture, absence shall not be admitted as entitling him to a restoration of the land, or any alleviation.

LETTER FROM COLONEL READ TO THE ASSISTANT COLLECTORS, BARAMAHAL AND SALEM.

Gentlemen,

I have been delayed in writing you concerning the Board's letter of the 30th ultimo by the same cause that prevented my doing it at the time copies were sent you.

It is between two or three years since I began to perceive, by the constant fluctuation in agriculture and annual demand for remissions, the effects of

the survey and our settlements in lease, and, as appears by my correspondence with you on matters intimately connected with them, they have uniformly been the subjects of my attention and inquiry.

Having stated, now a twelvemonth ago, the necessity of our declaring, upon our finishing the survey, by what means the objects of our appointment, *a permanent revenue to Government and the fruits of industry to the ryots, might be secured under a settlement in lease*, and recommended those matters to your serious consideration, I have no doubt of your being able, by this time, to comply with the request I then made, which was to be soon favoured with your sentiments upon them.

My communications on the present settlements and mode of management have heretofore been confined to the business of realizing them with the least inconvenience to the ryots, or, more emphatically and truly, without severity and (in some cases) without injustice. They have been confined, in short, to the functions of a *mutasiddi*, or mere Collector. But now that we are called upon for our sentiments on the effects and permanency of our present assessments, I feel desirous of extending your views beyond the narrow limits of Indian policy which too evidently pervades our system, to one more liberal and conducive to the general prosperity. I therefore request that you take this opportunity of bringing forward any measure or plan of reform you may have in meditation, as we may suppose the affairs of these districts will shortly be taken into consideration and a final arrangement for them determined on.

In this, I only request you to follow the example I have so often set you, and hoped ere this to have repeated, by circulating a form in which I intended to state every question that has occurred to me respecting the land rent, with proposed annotations for subjects of general discussion, in order to procure your sentiments on each, a free communication of knowledge and experience being the most approved method of ascertaining facts and devising the best rules of policy. Anxious to finish investigations I have still on hand, in time for adopting certain measures in our settlements the current year, and not expecting to be pressed for our reports upon the lease, I have been induced to defer the drawing up the propositions I have mentioned, and my state of health does not enable me to go sufficiently into a subject that requires so much consideration.

Under these circumstances I only request now, in the words of the Board, that, so far as relates to the obtaining system, 'you afford any explanations that may occur to you as necessary, relative to the state of your respective charge, and the effects that have been therein produced by the present assessment, together with your sentiments on the ultimate and more important objects in view, the permanent settlement of the district,' with a reference to—

1. *The poverty of the inhabitants in general.*
2. *Frequency of their removals.*
3. *Fluctuation of stock.*
4. *Precariousness of the crops.*
5. *Fluctuation in the price of grain.*
6. *Present high rental, which generally affords no other reward to the cultivator than the wages of labour.*
7. *Consequent cheapness of the land.*
8. *Smallness of farms in general.*
9. *Constancy of change in the number and extent of farms from the necessity*

of augmenting and reducing them every year, in proportion to the number of hands, the stock, the health and strength of the cultivators, and from the frequency of their throwing up the farms.

10. *Constraining all the ryots, without exception, to rent their farms a number of years, whether agreeable or not to their inclinations or interest, which is indispensable to settle a whole district in lease.*

11. *Constraining them after that, however reduced in their circumstances, to perform such forced engagements to make the settlement permanent.*

12. *Necessity of remissions, even under annual settlements, when their farms are proportioned to their circumstances at the beginning of the year, and which must be greater under lease settlements, because the same rent being demanded after any reduction of their stock, their inability must accumulate with the term of the lease.*

13. *Want of landed security, because, the land not yielding in general any profits of stock under the present assessment, it is worth nothing, unless to the cultivator, who can only earn his bread by his labour.*

14. *The consequent necessity of making securities pay up the rents of defuncts and absentees, which is hard, or of obliging the ryots of villages to pay them, which is unjust.*

15. *Removal of head farmers and increase of small ones, consequences of reducing the profits of farming by the increase of the rental, or exacting the whole of the ground rent, which is properly the farmer's, in place of a portion of it, for Government.*

16. *The necessity that involves of Government (that is, its officers) conducting the affairs of husbandry by prescribed and fixed rules, which, not applying to all times and circumstances, are detrimental to agriculture.*

17. *The loss which will be felt by the petty farmers or labouring poor, in times of scarcity, from the want of the head farmers, who used to supply them with grain, and doubtless preserved many of them, when, if without such aid, they would have perished, the not having which now at hand must be detrimental to population.*

18. *Increase of the public revenue, which is a lakh more than Tippoo's village rental in 1788-89, when it was higher than it had ever been before, and probably is double what was ever brought into the public treasury—an increase which must be a proportional deduction of private income, and not only a consequent reduction of the capital formerly employed in agriculture, but equally a loss to trade and manufactures.*

19. *Consequent extension of Government's interest in agriculture, which gives it a greater property in the produce than any other government has been known to have, which involves its concerns with those of every individual, because there is not, generally speaking, any intermediate class of the inhabitants between it and the cultivators, which creates the difficulty of recovering lawful debts, and the settling other disputes, without interference with it, and annoyance to the Collector, so that such an immersion of the public into private affairs is detrimental to the administration of justice.*

20. *Multiplication of labour which such an extension of Government's concerns occasions to its servants, and which must increase demands upon the Collector's time, or oblige him to delegate authority to others.*

21. *Inefficacy of delegated authority, from the want of moderation, zeal, or ability, and oftener from the abuse of it, which indicates that the conduct of agriculture should be left to the husbandmen, who can yield to all times and circumstances; the administration of justice to persons who are not concerned*

in their awards; and that the functions of revenue officers should be limited to their own province, the only means of which appears to be the reduction of the present rental, as that alone can give value to land, and make way for that middle order of men which is found in all civilized societies.

These, or their opposites, are the points by which, it appears to me, the nature and effects of our present assessment, and of the settlements in lease, must be determined, on which account I wish reference to be made to them in your reports. I must specially observe that, in doing so, some of them must be considered as only applying to the state of the country in general, and that it is left for you to determine the application of them to particular districts. They appear to me so connected with, and important to, the objects in view on which your sentiments are desired, that I wish them to be severally made the subject of particular consideration, and in the succession they are placed, for the convenience of adding my remarks, which the Board will expect, and I shall have great pleasure in giving; for it is my anxious wish to satisfy all doubts relative to the survey, to remove all objection to our assessment, and to have a mode of settlement established in these districts, by superior authority, before I resign my charge.

Though I have signified a desire that you adopt the above, as a form, for the explanations required, I do not propose that your discussions shall be confined to the matter it contains, but hope that you will furnish much additional information on the grand objects of inquiry, and throw new lights upon them, for none admit of a greater range, and perhaps they never have been treated by persons possessing your minute and local knowledge, experience, and ability. I wish, however, if you go far into the subject, that you begin as low as you can, and that you ascend in analytical progression, because revenue and all things on which it depends connect, making a *whole*, and positions are earliest admitted when their natural connection is observed and they are founded on facts previously established.

I request that statements of your settlements for the term of the lease may be transmitted with your reports, in the accompanying form; for though annual statements have been made of some districts since they were surveyed, and it be doubtful that the settlements of others in lease will be continued so for the term proposed, it is necessary to lay a general statement of them before the Board, as showing completely the progress of the survey, the rise of the settlements in every district to their height, and the intended periods of their lease.

You will, of course, attend to the request of the Board that it may have our reports soon, and I have only to add, as one from myself, that you send me in, by that time, some of your village registers of the survey, which will supply me with what is required for the district registers, and general statements, all of which we may be assured will afford the Board peculiar satisfaction.*

I am, etc.,

(Signed) ALEXANDER READ,

Superintendent Collector.

TRIPATUR, 25th July, 1797.

* Read's capacity as an administrator must not be judged of by his style of writing. The high estimate in which he was held, not only by Munro, but by Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley, is sufficient evidence that he possessed an ability which it is per-

haps difficult to discern in the awkward and involved language of the foregoing letter. The letter is inserted here, because the questions which it contains, form the subject of Munro's letter of 5th September, 1797, printed on pp. 22—51.

APPENDIX B.*

ON THE MODE OF CONDUCTING A RYOTWÁR SETTLEMENT.

To the President and Members of the Board of Revenue.

GENTLEMEN,

Para. 1. I had, some time ago, the honour to receive your letter of the 9th September last, with a copy of an extract from the Honourable Court of Directors, dated the 6th November, 1805, and of the Minutes of Government thereon, dated the 1st August, 1806; and I shall now, agreeably to the orders of the Board, give as circumstantial an explanation of the manner in which the kúlwár, or individual settlement, is made, as the subject seems to require.

2. This kind of settlement, though it appears intricate and laborious, is so greatly facilitated by a variety of causes, as to render the execution of it easy, to any person of common attention. It is the ancient and universal practice under all the native governments; and hence the Collector has no trouble of introducing a system, but has only to follow that which he finds already established.

Districts are divided into villages under the management of potails, or head farmers, who are, from long habit, perfectly capable of making the settlement of their respective villages; and the ryots, from having been long accustomed to be guided by them, readily agree to what they fix or propose, as it is usually what they themselves know to be the proper rent.

In all villages, the ryots are in the habit of meeting and debating upon the subject of rent; but there are many villages in which they settle among themselves the exact proportion of the whole rent that each individual is to pay. These are called Vísapadi, or sixteenth villages, from the land and rent being divided into sixteenth shares; and they compose a considerable part of the Cuddapah province, which is about one-third of the Ceded Districts, besides being scattered, though more thinly, over other parts of the country. When the season of cultivation draws near, all the ryots of the Vísapadi village assemble to regulate their several rents for the year. The pagoda is the place usually chosen for this purpose, from the idea that its sanctity will render their engagements with each other the more binding. They ascertain the amount of the agricultural stock of each individual, and of the whole body, the quantity of land, to the culture of which it is adequate; and they divide it accordingly, giving to each man the portion which he has the means of cultivating, and fixing his share of the rent; and

* The letters included in this Appendix are inserted as illustrating and elucidating the opinions more briefly

expressed in the paper printed on pp. 107—109, regarding the ryotwár system of land revenue.

whether his share be one or two sixteenths, he pays this proportion, whether the whole rent of the village be higher or lower than last year.

Every village is, in fact, a small collectorate; and where the potail does his duty, the Collector has only to confirm what he has already done. From all these circumstances, together with the aid which is derived from the tahsildárs and their cutcherries, the kúlwár settlement, which on the first view might appear to be an endless task, is so much simplified, that it may be accomplished by any person of ordinary talents and exertion.

3. The chief obstacles in the way of it, arise from false accounts, from doubts concerning the rate of assessment, and from the difficulty of ascertaining the condition of the poorer ryots. There is perhaps no curnum who, in any one year, ever gives a perfectly true statement of the cultivation of his village; and it is only the fear of removal or suspension that can make him give such accounts as are tolerably accurate. The proper rate of assessment is found, either by reference to the accounts of former years, or by comparison with the rent of lands of the same quality which have long been nearly stationary; and the condition of the poorer ryots is learned from the concurring testimony of their neighbours, who at the same time will not exaggerate their poverty, lest the remissions which may in consequence be granted, should fall upon themselves. A short explanation of what takes place in the kúlwár settlement of a single district or tahsildári, will equally apply to the whole number of districts forming a collectorate. I shall here speak of a district in its ordinary state of prosperity, not of one that has been reduced below it, by war or any other calamity.

4. A district paying a revenue of fifty thousand pagodas usually contains about a hundred villages, differing greatly in extent and produce; some of them not paying more than a hundred pagodas, and others as much as five thousand annual rent. Every village has within itself a complete establishment of hereditary revenue servants: a potail to direct the cultivation, realize the rent, and manage its affairs in general; a curnum to keep the accounts; and a certain number of peons to act under the potail, in collecting the kists from the ryots. When the ploughing season begins, the potail ascertains what land each ryot can cultivate; he permits those who may have met with losses to relinquish a part of their land, which he distributes to others, who may be willing to take it; and to such as require none, he continues their former lands. He does not fix their rents, because this is done by the Collector when the season is so far advanced that a judgment can be formed of the crop; but he assures them that their respective rents will continue the same as last year, only making allowance for such alterations as may become unavoidable, from the total revenue of the village being somewhat raised or lowered by the collector: they are satisfied with this promise, receive betel from him as a confirmation of it, and yoke their ploughs. Specific written engagements cannot be made with them at this early period of the year, because, as in annual settlements, where the failure of the crop is great, remissions must be allowed, so where the produce is uncommonly abundant, increase must be taken to balance such failures; because the potail having relations and friends in the village, to whom he would be partial, could not safely be entrusted with the power of fixing rents; and because the ryots themselves will not in this year agree to pay the same rent in the ensuing one, lest they should meet with losses, which would be aggravated by a rent which they might then be unable to bear. The tahsildár goes round his district in the early part of the season. His business is chiefly to regulate culti-

vation in those villages where it is mismanaged from the incapacity of the potail, or impeded by disputes among the principal ryots, and to make advances to the poorer sort for the purchase of feed, ploughs, or cattle. He also ascertains what land each ryot has already cultivated, or engaged to cultivate during the year, which he does by assembling the ryots in their respective villages, and examining them in the presence of the potails and curnums; and accounts of the land occupied and unoccupied are taken by his cutcherry, which accompanies him. He goes round again when the crops are ripening, to see their condition, and to ascertain whether the quantity of land actually cultivated is more or less than that which the ryots had engaged to take.

5. The Collector sets out on his circuit in September or October, when the early crops begin to be reaped, and the late ones to be sown. On arriving in a district he assembles all the ryots of the four or five nearest villages. The first business is, to learn how far the cultivation of the present year is more or less than that of the last. This is soon done, by the help of the tahsildárs' and curnums' accounts, compared with the reports of the potails and ryots. Where there is a decrease, it is commonly owing to deaths, emigrations, or loss of cattle; where there is an increase, it is usually derived from new settlers, or additional lands being occupied by the old ones. In the case of decrease, the rent of the lands thrown up is deducted from the settlement of last year; in that of increase the rent of the land newly occupied is added; and in both cases, the rent of the remaining lands remains the same as before. The rent of the land newly occupied is determined by the accounts of what it was in former times, or if such accounts cannot be procured, by the opinions of the most intelligent ryots; but the full rent of waste land is not exacted, until it has been in cultivation from two to seven years. The number of years, and the gradational rise in each year, depend upon the nature of the land and the custom of the village. They are known to all parties; and all doubts are removed by their being detailed in a proclamation or cowle nāmāh, under the Collector's seal, circulated to every village.

If the cultivation is the same as last year's, and no failures occur among the ryots, the rents remain unaltered. If the crops are bad, and it appears that some of the poor ryots must have a remission, the loss, or a part of it, is assessed upon the lands of the rest, where it can be done without causing any material inconvenience. This assessment never exceeds ten or twelve per cent.; and is much oftener relinquished than carried into effect. In cases where it can be easily borne, it is frequently agreed to without difficulty; and if opposition is made, it is generally soon got over by the mediation of the ryots of the neighbouring villages present. These discuss the point in question with the ryots of the objecting village; tell them that it is the custom of the country; use such other arguments as may be applicable to the subject; and never fail in persuading them to accede to the demand, unless it is really too high, in which event it is lowered. Wherever individuals or villages object to their rent, it is always the most expeditious and satisfactory way of settling the dispute, to refer it to the ryots of other villages, who do more on such occasions in half an hour, than a Collector and his cutcherry in a whole day.

6. The great number of ryots assembled, and the publicity of every operation, are of great use in expediting the settlement. If failures of crops are to be remitted to needy ryots, those who claim indulgence on insufficient grounds cannot succeed, because their neighbours, who are present, object to it; for they will not allow a remission to be given in which they do not themselves partake, unless it is absolutely necessary; and in the same manner, if

rent is anywhere raised too high, the parties on whom it falls, by appealing to the judgment of the ryots of other villages, get an abatement; so that as much aid is derived from the ryots themselves, as from accounts, in making the settlement.

7. When the land in cultivation and its rent have been ascertained, the Collector gives every ryot a patta, with his signature, in which every field he holds, and its rent for the year, are inserted. In most villages, the greatest part of the ryots hold the same field several years, so that among fifty individuals there are not, perhaps, ten whose rights require alteration. When the Collector has finished the first four or five villages, he moves on a few miles, assembles the ryots of the adjacent villages, and having settled their rents, proceeds in the same manner, until he has finished the whole district, which usually requires a month or five weeks. The Sub-Collectors, who have only four or five districts each, make the whole kúlwar settlement personally. My own division is too extensive to be annually settled in detail by one person; and I therefore leave what I cannot accomplish myself, to the district servants. I make the village settlements of every district, and also the kúlwar settlement of one district, in some years, and of one village in each district in others, and direct the rest to be done by the tahsildárs. The tahsildár having one village as a model, is easily enabled to settle the rest in the same way. The rent of each village having been settled by me, he can only add to it by including lands which may have been suppressed by the curnums, and he can only lower it where some of the ryots may have met with great losses. If he lowers it without cause, the ryots who do not share in the remission, object to it and complain; or if, without altering the rent of the village, he lowers that of one ryot and raises that of another unjustly, the ryot on whom the extra rent is thrown complains. Even where the ryots neglect to bring the grievance forward immediately, they hardly ever omit to state it, when assembled for the settlement of the ensuing year; and the tahsildár, knowing that the gross negligence or partiality will be attended with the loss of his place, seldom ventures to make an unfair settlement. There are, however, cases in which he does so, either from ignorance or corrupt motives; but where the Collector is vigilant, they are not frequent. There is, indeed, no possibility of preventing them altogether; for the Collector, when he makes the settlement in person, may be deceived occasionally by the servants of his own cutcherry, who may be dishonest as well as the tahsildár. The business of a Collector is not properly so much to labour through all the details of the settlement, as to make those do it who can do it best. The potails and curnums of villages are the persons most capable of making the settlement correctly; but they cannot be trusted, because they are cultivators themselves, and have always friends and enemies among the ryots. It therefore becomes necessary to employ a tahsildár, who, not being a native of the district, is not so liable to be influenced by partialities. As his attention, too, is confined to a single district, he will consequently know the state of its cultivation better than the Collector or his cutcherry, and will be better qualified than them to make the settlements properly; and hence I have found that the settlements of tahsildárs have usually been better adapted than my own to the circumstances of the ryots.

8. I have described the kúlwar settlement, as it is made in a country in its ordinary state of cultivation; but in one which has suffered from invasion or internal disturbances, and in which a part of the land formerly cultivated

is waste, and the remainder held at a rent considerably below the ancient standard, the process is more tedious and difficult, because it is requisite not only to increase or diminish the rents of such individuals as occupy or throw up land, but to raise the rent of every ryot, by raising the rent of all lands gradually to its former level, following cautiously the improving condition of the ryots. This was done throughout the Ceded Districts for some years; but they have all now, with a very few exceptions, reached their standard assessment. The same mode is followed in raising the general rent of whole villages and districts, as the particular rent of a few individuals. It is effected by the means of accounts, of the opinions of intelligent revenue servants; and, more than all, by the assistance derived from the ryots of one village in assessing those of another.

9. *When a district has been surveyed, and the rent of every field permanently fixed*, the kúlwár settlement becomes extremely simple; for all that is required is to ascertain what fields are occupied by each ryot, and to enter them, with the fixed rents attached to them, in his pattah: their aggregate constitutes his rent for the year. He cannot be called upon for more, but he may obtain an abatement, in case of poverty or extraordinary losses. He has the advantage of knowing in the beginning of the season, when he ploughs his land, the exact amount of what he is to pay; he knows the fixed rents of the different fields which he cultivates, and that the demand upon him cannot exceed their total amount; he knows the utmost limit of his rent, not only for the present, but for every succeeding year; for it cannot be raised unless he takes additional land, and he is thereby the better enabled to provide for the regular discharge of his kists, and against the losses of bad, by the profits of good seasons.

10. The kúlwár settlement, though it may appear tedious, when compared to the village one, is however not only better calculated to realize the revenue, but is, on the whole, a saving of time, because when it is once made, there is no further trouble; but in the village settlement there is so much room for malversation, for many disputes between the potails and ryots, about extra collections on the one hand, and the withholding of rents on the other, that more time is consumed in inquiring into those matters than in the original settlement.

11. The Honourable Court of Directors seem to be apprehensive that too much must be left in the kúlwár settlement to the agency of native servants; but it does not appear to me that such agency can be dispensed with, or that, when properly controlled, any serious evil can result from its employment. Without it, the Company's servants could do little or nothing. The most experienced Collector could hardly make the settlement of ten villages in a whole year; and, after all, it would most likely be done very indifferently. The native servants are restrained, as far as men with inadequate allowances can be restrained, by the same considerations as the public servants in other countries: by the fear of detection, of losing their situations, and of punishment. In all provinces that have been permanently settled, their agency has been used, and it had then a much wider field for abuse than in the kúlwár settlements; because such provinces having been previously settled for some years, by villages, taluks, or other large tracts, without descending lower into detail, and being then disposed of for ever, all inquiry was at an end; so that if the revenue of villages or taluks could be undervalued and concealed for a short period, till the permanent settlement took place, all danger of discovery was over; whereas, under the ryotwár system, the minute process that is

gone through every year, renders the most trifling abuse liable every moment to detection. When the rent of every field has been fixed by survey, there is little room for abuse: it cannot be against the ryot, but may be in his favour, because it can be effected only by reporting cultivated land as waste, or by obtaining remission on false pretences of poverty; but it has already been shown that, from the public manner in which the kúlwár settlement is conducted and the contending interests of the ryots, either of those modes of injuring the revenue can never reach to any extent, or be long concealed. There can be no doubt that the kúlwár settlement is better calculated than any other to bring to view the whole resources of the country; but whether it is equally well adapted to improve them, can perhaps never be certainly known, but by a long trial of its effects in an extensive district.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

(Signed) THOS. MUNRO,

Principal Collector.

KOILKUNTLA, 30th Nov. 1806.

ON THE CAUSES WHICH NECESSITATE REMISSIONS OF REVENUE.

To the Collectors of the Ceded Districts.

GENTLEMEN,

Para. 1. When remissions are required, it is generally owing to some one or more of the following causes:—1st. Peculation of the amildár and other district servants; 2nd. Peculation of the potails and curnums; 3rd. Improvidence of the ryots; 4th. Bad crops and other accidents; 5th. Over-assessment.

2. The amildár's peculations arise either from the public revenue, or from a private assessment. The amildár usually wishes that rents should be low, because the lower they are, the higher he can make his private assessment, and the less probability there is of its being soon discovered; because the potail and ryots, partaking in the benefit, are averse to informing against him. While he confines himself to his private assessment, he may carry on the public collections without leaving any balance outstanding; but, whenever he appropriates any part of them to his own use, he raises a proportionate balance against the district; and the cause of it will very soon be discovered, unless the division servants are concerned with him, and the Collector is himself very indolent. If he is pressed for payment, and attempts to raise the money by an extra assessment, the transaction will certainly be brought to light by some of the inhabitants, either by complaining, or by talking so much of it that it becomes known everywhere, and is carried to the Collector's cutcherry by some person who wishes to recommend himself for employment. The amildár, sensible of the danger of an extra assessment, seldom ventures upon it, but usually prefers the safer mode of fabricating stories of loss of crops and other accidents, and of the inability of the inhabitants to discharge the balances. When such excuses are received, it ought invariably to be concluded, unless the facts are very fully established, that there is something wrong in his conduct, and his removal from office ought to follow without

delay. His successor will find no difficulty in ascertaining the real state of the balances, for, on pressing the villages by which they are reported to be due, the inhabitants, if they have already paid them, will, in order to save themselves, inform against the late amildár.

3. The potails and curnums, when they know that the amildár diverts a part of the public revenue to his own emolument, always follow his example, and thereby augment the outstanding balance. They frequently go further; and levy additional sums from the more substantial cultivators, because they are conscious that the amildár, being himself guilty of malversation, will not dare to bring them to punishment. These last impositions, though they do not affect the balance of the current year, will most likely increase that of the next, or, what is the same thing, diminish the settlement. The potails and curnums can hardly ever make away with any of the public money without the knowledge of the amildár. If in any case they do, it is a proof that he is either very careless or very ignorant, and that he is unfit for his situation. Their influence, particularly when they have obtained by their exertions a favourable assessment for their village, is usually sufficient to make the cultivators conceal the demand for a small private assessment which is always, on such occasions, made upon them, provided that, together with the public one, it does not exceed what their rent ought to have been; but when they attempt to make an extra assessment, to supply any deficiency of the public revenue which they may have embezzled, the cultivators never pay it without opposition: and they will always complain of it to the amildár, unless they suppose that he is a party himself, and will not hear them.

4. The mismanagement of the cultivators is not so frequent a cause of failure as might at first sight be imagined. When they have money sufficient to pay their rents, but do not apply it to that purpose, it is usually expended upon a marriage or in discharging a debt; but as the ryots, when left to themselves, always pay their rent in preference to every other debt, it may generally be suspected, when they act otherwise, that the district or village servants are concerned in the transaction. Many potails and curnums having, under the late Government, embezzled a part of the revenue of their villages, and been forced to make it good, by borrowing money from soukárs, upon bonds running in the names of themselves and their villages, they frequently employed the money collected as revenue in paying these bonds, on pretence that all the ryots were answerable, as well as themselves, for the debt. They call upon them again for the rent, which they have already paid; but, as some of them are unable to comply, an outstanding balance appears against the village. Besides the general debts of the village, the ryots are often so much pressed for their own private debts as to be rendered incapable of discharging their rents. These debts are frequently nothing but the accumulation of exorbitant interest, which the ryots would never pay if they were not afraid of being compelled. When private creditors are permitted to seize the property of the ryots before their rents are paid, it is always to be inferred that they have bribed the amildár; and when the potails are allowed to assess them on account of general bonds, it may be concluded that the amildár has been guilty of peculation, and that he cannot support the cultivators, lest the potail should inform against him.

5. Bad crops are the chief cause of failures, and consequently of remissions; and they are also frequently brought forward as a plea for obtaining remissions, without any absolute necessity. All complaints regarding them should therefore be received with very great caution. Were an investigation

to be ordered whenever a cultivator thought proper to solicit an indulgence for his loss, claims would soon become so numerous that all the revenue servants in the country would not be able to examine one-half of them. The cultivators would likewise have no difficulty, even in a favourable year, of showing a real loss of eight or ten per cent. of the whole revenue; because in every village, in every season, there are a few fields whose produce is not equal to their rent; and these fields only would be mentioned as cause of distress and failure; while those whose crops had been more abundant, having probably been already reaped, there would be no means of determining how far the deficiency of produce, in the one case, was counterbalanced by the excess in the other. Were it even possible to estimate exactly the actual loss in every year, it would not follow that it ought to be remitted; for the same cultivators who have lost this year may have gained last, and as no extra assessment was then laid upon their profit, no remission can now fairly be claimed for their loss. Whatever may have been the crop, should it have been even less than the seed, they should always be made to pay the full rent, if they can; because good and bad seasons being supposed to be equal in the long run, the loss is merely temporary, and the making of it good is only applying to the deficiency of a year of scarcity the funds which have arisen from one of abundance. Though there is no rule by which a positive judgment can be formed whether or not a ryot who asks a remission can pay his rents, it may, in most cases, be discovered by ordering the amount of his failure to be assessed upon the village; for, as the other inhabitants are usually well acquainted with his circumstances, if he has any means of answering the demand against him, they will point them out, in order to exempt themselves from being burthened with it. In the same manner, when a village fails, if the balance upon it is assessed upon the neighbouring villages, the desire of saving themselves from additional taxation will induce the ryots of those villages to find and give information how far the failing village may be able to pay the whole or a part of its balance. When individual balances are to be levied upon the village by which they are due, great care should be taken lest the rigorous exaction of them should so much distress the inhabitants as to disable them from cultivating their usual quantity of land the ensuing year. The amount of this second assessment ought seldom or ever to exceed ten per cent. of the rent of the ryots of the muzera, or inferior village, on which it is imposed. If a balance still remains, it should be assessed upon all the muzeras which constitute the mouza, but not in a greater proportion than ten per cent. of the rent. Should a part of the balance yet remain unextinguished, it ought to be remitted, because the inhabitants are extremely averse to contributing to the losses of any village but their own, and because, if more than an additional ten per cent. is raised upon the mouza in whose muzera the failure has risen, there is great danger of its occasioning a considerable decrease of cultivation the following season. When individuals are pressed for balances, the extent of the consequent loss can never exceed the sum of their particular rents; but when a whole village is laid under a greater second assessment than it can bear, it may hereafter cause a very serious diminution of revenue. Whenever the failure of the crops gives reason to apprehend that there will be a balance against any village, the amildâr ought to repair to the spot without delay; ascertain, with the assistance of the inhabitants of it and the neighbouring villages, what sum it will be necessary to raise by a second assessment; and, after making known to every ryot the additional amount he is to pay, take measures for its being collected with the last or two last kists. When the loss, however, appears in a village whose inhabitants are able to make it good, the

amildár ought to take no notice of it, but proceed with his collections in the same manner as if there had been a plentiful crop; for the necessity of making remissions is much lessened by giving the ryots no encouragement to expect them.

6. When over-assessment is the cause of an outstanding balance, it ought to be remitted; for it would be unjust to exact more from the cultivators than their lands can possibly yield. Cases of failure from over-assessment alone are, however, very rare; because the potails, at the time of the settlement, always refuse to take their pattaas if it is too high, and always obtain a reduction when they show clearly that it is over-rated. Their own enmities are the most common source of over-assessment; for one potail often exaggerates the produce of the village of another, or offers more for it than it is really worth, with the intention of supplanting his rival, and making the ryots pay the loss. He ought to be obliged to pay it himself, as far as his means go; and, if they are not sufficient, the difference ought to be remitted. If, by any mistake or false information, one muzera in a mouza is rated too high and another too low, a second assessment ought to be laid upon the under-rated muzera, and applied to the discharge of the balance.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

(Signed) THOS. MUNRO,

Principal Collector.

CUDDAPAH, 25th August, 1802.

ON THE THREE MODES OF MAKING A RYOTWÁR SETTLEMENT.

To the Collectors of the Ceded Districts.

GENTLEMEN,

Para. 1. In making the annual revenue settlements there are three ways which are usually followed, and which have each, according to particular circumstances, their claim to preference. The first is, to make the mouzawár, or village settlement, of a whole district at once, and then to proceed to the kúlwár, or individual settlement, with every inhabitant of each village; the second is, to make the village settlement of one village, and then the individual settlement of it, before beginning with another; and the third is, to begin by settling with each individual of one village separately, and then, by adding their rents together, to make the village settlement.

2. The first mode, that of beginning with a general village settlement of a whole district, is that which I always observe myself, not only because it has in itself many advantages, but because no other would answer in a division so extensive as mine. It is much more expeditious, and is also frequently as correct as the others. By assembling all the potails and curnums of a district in one place, there is a better chance of obtaining speedy and even accurate knowledge of its actual state of cultivation, than there is by meeting them in their respective villages; because, besides the usual information to be derived from the curnums' accounts, there is always a great deal obtained from discharged curnums who wish to be restored, and from persons without employment residing in the different villages, who are desirous of renting them. By drawing intelligence from so many different sources, it usually happens that

the produce of some villages is more fully brought forward than that of others. But, as the potails and curnums of such villages are averse to being higher assessed than their neighbours, they seldom fail to disclose whatever they know of their concealed resources; and, in this manner, the total actual produce of the district is soon known; and after the gross amount of the assessment is once fixed, should it still fall so heavy on any particular villages, it is easily equalized by the potails themselves, with the assistance of the catcherry. When neither the accounts of the curnums, nor any other information, raise the revenue so high as there is reason to think that it ought to be, and when it is therefore thought advisable to try the dangerous experiment of increasing the assessment, not from the accounts of the current year, but from the presumption that the produce, being known from authentic documents to have been much greater some years ago, cannot possibly be now so much diminished as it is represented to be, the additional rent which may be imposed upon the district on such an occasion is in general very readily partitioned by the potails and curnums among their respective villages. It is, however, very hazardous to attempt to raise the revenue upon such uncertain foundations; for there is often more mischief done by one year of over-assessment, than can be remedied by seven of moderation. Revenue servants who have had much experience, can easily ascertain, from the manner in which the potails and curnums proceed in distributing the extra assessment, whether or not there be really a corresponding extra produce. When they divide the extra assessment in a certain proportion among all the villages, it is usually a proof that the first assessment had been to the produce nearly in the same rates in them all; but it is no proof that it is too low. When they divide the extra assessment unequally, it is a strong indication that at least those villages on which the greatest additional weight is thrown, had before been under-rated. The chief objections to making a settlement of all the villages of a district at once are, that it is sometimes detrimental to cultivation, by keeping the potails and curnums away from their villages when their presence is wanted to promote it, and that, by bringing the heads of villages together, it enables them to form combinations to prevent the raising of the assessment, which they would not otherwise have thought of. Their being assembled is, however, much more frequently attended by a contrary effect; for private quarrels, and their jealousy of any of their neighbours obtaining more favourable terms than themselves, most commonly urge them rather to exaggerate the value of each other's villages, than to form any concert for their mutual benefit. In my division, the settlement of all the villages composing a district is always made at once, and the *kulwár*, or individual settlement, is afterwards made by the *amildár*; but as few *amildárs*, who have not before been in the Company's service, have ever seen a *kulwár* settlement, people are sent from the catcherry to carry it into execution in all those districts where it is thought that it cannot be safely entrusted to the *amildár*.

3. The second mode, that of making the assessment of each village separately, is a very common one. It is less liable to be either too high or too low than the district settlement; because the state of a tank, or of the cultivation of particular fields, about which there may be a dispute, can be readily ascertained by sending some person on the spot; because those who are to make the settlements have also an opportunity of observing the general state of agriculture among the lands of the village; because it can be easily discovered whether those ryots who are reported by the curnums to

have emigrated, are present or not; and because the amount of the *muhtarfa*, or taxes on trades, can be more accurately determined at the village itself, than anywhere else. When the village settlement is once fixed, that of the different cultivators is greatly facilitated; because the *potail* and *curnum*, knowing that a certain sum must be levied, give every assistance, except perhaps in the case of a few of their own relations, to make a fair distribution of it, and because the cultivators, for the same reason, agree without much difficulty to their several proportions; and as the discovery of every unauthorized *inám* or cultivated *sirkár* field not brought to account, lightens their particular assessment, a regard for their own interest encourages them to give information of many frauds of this nature, which could not otherwise have been so readily detected. Though an *amildár* may visit and settle every village separately, a Collector, who has the management of five or six districts, must settle two, three, or more villages in one place; for, were he not to do so, the season would be over before he could finish his settlement. He has, in this way, more people to give him information of the state of these villages, than he could have had by going to each of them separately.

4. The third kind of settlement, the *kúlwár* or individual settlement, if the *curnums'* accounts could be depended upon, would naturally be the best, because the stock of cattle, and the quantity and quality of land belonging to each cultivator, being known, it would be easy to fix his rent; and that of all the cultivators added together, would form the land rent of the village. But, as the *curnums'* accounts are always false, to begin with fixing the rents of the cultivators would not only be the most tedious, but the most unequal of all settlements. Every single cultivator objects to his own assessment. When the *cutcherry* servants, by stating the quantity of his land and the rent that had been drawn from it in preceding years, endeavour to convince him that the assessment is moderate, and that he ought to agree to it, he urges all the excuses commonly brought forward by that class of men: that grain is now very cheap; that some of his cattle are dead; that he is poor, and cannot cultivate his land without an abatement of rent. He is privately encouraged by the *potail* and principal farmers to give as much opposition as possible; because they all, in their turns, intend to do the same, and they hope that, if he can obtain a reduction of his rent, they may also, under the same pretences, expect the same indulgence. Every *ryot* is usually sufficiently careful of his own interest to dispute about his rent, whether it is high or low; but should there even be some among them who, being satisfied with it, have no thoughts of starting objections, the fear of the *potails'* displeasure, and of the reproaches of the other *ryots* for deserting the common cause, induces them to raise as many difficulties as any of the rest. Much time is consumed in thus debating upon the rent of every individual; and if the revenue servants, either believing their representations of their distress, or wishing to expedite the settlement, allow some abatement of rent to those who are reckoned the poorest, they find that the aggregate of these remissions not only causes a considerable loss of rent, but increases the difficulty of settling other villages, by encouraging the *ryots* to insist on a similar, or perhaps a greater, reduction. The *ryots* who dispute the most obstinately, even though their rents are already too low, are the most likely to get a further abatement; and those who are less noisy and litigious are most liable to have their rents, perhaps already too high, raised still higher. It may be thought that the *ryots* being collected together in one place, no one would allow the land of another to be more favourably rated than his own, without complaining. This usually takes

place in villages where none of the ryots are very poor—where there are few in number, and nearly on a footing with regard to property. In such cases, they generally insist upon a fair division of the assessment; but in most other villages, in which both the poorest and the most substantial ryots are found, the assessment is for the most part unequal, and is always most favourable to the relations of the potal, and to such other ryots as hold out the most stubbornly.

5. *When a country has been surveyed*, the individual supersedes both the village and district settlement, because it is then no longer necessary to waste time in endeavouring to persuade the cultivators to accede to the assessment. The rent of every field being fixed, each cultivator takes or rejects what he pleases, and the rents of all the fields occupied in the course of the year in any one village form what is called the settlement of that village. But where no survey has been made, either the settlement with all the villages of a district at once, or that with three or four at a time in succession, must always be adopted. Besides the reasons already mentioned, the various accidents that affect the crop render it convenient to make the village precede the kúlwár settlement, because, though the general state of cultivation in a village may be known early in the season, the particular lands on which the crop may thrive or fail, can never be ascertained until it is pretty far advanced; and as the assessment of individuals must, in some manner, be regulated by the produce, the more advanced the harvest season is when their rents are fixed, the more likely are they to be proportioned to their means of discharging them. This system operates, no doubt, in many cases, as a tax upon industry and an encouragement to idleness; but as there is at present no other method of securing the realization of the public revenue, it must be continued until the country is surveyed, when every man will be made to pay, not according to the quantity of his crop, but of his land.

6. Though the crop should be considerably advanced before the individual settlement is begun, yet it ought not to be delayed beyond this period; and the sooner it is then finished, the better. If it were possible, it would be of great benefit to the inhabitants that it could be effected by the time the first kist becomes due; because every cultivator, knowing the full amount of his rent, and having the whole of his crop on hand, would see at once how far it was likely to answer the demand upon him, and would thereby be the more enabled to turn it to the greatest advantage. If it was more than sufficient, he would lay up a part to sell late in the year, when the price had risen to its highest pitch. If it was inadequate, he would still endeavour, by selling it only by degrees in proportion to his kists, and by curtailing his expenses, to pay his rent. But when his rent is not settled till after most of the kists have been collected, it is sometimes higher than he expected. He has probably not been so careful or economical as he would have been, had he known the amount of it earlier, and he is, therefore, unable to make it good. On the other hand, while he remains in his state of uncertainty, he sometimes suspects, without cause, that his rent will be raised higher than is actually intended. He perceives that his grain will not equal the demand against him; and he sells it off in a hurry at a low price, and absconds with the produce. It is, therefore, of importance that the individual settlement should never be longer delayed than is absolutely necessary; for the same bad consequences often ensue from uncertainty, as from a higher assessment.

7. Whenever the individual settlement of a district is completed, pattahs for every ryot paying rent to Government should be made out by the curnums,

according to the form prescribed in my letter of the 30th August, and transmitted to the cutcherry, to be signed by you, after having been compared. You should give them yourself to the inhabitants of the villages near the spot where you happen to be at the time : in all other places they may be delivered by the amildar. It is proper that every pattah should have your signature, because the inhabitants have more confidence in it than in that of the amildar or potail. They know it is intended to guard them against extra demands ; any they will be more likely to refuse compliance with them, when they have such a voucher in their possession. It likewise teaches them to look up to you, instead of the native servants : and, though they may not have courage to resist the demand in the village, to come forward afterwards with the complaint. They have always been so much accustomed to arbitrary exactions, that it is very difficult to prevail upon them, at least upon the poorer classes, to oppose them. But nothing tends sooner to convince them that there is a limit to assessment, and to encourage them to reject all extra impositions, than the general distribution of pattahs by the Collector.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

(Signed) THOMAS MUNRO,

Principal Collector.

CHITVEL, 30th September, 1802.

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