

THE
TRAVANCORE
LAND REVENUE MANUAL
VOL. IV.

LAND REVENUE HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES UP TO 925 M. E. THE YEAR OF THIRUPADIDANOM.

Close connection between political history and land revenue system—Origin of jennom tenure—Incidence of jennom tenure—Early history. Want of reliable data—Parthivasekharapuram grant—Constitution of Ettarayogam—Sripandaravaga lands—Importance of Devaswoms from the earliest times—Taxes in vogue in the 3rd century M. E. at Cape Comorin—Gift of lands to Cape Comorin temple by the Pandian king—Annexation of Nanjinad—Administration of Nanjinad in the early days—Old limits of Travancore—Old administrative divisions and special tenures—Manalikara inscription of 410 M. E.—Existence of some special taxes—Origin of Sreepadom Edavaga—Control over Vycome temple—Reign of Chera Udaya Marttanda Varmah—Special taxes for the support of the army and navy—Construction of Veerapuli Dam—Exemption from certain taxes granted to the Paravas of Cape Comorin—Cess known as Anjali—Remission of taxes in Nanjinad owing to Thirumala Naik's invasion—Vilinjiam granted to the English East India Company—Territorial divisions in 839 M. E.—Anjengo granted to the English East India Company—Factory of the Dances at Edawa—Administrative changes in the 9th century—Troubles in Nanjinad—Edawa granted to the English in 901 M. E.—Origin of Kilimanur Edavaga—Land Revenue system and administration in 903 M. E.—Grants of land by sovereigns for religious and charitable purposes—Origin of Sirkar lands—Commencement of modern history, 904 M. E.—Gardens in Palatady and Kottudali granted to the Anjengo factory—Construction of the Puthen Dam and Puthenar Channel—Sovereignty of Attingal transferred by the Rani to the Maharajah—Settlement of 914 M. E.—Main features of that settlement—Available records relating thereto—Period of the settlement operations—Scope of the settlement—Tenures in vogue—Extra cesses—Analogy between Sirkar and Sripandaravaga tenures—Items of information contained in the available records—Old features still in existence—Augmentation of the State Ayacut due to Marttanda Varmah Rajah's extensive conquests—Irrigation works in Nanjinad—Construction of irrigation tanks in Nanjinad—Constitution of the village and taluk organization—Thirupadidanom in 925 M. E.

In all countries, the land revenue system is closely connected with and mostly determined by its political history. It is well known that as soon as a State is formed or acquired by conquest or treaty, the ruling power considers it its first duty to settle the land revenue. The administration of the land including the ascertainment and collection of the land revenue is the chief function and the main-stay of the central Government. It is natural, therefore, that with every change in the ruling power and the vicissitudes in the political history, the land revenue system should undergo modifications in a greater or less degree. This is exemplified in the history of all countries. In India, at the time of the Aryan conquest and colonization, a land revenue

system based on the precepts and principles laid down by the ancient law-givers was introduced, which continued for several centuries with local variations in regard to minor details without affecting the main principles of the system. The main principle was that the Sovereign or State was entitled to a share of the produce. With the advent of the Mahomedan power, this system underwent some change. Though the principle of taking a share of the produce as the revenue due to Government was recognised, the extent of the lands was brought under calculation and a lump sum was fixed for each area and the revenue was farmed out among a number of officials or local agents who, in course of time, rose in importance and assumed regal functions. The British Government who succeeded the Mahomedan rulers maintained the system adopted by the latter, but introduced several important changes calculated to remove anomalies, reduce the burden and secure uniformity and fixity in the Government demand. This was effected by gradual changes which found their consummation in a scientific survey and settlement which, with all its imperfections, is the pride and glory of the British Indian administration.

Travancore, as forming an integral part of Kerala, has had a peculiar origin and history, which has given it a land revenue system unique in many respects. Unlike the rest of Kerala, Travancore has continued all along without being conquered or subjugated by any foreign power. This has enabled it to retain the old system unimpaired. As observed by the compiler of the 'Selections from the Records of Travancore', "Travancore is one of the very few remaining specimens of a pure Hindu Government, the institutions of which have never been affected by Mahomedan conquest". In no respect is this more true than in regard to the land revenue system obtaining in Travancore.

2. The most striking feature of the Travancore land revenue system, which is traceable to its early political history, is the 'jenmom' tenure which is peculiar in its origin and incidence of taxation. There are different theories regarding the origin of the 'jenmom' tenure which have been propounded by various authorities. The following extracts contain some of the important pronouncements on the question:

Sir T. Madava Row's Memo on the Jenmi and Tenant question. pp. 2-3.

"7. A Jenmi is often termed a landlord. But, it must be clearly understood and also always remembered that a Jenmi, though certainly a landlord, is a *peculiar kind of landlord*.

"8. *Any person, who holds a pattah from a Collector in a British District and under it holds lands from the British Government subject to Government tax more or less, is called a landholder in ordinary language. Even in Travancore, any coffee*

“or indeed any ryot who holds lands under a grant from the Sirkar &c., is or may be called a landlord. But, be it remembered, *such* landlords are not *Jenmis*.

“9. A Jenmi differs from such landlords in that he does *not derive his title to lands from the Sirkar &c.* His title to the Jenmom lands is *inherent*. He is, so far as his Jenmom lands are concerned, *a little territorial sovereign* in a limited sense. He is landlord of his Jenmom domain exactly in the sense in which this Sirkar is landlord of all the land it grants to planters and indeed to all ryots in general; in the sense in which the British Government is landlord of all the Ryotwaree lands of the East Coast Zillahs of the Madras Presidency.

“10. It is necessary, in view to avoid errors and misconceptions, to familiarize the mind to this definition of a Jenmi.

“11. The origin of Jenmom property may be briefly explained here with a view to make the rights of Jenmis clear. Kerala Dasom (in which Travancore is included) was originally conquered by Parasurama, and this great warrior parcelled out the conquered lands among a limited number of Brahmins. The Brahmins then became territorial lords, each independent of the rest. From that early age, the lands have descended with the tenure almost unimpaired. The lands so belonging to each Brahmin are said to constitute his Jenmom, and the Brahmin himself is called a Jenmi. These lands, so long as they continue in possession of the Jenmi, *are free of all taxation*. To this day this exemption continues in full force.

“12. Jenmom lands are precisely what are in Europe called allodial properties as contra-distinguished from feudal.

“13. It must be clear from what has been stated that all the lands in Travancore belong to a body of Jenmis. There are no lands that do not belong to some Jenmi or other.

“14. Be it remembered that the Sirkar itself is one of these Jenmis, it having come to possess Jenmom lands by gift, purchase, escheat, confiscation and other ways. It is only a great Jenmi, great in the sense that its Jenmom property is extensive.

“15. If any person wants land in Travancore, he must obtain it from, and hold it of, some one of the body of Jenmis, *i. e.*, from the Sirkar, which is the chief Jenmi, or from some other Jenmi.”

The Madras Revenue Register, Vol. IV. pp. 34-36 (1870).

“We are indebted to the *Indian Economist* for an explanation of the peculiar character of the tenure on which land is owned on the Western Coast. Unfortunately, the source to which we ^{revenue} _{degree} ^{pint} presents us with but part of an able paper on the subject, by that talented indigenous statesman, Sir T. Madava

“Row, K. C. S. I., the Dewan, or Prime Minister, of the Maharajah of Travancore; and we have, therefore, thought it best to defer extracting the Dewan’s memorandum into our columns until we are in a position to present it in its entirety to our readers. Meanwhile, it may be of interest to our readers to know what a *jennum* and *jenmee* really mean. Any practitioner who has had to deal with appeals from the Western Coast must be familiar with these names and several others; but we dare venture to say that he will own himself to have been often puzzled with the complication of questions connected with holdings, which have passed through a variety of stages from the full proprietorship of a *jenmee* to the precarious tenure of a conditional *kanomdar*. Of course, Sir T. Madava Row confines his attention to the lands comprised within the Travancore Sirkar; but there is no doubt that the state of things which prevails in that territory prevails also in the adjoining lands of British Malabar. Before one involves himself in the mazes of sub-tenancy, it will be advantageous to know what are the elementary principles of land-owning on the Western Coast. The original land-owner is called a *jenmee*, and his estate is called his *jennum*. As far as we are aware, we have no corresponding landlord and estate in the Madras Presidency, with the exception of Malabar, answering to the description of a *jenmee* and his *jennum*. The nearest approach is a *mirasdar*; but not only does great uncertainty prevail as to the exact title of a *mirasdar*; but as will appear, he differs in one great essential, which completely takes away from any resemblance to the Malayalam landlord. From what the Travancore Dewan tells us, the *jenmee* is the hereditary proprietor of the soil, paying no tax whatever to the Sovereign. If the *mirasdar* is what he professes himself to be, he may be the hereditary owner of the soil, but he does not escape the payment of assessment to the State for the land he enjoys. Herein is the distinction. The *jenmee* of the Malayalam country is an absolute freeholder, and possesses entire immunity from all taxation on account of his land. This state of things is attributed to an act of the great warrior Parasu Rama, who, our readers are doubtless aware, was the uncompromising champion of the Brahmins, and is said to have even exterminated the Chattryas (or king’s caste) for an insult offered to the superior tribe. The whole of Kerala Desam, in which Travancore is included, was conquered, it appears, by Parasu Rama, and by him allotted to a number of Brahmins as absolute owners. We have heard, however, of another tradition which attributes the creation itself of Malabar to the great power of Parasu Rama. This tradition states that the whole of the Western Coast was once submerged, and that Parasu Rama commanded the ocean to retire, and thus reclaimed Malabar towards the end of the Krita yuga; and that it is in commemoration of this mode of acquisition, that the giving of water to drink by the *jenmee* to his transferee is a necessary symbol of every such transfer. These Brahmin proprietors, who

“ were the recipients of Parasu Rama’s munificence, and their superior known as Numboories, were not merely feudal lords, but the sovereign territorial lords, each independent of the rest, and each independent as to his possession of the State, therein again differing from mirasdars, who hold in common. The Sirkar itself has no property in the soil, except in those lands or estates which have been acquired in the way of purchase, gift, or escheat; and in this respect, it becomes no more nor less than a *jenmee*, like any other *jenmee* holding original proprietorship. Thus, a *jenmee* in Malabar differs altogether from the landlords of the rest of the Madras Presidency, who, whether as Zemindars, Mutahtars, or ryots, hold entirely of the Government. As Sir T. Madava Row puts it, the title of the *jenmee* is *inherent*; and, as far as his *jennum* lands are concerned, he is ‘*a little territorial sovereign*’ by virtue of ownership. In other words, ‘*jennum* lands are precisely what are, in Europe, called allodial properties, as contradistinguished from feudal.’ We all know what feudal means. Notwithstanding its immediate Teutonic derivation, it evidently comes from the Latin word *fidelitas*, signifying obligation or fealty to a superior. Thus a *fief*, or feudal tenure, was the right of a tenant to hold lands or hereditaments in trust for his lord, the tenant using and taking the profits of the land hereditarily, and rendering in return certain services to his lord; the property of the soil, however, always remaining in the lord or superior. On the other hand, allodial land was that which was held independently of a lord paramount; an *allodium* being a freehold estate which was the absolute property of the owner, subject to no rent, service, or acknowledgment of a superior. It is said that in England there is no allodial land, all land being held of the Crown, while in America property is mostly allodial; and this would appear to be the case in the Malayalum country from the circumstance of its original partition among, and free bestowal on, the Numboory Brahmins by the conqueror Parasu Rama.

“ This would undoubtedly appear to be the theory of original ownership of the soil on the Western Coast; but we doubt whether practically it exists in the present day within that part of the Malayalum country which has fallen to the British Government. We cannot think that the paw of the lion has not been laid on the Malabar landlords, and that one way or another all land in that province has not been made to contribute its quota to the great Land Revenue of the country. Let us, however, confine ourselves to the Western Coast theory of landed rights, which Sir T. Madava Row assures us is strictly respected in practice within the limits of the Travancore Sirkar; for he distinctly states that there the *Jennum* lands, ‘so long as they continue in possession of the *Jenmee*, are free of all taxation,’ and that the exemption continues in full force to the present day. The Sirkar itself is but a *jenmee*, as respects those lands which it has acquired by escheat, or otherwise; and, as respects other lands belonging to

"Private jennies, it has no more right over them than one jennee of ~~as~~ over any land which is not his jennum. The theory, then, in Malabar and the practice in Travancore are, if a man wants land, he must obtain it from, and hold it under, some jennee. Except in the case of waste lands, we presume that but very little land is now at the disposal of the jennies, all cultivable land having passed into the hands of the real landlords, while theoretically ownership still continues in the original proprietors. Indeed, the Travancore Dewan tells us that such is the case. He says: 'In value and area such lands', *i. e.*, jennum lands, 'are of great importance, and they are held by thousands of individuals. The primary owners of such properties are mostly the Numboory Brahmins; but the lands are actually in possession of others in the character of tenants'."

*His Highness the late Maha Rajah's contribution to a
Calcutta Magazine.*

"According to all legends and all available evidence, the Malabar Coast was populated by Aryan emigrants from the eastern side of the ghauts. It is equally a fact that the priestly class not only predominated among the emigrants, but actually monopolised the whole of the land of their adoption to themselves, the rest of the emigrant population being their drawers of water and hewers of wood, their serfs or at the most, their tenants-at-will. But to stereotype the configuration of society for all time to come, is as much an impossibility as to fix that of the clouds of the sky. Aggregations and segregations of power, influence and wealth, must ever and anon go on under the guidance of the universal law of struggle for existence and survival of the best. Those priests are the wisest, and consequently the most powerful, who, without directly arrogating secular power to themselves, can bring into the meshes of their moral influence, those in whose hands that universal law places such power. The ecclesiastics of the Malabar Coast knew this as instinctively as the ecclesiastics of Rome. But they had the additional advantage of having something more solid than benedictions and indulgences to confer upon their political stewards, *viz.*, sovereignty of the land which exclusively belonged to them. They were equally wise and far-sighted in another step they took. They foresaw that the halo of sanctity which encircled themselves might not be proof against the gradual degeneracy of religious feelings which time must produce, and the consequent encroachment upon their supremacy in the land. And they constitutionalized that sanctity by demising large tracts of land and their revenues to certain temples built and consecrated by them. Men who would not hesitate to rob a priest may still hesitate to commit sacrilege on an object of general religious worship. Of these temples, the priests assumed the proprietary wardenship. Almost every temple of note had a synod of these priestly wardens. They invited the leading layman or chief to a membership of the synod and entrusted to him the

“stewardship of the whole temple domain, subject to their superior authority. Thus arose those rich temples. Thus arose the sovereignties of the Malabar Coast.”

*Dewan Mr. Sashiah Sastri's Administration Report for
1048 and 1049.*

“200. Jenmom lands.—The *Jenm lands* may be sub-divided into (1) Davaswom, (2) Brainaswom, those held by pagodas, and those by Brahmins.

“201. The normal condition of the Jenm tenure is *absolute freedom from tax of any kind* and the tenure dates from the remotest period of antiquity when according to tradition the ‘Kerala’ country was reclaimed from the sea and parcelled out by Parasu Rama among a colony of *Brahmins*, who are still known as the sixty-four villagers or communities.

“202. The tenure, however, ceases the moment it passes into *alien* hands (that is, not jenmis) for a *money* consideration whatever the nature of the transaction.

“203. The mere letting out of the lands for annual rent to a tenant for whatever period does not vitiate the tenure.

“204. The moment an alienation (kanum or mortgage) does take place, the land becomes liable to a light tax called Rajabhogam amounting in the case of gardens to $\frac{1}{6}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ of the full rental (Venpauttom or Kundapauttom,) and in the case of paddy lands to nearly the same proportions of grain rent, that is, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{10}$ or $\frac{1}{10}$ of the quantity of *seed* required to sow the land, while the *full grain-rent* would be represented by an average of 3 times the quantity of seed. Thus, if the Kundapauttom of the alienated garden was fanams 100, the Rajabhogam (or Karum) or tax would be nearly $16\frac{1}{2}$ or $12\frac{1}{2}$ fanams and, in the case of paddy lands, if the land was one parah khandum, that is a block of land which would require one parah of seed, the full grain-rent would be 3 parahs. The light tax chargeable would be only $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{10}$, $\frac{1}{10}$ of one parah.

“205. Even if the mortgage is afterwards redeemed by the Jenmi, the light tax continues to sit on the back of the land for ever and ever at the same rate without variation except for worse, that is, if in this condition the mortgagee dies heirless, the Sircar seizes the tenure, (*i. e.*, succeeds to the mortgagee's money), transfers the land to the head ‘Sircar’ and pays to the Jenmi (landlord) the residue of rent (Michavarom) if any was paid to him by the deceased. Again, if the land is abandoned (Nirthul) by the Kanom holder on account of its becoming unfit for cultivation, from various causes, it is at once transferred to ‘Sircar’ and granted as a new Sircar Pattom tenure, if it is ever reclaimed.

“206. A Jenmi, as a rule, never alienates absolutely (Uttipare) except to other Jenmis whether Brahmins or Davaswoms (Pagodas.)

"207. The 'Madambimars' are, in common parlance, also called Jenmis, though strictly speaking they are not, because their lands are *sui generis*, subject to the *Rajabhogam* whether in their own hands or alienated to others. They are generally Nairs or others *not* Brahmins.

"208. These also seldom alienate by *absolute sale*; if they do, the tenure is extinguished as with Jenmom lands, the land is transferred to 'Sircar,' the purchase money, less a fine of 25 per cent. is given credit for, and interest is allowed on the 75 per cent. only, the remainder of interest being *added* to the existing *Rajabhogam Karom*, which will still be much short of full *Pattom* or rent of the land. At every alienation, however, this fine of 25 per cent. is levied till some times the purchase money entirely disappears, and interest added to *Rajabhogam* which continues unabated may absorb all the *rental* and even exceed it."

*His Highness the late Maha Rajah's Memo dated 10th May 1882
on "Janmi and Kanam Rights in Travancore."*

"2. Unlike in the greater portion of British India where, in theory the Government is the Lord of all lands, in the Malabar coast, including Travancore, there are Janmis, mostly Brahmins, who have from time immemorial, been unquestionably accepted as lords of the greater portion of the land.

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"14. The Janmis *were* sovereigns at one time or rather they had the power of making or electing sovereigns. They were very much in the same position as the Electors of Germany—the Grand Dukes, Landgraves, Margraves &c., of the Middle Ages. As such their power in the long run was superior even to the person that wielded sovereign power for the time being, for they could, by combined influence, make or unmake a sovereign while the sovereign could never make or unmake a Janmi.

"15. Such was their position. But the all sweeping influence of time has effected a complete revolution. The gradual formation of native *dynasties*, their permanency and aggrandisement of political power, the conquests of Tippu Sultan and lastly the advent of the British Government, have completely changed that order of things. The Janmis who *had* more than sovereign powers formerly *are* now virtually ordinary subjects.

"They have no power or privileges of sovereignty. They cannot levy taxes, make war, dispense justice, punish crime or compel a defaulting tenant to pay his dues. The very fact of their resorting to the established law Courts of the realm proves their acceptance of their position as subjects and the recognition of the same by the State."

Dewan Mr. Ramiengar's Settlement Memorandum.

pp. 11-13.

“46. The land tenures of Travancore may be classed under two broad heads:—

- I. Jenmom.
- II. Sirkar.

The former is of three kinds—namely:—

(a) Jenmom lands which are entirely free-hold and exempt from payment of any revenue to Government under any circumstances,

(b) Jenmom lands which originally are exempt from the payment of any revenue to Government, but which subsequently become liable to it under certain conditions, and

(c) Jenmom property subject *ab initio* to the payment of a light demand.

“47. Of the first class are certain entire proverties and desoms or tracts of territory and a few detached gardens belonging to individuals or institutions, which are exempt from taxation of any kind and are wholly free from Government interference in matters of revenue administration. * * *

“48. Under the second head (b) fall all Devaswoms and Brahmaswoms which are only other names for what are called Devadayams and Brahmadayams on the other coast. They are in other words property belonging to pagodas and Brahmins respectively. The former are represented by their managers, the latter by the descendants of the original jenmies.

“49. The peculiarities of this jenmom tenure are:—

(1) That its normal condition is absolute freedom from taxation.

(2) That this condition ceases the moment the land passes into the hands of *others than Devaswom or Brahmin Jenmies* for a money consideration, provided that the mere letting out of the lands to a tenant for rent does not vitiate the tenure.

(3) That on such alienation taking place, the land becomes liable to light tax to Government called rajabhogam which is a fee or light tax paid in acknowledgment apparently of fealty to the Sovereign. The rate of rajabhogam varies and is said to be $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ of the full assessment. Except the first two rates, however, the others are exceptional.

(4) That the light assessment continues for ever a burden on the estate, even though the kanom is redeemed.

(5) That if the kanomdar dies heirless, the land lapses to the Sirkar, the Jenmi being entitled only to any residue of rent (michavarom) payable to him by the deceased, and

“(6) That if the kanomdar abandons the land as unfit for cultivation (nirthal), the Sirkar takes it and grants it again to any body who asks for it on full assessment. * * *

“51. The third head (c) comprises all Jenmom lands held by what are called Madambimars who are generally Nair or other chieftains not Brahmins. The characteristics of this tenure are:—

(1) That the lands are from the beginning subject to the rajabhogam tax which is levied whether they are in the hands of the Madambimars or others,

(2) That the tenure holds good so long as the land is not alienated by absolute sale, and

(3) That if an absolute sale takes place, the tenure becomes extinguished and the land is transferred to another class of tenures called Otti which will be noticed further on. * * *

“53. All lands other than Jenmom are known as Pandaravagai or Sirkar property. Both the theory and practice in respect to them is that Government is primarily the land-lord and that whatever rights in them vest in the ryots have been derived from the State. If the theory that originally all lands were Jenmom property is correct, doubtless the Sirkar lands are lands which in process of time have become vested in the Government by escheat or otherwise.”

*Mr. Shungarasoobyer's Memorandum on Settlement,
appended to Mr. Ramiengar's Memorandum.*

“13. The proprietary interest in the Jenmom lands is considered as inherent in the individual owners and not derived from the State. This is their distinguishing feature.

“14. The Jenmom tenure is of two kinds (I) freehold and (II) taxable. * * *

“19. The Jenmom lands of the taxable class are liable to the nominal rate of Rajabhogam and nothing more.

“20. The Devaswom and Brahmaswom holdings, however, have a peculiar tenure which distinguishes them from the rest.

“21. They are exempt from taxation of any kind so long as they remain in the hands of their Jemmies.

“22. This tenure, however, ceases the moment the lands pass into alien hands for a money consideration.

“23. The Rajabhogam tax is then levied, as in the case of other Jenmom lands of the taxable class and it is never discontinued though the lands may be redeemed.

“24. In fact, the effect is the ordinary Jenmom tenure replacing the exceptional one.

"25. The exceptional tenure in respect of Devaswom and Brahmaswom prevails in this country alone. In the neighbouring State of Cochin, these are treated on the same footing with the others, being subject to the payment of the Rajabhogam tax all along.

"26. In other particulars all the Jenmom lands under the head (II) are treated alike.

"27. If the alienee who has a money interest in the land dies heirless, the property lapses to the Sirkar, the Jenmy being entitled only to the Michavaram in case of mortgage.

"28. Where the land is abandoned by the mortgagee and entered as Nirthal, the Sirkar has the right of granting it on the Pattom tenure.

"29. In cases of outright sale by Jenmies, which seldom occurs, the practice appears to be to convert the tenure into 'Sirkar Otti' under the ordinary Ottivilakkom process. No instances of such sale are ever known in respect of Devaswom and Brahmaswom properties and doubts are entertained as to the usage in that connection.

"30. There are certain exceptional cases where Devaswom and Brahmaswom properties are taxed from the beginning.

"31. There are also cases where lands of this and other Jenmom classes are permanently tax free.

"32. It is a noteworthy point that the mere circumstance of a land being the property of a Jenmy does not bring it under any of the tenures above described. Those tenures are confined only to the lands recognised as Jenmom in the Government accounts."

Mr. Kunhiraman Nair's Memo on Land Tenures.

"19. The main object here is simply the consideration of the existing state of the relations between Jenmies and Kanapattom tenants and for this purpose to determine the origin of Jenmies and jenmom lands as also the rights and liabilities of the Jenmies with regard to Kanapattom Kudiyans. To these questions, we must address ourselves, but a passing preliminary allusion to the ancient—social and political—organisation of the country which gave birth to this system of land laws is necessary to render the whole subject intelligible.

"20. The organisation of the country for social and political purposes may be said to have been of the pure Hindu type. The unit of the social system was the joint family which happily survives to the present day and a number of joint families belonging to the early settlers in, or colonists of, Keralam associated themselves for political and administrative purposes and established village communities, the Brahmin village communities being designated Gramoms, and the non-Brahmin, Kara, Pitaka, Cheri, and Muri, and later on, Desom. According to Kerala Uppathy

" (said to have been recorded probably in the 17th century of the Christian era by Thunchathu Ramanujan otherwise called Thunchathu Ezhuthachan who may be called the father of Malayalam literature) and other traditional accounts, the Brahmins who had been prevailed upon by sage Parasu Rama, the Conqueror or discoverer of Kerala, to colonise his new dominions and who, it is said, were rewarded by him with the gift of the whole land, after fixing the *taras* (Nair villages) and *Sankethams* (literally appointed places or a division of the Brahmin dominions answering somewhat to the English Pale in Ireland), established sixty four Gramoms or Brahmin villages and introduced a sort of Republican Government. The actual Government was vested in four Kayakoms or Councils elected as representatives of the sixty four Gramoms, assisted, or presided over, by an Officer styled Raksha Purushan (Protector) who was to be elected by the whole body as their Executive Officer and to remain in office for a period of three years each. Each Kayakom further elected an Avarodha Nampi to serve as a sort of Councillor to the Raksha Purushan and lands adequate for the support of these officers were assigned to them severally. The office of Raksha Purushan subsequently fell into disuse on the appearance in the country of some foreign Hindu Noblemen who under the style and designation of Perumals (or great personages), were allowed to rule the country for 12 years each, but was, at a later period, revived with all the privileges of the Perumals. Another set of Perumals then succeeded. The installation of the first Perunal is said to have happened in *Pushya* (8th Lunar Asterism) in the month of Maghom in Karkadakam Vyazham which, as has been ascertained from the Kali year given, was A. D. 216. This day in cycle of Jupiter thus became important in the history of Keralam and a great feast in comemoration of the event called 'Mamankom' in which all the Rajahs of Keralam, including Travancore, took part, used for a long time to be held in Tirunavaye in South Malabar.

"21. Mr. Jonathan Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, thus wrote about this festival in the first volume of the 'Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society': 'At the end of this feast (Mamankom), all prior leases of the lands were considered to be at an end, and fresh grants were to be obtained at the beginning of the next reign. In all the principal deeds, the position of Jupiter is to be mentioned. This practice is continued even up to the present day.' The third of the latter set of Perumals shook off the Brahmin yoke and established a sort of absolute monarchy, but that his sway extended throughout the whole of Keralam seems doubtful. At the close of his reign, he is said to have parcelled out his dominions among the Rajahs and others subordinate to him.

"22. The original arrangement for the internal administration of the country by village communities continued, however, for a very long time notwithstanding changes in the form of central

“Government. ‘The village community’, to use the words of Lord Charles Metcalfe, ‘possessed an inherent vitality in itself which preserved it amid the revolutions of power and the changes of dynasties. It was a little Republic having its own territory and its own municipal Government under a head-man.’ These head-men belonging to non-Brahmin classes were, in later times, designated by the generic title of Matampimars and consist of Kymals, Karthas and Itaprabhoos. These and other leading men were, at a very early time, allowed to take for themselves a portion of the land within their respective jurisdiction in return for the protection afforded by them to the rest of the community in the same way as the original Raksha Purushans or Protectors.

“23. Land-taxes were unknown in Keralam in ancient days. The Ruler—be he Raksha Purushan, Avarodha Nampi, Desadhipaty, Natu Vazhi, or Raja,—derived his income from other sources than land-tax. The Rajahs and Perumals also do not appear to have exacted regular land-tax until a period when the necessity for warlike preparations ceased, though, when powerful enough, they levied forced contributions from land-holders in cases of emergency.

“24. The Brahmins in Kerala were, at a very early period, shrewd enough to foresee that the halo of sanctity which encircled themselves might not be proof against the gradual degeneracy of religious feelings which time must produce, and they constitutionalised that sanctity by assigning large tracts of land and their revenues to certain temples built and consecrated by them. The actual Governors or Rulers of several villages (Desoms) and latterly of Nadus (Provinces) imitating the example of Brahmins, founded and endowed other temples. Other persons also did the same.

“25. In later times the country was divided for the purpose of administration into *Nads* (Districts or Provinces), of which there were at one time 17, and sub-divided into Desoms (villages). The most successful of the village head-men, Gramadhipathies or Madampies, ripened in a few instances into Chiefs of Nadus in some places, and their domain was known by the names of Swarupoms and Edavakays. The village head-men were known in some places as Desavazhies and, in others, as Madampies. Desavazhies were at one time the sole proprietors of lands in their respective villages and they enjoyed in addition the following rights if we are to credit the traditions current among the people:

- (1) The Ambalapati or the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagoda.
- (2) The Uraima or the mangement of Pagoda lands and tenants.
- (3) The control of all village ceremonies, such as marriage &c.

“(4) Desadbipathyam or the general superintendence of all affairs of the desom or village.

“26. The ranks of these petty Chiefs in Travancore received additions from other sources. Namputhiri Brahmins, who held sway over the Devaswoms or pagodas possessing immense wealth and landed property, invoked the assistance of Samantha Kshetrias, and these managed the Devaswoms under the designation of Koviladhikarikals. The Devaswoms exercised sovereign functions within the limits of their landed property as did wealthy classes of Brahmins generally within the limits of their Sankethoms (tracts assigned to Brahmins). The life and liberty of the Devaswom tenants were at one time at the mercy of these Devaswom communities.

“27. The various small petty chief-ships and Nadus (provinces) which, on the disappearance of Perumals probably in the 8th or 9th century of the Christian Era, passed under the independent rule of their respective native princes and feudataries—probably the nominees of the Cheraman Perumal or the descendants of the ancient princes—maintained their sway in Malabar down to the epoch of the Mahomedan conquest, and in Travancore down to the 17th and 18th century when the leading or paramount State in Travancore subdued all the rest of the Rajabs and petty Chiefs and extended its dominions originally confined to a small tract of country in and about the village still known by the name of Thiruvithancode (Travancore) to Parur and Alengad on the north.

“28. None of the petty Rulers of various Nadus composing the modern Travancore were probably powerful enough to bring the subordinate chiefs under them into the meshes of their influence, and in the absence of a centralised system of Government, Madampimars, Temples and Brahmins exercised practically all the rights of sovereignty, nominally yielding fealty to some paramount power. There is a tradition recorded in the Kerala Ulppathy that the actual internal administration of the country was left by the Perumals with the Brahmins during the Perumal period which lasted for several centuries, the Perumals confining themselves to the duty of protecting the country from foreign and domestic foes.

“29. The Chiefs, principal and petty, had their own private domains held in absolute proprietary right, and their revenues consisted, besides the produce of their own private jenmom lands, of customs duties on trade, mint duties, escheats of intestate property, poll-taxes, taxes on professions, a variety of royalties on cardamoms and other indigenous products, the wrecks of vessels stranded on the coast, presents on festival days, and occasional contributions on extraordinary exigencies.

“30. The exercise by Devaswoms and Madampies of the rights of sovereignty was, in later times, when the whole of Travancore became united in one Sovereign, found incompatible with the

“welfare and progress of the society at large, and the rights and privileges of Madampimars and others similarly placed were one by one curtailed in the last, and in the beginning of the present century.

“31. The private Jenmon lands of Madampimars and of petty Rajahs and Chiefs were, in several instances, confiscated by the Sirkar for acts of rebellion and other causes, and so also has been a large extent of lands appertaining to wealthy temples numbering 378, the management of which was assumed by the Sirkar in the year 987 during the administration of the State by Colonel Munro as Dewan.

“32. From what has been stated above, it may easily be gathered that the lands must, in ancient days, have been owned by four classes of community, viz:—

(a) The Malabar Brahmins who were the first to occupy the land at least in places where their community had established themselves,

(b) The pagodas or religious institutions founded and endowed by Brahmins and others,

(c) Rajahs and local Chieftains, and

(d) Madampimars, *i. e.*, Heads of villages.

“33. All these classes have long regarded the property in land as their own private property and the ruling feature in regard to the tenure of land may be said to be this, that all land is private property of the joint family or other corporation (Illom, Mana, Matom, Itavaka and Tarawad) and that it is distributed amongst a multitude of proprietors and land-lords of various classes and conditions from the Ruler (Rajah), Nobles (Itavakas or Sworupoms) and religious institutions (Devaswoms) with their large estates, Kandu-krishi or Thanathu lands tilled by their once pre-dial slaves and tenants-at-will, down to the petty Madampimar and Kudi-jenmies tilling their own land. The private property in land possessed by these classes has, from ancient times, been distinguished by the word ‘Jenmon’ derived from Sanscrit and signifying birth-right, that of the subject races belonging to the non-Brahminical race being also distinguished at later times by the word Kudi-jenmon signifying the birth-right of Kudi or subjects. This private property may be said to be more ancient, and probably more perfect than that of English land-lords.

“34. The long disputed question in British India, namely, whether private property in land existed before the British rule or before the beginning of the present century, has happily not arisen here. If, as has been stated by eminent statesmen, the property in land, as a transferable mercantile commodity absolutely owned and passing from hand to hand like chattel, is an indication of the advanced stage of civilization, Travancore may justly claim to have long attained that distinction but for the existence in some quarters of the idea that the properties of Malabar Brahmins—

“Brahmaswoms—can only be transferred in fee simple or jenmom to the members of their own caste, that if transferred to non-Brahmin classes by out-right sales, they will be subjected by Government to the process of what is locally known as Ottivilakom, that is, of converting the purchaser into a mortgagee of the land under the Sirkar for the price actually paid by him to his vendor. This supposed rule, however, has not, as yet been judicially recognized, and it is doubtful if it will stand the test of scrutiny. Of this, however, we may have to speak further on. (See Memo, Part II, Para 22).

“35. It may, generally speaking, be stated that the condition of landed property desired by the British Government for the East Coast where the Administrators—Mahomedan and others—prior to the British, had practically abolished private landed estate by raising the Government demand, so as to absorb the whole of the surplus produce, is found to exist here in all its vigour. The Sirkar takes little or nothing from the produce of lands owned in fee simple or jenmom by private persons, and the whole or major portion of the produce is shared between the owner and the cultivator.

“36. The private property in land distinguished by the term jenmom or birth-right is, in the Government accounts, distinguished by the term ‘Thanathu’ (that which is one’s in all its fullness)—in other words, the allodial property of the holder of the tenure.

“37. In the earliest survey and settlement said to have been made in the year 926, and in the revised settlements of the years 948 and 978, conducted on a comprehensive scale and embracing almost all the arable lands and gardens in the State, the Brahmin possessions have been recorded as Brahmaswom Thanathu, that is, the allodial property of Brahmins, and the State has, in conformity with the precepts of the Hindu Law, which says ‘A king even though dying with want must not receive any tax from a Brahmin learned in the Vedas’—Manu C. 7. Sloka 133—exempted the Brahmaswom lands from tax, so long as they remain in the actual possession of the Brahmin owner. Others besides the Brahmins are also recorded as the allodial proprietors and they are supposed to have originally derived title either under allotments or grants from the Brahmins or by being the first occupiers, or by usurpation.

“38. It is likely that the Brahmins, though they laid claim to the birth-right or Jenmom in all lands, willingly left others, especially in places where their community did not settle in large numbers, to become owners and in old Travancore extending from Cape Comorin to the estuary of Etavai on the North, there were, as already stated, originally very few Namputhiri Brahmin settlers. In the Vilavancode Taluk, there are as many as 5,864 Kudijennies or ancient peasant proprietors. Probably, the number

“of Brahmin emigrants was not large enough to enable them to establish Gramoms throughout Kerala. Each Gramom was according to tradition to consist of 720 families and the Gramoms allotted to Malabar and Travancore together, being 32, the remaining 32 being allotted to Canara, it follows that $720 \times 32 = 23,040$ families only could have originally settled in these two countries. Wherever the Brahmin element was weak or had not penetrated, the Sudras and others have assumed the actual sovereignty in land.

“39. The term ‘Jenmom’ was originally used by the Brahmins exclusively to denote their allodial proprietorship and is still used in that sense in Courts and Cutcheries in Travancore, though in other parts of Malayalam and in popular parlance in Travancore, the term is now universally employed to denote the full proprietary right in the land of any class of people.

“40. The popular and the long accepted theory in Travancore of the origin of jenmom (Thanathu) right, as already remarked, is that the whole land in Keralam was made over in gift to Brahmins by the Sage Parasu Rama, but the accuracy of the story of gift cannot at this distance of time be tested. From the persistency with which the story is repeated by the public at large, one cannot help concluding that the story as preserved in treatises drawn up two or three hundred years back may have a substratum of truth in it. Whether there was an actual gift or not, it is very clear that the Brahmins, as the leading occupiers of the soil until then without owners, or deserted by the aborigines who fled to the hills, had a better title than others who must, if the traditionary accounts be true, have colonised the country at a later period. The Hindu idea of acquisitions of title by occupation is propounded in the following text of Manu:—‘Sages who know former times * * * * * pronounce cultivated lands to be the property of him who cut away the wood or who cleared and tilled it, and the antelope of the first hunter who mortally wounded it’ (C. 9. Sloka 44) and the possible objection to the theory of the acquisition by Brahmin settlers of title by occupation, namely that the religious nature of the avocations pursued by them (Brahmins) and their prejudices must have stood in the way of their taking part in the actual cultivation or tilling of the soil, loses much of its force when we remember that the condition of society in those pre-historic days was such as to enable the sacerdotal class to utilise the services of other classes for their own exclusive benefit and aggrandisement, and that there were apparently none at the time to compete with the dominant and priestly race for the sovereignty of the land. The Brahmins, though not taking part in actually tilling the soil or cutting the wood, may have nevertheless cultivated the land by hired labour under their direct management and thus enjoyed the benefit of the cultivation. A class of Sudras, who are considered merely the domestic servants and vassals of Brahmin families of note, still

“exists, and it is well-known that the Malabar Brahmin families have, for a long time, had under them, Sudra families attached to their houses for the purpose of conducting the cultivation of their farms &c.

“41. It has been supposed in some quarters that the Jenmom and Kanom were originally mere offices of rank and did not denote any rights in land, but these novel theories, opposed, as they are, not only to popular and received notions on the subject but also to the weight of authority of early enquirers into the land tenures on the West Coast, may be disposed of by the simple remark that any one pursuing the Jenmom or Attipper deeds, as the deeds of outright sale of Jenmom are called, cannot but be struck with the idea namely, that Jenmom right contained within itself the full rights of an allodial proprietor and that the parties had expressly employed words to show how complete the dominion was that had thus been bought and sold.

“42. The Jenmom signifying birth or life, may not be a very accurate term to express a tenure of land and there is no doubt that originally the term included many territorial, social, taxatory and other incidents which pertain to the jenmiship in the persons, families and institutions to which the title with its privileges is attached; but, for the last 200 or 300 years at all events, the term has been used on the West Coast generally to denote prescriptive hereditary property in the land. The conveyancers in Kerala employ in their conveyances more general words than are to be found in the old English deeds. They profess to sell not only the surface of the soil within defined boundaries but stones, good or bad, stumps of nux vomica, thorns, roots, pits, mounds treasure, lower earth, water, ores, foot-paths, streams &c. &c., and these point to an ownership of soil as complete as was ever enjoyed by a free-holder in England.

“43. The following extract from Elphinstone's History of India, page 79, may also be quoted to show what the Hindu idea of proprietorship in land is.—‘Property in land seems to consist in ‘the exclusive use and absolute disposal of the power of the soil ‘in perpetuity together with the right to alter or destroy the soil ‘itself when such an operation is possible. These privileges ‘combined, form the abstract idea of property which does ‘not represent any substance distinct from these elements. ‘Where they are found united, there is property and nowhere ‘else.’

“44. The Hindu Law exhibited so much regard for this form of property that it imposed more than ordinary restraints on the power of the manager of the family to alienate it, and because it was considered that it was disgraceful to sell land, every sale of the whole ownership of land in ancient times took the form of gift. It was also required or recommended that the sale should be attested by the heir, kinsmen, neighbours, villagers and officers of the

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“ Sovereign. (Daya Vibhaga, Burnell's Translation, section 55). Several Attipper deeds in which the fulfilment of the above requirements is recited as a matter of form are to be met with on the Malabar coast, and we have also come across documents shewing the sale of lands, the gift of lands, and the inheritance of lands all in complete ownership. That the Government exacts only Rajabhogom or tax from the ordinary proprietors in Travancore, (except Brahmaswoms and Devaswoms exempted on religious grounds) at the rate prescribed in the Hindu Sastras for King's tax, full pattom or rent being levied from the holders of land under the Government in its capacity as Jenmi, and that both Rajabhogom tax and Jenmibhogom dues are charged and levied when the Government happens to succeed to the proprietors' rights either in virtue of escheat or otherwise, further furnish additional proof, if proof is wanting, of the recognition in Travancore of the full proprietary rights. It is thus clear that the Jenmom on the Malabar coast has long been regarded as the '*plenum dominum*' in the soil, and the Jenmi as the possessor of that '*plenum dominum*'. For all practical purposes connected with any legislation affecting the land, the fact must be recognised that the Jenmi has been so regarded by the Government in Travancore even since the dawn of history.

“ 45. At present the Sirkar is the largest Jenmi in the State. The Jenmom lands of all the petty Rajas subdued in the last few centuries and of several Madampies, have lapsed to the State, and other causes such as escheat &c., have tended to increase the extent of the Jenmom possession of the Sirkar. About three-fourths of the whole land in the State belong on Jenmom to the Sirkar, the remaining one-fourth being distributed among the classes mentioned in para 32.

“ 46. The Sirkar in its capacity of Jenmi acted until a very late period as the private Jennies, and the Sirkar lands otherwise called Pandaravakai were held by tenants under the same local arrangements as were made by private Jennies. Both the theory and practice in respect to Sirkar lands are and have all along been, that the Sirkar is primarily the land-lord and that whatever rights in them vest in the ryots have been derived from the Sirkar. None of the arrangements with regard to the holding of land made by the Sirkar in olden times indicates the consciousness of the existence of occupancy rights in the ryots, except those expressly conceded to them by contract or grant, and it was not until 1040 that the Sirkar by a Royal Proclamation conferred the rights of permanent occupancy upon the large body of Verumpattom holders under the Sirkar, who until then held the lands—in theory at least—as tenants-at-will. The effect of the liberal policy adopted in 1040, has been to bring about a distribution or diffusion of landed property among all classes of His Highness' subjects and the evils arising from land monopoly have

“thus been remedied to a considerable extent. There is at present nothing like monopoly of land by particular classes.

“47. The private Jemmies in Travancore have, from a long time past, lost much of their former influence and grandeur. The Brahmin Jemmies are small in number, and they can hardly be correctly described as close monopolists of land, though homogeneous as regards ideas and traditions.

“48. The present position of private Jemmies may be gathered from the following observations based upon information derived from the Revenue authorities :

“49. For the purposes of fiscal administration, the jemmom tenure held by others than the Sirkar has been divided in the Revenue accounts into two kinds (1) Free-hold, and (2) Taxable. Under (1) are comprised :—

(1) The two adhikaroms or Provertis of Attingal and Etakkodu belonging to Sreepadam or Her Highness the Ranee.

(2) The Kilimanur Adhikarom belonging to Koyil Thampuram.

(3) Desams of Edapally Raja outside Edapally proper or Edapally Edavakay—Changanacherry, Karthikappally and Thiruvalla.

(4) Desams of the Punjat Perumal (Meenachel).

(5) The Desams attached to Manikandeswarom Pagoda (Kottarakaray Taluk).

(6) The Desams attached to Elamkunnappen Pagoda (Pathanapuram)

(7) The Desams attached to Kaviyur Pagoda (Thiruvalla)

(8) The Desams attached to Pangottu Krishnaswami Pagoda (Kottarakaray)

(9) The Desams attached to Mannady Bhagavathy (Kunnamthur and Pathanapuram).

(10) The Desams attached to Panayannar Kavil Bhagavathi (Thiruvalla).

(11) The Desams attached to Kongurpalli Namputhiripad's Sastha and Bhagavathi (Changanacherry)

(12) The Desams belonging to Akavur Nampuripad (Kottarakara, Karthikappalli and Mavelikara).

(13) The Desams attached to Akavur and Ummampalli Namputhiripad (Quilon).

(14) The Desams belonging to Vanjippuzha Pandarathil (Chengannur).

In the accounts they are termed Adhikarom Ozhivu and Desa Ozhivu. They consist of compact locks of territory and are absolutely exempt from tax of any kind and from all Government

“interference in the matter of Revenue administration. Under (2) Taxable Jenmom lands are :—

- (1) Dewaswom or Pagoda properties.
- (2) Brahmaswoms or the holdings of Malayala Brahmins.
- (3) The holdings of various chiefs and others including Madampimars as below :—
 - (1) Perumpadappu Swarupam (Cochin Raja),
 - (2) Kodungallur Raja,
 - (3) Pujat Perumal,
 - (4) Pandarathummar,
 - (5) Thampakkanmar, Thirumulpadaummar and Kovilanmar,
 - (6) Paliathu Menon,
 - (7) Vadayattu Chief,
 - (8) Native Madampimar,
 - (9) Foreign Madampimar,
 - (10) Naikanmar,
 - (11) Varianmar.

“50. Some of the Jennies of this class belong also to the first. But the properties are different, being outside the freehold tracts and totally unconnected with them.

“51. The Jenmom lands of the taxable class, except the Dewaswom and Brahmaswom holdings which are exempt from taxation of any kind so long as they remain in the hands of their Jennies, are liable to pay Rajabhogom tax, and even the Dewaswom and Brahmaswom lands are liable to the Rajabhogom tax the moment the land passed into alien hands for a money consideration.”

Coorg Manual Vol. I.—Appendix.

Note by Sir J. B. Lyall on Tenures in Coorg and surrounding Countries.

“The theory of land tenure which prevails in Malabar, including Wynaad, is that in the beginning all land whether cultivated, waste or forest belonged in full private property or *jenmi* right to some individual or family. All present holders are either *jenmi* land-lords or hold of a *jenmi*: the British Government owns only lands or rights in lands which have escheated to it from some *jenmi*, and is *jenmi* land-lord as regards them. The land revenue now taken by the British Government in continuation of that which was imposed by the Mysore Sultans, Hyder and Tippoo, when they conquered Malabar, and which appears to have been taken by the Perumal Emperor or Viceroy in very ancient times, is by this theory a simple imperial land tax, not in any sense a rent. When the imperial government disappeared, as it did for long periods in ancient times, the tax disappeared or was merged in the *jenmi*'s rent, and there was no land revenue.

“The particular facts upon which this theory of land tenure rests appear to be as follows. Many centuries ago in this part of India two sections of the population confronted each other as equal powers, one, the Warrior clans of Nairs who formed the military caste of the country and wielded the power of the sword: the other a clan or clans of sacerdotal Brahmans whose superiority in intellect and learning enabled them to impose their priestly authority upon all other classes including the Nairs. They entered into very close social and ceremonial relations with the Nairs (which still exist) and agreed to divide the land and its lord-ship with them. Accordingly the land was divided, certain sub-divisions going to the Brahmans as their property, and others to the Nairs. The Brahmans, as was natural from their instincts and ideas, held their share in democratic style, all members of the clan having equal rights in the lord-ship or property of the soil.

“The Nairs, on the contrary, had, as was equally natural, the instincts and ideas of feudal subordination to chiefs, to which they owed their military success, and which are to be seen in the Rajput clans and other military races of India. In their case, therefore, it was the chiefs of the separate clans or confederations of Nairs who were recognised as the lords of the soil, the other Nairs being content to receive allotments to be held of them on feudal or military service tenure. In this way the lord-ship of the soil or what is now known as the ancient *jenmi* right came to be held by the chieftain families of the Nairs and by the sacerdotal Brahman families. It was something more than a mere property in the soil, being as it were a share in the kingdom of the country and in the lord-ship over inferior races: certain rank and powers were, therefore, also connected with it. The Nair chieftains, if their territories were large, seem to have sometimes granted away their rights and powers over certain tracts to subordinate chiefs or captains of the Nair Militia, to be held by the latter in military subordination. The mainbody of the Nairs were content to get household or family allotments in lease from the chiefs or captains to whom they chose to attach themselves; they gave the chief a fee or *nazzarana* called ‘*kanom*’ or ‘*kanike*’ in token of allegiance on receiving the allotment, but paid no rent and were only bound to military service. They did not till the land themselves but cultivated through slaves or serfs.

“In order to secure their independence, these military Nairs asserted the power of demanding back the *nazzarana*, relinquishing the land allotted, and of thereafter attaching themselves to another chief or captain. But it seems probable that the chief had at this time no power to take away the allotment or terminate the lease so long as service was duly rendered. This was apparently the original form of the *kanom* or *kanakka* tenure. The bulk of the occupied land held by the Nair chieftains was

“granted away on this tenure; the rest was the private demesne of the chief which he cultivated through low caste slaves or serfs, or leased on *pattom* tenure to ordinary rent paying tenants of the non-military classes called *pattomkars* or *verampattomkars*. The Brahmans collected the produce or rents of part of their lands through slaves and tenants like the Nair chiefs: the rest, they also found it after a time necessary to grant to the fighting men on *kanom* tenure for their own safeguard and protection.

“In this way the villages or circles known as the Brahman *deshoms* and the Nair *taras* were formed in the Brahman and Nair sub-divisions of the land. Afterwards, when an Imperial authority was super-imposed either on the application of the *jenmi* lords (as traditions says) or in some other way, a share of the rent or produce was assigned as its due and was no doubt paid by all lands including those of *kanakkas*. When the Imperial authority disappeared, this tax, or a part, was probably taken from the *kanakkas* by the *jenmis* as rent whenever they felt strong enough to demand it. Certain functions were also entrusted to the Imperial authority, but its power seems to have been very limited; and the assent of certain territorial assemblies (mentioned in old deeds as the council of the 600 &c.,) seem to have been required to acts affecting the land. I imagine that these assemblies were composed of the *jenmis* or land lords and *kanakkas* or feudal militia of the circles. As I have said above, it would appear that the *kanakka's* lease was at first a permanent tenure, forfeitable only for failure of service; but in more settled times and as the Nairs increased in numbers and their demand for these allotments became more keen, the *jenmis* would naturally begin to assert the theory that as a *kanakka* could demand back his *nazzarana* and surrender the land at his pleasure, so they, the *jenmis* could also, by returning the *nazzarana*, oust him in favour of another. They probably refrained from putting this theory into practice at once against the old *kanakkas*, but the theory once started would enable the *jenmi* to periodically exact additional *kanom* fees from the weaker *kanakkas* under threat of ousting them, and in such cases the aggregate *kanom* payment would assume the aspect of mortgage money. When relieved of all fear by a strong rule like the British, the *jenmis* would apply the theory boldly to all *kanakkas* and would actually oust those who would not pay heavily. In this way by the change of circumstances and by the inevitable tendency of the judge-made law of our Courts to apply one and the same interpretation to all cases of the same tenure, the *kanakka's* tenure has been gradually developed or rather degraded into that of mere mortgage lease-holders, who can be periodically evicted on re-payment of the *kanom* money, unless they pay such additional fines and increased rents as may be demanded of them. Besides the original Brahman and Nair Chieftain *jenmis* and the

“subordinate Nair Captains, who became as it were *jenmis* of small circles under their chief, a class of *jenmis* of small holdings gradually grew into existence. These were men to whom original *jenmis* conveyed by sale or gift certain plots of land in full property free of all rent or service. When the name of *jenmi* came to be applied to the old original lords of the soil, it was soon also extended to these people or was assumed by them. The number of *jenmis* at the present day is, therefore, large, and includes all classes of people. The *Chetties* who hold the rice lands in Wynaad are mostly *kanakkas* holding of persons who claim to be *jenmis* of considerable areas, and to have got the *jenmi-ship* by conveyance from the family which seems at one time to have been *jenmi* of the whole of Wynaad: that is the family of the Pyke Rajas. The estate of this family was confiscated for rebellion and Government is consequently the *jenmi* of all land in Wynaad of which the *jenmi* right had not been previously alienated by the Pyke family. All cultivated land in Wynaad pays rent to the *jenmi* as well as revenue to the State; this rent is called *kani* or *jenmibhogam*; the revenue is called *nigdi*. All new cultivation is assessed with both these items as it occurs, but no rate has hitherto been imposed upon possessed waste. Trees in forest lands belong absolutely to the *jenmi* of the forest who sells or takes a stump fee or seigniorage for any cut; the *kanakka* holders, however, claim the exclusive right to cut the timber in the forest land adjoining and attached to their rice fields and answering to the *Coorg bane*; but it is not admitted that they have a right to sell”.

Maclean's Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency, Chap. II.

Land Revenue Tenures.—Sketch History of Land Revenue in the Madras Presidency. The West Coast. p. 114:—

(7) The tract of country known to ancient Hindoo geographers as Kerala comprised the whole of the tract lying along the Western Coast and under the mountains as far as Gocarna in North Canara. Travancore and Cochin were from the first under Rajahs belonging to the land-owning class. Malabar was similarly ruled, but broke up in the ninth century into a number of petty principalities, among the chief of which was that of the Zamorins at Calicut found still in authority by Vasco de Gama at the end of the fifteenth century. Toolloova, or Canara as it has erroneously been called by the British, was established as a separate Hindu dynasty held by the land-owning class; but in the twelfth century this dynasty made way for that of the Pandians, and a century later for that of the Telogoo-speaking kings of Vijjanugger, the representatives of the old Carnatic or Canara Empire. The characteristic of the whole of the Kerala country was the presence of a strongly developed personal and individual land-property, the absence of a Government tax on

“land, the absence of a concentrated village system such as obtained in the Carnatic, and the existence of a military tenure similar to the feudal system of Europe. The country was originally subdivided between a race of Brahmins or priests called Numboories, and a military tribe called Nayars; these two holding in subjection the agriculturalists of the country, consisting of persons called Teeyars and others. The Nayars paid no land-tax, but attended the kings to the field with their retainers. The Numboories also paid no land-tax, but furnished the expenses for the support of the temples. (In the ninth century a Zamoria of Calicut became a convert to Mahomedanism and about this time a large colony of Mahomedan settlers of Arabian descent were allowed to occupy lands in Malabar. These Mahomedans, called Maplahs, were mostly merchants, and were equally exempted from payment of direct land-tax. In the absence of land-tax the kings of the country had considerable domains assigned to them which were cultivated by slaves and yielded a sufficient revenue for household expenses. The subordinate chiefs maintained their own internal police arrangements, and, excepting in time of war, the personal expenses of the Rajahs were not large. But they were not without other branches of revenue. A succession duty equal to 25 per cent. on the value of the estates was levied on Mahomedan subjects being land-holders.) There were also import and export duties, mint duties, fines, escheats, confiscations, protection money received from persons of other States who claimed asylum, benevolences in the shape of offerings made to the Crown at great festivals or on an occasion, and fees on marriages of important persons. There were also license-taxes and royalties on gold ore, elephants, ivory, teak trees, bamboos, and vessels wrecked on the coast. The inhabitants of the West Coast did not congregate together in villages, but resided in scattered habitations on their farms and in their gardens. For fiscal arrangements there were authorities in charge of defined tracts of country. The proprietary right in the land differed from Mirassy right in being individual and not communistic. Whether enjoyed by the original Nayars and Nambories, or by the more recent Maplahs, it was equally called Jenm, or birth right. The owners seldom cultivated their own lands, but let them out on limited leases to tenants called Pauttomcars. The Crown ceased to recognize the immunity from land-tax if an original Jenmdar once parted by the sale with his right. Hence mortgage was the rule of the country, and sales scarcely ever occurred. The mortgagee again could not acquire the Jenm right by simply foreclosing; the landlord never losing the power of subsequently reclaiming his property by paying the principal, and being always entitled to some recognition of his ownership even if it were only given in the shape of a sheaf of corn or a pound of butter. The Malabar mortgages possessed another peculiarity in the principle of

“self-redemption. On the death of the owner of mortgaged lands, it was usual for the heir to furnish a new instrument recognizing the act of his predecessor, but on this occasion he was entitled to deduct 13 per cent. from the principal of the debt. Thus in a few generations the lands reverted to the ancient family proprietors. These were the primitive tenures of the West Coast, and as long as they were recognized by the Governments, there can be little surprise that landed property so carefully protected should be strongly asserted by the holders. There is no trace that up to the time of the Mahomedan invasions, there was any land-tax south of Tooloova, and in the southernmost part of Tooloova it must have been even then a very light one. The Tooloova country began to change its land-revenue features in the thirteenth century when invaded by the Pandyan King. On that occasion the original Nayars seemed to have been dispossessed in favor of a race of cultivators called Hullers, and in making the transfer of property the land-tax, such as it was, suffered an increase. It is reported that the new Government required the grain to be husked before being delivered into the public stores, thus adding 10 per cent. to the impost. In A. D. 1336 when Tooloova came under the Rajah of Vijianugger, the system was still further adapted to that prevailing in the north.”

Settlements in Malabar.—p. 117.

“The remainder of the Madras provinces consisted of Malabar and Canara. The ancient feudal system which existed in Malabar has already been mentioned. The country was in the hands of a race of rajahs or military leaders, and their retainers the Nayars, holding in subjection the Teeyars, and other laborers, the ancient inhabitants of the country. Instead of the districts in Malabar being assessed at so many thousand pagodas, they were rated at so many men liable to be called to the field. At the peace of 1792 Malabar was ceded to the British Government by Tippu Sultan. It had been first invaded by the Mahomedans under Hyder Ally thirty four years previously; its invasion being invited in the first place by the Palghat Rajah to enable him to repel the attack of the Zamorin of Calicut. The landlords of Malabar did not yield readily, and in the struggles which ensued between them and the Mysore Government, most of the ancient landed proprietors were either killed or expelled. In the year 1783 Ashed Beg Khan was put in by Hyder as Governor of Malabar, and his administration appears to have been more lenient and equitable than that of any of his predecessors. The principles of this assessment are said to have been as follows:—to the cultivator $5\frac{1}{2}$ tenths, to the proprietor $1\frac{1}{2}$ tenths, to the Government 3 tenths. Shortly after the cession to the British, a committee, consisting of two Bengal and two Bombay servants, were deputed to make a settlement of the country; and their report, issued in 1793, consisting of several volumes, furnishes a full account of the district.

“ In this province, where the landholders maintained that not only were they the proprietors of their estates, but that under the native princes they had never paid a land-tax at all, the doctrine of State proprietary right to the land then prevailing and a claim to half the produce assumed in other places were not likely to be acceptable. The Bengal and Bombay Commissioners found that in Malabar no such claims could be enforced, and they proposed to regulate the future demand by the assessment of Ashed Beg Khan. The first settlement, or rather realization of revenue, fell short of that amount by about 25 per cent., and an attempt to raise the rates caused an open rebellion, which lasted for some years and cost a heavy expenditure of lives and money. In 1800 the province was transferred from the Bombay to the Madras Government, and its management was made over to Major Munro, the advocate of ryotwarry, who in effect introduced the ryotwarry system there. One of the earliest of this officer's measures was a survey and assessment. These led to urgent complaints, which were unattended to, and which ended in another rebellion more violent than the former. The second rebellion was suppressed, more by conciliation than coercion, and the result was the recognition on the part of Government of the proprietary right of the landholders to their estates. Peace being restored, the chief Brahmins and landed proprietors assembled at the Collector's invitation at his office, where they selected a committee from among themselves, to arrange matters for the future administration of the province. On this occasion the land-holders agreed, after allowing 50 per cent. of the produce to the cultivator, to pay to Government a sum of money estimated at 20 per cent. of the gross produce, themselves retaining 30 per cent. as rent. It was decided that the assessment should be founded on the survey and assessment of 1800. Affairs remained thus for several years, but meanwhile many complaints were made as to the inequality of the assessment, the people not being satisfied with the arrangement of 1800. In 1817 Colonel Munro, who had been the principal agent in suppressing the last rebellion and in making the last settlement, was deputed to visit and report on the condition of the province; the chief result of the visit was a reduction in the assessment. It should be mentioned that there are no compact villages in Malabar similar to those in the Carnatic. The taluks in Malabar are divided into Amshoms, which are again subdivided into Deshoms. Over each Amshom is a headman called Adigary, associated with an accountant called Menon. These officials are paid by fixed salaries. The Deshoms are presided over by honorary headmen called Mookhyastans. The houses are scattered, and there is therefore no village-site.”

Land Revenue Tenures—p. 24.

“130. The tenures and settlements as between Government and the payer of the land-dues are in Malabar and Canara professedly

“a mere form of ryotwary. The special arrangements which exist in those districts between the landlord and his tenants do not as a rule affect the Government, and in dealing with the occupant the Government ignore as much as possible the existence of middlemen, or of interests other than their own. Sometimes, for instance, the Government puttahdar in Malabar is a jenmy landholder with his tenants under him, and sometimes he is a pauttoincar tenant owing his separate rent to a superior jenmy; but into this the Government do not go. Again in Canara, though the landlord's right or mooly-huk sometimes falls to Government by escheat, the Government are in the habit of taking steps for divesting themselves of it and of handing it over to the occupying ryot. In some respects, however, there are considerable differences between this sort of ryotwary settlement and the ordinary ryotwary settlement, even from the Government point of view. For instance there is no detailed survey in these districts, and the settlements are made not on fields but on holdings. Again, there are doubts how much waste lands are at the disposal of Government, a considerable portion being at present claimed as private property. Remissions again are never needed, owing to the certainty of the seasons and the lightness of the assessment. The ancient character of the proprietary rights enjoyed by West Coast landlords has already been seen from the historical sketch of land tenures. They are to the individual what the mirassy rights of the Eastern Coast are to the community.”

Travancore State Manual Vol. III—p. 311.

“*Land Tenures.* The subject of land tenures in Travancore is one which requires careful study and thorough investigation for a full comprehension of its origin, development, intricacies and incidents. The land tenures of Travancore are similar in some respects to those obtaining in the adjoining Districts of Madura and Tinnevely on the East Coast as well as to those of the neighbouring State of Cochin and the British District of Malabar on the north. They resemble the districts of the Madras Presidency in being *ryotwari* in their character and partake of the nature of the holdings in Malabar and Cochin in having had a common origin and development in ancient times before Kerala was divided into separate kingdoms ruled by independent chiefs.

“*Their origin.* The theory in Malabar is that all land was reclaimed from the sea and made over to the Brahmin colonists brought by Parasurama from the other coast. Hence all land in Malabar theoretically belonged only to Brahmin Jenmis whose *Jenmom* or birth right to the lands dates from Parasurama's advent or prehistoric times. In later ages, some of these lands passed over to the temples or charities which too acquired an indefeasible *Jenmom* right to them as the original Brahmin colonists themselves. All the present holders are therefore considered the descendants of those *Jenmis* or landlords or others

“ who trace their title from them and the Sirkar owns only such lands or rights as have become escheated to it.

“ It seems reasonable to suppose that the Jenmis took for themselves all land nearest their dwellings and that the distant mountainous and jungle tracts were ownerless till the States grew up and acquired proprietary right over them. The ruling chiefs must have then claimed these tracts as their own along with others acquired by them as stated above, and granted them to the ryots for cultivation. This explains how the Jenmom right in Travancore is recognised as antecedent to the sovereign's right to the land.

“ There is, however, another traditional account of the origin of Sirkar lands. In prehistoric times all the land of the State was owned by Nagas or Nayar chieftains when sovereignty was in a state of a tribal commune. Then there was no land tax or revenue levied on them, but each member of the tribe contributed a small portion of the produce as tribute for the upkeep of the tribal chieftain. Land was at a discount. The possession of land which subsequently became a power and a privilege was then of small account. As Ricardo so beautifully expresses it, ‘On the first settling of a country, in which there is an abundance of rich and fertile land, a very small proportion of which is required to be cultivated for the support of the actual population, there will be no rent; for no one would pay for the use of land, when there was an abundant quantity not yet appropriated, and therefore, at the disposal of whosoever might choose to cultivate it’. At the time of the Nambudiri Brahmin colonisation of Kerala by Parasurama a change came over this state of things. The superior intellect of the new colonists and their priestly authority over the tribal chieftains and clans and their forming social relationships with the natives led to a new order of things in the holding and enjoyment of property. The natives with their joint family system and the common ownership of family property were ready to own the Nambudiris as their landlords and hold lands from them as tenants. It was thus that the ancient Jenmom right came to be held by the families of Nayar chieftains and those of the sacerdotal Brahmin Nambudiris and Pottis. The main body of the Nayars were content to get household or family allotments from the chiefs and Brahmins. They paid the landlords no rent or *michavarom* but some fee called *Kanom* or *Kanikka* in token of allegiance, and did not cultivate the lands themselves but through serfs or slaves. Thus arose a sort of feudal system in Malabar traces of which are still visible to-day.

“ This system, however, did not last long. The Nayar chieftains gradually became subservient to the growing colony of Brahmin settlers of the 64 villages and their estates became more extensive. With the advent of the Perumals a simple imperial tax was levied to defray the expenses of the Perumal viceroy. This was the origin of the modern *Rajabhogam* or royalty, a

“tax or rent calculated at $\frac{1}{6}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ of the *Pattam*. The Nambudiri chieftains made also grants of lands to the Perumals which ultimately became their Jenmom properties. Besides, all the *Pokuti* or abandoned lands and the escheat properties as well as those taken or captured during the earlier wars of Travancore became the property of the kings or Perumals. Thus their lands increased from day to day and formed the nucleus of the present Sirkar lands. Towards the close of the Perumal period the country was parcelled out among the several chieftains who became independent rulers of their respective provinces. This state of things continued for several centuries until the whole country was conquered and consolidated by Martanda Varma Maha Rajah, when the rights of the several petty chieftains became vested in him as supreme lord of all Travancore. These conquests, however, did not affect the rights of the Brahmin landlords. Thus arose the two classes of lands now extant in Travancore, *viz.*, Sirkar and Jenmom lands.

“The origin and development of the lands and their tenures will thus be seen to have had a slow and gradual growth. The land tenures of Travancore bear, therefore, no analogy whatever to the English theory of property or the system of feudal tenure connected with it; nor do they exhibit any traces of the theory that the king was the first lord and owner of the soil. Property was owned and enjoyed long before the State or king came into existence. This explains the immunity of Jenmom lands from any taxes to the Sirkar. It will therefore be right and proper to speak of these lands first before we proceed to consider about the Sirkar lands of later origin and development.

“*Jenmom lands*. According to the *Keralolpatti*, Parasurama after creating Kerala made it over to Brahmins (Nambudiris) for the expiation of the sin of the murder of his mother, Renuka. The land was parcelled out into 64 villages or *gramams* and each of them had an assignment of land as free gift to be enjoyed by him and his descendants as independent landlords. These Brahmins being quite new to the place and unable to cultivate the lands themselves entrusted them to certain classes of people for cultivation, on the understanding that the shares of the produce due to them should be faithfully surrendered. Thus came into existence two classes of persons, *viz.*, the Nambudiri Jenmis or proprietors and their *Kudiyans* or tenants and cultivators.

“The word ‘Jenmom’ means ‘life’ or ‘birth’ and denotes technically a hereditary right to freehold lands subject to no state-tax at all. The character of these Jenmom lands was that they were liable to pay no taxes at all. They retained their normal condition so long as they remained in their Jenmis’ hands or passed to other Jenmis for no money consideration. The tenants cultivating them for the Jenmis did not alter their character but the Jenmom tenure ceased the moment such land passed into alien hands for money consideration, whatever be the

"nature of the transaction. The moment an alienation of the above kind takes place, the land becomes liable to a light tax called *Rajabhogam* amounting in the case of gardens to $\frac{1}{6}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ of the full rental or *Kandapattom* and in the case of paddy lands to a similar proportion of the grain rent amounting to $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{10}$ or $\frac{3}{10}$ of the quantity of seed required to sow the land. This light tax once imposed sticks to the land for ever and continues even though the land is redeemed by the Jenmi himself. As a consequence of the original transaction, the land is registered in Sirkar accounts in the name of the tenant or cultivator and the tax levied from him only; and if he dies heirless, the property escheats to Government, the Michavarom or dues to the Jenmi continuing as a charge on the property. Similarly, if the tenant abandons the holding as unfit for cultivation, then too the Sirkar takes up such lands as *Nirthal* and gives them on lease for a lower pattom as Sirkar lands. A word of explanation may be necessary for treating the cultivators as owners and recognising them as such in the Sirkar accounts. It had its origin in Brahmin Janmis allowing their Kanam holders to continue in possession for indefinitely long periods in as much as they felt themselves comfortable and satisfied so long as their customary dues were paid. Such custom, long observed and understood as binding on both sides, in time acquired the force of law, so that in later days it became necessary to insert, whenever required, a clause reserving the rights of redemption. This tendency, to gradually strengthen the claims of the tenant against his landlord, gained in volume from the improvements made by the tenants in their several holdings which had to be compensated for in case the Jenmi wished to resume his lands."

Imperial Gazetteer, Madras, Vol. II. pp. 328, 341-342 & 344.

"The early history of Malabar is inseparable from that of the adjoining State of Travancore. Identical in people, language, laws, customs, and climate, the whole of ancient Kerala is homogeneous in every respect, except in the accident of a divided political administration. * * *

"It is probable that the later flood of immigration which gave to Kerala or Chera its Nayers and Namburis was part of a general movement southward, which in prehistoric times brought the best of its people and its Brahmanism to Southern India. It is also likely that the physical formation of Kerala was due to some natural process, gradual or convulsive, which gave rise to the local legend of its having been the gift of the ocean. * * *

"In Malabar, unlike other Districts of Southern India, the Hindu rulers appear to have levied no regular land revenue, but to have contented themselves with customs and tolls and with the occasional levy of special contributions. The Nayers quickly

“ attained pre-eminence among the various immigrant tribes, and organized the country on a military basis, dividing it into *nads*, each under its Nayar chief, who in return for military service granted his vassals fiefs held free of land revenue and carrying with them various administrative and other privileges. The chiefs themselves retained domains for their own support. This organization was probably not disturbed by the Brahman immigration, though the Brahmans in Malabar, as elsewhere, attained great influence and received large grants of land for their own support and the maintenance of their temples; and the feudal system seems to have continued both when the *nads* were combined into a kingdom and when, on the abdication of the last of the Perumals, the country was again split up into *nads*. As the influence of the Rajas who succeeded to the Chera kings declined, the process of disintegration continued and the fief-holders and Brahman landowners naturally claimed independent lordship of their lands; and these formed the bulk of the *janmis* (landowners) on whose share of the produce the Mysore assessment was eventually levied. * * *

“ The landlord’s right in the soil is held to vest in the *janmi*. The word *janmam*, literally meaning ‘birth’, perhaps carries with it the idea of hereditary ownership. The probable evolution of the *janmi* as landlord has been sketched above. As now interpreted by the Courts, *janmam* right means the proprietary interest of the landlord in the soil, and is freely bought and sold; but the idea of property in land is of comparatively modern growth.”

Gazetteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts—p. 287.

“ The land revenue settlement of Malabar differs from the ordinary ryotwari settlements of the Madras Presidency, in that the existence of a landlord between the State and the actual cultivator has been recognised in the theoretical distribution of the produce, on which the rates of assessment are based. As elsewhere, the State claims a share of every crop, and that share commuted to money and called assessment, is a first charge on the land, and is recoverable by the usual processes, including in the last resort the attachment and sale of the land itself. But in fixing the share of the State, account has been taken of the landlord as well as the cultivator.

“ The reason for this divergence from the ordinary rule can only be explained by an examination of the history of the principal land tenures in the district. Their origin has been much debated, and it is impossible to deal with the subject exhaustively within the limits of this book; but it will be desirable to state briefly the different theories which have been put forward.

“The traditional accounts are to be found in the vernacular treatises, which, though full of inconsistencies and Brahman bias, seem, as has been remarked in Chapter II, to embody to some extent a plausible history of early political development; and in the matter of law are not the less valuable as authorities, because they reflect the theories of the Brahmans, who were the chief makers of the law.

Keralolpathi. “Of the origin of the *janmam* and *kanam* rights, the Keralolpatti says—

‘Parasurama created Malayalam, the Keralabhumi, and gave it as a gift to the Brahmans of the 64 *gramams*. The gift of flower and water given to the sixty-four *gramams* together for their enjoyment is called *janmam*. That gift was given to the *tarawads* of a *gramam* together and called *Egodagam*. Afterwards he gave the right called *Rajamsam* to 3,600 Brahmans of ten *gramams* by pouring water on the sword. They can put their finger in water and say ‘this is my *janmam*’; but the others may not put their finger in water and say ‘this is my *janmam*’; they have only enjoyment.

‘Parasurama having sent for Sudras from various countries made them settle and prescribed various rules of conduct for them. He created *adima* and *cutima* in the *desam*, protected *adiyans* and *kudiyans*, established *taras* and *sankethams*, separated the Nayers into *taras* and ordered that to them was to belong the duties of supervising (lit: the eye), executing (lit: the hand) and giving orders, in such a manner that rights should not be curtailed or suffered to fall into disuse. To the *kudiyans* the *kilkur* (inferior share), to the Brahmans the *melkur* (the superior share); to the former the *kanam*, and to the latter *janmam*; and so the law of *kanam* and *janmam* and the rules of conduct for the Brahmans and custom for the Sudras were ordained.’

“On these texts the Brahmans support their claim, that they and they alone have always enjoyed the full *janmam* or proprietary right in the land; and as Brahmans are expressly exempted by Manu from payment of taxes, the tradition is offered as a simple and satisfactory explanation of the absence of any general land revenue in Malabar at the time of the first Mysorean invasion.

“The Brahman tradition was accepted generally by the early British administrators, but they were more concerned with giving an accurate account of the land tenures as they found them, than with speculating about their origin. Mr. Farmer, one of the first ‘Commissioners for inspecting the countries ceded by Tippu Sultan,’ reported in 1793 that the possessors of land were said to be of two descriptions—

“ ‘1st *Jelm-kars* or free holders who hold their lands either by purchase or by hereditary descent.

‘2nd *Kanom-kars* or mortgagees, to whom an actual delivery of the land appeared to be made, although the money taken upon it was not at all proportioned to the value of the land.....

‘Many of the Raja’s principal Nayers and Nambudiris holding estates at a distance from their residence, or holding more land than they chose to attend to the cultivation of, were necessitated to farm them out to others, at a certain fixed rent settled between the parties, and for the security of the land-lord, or *Jelm-kar*, the following regulation seems generally to have been observed in the Malleam.

‘The farmer, called *Kanom-kar*, deposited with the landlord a certain sum to remain with him as a pledge for the due payment of the stipulated rent; on this sum an interest was allowed to the *Kanom-kar* or farmer, who might perhaps frequently be obliged to borrow the money on other pledges; after deducting the amount of this interest from the *pattom* or rent agreed on, the difference was paid to the *Jelm-kar* or landlord.’

“Dr. Buchanan, a most careful enquirer, wrote in 1800:—

‘I have already mentioned that the Nambudiris pretend to have been possessed of all the landed property of Malayala ever since its creation; and in fact it is well known that before the conquest by Hyder, they were the actual lords of the whole soil, except some small parts appropriated to the support of religious ceremonies, and called *Devastanam*, and other portions called *Cherical*, which were appropriated for supporting the families of the Rajas. All the remainder, forming by far the greater part, was the *janm* or property of the Nambudiri Brahmans; and this right was, and by them is, still considered as unalienable: nor will they allow that any other person can with propriety be called a *Janmcar* or proprietor of land. As, however, both duty and inclination prevented the Nambudiris from attending to the management of their lands, they took various means of obtaining an income from the *Sudras*, to whom they granted a temporary right of occupancy.’

“He proceeded to give the details of the various tenures, showing that, at the time he wrote, their incidents had become more or less definitely settled, and that the terms of the contracts in each case were usually reduced to writing.

“In 1801, an elaborate treatise on the several forms of conveyance and lease then in use was prepared by Major Walker. He derived his information mainly from Brahmans, and drew largely from the *Vyvahara Mala*, a Sanskrit legal manual; but that does not diminish the value of the details, which he collected, of the practice of the day. He concludes his treatise as follows:—

“ ‘The jenma-karan possesses entire right to the soil and no earthly authority can with justice deprive him of it. But his right is confined to the property, and he possesses neither judicial nor political authority.....’

‘In no country in the world is the nature of this species of property better understood than in Malabar, nor its rights more tenaciously maintained. It is probable that the possession of jenmam land was originally unalienable and confined to one or two castes. At present, however, any person possessed of money may become a purchaser of jenmam. It is still more probable that this possession was exempt from any direct burden except military service. There seems to have been no regular tax anterior to the Mahomedan invasion. The Rajas were supported by the produce of their own lands and by certain fugitive forfeits or immunities which were more singular than advantageous. In cases of public necessity, they might have recourse to the voluntary or constrained assistance of their subjects; but their power was very limited, and it was seldom that they could more from a jealous and discordant aristocracy than a short personal service.....’

‘It is obvious from the tenor of the deeds that considerable provision has been made in Malabar for the security of landed property..... In all the stages of conveyance, the most watchful jealousy is observed, to prevent the possession being loaded with additional engagements, and to save it from total alienation. The conditions of each step are the subject of a new writing, in which they are recorded with precision..... In the inferior tenures, which only convey a temporary possession, there appears an equal attention to the interests of the proprietor and of the tenant..... Few or none of these tenures are simple. They unite almost in every case the consideration of mortgage and rent, and in this they discover that distrust and want of confidence peculiar to infant societies, when a pledge is the most natural security for property; another proof of the great antiquity of these institutions.’

“The accounts of Mr. Thackeray, who reported on the land tenure in 1807, and Mr. Warden, who was Collector of Malabar for twelve years from 1804 to 1816. are to the same effect.

‘Almost the whole of the land in Malabar, cultivated and uncultivated, is private property and held by Mr. Thackeray, janmam right, which conveys full absolute property in the soil. We find the land occupied by a set of men, who have had possession, time out of mind; we find that they have enjoyed a landlord's rent, that they have pledged it for large sums, which they borrowed on the security of the land, and that it has been taken as good security; so that at

“ this day, a very large sum is due to creditors to whom the land is mortgaged..... The deeds which serve to record these transactions are drawn out in a peculiar character, which may be termed the black letter of Malabar..... There is no proof that any land-tax existed in Malabar before Hyder's invasion. The proprietors were bound to render military service and were liable to contribute 2 per cent in case of invasion. The pagodas and Rajas had lands of their own; the Rajas had other sources of revenue from fines, imports, personal taxes and plunder which were sufficient to support them.’

‘ The jenm right of Malabar vests in the holder an absolute property in the soil. *Kanamkar* is a mortgagee, Mr. Warden. or one who has land pledged to him in security for the interest of money advanced to the jenmkar, which advance is the *kanam* that is ever incumbent on the land until it be redeemed..... The peculiarity of the *kanam* or Malabar mortgage is that it is never foreclosed, but is redeemable after the lapse of any number of years. The quantum of money lent characterises the different gradations of the *kanam* tenure. Their variety and numbers till they reach the deed which for ever alienates the jenmom afford the most conclusive evidence that can be adduced of the tenacity with which the ancient land holders cling to their jenm right..... It was a prerogative (and is still claimed), inherent in the jenm right, that the *kanamkar* should renew his *kanam* deed after the lapse of a certain number of years. The renewal entitled the jenmkar to a remission of a fixed percentage on his original debt..... There is no such thing as an established division of the produce in shares between jenmkar and tenant.’

“On these reports the Government acted in considering the principles on which the land revenue should be settled; and the Civil Courts similarly, accepting the position that the *janmi* was the *dominus* or the landlord in the English sense, proceeded gradually to define the legal incidents of the various tenancies.

“The first serious attempt to question the correctness of the position was made by Mr. Logan in his report Mr. Logan's theories. on the land tenures of Malabar, which he prepared when appointed in 1884 as Special Commissioner, to enquire into tenant right in connection with Mappilla disturbances. He refused to accept the theory of a Brahman theocracy and monopoly of land; but emphasizing the importance of the function assigned by the *Keralolpatti* to the Nayars, and relying on some doubtful interpretations of the Syrian copper-plate grants and other documents which he had collected, developed a theory, which, briefly stated, is that *janmam* and *kanam* were originally political offices, conveying each a right to a definite customary share of the produce; and that

‘rights of property in the soil were imperfectly developed even at the time of the Mysorean invasion.

‘The unit of the Hindu social system was the family, not the individual. An association of families formed a body corporate, as, for example, the *gramam* (village) among the Brahmans, the *tara* (foundation street, village) among the Nayars, the *cheri* (assemblage, village, street) among the Tiyar (Cingalese, islanders) and other foreigners..... These guilds or corporate bodies had each distinct functions to perform in the body politic, and those functions were in old times strictly hereditary..... The Nayars were, as the Keralapatti expressly says the people of ‘the eye,’ ‘the hand’ and ‘the order’ and it was their duty ‘to prevent the rights from being curtailed or suffered to fall into disuse.’ The word *kanam* comes from the Dravidian verb *kanuka* (=to see or to be seen) and the root from which that verb is derived is *kan* (=the eye)..... so that *kanam* in its original sense seems to have denoted this function of theirs in the body politic..... But what was this supervision right (*kanam*)? The *kon* (shepherd, King) and the *pati* (Lord, Master) had shares of the produce due to them as the persons of authority in the land. And the specific words used in the ninth century A. D. to denote these shares have probably survived to the present day and are still in common use in a contracted form as *pattom*. For *pattom* seems to be a compound word signifying the *padu* (=authority’s) *varam* (share)..... The Nayars were no doubt spread over the whole face of the country (as they still are) protecting all rights, suffering none to fall into disuse, and at the same time supervising the cultivation of the land and collecting the *kon* or king’s share of the produce, the public land revenue in fact.....

‘In order to understand the Malayali land tenures aright it is therefore first of all necessary to realise the fundamental idea that certain castes or classes in the State were told off to the work of cultivation and the land was made over to them in trust for that purpose, and in trust that the shares of produce due to the persons in authority should be faithfully surrendered.

‘The next most important point to keep in remembrance in regard to Malayali tenures is the fact that from the earliest times grants of land by the ruling power were customary, and what those grants conveyed requires to be examined attentively.

‘In the first place the grants were of a hereditary character. This is fully borne out by the earliest deeds. The distinctive phrase used was *peru*. It occurs in various combinations—Vidu-per, Attiperu, Attipettola, Perumarthan, Epperpettattu, etc. *Peru* itself is the verbal noun of the verb *peruka* (= to bring forth) and it means birth. The word has fallen into disuse of recent years and it has been supplanted by

“ its Sanskrit equivalent *janmam*, which coming from the root *jan* also signifies birth. Both words when applied in speaking of land tenures conveyed the idea of hereditary grants.....

‘In regard to the next and perhaps the most important point of all, the sharing of the produce in these hereditary holdings, much has already been said, and it is needless to say more here than that all the State functionaries employed had well-defined shares of the produce set apart for them. The *kon* or king had his share. The *pati* or overlord (the hereditary grantee apparently if there chanced to be one) had likewise a share. And if there was no such *pati* or hereditary grantee, then it seems his share went to the general body of protectors and supervisors—the ‘six hundred,’ the Nayar guild, the *kanakar*.....

‘ But when the right of the Perumals came suddenly to an end, their (the *kon*’s) share of the produce was, in Malabar at least, certainly not passed on to the chieftains who in some measure supplied the Perumal’s place..... These chieftains certainly had revenues from their demesne lands, but from the lands of the bulk of those subject to them they certainly levied nothing. The chieftains were hereditary holders (*janmis*) of the lands from which they derived a share of the produce, and on the other hand the bulk of their subjects—the headmen of the Nayar protector guild—had likewise become hereditary holders (*janmis*) of their own lands by usurping the *kon*’s share of the produce. This is the only explanation which accounts for the state of the facts at the time of the conquest of Malabar, and moreover it is a very natural explanation.....

‘In Malabar the hereditary property (*janmam*) was freely bought and sold, long before the Mysorean invasion took place. And it was this buying and selling, and in particular the wording of the deeds in which such transactions were recorded, that misled the early British administrators and caused them to form erroneous views on the general subject of the Malayali land tenures..... The things enumerated (stones, thorns, snakes, holes, treasure, wells, skies, streams, forests, paths, lower world, etc.) seem at first sight to have been named purposely to express, with exaggerated force, the completeness of the relinquishment of the seller’s right in the soil. But with these material objects were conveyed such things as ‘authority in the *Desam*,’ ‘Battle wager’ and ‘Rank’ and ‘Customs’ which are clearly outside the idea of *dominium* as understood by Roman lawyers. The idea of property in the soil—the Western or European idea—was evidently not the idea uppermost in the minds of the persons who executed these deeds. What in fact they were buying and selling was not the soil, but a position with emoluments (in Malayalam *Stanam Manam*) conferring authority of different kinds and of varying degrees over the classes resident within the limits specially laid down in the deeds..... If the

“fundamental idea of the Malayali land tenures is borne in mind, namely, that the land was made over in trust to certain classes for cultivation, the above will be seen to be a most natural outcome of the Hindu system.

‘While on the one hand, therefore, it is erroneous to suppose that the janmi was the dominus, it is equally inaccurate, on the other hand, to say of the kanakkar or supervisors that they were the real proprietors of the soil..... The Nayar kanakkar collected the share of the produce due to the janmi. But janmis were at times hard pressed for coin and it became customary for them to borrow what money they wanted from the kanakkar. In proportion to the sum borrowed the kanakkar deducted from the pattom (*i. e.*, the *padu* or authority’s, *varam* or share) collected by him for the janmi a quantity of produce sufficient to meet the interest on the sum lent. The interest was calculated at certain customary rates and the balance of produce alone went to the janmi..... What he pledged was evidently not the soil itself but only his share of its produce so far as that went, and after that his other income and emoluments attaching to his status as janmi of the land. But the Civil Courts, acting on the idea that the janmi was a dominus and as such entitled to take what he could get out of the land, viewed his pledges as pledges of the soil itself, and in this way they have almost completely upset the native system of customary sharing of the produce.

‘Under that system of customary sharing of the produce, the kanakkar’s advance to the janmi used to be periodically revised in one or other of two ways, namely :—

(a) A deduction of about thirteen per cent. of the advance was made, and a renewal deed showing the loan diminished by this percentage was prepared, or

(b) No deduction was made, but instead of it the kanakkar made to the janmi a payment equivalent to the customary deduction described in (a) and the renewed deed showed the full original sum advanced.....

‘The latter method (b) is that which has generally been adopted, and the periodical renewal fees—now however extravagantly enhanced, amounting in the most favourable cases to about twenty-five per cent. of the mortgage advance—form one of the regular sources of a janmi’s income. The idea at the root of this system of renewals was that in due course of time the janmi’s customary share of the produce should be freed from the mortgage with mutual advantage both to the janmi and to the kanakkar. If, on the other hand, it was to their mutual advantage to maintain the existing relations, the payment made in lieu of the customary

"deduction was of advantage to both of them. The system was admirably conceived for binding the two classes together in harmonious interdependence..... When after a series of renewals by the method (a) described above, the Janmam holding had been freed from mortgage, the parties (janmi and kanakkaran) simply resumed their original stations. The kanakkaran began to yield up again to the janmi the whole of the janmi's customary share, as he had been in the habit of doing before the loan had been made, and remained on the holding in his capacity as supervisor (kanakkaran.)'

"Sir W. Robinson criticised Mr. Logan's history and etymology; and argued that in Malabar private property in land was an old established institution quite distinct from political office, and that proprietary rights were, before the Mysorean invasion, distributed among *janmis*, *kanamdars* and *verumpattamdars*, all of whom paid land revenue (*pattam*). The term *janmi* did not, he considered, in itself connote any rights of property in land; but was properly a title attaching to certain families, and indicative of many social, territorial and taxationary privileges.

'The organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social and administrative purposes, was the ordinary Hindu type, and intimately allied to that of Tamul nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages and institutions. It rested on the village system in its truest and least disturbed form. There were the *tara* and *cheri* (Tamul) and later the *deshom* and *ulldeshom* (village and hamlet), with its institutions of headman (*Pati*, *Deshadhepati*, *Deswali*, etc.), hereditary village servants (*Cheri-janmakar*) and village *Panchayet* or *Kuttam*; there were the *vattoms* or village circles of Tamul countries, possibly with their official organisation, for revenue registration and record; there probably existed—in many parts of the country at least—the *kaveli* system of police and watch and ward, common to all South Indian populations, with its *kavelgars* of many grades down to the village watch, and its grain fees, etc., etc.; there were the ordinary village pious uses, and wider religious orders and personages (Nambudiris, etc.) and institutions with their usual privileges. And finally there were the independent native princes, with their large private properties and usual sources of public income and taxation—with their occasional and latterly (during the last and probably the previous century, at least) very active levies of the inhabitants for aggressive and defensive purposes amongst themselves and against external menace. With these probably rested, in the main, the guidance of the revenue system and assessment (*pattom*) of the properties of their subjects, such as it was from time to time within their respective territories, and the exercise of the usual functions which belonged to the position under ordinary Hindu conditions.

“All land was private property, with all the legal incidents of inheritance, sale, etc.; and it was distributed amongst a multitude of prescriptive ryotwari landholders and ‘proprietors’ of various classes and conditions from the native ruler, noble and religious institution, with their large estates tilled by their predial slaves and under-tenants (*Kudiar*), down to the *Verumpattakar* or hereditary occupant (the *Mulguenigar* of Canara and *Ulkudi* of Tamil countries), who were more or less directly in account (*wary* of Canara) with the State in respect of their fixed and moderate revenue demand. These paid what was equivalent to a prescriptive and more or less fixed land revenue (*pattom*, *janme-pattom*, *kanom-pattom*, *nigudi-pattom* or the like) assessed on fixed, moderate and mutually recognised principles on their holdings, to the State for the time being or to some assignee or representative of the ruler’s rights. At the same time there were under the native rulers privileged classes, institutions and persons whose properties remained—for pious reasons, exigencies of warlike calls on them, such as became heavy during later centuries and other causes—unassessed and untaxed until the Muhammadan conquest supervened, and placed all on equal footing in this respect. Practically what we have to do with in Malabar is the dethroned native ruler and others who had possessed rights of taxing their fellow-subjects’ private properties, self-constituted as Zamindars.’

“The Commission appointed to consider Mr. Logan’s report did not accept all his theories; but they agreed with him in holding, that the *kanamdars* had, before the British Courts interfered, permanent rights of occupancy. They assigned to the *kudian*, or occupant, the hereditary rights of the ryot who first clears the land; and to the *janmi*, the rights of the ruler who claims a share in the produce.

‘Both the *pattam* and the *kanam* were, we believe, originally revenue and not rent—revenue paid to the public purse by the hereditary raiyat or *kudian*. In the political history of Malabar, one fact at least is supported by a considerable amount of evidence, *viz.*, that lands were originally held free of rent and taxes, and that in times of public exigency the Rajas levied a tax of one-fifth of the produce on all lands except those appertaining to the temples. This then was the *pattom* or share of the *pad i. e.*, the paramount authority. It may perhaps be said that the lands were held free of rent or taxes on condition of performing military service; but so far as the evidence goes, this liability to military service was purely a personal liability, and had nothing to do with the land.

‘The *kanam* (money secured on the land) may not improbably have originally been the contribution levied on extraordinary occasions by the Rajas, which was treated not as a land-tax but as a loan.

“ ‘ The practice of levying a periodical fine for the renewal of a *kanam* was really in the nature of a succession duty (*Purushantaram*). The fine was payable at the death of janmi and at the death of the kanamdar, or once in twelve years at the feast of Mahamakam at Tirunavayi, when, the parties having met together, the old document was torn up and a new document substituted (*policheluttru*). That the janmi had, however, the power to refuse the renewal at his own caprice is a proposition to which we are unable to assent.

‘ Non-payment of the janmi’s customary share, non-payment of renewal fees, neglect to cultivate, and perhaps the inability of the kudian to advance further sums of money to his janmi, may have been considered adequate grounds of forfeiture, but not a simple desire on the part of the janmi to favour another kudian.

‘ So long as he behaved himself and acted up to the unwritten law of custom, the *pattamkar*, whether he held on *kanam-pattam* or *verum-pattam*, was practically the settled occupant of the land having as much right to the customary share of the produce, as the janmi had to his.

‘ It is possible that the relations of the two classes were slowly but steadily tending towards the independence of the janmi and the dependence of the kudian. The janmi may have had full *dominium* over some lands either because there was no settled kudian, and he cultivated them by means of his slaves; or because as kudian he has purchased the janmion, and the two rights became merged into one. All that we maintain is, that at no period had the relations of the janmi and the kudian reached that stage of development, that it was proper to apply to them literally the terms landlord and tenant, and that at all events as regards the bulk of the old Nayar kudians, the ancient custom had never been lost sight of’.

“ The theories put forward by Mr. Logan and the Commission were subjected to a trenchant criticism by Sir Charles Turner, then Chief Justice, who pointed out the slender basis on which they rested and emphasised the authority due to the early reports. Many of his arguments are conclusive, and his minute deserves to be quoted at some length. After referring to the early organization of Malabar society and alluding to the predominant influence of Brahmanism, as evidenced to-day by the Nayar marriage customs, the strict regard paid to caste, and the very large endowments of religious institutions, he proceeded :

‘ Mr. Logan not only denies that there was any such thing as absolute property in land in Malabar,..... but goes so far as to assert that while ‘ the Europeans look to the soil, the soil and nothing but the soil, the Hindus on the other hand, at any rate in Malabar,

“ ‘look to the people, the people and nothing but the people located in the soil.’

‘Whatever may have been the case in Malabar there is no doubt that Hindu (*i. e.*, Brahminical) law recognised the private ownership of land..... The Hindu law exhibited so much regard for this form of property that it imposed more than ordinary restraints on the power of the manager of the family to alienate it, and every sale of the whole ownership of land in ancient times took the form of gift..... It was also required or recommended that the sale should be attested by the heir, kinsmen, neighbours, an officer of the sovereign, and the scribe..... The Hindu law also recognised a multiplicity of forms of mortgage, some extending to the usufruct of land, others to the actual ownership.....

‘Mr. Logan admits that some of the deeds which he has collected ‘express with exaggerated force, the completeness of the relinquishment and of the acquisition of the rights conveyed’..... and that ‘at first sight it looks as if the soil and all above and below it (the soil), from the highest point of heaven to the lowest depths of the earth, were the objects conveyed, and that the parties had purposely employed words to show how complete the dominion was that has thus been bought and sold.’ I do not understand on what principle we are to repudiate the expressions which the parties have themselves used in these deeds as indicative of the interests with which they intended to deal. They proposed to sell not only the surface of the soil within defined boundaries but stones good or bad, stumps of nux-vomica, thorns, roots, pits, mounds, treasure, low earth, water, ores, boundaries, field ridges, canals, washing places, foot paths, streams, deer forests, shady places for honey, etc., and in some cases rights which may be termed manorial..... Now if these words had any meaning, and we may presume they had, they point to an ownership of the soil as complete as was ever enjoyed by a free-holder in England. Private property in the soil is not inconsistent with payment of a land tax to the Government, nor is it inconsistent with the existence on the soil of persons who may have subordinate rights, or of village artificers who receive for the services they render a customary dole at the time of harvest or a rent free-holding.....

‘It appears to me impossible to resist the conclusion that whatever the origin of the title, the jaimis were, and for centuries before British rule had been, the owners of the soil in full proprietary right; and that their rights were recognised even by the class that would have been most hostile to them, the Mappillas, who owing to the persecution of Tippu, had for some years been the masters of the situation. Indeed this seems to be admitted by Mr. Logan; for he notices that when the jaimis fled the country, they received considerable advances in money from their Mappilla tenants.

“ ‘I have, I hope, established that Hindu law allowed almost as complete a property in land as is recognised in England and that although in many parts of India this right had become practically valueless when the country passed under our rule, it subsisted in full vigour in Malabar prior to the Muhammadan invasion, probably for the reason that revenue was raised, if at all, only occasionally by an assessment of the produce.’

“ On the question of the absence of a general land revenue he wrote as follows:—

‘The absence of land revenue, which appeared to the early enquirers and to the Court of Directors so extraordinary, is explained on the hypothesis that the Brahmin whom the Hindu law declared free from tax was the owner of the soil. I do not, of course, intend to assert that the janmomi right had at any time been enjoyed in all the land by the Brahmin. It is probable that some of the land was held throughout by Nayars, but these and the Mappillas who were in possession as janmis when the District was ceded by Tippu claimed the same completeness of ownership as was claimed by the Brahmins.

‘So far as I can understand Mr. Logan’s theory, he regards the pattom received by the janmi as the land revenue, and this is also the view supported by the Committee and by Sir William Robinson. If this were so it would point to the existence at some time or other of a Brahminical oligarchy which had constituted itself the sovereign of the soil and had retained the land revenue after it had lost other rights of sovereignty, or to a very general dedication of the land revenue as an inam to the Brahmins; but I cannot say that I find any sufficient evidence to support either suggestion. The earliest instance we have of the payment of a land tax in Malabar occurs in 1731 to 1732 when the dominions of the Raja of Kolateri were invaded by the Bednur Raja’s forces, and the Kolateri Raja in consequence imposed a tax of 20 per cent. on the pattoms of all rice lands. It will be noticed that the tax was not the pattom, but was taken out of the pattom; and it could be taken from no other source, for the cultivator received little more from the land than would induce a tenant to cultivate it.....

‘I am satisfied that for some hundreds of years the term pattom has been used in Malabar as meaning neither more nor less than rent, while the land revenue is invariably termed Nigadi, and this is a further argument as to its origin, for Nigadi is a corruption of Muhammadan term Nakel.’

“ He then discussed the *Kanam* tenure at length:—

‘I now come to the *kanam*. Mr. Logan observes that the term *kanam* applied to this tenure is comparatively recent. If by comparatively he means

The *Kanam*,

“ ‘ within the last 300 or 400 years he is possibly right. But the tenure itself was known antecedently to that period under the more ancient but analogous names of Abhayya, Abhayya Pattola Karmam or simply Pattola Karmam.

‘The term Abhayya (literally without fear) means an assurance of safety, security, thus Abhayya Patra is a safe conduct and Pattola Karmam is a written deed of lease. From these names we may, I think, form a pretty accurate opinion both of the antiquity and of the nature of the tenure.....

‘It may well be imagined that in Malabar where the central authority was certainly for many centuries weak, and each division of the country from time to time involved in war with the other, the landlord felt it necessary to obtain some security from his tenant. A tenant could escape without much difficulty into a neighbouring jurisdiction where it would be difficult if not impossible, for the land-lord to follow him and exact his dues; and the view that the kanam was a security for the rent, so far from being as Mr. Logan suggests, a modern one, is supported not only by the opinions of the earliest inquirers but by the ancient name of the instrument by which the tenure was created, and by the purpose which it is represented as serving in the Malayalam treatises.....

‘The conclusions which I draw from the Malayalam text-books and the information acquired by the English officers, is that originally the kanam tenure was a tenure with a payment of rent in advance, but that advantage was taken of it for the purpose of raising money on loan.....

‘That the kanam was periodically renewed is admitted by the Committee..... The renewal entitled the janmkar to a remission of a fixed percentage on the original debt..... The renewal fee was devised to meet this result..... If the landlord had no desire to reduce the charge or the tenant wished to continue the security which the indebtedness of his land-lord assured to him the obvious course was that tenant should pay an amount equal to the reduction to which the land-lord was entitled.

‘The right to insist upon a renewal does not, of course, necessarily involve the absolute right of resumption. The practice of renewals might have been introduced only that the parties might re-adjust their rights at certain definite periods, but there is abundant evidence to show that the janmi also possessed the right to resume. It is shown by the Proclamation of the Joint Commissioners in 1793 and asserted by Dr. Buchanan and Mr. Warden.....

‘Much difference was found to exist, probably owing to varying local usage, as to the length of the term for which the kanam was granted. According to Mr. Walker, it enured for

“ ‘ from 3 to 6 years. Mr. Farmer mentions that such leases were in general for from 3 to 5 years, and that it was only when the owners of land wanted to borrow a considerable sum of money that longer leases were granted from 20 to 25 years or for life. Mr. Græme states that in North Malabar the kanam was renewed every 3 or 4 years. If, as I believe to be the case, the kanam was resumable, the court conferred a great boon on the kanamkar when they held that the term of a kanam in the absence of special contract was twelve years.....’

“ He concluded :

‘ I have not entered on a discussion of the deeds collected by Mr. Logan, because on those points on which he bases his arguments there is very much reason to doubt whether Mr. Logan’s translations are accurate. So far as the construction of these deeds is undisputed, they entirely coincide with what was for more than 80 years the unanimous opinion regarding land tenures in Malabar. I have only to observe that we find a marked difference between deeds which purport to deal with janm or full proprietary right and deeds which create inferior interests. We find the janmis when they profess to sell their janm rights, describe it in terms which would apply only to the most complete interest in the soil. We find a recognition of various tenures, some for terms of years and others in perpetuity, and the conversion of one tenure into the other. We find an inam created by a Rajah of the rent reserved on a plough right in perpetuity (Arikaraima), and of his right to levy taxes and percentages on the transfer of janmam property. And we find deeds which are identical in their substance with the kanam deeds of the present day.’

“ It remains to notice the account of the Malabar land tenures given by Mr. Baden Powell in his *Land Systems of British India*. Though he does not accept Mr. Logan’s etymologies, he relies to a large extent on his history, and endeavours to show that the claim to *janmam* right is an instance of the phenomenon common in India, of Rajas or chiefs who were originally rulers and claimed only revenue, without interfering with the proprietary title of the original soil occupants, gradually, as their rule is weakened by invasion or conquest, assuming the rights of landlords and demanding rent. The early organization into *taras* and *nads*, as described by Mr. Logan, is, he considers, typically Dravidian; and the next stage, the introduction of a King (Kon, Perumal), to whom a land revenue is assigned, is in accordance with the custom common to Dravidians and Aryans. The petty chiefs, who succeeded to the Perumal, claimed no general land revenue, and were content with demesnes, feudal services and miscellaneous revenues; but with the Mysorean conquest, a general land revenue was re-introduced, and the petty chiefs became land-lords or zamindars in their turn paying revenue.

“ ‘The whole process of the growth of the landlord right thus reduces itself to an evolutionary process, which is in all essentials the same as that taken place in other parts of India. The Dravidian adopting Aryan ideas, and perhaps, in return, suggesting his own ideas to the Aryan, establishes a kingdom in which the rulers and chiefs are military castemen, the advisers Brahmans. The inferior castes who are above the status of slaves or serfs are first settled in their localities, holding undisturbed (as proprietors if it please us to say so) the cultivated plots which they cleared from the jungle, but paying a part of the produce to the king or to some local chief or immediate overlord. As long as there is a powerful sovereign or overlord, he keeps the subordinate military in feudal subjection; they were content with their places in council, the privileges of rank, the right to special dues from estates granted to them or the perquisites of headship over the Governmental groups of territory, the *desam* and the *Nad*. In time the supreme ruler ceases to exist and the country is then held in small groups or estates by the chief Nayars, while the smaller men are content to hold lands under the chiefs, as privileged tenants or on terms of the *kanam*; inferior castemen are reduced to being tenants. In this stage there is no one to collect any general revenue. Each chief lives on the produce or grain-share of his own demesne, and on the payments of the smaller landholders whom he has now made his subjects.....

‘Then comes the Mysore conquest and the disruption of the ruling chiefships. As many of the Nayars as can do so cling to their ancestral lands, no longer as rulers or as official heads of districts and subdivisions, but as landlords inventing terms to signify their claim to the soil.....

‘Lastly comes the British power, and finding the landholders making such claims, and misled by names into supposing these rights to be something really ancient and exceptional, not only recognises the proprietorship (which as it was practically established, was the obviously right thing to do), but further accepts totally unfounded theories about the perfection and antiquity and exceptional character of the right, whereby the claim of the State to the forest and unoccupied waste which has elsewhere been properly asserted has been lost.’

“The objection to Mr. Baden Powell’s theory is that it is based largely on incorrect and doubtful assertions. It rests in the first place on the position that there was a general land revenue and an organised system for its collection in the time of the Perumals. There is no proof that this was so. Nor is there any evidence that the land-lords, who claimed *janmam* rights at the time of the Mysorean invasion, based their claims on the fact that they represented the chiefs, who succeeded the Perumals as rulers. The deeds of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

Criticism.

“collected by Mr. Logan go to show that, at that time, the ‘perquisites of headship’ might be held by Numbudiri Brahmans; that property in land pure and simple, unconnected with any political office, might vest in persons who were not Brahmans or Rajas or officials in any sense; and that Rajas, Nambudiris, and private persons were all equally competent to grant leases of their private lands on definite rents and for definite periods set out in written documents. But they show no trace of the existence of a State land revenue.

“Nor is it inconceivable that such a system of land-holding should have been evolved from what is supposed to be the type of primitive Aryo-Dravidian tribal organisation—an aggregate of villages under a chief, each village being an aggregate of the family holdings of the original cultivators, with special allotments for the priest and temple and for the chief. The normal development from this to the village of ryotwari holdings, each paying a share of the produce to the king, would naturally be arrested by the peculiar conditions of Malabar. The physical features of the country would in themselves go far to prevent the formation of village communities; the martial spirit and organisation of the Nayars would militate against the establishment of any strong central Government or system of land revenue; and the matriarchal family system and supreme influence of the Nambudiris would tend both to the preservation of large family estates, and to the accumulation of land in the hands of Brahmans and temple trustees. On the other hand, with a Government organised on a military basis, it would be natural for the Nayar janmi to hold his lands free of State revenue on condition of supplying his Raja with men; and the prevalence of the *kanam* tenancy may well be explained by the fact that, while it provided the janmi with some security for his rent, it would attract retainers by offering them a larger interest than that of an ordinary tenant at will.

“But whatever the true history of the tenures may be, it can hardly be denied that the early British administrators were right in treating the janmis, who then included Mappillas, Tiyans and Mukkuvans in their number as well as Nayars and Brahmans, as being in fact in the position of land-lords, and the kanamdars in the position of tenants, in the English sense of the words.

“It is perhaps unfortunate that, instead of asserting the State’s right to waste lands, they adopted the presumption that every acre of land was the private property of some janmi; but the position was difficult. Cultivable and uncultivable lands are inextricably mingled in Malabar, and few of the low hills which surround the paddy flats are altogether valueless for cultivation; and the existence of special forms of lease for the reclamation of jungle, and even for shifting cultivation in forest, goes to show that

“private rights had been claimed and acknowledged over most of the ‘waste’ lands in the less remote desams. It is also probable that private rights had become defined in the more accessible timber forests. But there must have been ‘wide stretches of primeval forests, unreclaimed wastes and sandy tracts, and hills and waste lands used from time immemorial as common grazing grounds and places where the people at large cut grass and fuel’ over which the Rajas and their officials claimed at most the prerogatives of sovereignty; and these prerogatives should have passed to the Honourable Company. In respect of these, what Sir Henry Winterbotham called ‘the pestilential legal fiction that all waste land must have a private owner’ has operated as ‘a direct standing invitation for the preferment of unfounded preposterous individual claims.’

“In settling the proportion of the State’s share leviable as land revenue, provision was accordingly made for the land-lord’s interest separately from the interest of the cultivator; but the tenants, whether *kanamdars* or *verumpattakars*, were not regarded as having a permanent right of occupancy. No doubt the *kanamdars* held a powerful position before the Mysorean invasion, as the fighting material on whom the *janmis* depended to perform their military service to the Rajas, and were seldom evicted; their position was still further strengthened by the general flight of the bigger *janmis* before the terrors of Tippu’s rule; and many of the Mappilla *kanamdars* apparently proceeded to claim the *janmim* rights of the lands of which they were left in possession. On the return of the *janmis* in 1793, the Joint Commissioners in arranging for a settlement with them, considered it desirable to effect a compromise; and published a proclamation declaring that Mappilla *kanamdars* who had been in possession of lands for over six years should be left undisturbed in full rights, but that *janmis* who had been absent for only five or six years might claim their old rights, and should if necessary sue for possession of their lands. The *janmis* apparently in most cases came to terms with their *kanamdars*; but they were still heavily in their debt; and when subsequently the collection of the revenue was taken over by the British officials, the *kanamdars* in most cases paid it, and there was often little left for the *janmis* after the assessment and the interest on the *kanam* had been deducted from the rent. With a settled Government prices gradually rose, and the *janmis* in course of time naturally endeavoured to improve their position and get better rents from their lands. The result was a disturbance of the hitherto quiescent relations between the land-lords and tenants, and a more frequent resort to the Courts in proceedings for eviction; and to this amongst other causes was attributed the recurrence of Mappilla out-breaks in the middle of the nineteenth century. An elaborate enquiry was held into the system of land tenures, and proposals (to which

"allusion has already been made in Chapter IV) were considered to give certain of the tenants a statutory right of permanent occupancy; but no change was actually effected.

"In describing the land revenue administration of Malabar, it is impossible to deal with the district as one homogeneous whole. Different systems have at various times prevailed in different parts. After a brief notice, therefore, of the revenues collected in the days before the Mysorean invasion, the revenue history of the eight plain taluks of Malabar will be described, and tracts like the Wynaad and Cochin taluks, which for special reasons require separate treatment, will be dealt with separately.

"Allusion has already been made to the taxes upon which, as well as upon their *cherikkal* lands, the Hindu Rajas depended for their revenues between the date of the departure of the last of the Perumals and the Mysorean invasion. Many of them were not so much taxes as feudal rights and prerogatives. The Raja levied customs duties upon imports and exports, and taxes upon the houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill his coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices or rights over land. Outcaste women were a two-fold source of profit. They were made over to the Raja with a premium as compensation for the trouble of looking after them, and they were sold by him as slaves or wives to Chettis. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated; nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, given of course at a price. Protection fees under various names were levied from dependants and strangers, and customary presents were his due on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisite, and various animals his monopoly. Among such animals may be mentioned cows with three or five dugs, cattle that had killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

"The first recorded instance of the levy of land revenue in Malabar licensed in historical times was in 1731-32 A. D., when the Kolattiri Raja, hard pressed by the invasion of the Bednur Raja, imposed a tax of 20 per cent. of the pattom on all rice and garden lands in Kolattanad. When the invaders retreated, the tax was probably discontinued, and the district was not assessed again till the Mysorean invasion. In 1757 the Zamorin, who had previously possessed himself of the *nad* of Naduvattam, overran the remaining territory of the Palghat Raja, and to meet the expenses of the force required as a defence against the Mysoreans,

“ who were then threatening an invasion by way of the Palghat Gap, imposed a land tax called *kaval-phalam*. This tax was levied at the rate of an anna on every piece of land which required for a single crop one local para (10 seers) of seed.”

Cochin State Manual—p. 298 :—

“ As land holding developed into a well defined, if complex, system centuries before the sovereign began to levy any revenue from the land, and as when land revenue began to be imposed, the various tenures under which lands were held from time immemorial were taken into account in fixing the assessment, an account of the land tenures should naturally precede that of the land revenue administration. Here, as in Travancore and in Malabar, the property in the soil is vested not in the sovereign or in the cultivator, but in an intermediate class known as *janmis*, by whom the lands are leased to cultivators on the produce sharing system on a variety of tenures. The origin of this proprietary right and of the tenures on which the lands are leased is lost in the mists of antiquity. Various theories have been put forward by writers on the subject, which it is impossible to deal with fully within the limits of this book: all that can be attempted here is a recapitulation of the traditionary and popularly accepted account of their origin, together with what appears from a consideration of the circumstances of the case to be the true origin.

“ According to the traditionary account preserved in the *Keralolpatti*, a comparatively recent work, Parasurama, an incarnation of Vishnu, created the land of Kerala and gave it as a gift to the Brahmans, whom he invited from the north and settled in sixty-four *gramams*. This gift, made with flower and water for their enjoyment, is called *janmam*. Parasurama then sent for Sudras from various countries, and settled them in the land as the *adiyans* and *kudiyans*, or the slaves and tenants, of the Brahmans. He established them in separate *taras*, and assigned to them the duties of supervising, executing and giving orders (literally, the eye, the hand and the order), so that they might preserve the rights of all classes from being curtailed or falling into disuse. To them as *kudiyans*, he also assigned the *kanam* and the inferior share (*kilkur*), while to the Brahmans belonged the *janmam* and the superior share (*melkur*). On the authority of this tradition, the Brahmans claim the exclusive proprietary right in the land as well as explain the absence in the old days of any general land tax in the State, since the ancient Hindu law-givers expressly excluded the Brahmans from payment of taxes. In the absence of authentic history and of the historical instinct among a people, all social and other phenomena are explained by ascribing a divine origin to them; the Brahmanical explanation of the origin of *janmam* and *kanam* is

"but one of the many illustrations of this tendency. All the evidence available at present tends to show that the Sudras established themselves in the country centuries before the Brahman immigrants found their way into it in successive waves, and at the dawn of history, the *janmam* or proprietary right in the land is found to have been vested for the most part in non-Brahmans. The probabilities therefore are that the Brahmans never enjoyed proprietary right over more than a minor portion of the land and that they obtained this right not by divine favour but—more prosaically—by gift, purchase or usurpation from the immigrants who settled in the country long before them.

"The political constitution of the country had, from the times when we begin to get glimpses of it up to the middle of eighteenth century, been of the nature of a military hierarchy, whatever might have been the process of evolution by which it attained that form. The king was the head of the State, and had extensive crown lands for his maintenance, while the rest of his territory was divided into *nads* or districts ruled over by *Naduvazhi* chiefs, who exercised quasi-sovereign authority over them. The *nads* were again divided into *desams* or villages, some of which were reserved as the private property of the king or the *Naduvazhis*, while the rest were made over to and ruled by *Desavazhis*. The proprietary right in the lands comprising the latter class of *desams* was vested in the *Desavazhis*, while that of the other *desams* belonged to the *Naduvazhis*. The king enjoyed the same right in the lands comprising the crown villages. This right, to the extent limited to property in the soil, came to be known as the *janmam* right. Neither the *Desavazhi* nor the *Naduvazhi* had to pay any regular tax to the king for the lands in their possession, but they were both bound to attend the king, and march wherever they were directed, with all the fighting men in their *nads* and *desams*. In the midst of the community organised in this manner, Brahmans from the north began to establish themselves, and by their great superiority in knowledge and intelligence, they gradually acquired great ascendancy over the people and their rulers. For their valuable services, both spiritual and temporal, they obtained, as in the other kingdoms of southern India, repeated grants of lands with libations of water from the king and chiefs of the country, and the religious institutions founded by them or at their instance also received similar grants of land. The granting of lands in this manner to Brahmans and Devaswoms was and is still considered to be an act of religious merit. Thus, in course of time, the lands became distributed among the king, the chiefs of *nads* and *desams*, the Brahmans and the Devaswoms. Some of the landed proprietors among the Brahmans rose to the position of *Naduvazhis* and *Desavazhis*, and two of them even became rulers of petty kingdoms, but the great majority of the rulers and *Desavazhis* were always non-Brahmans. This latter circumstance

“ proves that the Brahmans were the new-comers and that they acquired their rights and privileges from the earlier settlers. In view of their great superiority over the Dravidians in almost every respect, it is inconceivable that the latter could have succeeded in wresting so much power from the Aryans. The king and the chiefs leased most of their lands on favourable terms to their military retainers, mainly Nayars, who, in consideration of the substantial profit they derived from their holdings, were bound to render gratuitous military service whenever called upon to do so. The normal lease was a simple one called *verumpattom*, which was redeemable at pleasure. When any retainer rendered distinguished service, such as, in the opinion of the chief, merited special reward, the lease was converted into a *kanam*, which not only rendered it irredeemable for a generation, but also entitled the tenant to a pecuniary compensation in the event of eviction. If the service rendered was of an exceptional nature, the lease was made perpetual and irredeemable, with only a nominal rent payable by the tenant (*inam* or *anubhogam*). Thus, in their origin, the land tenures of this coast were essentially military, though in their subsequent developments under altered circumstances they have lost much of this character. * *

“ Land revenue, as it is now understood, began to be levied for the first time in 1762. Prior to that year, the produce of the land used to be shared exclusively between the *janmi* and the tenant in certain fixed proportions. In that year, however, it became necessary to provide additional funds for administrative purposes to be presently explained, and it was decided to levy from land-holders a *rajabhogam*, or king's share, as distinguished from the *janmibhogam*, or the landlord's share. This *rajabhogam*, together with the *janmibhogam* of the lands which belonged to the Sirkar in *janmam*, constituted the land revenue of the State.

“ The chief sources of the king's revenue prior to 1762 were the *kandukrishi* or crown lands, customs and monopolies. The crown lands, which consisted eventually of 365 farms, were either leased to tenants at will or cultivated by the Raja's slaves under the supervision of officers appointed for the purpose. Owing to the large foreign trade which Cochin enjoyed from very early times, the customs revenue was considerable, and consisted of transit duties as well as duties on exports and imports. Since the advent of the Portuguese, pepper and other spices were treated as articles of State monopoly, which could be disposed of by the producers only to the State. The latter purchased them at fixed prices and sold them at a profit. A tax called *kettuthengu* was levied from the cocoanut gardens owned by *Madampi* chiefs at the rate of six annas and eight pies per tree or three per cent. of the trees in every garden. Among the minor sources of

"income were the annual nuzzar, the protection fees under various names and the succession fees paid by chiefs and other landholders, taxes upon the houses of tradesmen and other professional men, fees paid when titles or privileges were conferred on individuals or families, and criminal fines, and fines levied for caste and other social offences. The estates of chiefs and others dying without heirs lapsed to the king, and adoptions could be made only with his consent and on payment to him of 20 per cent. of the value of the estate as nuzzar. He was entitled to all wrecks stranded on his shores, to all elephants caught in pits and to certain natural freaks among cattle. All teak trees, whether standing in Sirkar or private lands, were the monopoly of the State.

"When local administration was in the hands of hereditary chiefs and the army consisted of militias maintained by them, the income from the above sources, though not large, was generally sufficient for the maintenance of the royal family and of such limited establishments as were then needed. But when, after the expulsion of the Zamorin in 1762, the chiefs were divested of their administrative and military powers and the administration was placed in the hands of officers appointed by the Raja, it became necessary to provide funds for the maintenance of these administrative establishments, as also of a standing army. As the income from the existing sources was not sufficient for these purposes, the levy of a general land tax on a very limited scale was ordered from 937 M. E. (1761-2). In 1774, Haidar, after his second conquest of Malabar, demanded a contribution of four lakhs of rupees from Cochin; the demand was readily complied with with a view to obtain immunity from invasion. To meet this expenditure, an additional tax was levied from the land holders in 949 M. E. In 957, Cochin became tributary to Haidar and had to pay a tribute of one lakh of pagodas in 952 and thirty thousand in each of the subsequent years. The rates of assessment were accordingly revised in 952 and 953 to meet this demand. Since this period, there has been settlements of land revenue on several occasions, some general and others piecemeal....."

3. The above extracts have been reproduced at such great length in view of the importance of the subject and the elaborate treatment it has received at the hands of competent authorities holding divergent views. Whatever may be the real origin of the *jenmom* tenure, it is admittedly a peculiar feature of the land revenue system of Kerala, including Travancore. Owing to its political history, Travancore has, as already stated, retained intact the original institution. The earliest State accounts recognise the broad distinction between *Jenmom* and *Sirkar*. Further, it will be seen

from some of the above extracts that the Sirkar itself was considered only a big Jenmi and the Sirkar lands comprised that portion of the original Jenmom lands that had lapsed to Government or the ruling power, by escheat, conquest or confiscation. It is significant that Dewan Mr. Ramaiengar defined Pandaravaka or Sirkar lands as 'lands other than jenmom'. This shows the antiquity of the jenmom tenure as well as its prominent and well recognised position in land revenue phraseology. In connection with the Jenmi and Kudiyan Regulation, V of 1071, the following definition of 'Jenmom land' was arrived at after considerable discussion:—

“ ‘Jenmom land’ means land (other than Pandaravaka, Sree-pandaravaka, Kandukrishi or Sirkar Devaswom land, recognised as such in the Sirkar accounts) which is either entirely exempt from Government tax or if assessed to public revenue is subject to Rajabhogam only and the occupancy right in which is created for a money consideration (kanam) and is also subject to the payment of nichavaram or customary dues and the periodical renewal of the right on payment of renewal fees.”

‘Jenmom lands’ are classified in the Sirkar accounts as falling under one or other of the following heads:—

- (1) Devaswomvaga
- (2) Brahmaswomvaga
- (3) Madambimarvaga.

The essential distinction between the three classes of jenmom lands, from the land revenue stand-point, is that while the jenmom lands under the head of Devaswomvaga and Brahmaswomvaga are exempt from assessment so long as they remain unalienated, the lands under Madambimarvaga are charged with Rajabhogam even in the hands of the original holders. Both classes of jenmom lands become subject to varying rates of Rajabhogam in cases of alienation.

The exemption from assessment in respect of jenmom lands under the head of Devaswomvaga and Brahmaswomvaga was not peculiar to Travancore, but was recognised throughout Kerala, including Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. In Malabar, the old system was changed only after the invasion of Hyder Ali and in Cochin, a similar change was introduced when it came under the influence of Hyder. (*Vide Gazetteer of the Malabar District*, page 308 and *Cochin State Manual*, pp. 303-304). This is mentioned also in *Ward and Conners's Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 72.

“The Namboories (the Brahmans of the eastern coast have no particular privilege in this instance) of Travancore who possess hereditary estates, still hold them free from any sort of

“taxation, (and may pass them to a Namboori without deteriorating the tenure) an immunity enjoyed by those of Cochin till the reign of Hyder (1765) ”.

Travancore having been all along free from foreign conquest or subjugation has retained the original system unimpaired. This has been recognised and confirmed at every settlement and constitutes an essential feature of the existing system.

4. The early history of Travancore is mostly based on tradition and some ancient works which do not command that reputation for accuracy and precision that is necessary for accepting them as reliable data.

Early history. Want of reliable data. In the absence of better materials, these data have been utilized in the few published writings relating to the early period of Travancore history, which may be roughly described as the period preceding the accession of Marthanda Varma Maha Raja in 904 M. E. Recent archaeological researches have disclosed some facts relating to that period. Some information under this head is furnished in the State Manual, Vol. I, Chapters V and VI. A few facts related in Mr. Shungoony Menon's History of Travancore are also based on old records to which reference is made in that work. With the help of the information obtained from these sources and other publications (notably the 'Travancore Archaeological Series' published by Mr. Gopinatha Row) a few important facts bearing on the Land Revenue History of the State have been collected and they are enumerated in the following paras 5 to 33 in chronological order. They are put in not so much as facts established by incontrovertible authority but as affording matter for further enquiry and examination.

5. From some copper plate inscriptions examined by Mr. Gopinatha Row and explained in the *Travancore Archaeological Series No. I*, it is seen that in the first century of the Malabar Era certain lands were purchased by a king from the sabha at Minchira and endowed for religious and charitable purposes in the temple of Parthivasekharapuram and the village of Parthivasekharapuram founded by the king. Mention is made of certain taxes known as *Karanmai*, *Midatchi* and *Nerpadi*. The *Kalam* measure for rice lands is also mentioned. The terms *Devadayam* and *Brahmadayam* also occur in this record. Rice lands are described as *thadi* or field, which expression is even now in common use.

In another inscription also dealt with in the same publication, the above terms occur. In addition, the term *Rakshabhogam* also occurs and is interpreted as meaning 'the fees levied for protecting anything such as land.'

The 'Kalam' measure for land is mentioned also in another inscription (Thripparappu Fragmentary Set of Copper Plates) dealt with in the *Travancore Archaeological Series, No. XIII*.

6. The constitution under which the Sri Padmanabha Swami temple is managed is traced to the commencement of the Malabar Era. Mr. Shungoony Menon says in his History of Travancore, page 89:—

Constitution of Ettarayogam.

“The old records in the Trivandrum pagoda shew that on the 5th Chingom of the first Kollam year, *i. e.*, five days after the promulgation of the new year, the members of the five royal Houses of the Travancore family, the Swamyar, (ecclesiastical head), and all the nobility, &c., assembled in the Trivandrum pagoda and introduced certain new rules or ordinances for the conduct of the daily, monthly, and yearly performances of poojas and other ceremonies in the pagoda. These rules are still in force in the said pagoda.”

The five royal houses mentioned in the above extract are explained by Mr. Shungoony Menon himself in an earlier portion of his book as comprising (Vanavanaud) Venaud, (Sreevalumcode) Thiruvithancode, (Sreepatha) Trippappoor, (Sreevey) Sheravay and (Jayuthunaganaud) Desinganadu Swaroopams. It is said that the Travancore royal family resided at different places and was known by the five denominations above mentioned. In the same book it is stated (page 92) that “in the Kollam year 225 (1050 A. D.) the ancient pagoda at Trivandrum was rebuilt by a Travancore sovereign, whose name is not known.”

These statements were evidently based on a Malayalam work of 1043 M. E. by Mr. Patchu Moothathu, who like Mr. Shungoony Menon was attached to the then sovereign and both had ample facilities afforded them for examining the old records in the palace and the temple. The specific mention of the old records in the extract above given shows that the author had obtained some authority in support of his statement.

The facts connected with the constitution of the Sri Padmanabha Swami Temple at Trivandrum are important as there is a close connection between it and the State and the organisation of the latter including the land revenue system was modelled on the former. This is borne out by the earliest land revenue accounts now available.

The ancient constitution of this temple, which is still in force, is known as ‘Ettarayogam’ or council of eight and half. It was referred to and explained as follows by Dewan Mr. Seshia Sastri in his ‘Administration Report for 1048 & 1049, p. 98’:—

“449. The most celebrated and venerated pagoda in the State, viz., that of Sri Padmanabhaswami has a Government of its own unconnected with the State, the Sovereign having but half a vote among the governing body which consists of one Nambooree Sannyasi, 6 Potti Brahmans and one Nair Nobleman, (possessing with others a single vote) who constitute the honorary trustees.

* * * * *

"451. By virtue of the half vote enjoyed by the Sovereign, the whole management and supervision of the temple vests in the Sovereign who appoints the necessary establishments and arranges for the due performance of service."

Mr. Shungoony Menon also explains the origin and development of the old institution in another passage (quoted below) in his 'History of Travancore'—pages 96-98:

"As has already been stated the re-organisation of the ecclesiastical society in 225 M. E. (1050 A. D.) which was called Ettara Yogom amounted to this. A society was formed consisting of 'eight and a half members' of whom eight were Potty Brahmans, each of whom pretended to have the privilege of a casting vote, and the sovereign who was considered half member, had no vote in the transactions of the Devaswam affairs. By such an arrangement, the affairs of the Devaswam became virtually vested in the hands of the eight Potty Brahmans, and they began to work the institution through their attachés the Ettu Veetil Pillamar, who were the representatives of eight noble families. The sovereign had little or no influence over the Devaswam, and was simply required to be present at the usual periodical ceremonies.

"The power of this Yogakar and the association became so great, that the records show that they even imposed heavy fines upon the sovereign for wrongs done to the Devaswam institution.

"This Devaswam possessed extensive landed property which was then called Sree Pundara Vaca (belonging to the holy treasury). Its sole managers were the Yogakkar, who had all the powers of despotic rulers over the Devaswam property, and over every one of the tenants and holders of the Devaswam lands. The Ettu Veetil Pillamar were entrusted with the collection of the Devaswam revenue, and the village where the Devaswam lands lay, were divided into eight Adhikarems. Each of the Ettu Veetil Pillamar was appointed a collector over the Adhikarem, with the powers of a petty chief.

"The king having little or no authority over these men, they rose in power and importance, and gradually became supreme lords in their villages, and in time the Madempimar (nobles and petty chiefs), who were not loyally attached to the crown, were also influenced by the Ettu Veetil Pillamar and the combination became a powerful one.

"The principal royal residence was at Sreevalumcode about thirty miles from the Devaswam head station (Trivandrum), which was solely under the despotic rule of the Yogakkar and the Ettu Veetil Pillamar for a period of two hundred and thirty five years, and so the re-construction of a royal residency at Trivandrum in 510 M. E. was not quite to the liking of the Yogakkar,

whose feelings were roused when the sovereign began to watch their proceedings and insist upon having the accounts, connected with the income and expenditure of the Devaswam submitted periodically to his inspection.

“Though the king’s command was resisted by the Yogakkar, Sree Veera Marthanda Vurmah, from whom originated the proposal, quietly, but effectually, gained a step in the right direction, and, during his reign of forty years, His Highness established his authority, in a measure, over the Devaswam.”

The ‘Travancore State Manual’ contains the following reference to this subject, Vol. I, pp. 303—304 :

“The Yogakkars were a body of Potti Brahmins who formed themselves into a committee of management of the Sri Padmanabha swamy temple at Trivandrum. There were eight such Brahmin representatives belonging to eight Brahmin families. Each of them had a vote while the sovereign himself had only half a vote—in all, eight votes and a half. The Committee was therefore known by the name of *Ettara-yogam* (committee of 8½ votes). According to Shungoony Menon, there was effected a re-organisation of the devaswams in 220 M. E. (1045 A. D.) under the management of this *Ettara-yogam*. These members gradually became a powerful body and wielded immense influence in the conduct and administration of the temple establishments. The sovereigns had little or no control over them and were simply permitted to be present at the periodical ceremonies. The Ettuvittil Pillamars were the representatives of eight noble Nayar families and were entrusted with the collection of the Devaswam revenues. Originally they had nothing to do with the Devaswams. They were the tenants of Potti *jenmis* who were not members of the *Ettara-yogam* but mere landlords. In course of time, however, they acquired great wealth and power, defied their own *jenmi* landlords and allied themselves with the Yogakkars. As the king had no authority over the Yogakkars and was evidently unable to control the Pillamars, these latter easily rose to power and importance.”

7. The lands belonging to the Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple known as Sri Pandaravaga are kept separate from the State accounts, though managed by the State from the earliest times. It is well-known that Sreepandaravaga lands. Devaswoms in Travancore as well as in the rest of Kerala are of ancient origin and that they owned extensive properties the management of which invested the Ooralers or temple managers with great power and influence approaching in some cases to regal power. This peculiarity of the ancient constitution has also a direct bearing on the Land Revenue History as the great *jenmis* of the earliest periods were also territorial land-lords, as has been already explained in dealing with the origin of the ‘Jenmom’ tenure.

8. The importance of the Devaswoms in the early constitution of the State is described as follows in Mr. Shungoony Menon's 'History of Travancore,' pages 79-80:—
- Importance of Devaswoms from the earliest times.

"We find that during the sway of the Namboories over each of the various Devaswoms (temples of worship) instituted by Parasu Rama, a Samantha Kshatria called Kovil Adhikarikal was appointed as manager. These Adhikarikals rose in power and in course of time established themselves as petty chiefs.

"These Devaswoms became possessed of immense wealth and landed property, to which latter numerous tenants were attached and who established themselves as ryots or subjects, so much so that the Devaswom managers and trustees enacted rules and laws for the management of the Devaswom property and began to enforce these laws, independent of the king, within the limits of their landed property.

"Tradition shows that the life and property of the Devaswom tenants were at the mercy of the Devaswom community. In every pagoda, before the commencement of the annual Ulsavam festival, which generally begins by a flag being hoisted, such of the Devaswom tenants, as had committed any breach of the Devaswom rules were gibbeted before the hoisting of the flag and the commencement of the Ulsavom. By such arbitrary conduct of the Devaswom people the sovereign power was overshadowed, and the king became indifferent to the mode in which affairs were administered within the jurisdiction of Devaswom and Brahmaswom lands.

"These powers of the Devaswom appear to have continued up to the early part of the eighth century, as will be seen from accounts of the Trivandrum Devaswom.

"The rise of the Devaswom to power greatly affected the military resources of the king, whose forces were chiefly constituted of militia trained out of the populace. Now, the Devaswom ryots became the largest portion of the people and they were not permitted to form a portion of the militia".

9. From an inscription in the Cape Comorin temple (*Travancore Archaeological Series No. VIII pp. 164-165*) belonging to the 3rd century of the Malabar Era, it is seen that in the *devadanam* village of Kanniya-kumari, there were several taxes known as Kumarakachanam (കുമാരകച്ചാനം), Meenpattom (മീൻപാട്ടം), Elavaniyapattom (ഇലവാനിപ്പാട്ടം), Attu pattom (ആട്ടുപാട്ടം), Tharaku kooli (തരകൂലി) etc.

Another inscription dealt with in the above Series No. VIII p. 168, also of the 3rd century of the Malabar Era, makes mention of the *Kole* as a measure of land.

10. From an inscription in the Cape Comorin temple examined by Mr. Gopinatha Row and explained in the *Travancore Archaeological Series No. III*, it is seen that in the 4th century of the Malabar Era, the Pandyan king Parantaka made a gift of lands, comprising a good portion of modern Nanjinad and the adjoining British territory to the Cape Comorin temple. The gift is termed Devadanam and from the area within the limits specified in the grant the lands styled *Pallichandam* are excluded. The latter has been interpreted to mean lands belonging to Jaina or Budha temples.

11. The tract known as Nanjinad comprising the taluks of Thovala and Agastiswaram is said to have been taken back by Travancore in 292 M. E. (1117 A. D.) from one Nanji Kuravan who had taken possession of it during the Mahommedan rule of the Pandyan kingdom. *Vide* following extract from Mr. Shungoony Menon's 'History of Travancore' page 92:—

"During the Mahommedan rule of the Pandyan kingdom, which rule appears to have continued for about half a century, one Nanja Koraven, a feudatory chief under Travancore obtained possession of Nanjinad, the southern part of Travancore, and established himself there as a ruler. Subsequent to the conquest of Mysore by the Mahommedans and the relief of the Madura kingdom, Nanja Koraven and his confederacy were driven away by the king of Travancore in the Kollam year 292 (1117 A. D.)."

This fact is also mentioned in the "Travancore State Manual" Vol. I p. 251 as follows:—

"In the beginning of the 12th century A. D., a battle was fought between the king of Kupakas (Travancore sovereign) and Rajasimha, the Pandyan king, at the dam of the river Parali, *alias* 'Pandian Anai', during which the dam was demolished by the forces of the king of Kupakas. He defeated Rajasimha and conquered the country of Kottar together with the whole of Nanjanad on the 11th Chingam 292 M. E."

12. The administration of Nanjinad in the fourth century of the Malabar Era is referred to as follows in the 'Travancore State Manual,' Vol. I pp. 252-253:—

"In 301 M. E. (1125 A. D.), SRI VIRA KERALA VARMA I flourished in Venad and his loyal chieftains made over the tax in paddy and money due from Vadasseri as a gift to the temple of Rajendra Cholesvara for the daily performance of *Thirumadura-Panakam*. Travancore or Venad, as it was then called, was under him a well-organised principality with loyal feudal chieftains to transact public business and to levy taxes, as it is done now, both in kind and in cash; the Government dues were

“ then moderate and fair. The circumstances under which Sri Vira Kerala of Venad was prompted to dedicate so piously a portion of his revenue to a temple founded by a foreign monarch are difficult to determine. The grant was, however, meant in all probability as a political peace-offering to the representatives of the Mummudi Chola power in the land. We do not know how long this king ruled. We find his successor SRI KODAI KERALA VARMA ruling in Venad between 320 and 325 M. E. (1145-1150 A. D.). This king recovered possession of Suchindram and other portions of Nanjinad and made to the temple of Suchindram a gift of lands in the following villages, namely Suchindram, Karkadu, Tenvalanallur (or Kakkumudur as it is now called) and Tenkanpudur. During his reign, the measurements of land and grains were the same as they were in the Chola country. Kodai was an epithet applied to the kings of Travancore.

“ The successor of this king was SRI VIRA RAVI VARMA who ruled over Venad from 336 to 339 M. E. (1161—1164 A. D.). The remaining northern portion of Nanjinad was added by him to his kingdom. The gift of the lands in Tazhakudi Pudukkottai to the temple of Puravari Vinnavar Alvar was made by his loyal chieftains Singan Rangan of Pasunkulam (Painkulam) Tennadu, and three others on the 6th of Edavam 336 M. E. There was no uniform standard for measures and weights anywhere in Southern India; each temple used its own under the name of the local deity. The village governments that existed received the support and sympathy of this sovereign. One of his documents confirms the inference that has already been drawn with respect to the eastern boundary of the Venad principality at that time. Since the executive officers referred to in the deed are styled ‘ officers in charge of the affairs of Nanjinad ’ (நாஞ்சி நாட்டுக்காரியம் செய்வார்கள்), the Chola power must have been by this time altogether extinct there. Vira Ravi Varma ruled peacefully over all South Travancore, his affairs in Nanjinad being administered by a triumvirate composed of Kerala Santosha Pallavaraiyan, probably the chief of the local officers, Govindan Vikraman and Anandan Chakrapani who were in charge of the civil administration. The Rajah’s ministers of the State at the capital were the loyal chieftains, Pullalan Aiyar, Singan Rangan, Narayanan Shungaran and Kodai Devan.”

13. Prior to the annexation of Nanjinad mentioned in the above extract, the territories of Travancore comprised only the tract between Eratta Malay (east of Oodayagiri) and Edavaye near Warkalay. There was a small accretion to this territory, when the Travancore Royal family acquired by right of adoption the territories forming the Madanthinkara Swaroopam (Mavelikara). Shungoony Menon’s ‘History of Travancore’ pp. 91-92.
- Old limits of Travancore-

14. The existence of administrative divisions or 'districts' about this period and of the land tenures known as *Uranmai* and *Karanmai* is also mentioned in the 'Travancore State Manual', Vol. I p. 255:—
- Old administrative divisions and special tenures.

"In 371 M. E. (1196 A. D.), the ancient throne of Venad was occupied by SRI VIRA RAMA VARMA TIRUVADI. From the inscription in which this king is mentioned, we are able to trace two or three striking features of the social economy of the times.

'Besides the village associations already noticed, Venad, it would appear, had an important public body under the name of the "Six Hundred" (வெண்டறு நாடுவர்) to supervise the working of temples and charities connected therewith. What other powers and privileges this remarkable corporation of 'Six Hundred' was in possession of, future investigation can alone determine. But a number so large, nearly as large as the British House of Commons, could not have been meant, in so small a State as Venad was in the 12th Century, for the single function of temple supervision. There is an allusion again in this record to the *Valanjiyars* of the eighteen districts. The 'eighteen districts' were no doubt eighteen administrative divisions of Venad..... We may reasonably presume that the eighteen *Valanjiyars* were eighteen local magnates, or feudal barons of the realm..... It looks probable that the loyal chieftains transacting business in the name of the king and forming, as it were, his government or cabinet ministry came from this class of *Valanjiyars* or feudal barons'.

"There were also slaves attached to the land and there were two important kinds of land tenure, *Ural* or *Uranmai*, subject to the control of the village associations, and *Karanmai* or freeholds, directly under the control of the State."

15. The next important fact is the abolition of the system of farming the land revenue in the fifth century of the Malabar Year. This is mentioned in the Manalikai inscription of 410 M. E. to which great importance is attached by the late Prof. Sundram Pillai. His interpretation of this inscription is quoted at length in the 'Travancore State Manual', Vol. I pp. 197 & 256—258:—
- Manalikai inscription of 410 M. E.

"There are a number of inscriptions relating to taxation. A very important one on a pillar standing outside the temple of Manalikai Alwar in Kalkulam Taluk, dated 27th Medom 410 M. E., (1235 A. D.) records a Royal Proclamation issued after a consultation held among the loyal chieftains of SRI VIRA RAVI KERALA VARMA ruling VENAD, the members of the Kodalinallur assembly and the people of that village as well as the individual entrusted with the right of realising the Government dues. The chief points of interest in this inscription are that the whole

“village was responsible for the tax so that when any portion of the crops failed, the villagers and the village assembly should inspect and if satisfied of the drought, the sufferers had to pay only one-fifth of the normal dues, while the balance fell on those whose lands did not fail. If there was a general failure, then the village had to pay only one-fifth of the whole demand due from it; if the villagers should however desire that the collections should be postponed, it was done accordingly, the unpaid amounts being adjusted in the years of plenty.”

“The purport of the inscription is that on the 27th Medam 410 M. E., when Jupiter was in Vrishigam, was issued the following Proclamation:—

‘Agreeably to the understanding arrived at in a consultation duly held among the loyal chieftains of SRI VIRA IRAVI KERALA VARMA TIRUVADI, graciously ruling over Venad, the members of the *sabha* or assembly of Kodainalloor, and the people of that village as well as Kandan Tiruvikraman of Marugatacheri, entrusted with the right of realising the government dues: We command and direct that the tax due from government lands be taken as amounting in paddy to.....and 24, in *arakkal* crop (Kanni crop), and 725 and 24, in *charal* crop (Kumbham), and making up per year a total of.....and the same, due from tax-paying village lands, be taken as amounting in paddy to.....and 24, in *arakkal* crop; and 728and 24, in *charal* crop, and making up per year a total of.....709 $\frac{2}{10}$;.....and that when the due quantity is measured out, a receipt be granted, discharging the liability; the fact being duly noted also in the rent roll, and we command moreover that the order of permanent lease (now in force) be surrendered into the hands of the clerks who write or issue such deeds.....From the Tuvami, (Swami), too, no more lease be taken. When part of the tax is paid, and part is still due, a list shall be prepared showing the arrears for the whole year; and an *anchali* (or authorisation) taken in writing to realise the same from the *sabha* and the inhabitants; and the arrears then recovered accordingly. In seasons of drought and consequent failure of crops, the members of the *sabha* and the people of the village shall inspect the lands and ascertain which have failed and which have not. The lands that have failed shall be assessed at one-fifth of the normal dues, but this one-fifth shall be levied as an additional charge on the remaining lands bearing a crop. If all the taxable lands appear to have equally failed, the *sabha* and the villagers shall report the matter to the Swami and, after the Swami has inspected the lands and ascertained the fact, one fifth (of the entire dues) shall be levied. This one-fifth shall be taken to include *pattavritti* and *onachelavu* amounting in paddy to.....If the members of the *sabha* and the inhabitants agree among themselves, and pray in common for a postponement of payment, as

“ the only course open to a majority among them, this demand (one-fifth drought rate) shall be apportioned over all the lands paying tax to government (to be levied in the subsequent harvest) but without interest and *pattari*, the rent roll of the current year being scored out. Should anything whatever be done contrary to these rules, the deviation shall be visited with fine.....
and the strict procedure again adopted. This
 Our regulation shall continue in force as long as the moon and the stars endure.’

“ This is a true stone-inscribed copy of the Royal writ. According to the late Prof. Sundaram Pillai, the Travancore Honorary Archæologist,

‘ This grants not a perpetual lamp or ‘ a mountain-like drum’ to the Gods above, but peace and protection to toiling humanity here below. One of the most momentous questions in all human communities has been, and will always be, the price each individual in it has to pay for the advantages of organized social life. In proportion to the fixity and definiteness characterising this price, in all its aspects, is the government of the community said to be civilized, stable and constitutional. An important item in the price to be thus paid is the pecuniary contribution given by each individual for the maintenance of the State. In all agricultural countries, the bulk of the contribution must assume the form of land tax. In Travancore, then, which is little else than agricultural, where in fact there is no individual but has his *taravad*, his plot of land, the plot in which he is born, in which he lives and works and in which he dies and is cremated too, so that his very ashes stick to it even after his soul departs from this world, in a country so entirely agricultural, there can be no question of more vital interest, or of more universal concern, than the nature and amount of land tax, the manner and time of paying it, and the machinery through which it is realized for the State. It appears to have been the practice with several governments in by-gone days to farm out the land revenue to the highest bidders, with a view to save themselves the trouble and expense of collecting it in dribbles. The iniquity of the system may be better imagined than described. It seems, nevertheless, to have been current in the neighbouring districts of Tinnevely and Madura to the very days of the Honourable East India Company. But in Travancore, thanks to the village associations and the magnanimity and political sagacity that seem to have uniformly characterized the Venad sovereigns, the system, if it was ever largely introduced, was nipped in the bud, and the disasters of the fable of the goose with the golden eggs were early averted. For, observe how the royal writ before us deals that system a death blow. It quietly takes away, in the first place, its sting by fixing the government dues exactly and unalterably per year and per harvest. The lease again is not to be a *tira taravu*, an enduring

“ one, but to be renewed from time to time so that the government farmer would have no chance of abusing his power on the strength of the hold he might otherwise have of the people. The writ provides further, for the reduction of the government demand to one-fifth in times of drought and failure. Why, when some lands alone fail in a village, this one-fifth should be given up on those lands, but levied as an additional charge upon the remaining, might demand a word of explanation. In seasons of partial failure, and in tracts of land not fully opened out by easy lines of communication, the price of corn goes easily high; and the Kodainallur council seems to have thought it just, or at all events conducive to fellow-feeling, that those that are benefited by such an adventitious rise of prices should forego a portion of their profits for the sake of their suffering fellow-villagers. At any rate, the measure must have acted as a check upon false complaints of failure, since the duty of determining what lands had failed, and what not, was left to the villagers themselves under the supervision of the *sabha*. It would be interesting to know who the Swami was, to whom the edict assigns the duty of ascertaining and certifying the fact, in case the whole village fails. He was, no doubt, some high ecclesiastical functionary, with a considerable portion of the land revenue of the village probably assigned to him for his own support and the support of the temple he was in charge of. The prohibition to take out leases from the Swami would then mean prohibition to farm out to the highest bidder the land revenue so assigned to him. Anyhow, when the Swami certifies a complete failure of crops in the whole village, the government reduces its total demand to one-fifth, and, foregoes in addition, its right to levy two minor charges, under the name of *pattavritti*, (probably a present on the anniversary of the Sovereign's accession to the throne,) and *onachelavu*, a special contribution to keep up the annual national festival of that name (Onam).’

“ Further he writes :—

‘ It is said that the edict is issued in terms of the understanding come to, in a council composed of the loyal chieftains or ministers of the king, the assembly of Kodainallur, the people of the village, and Kandan Tiruvikraman, the local revenue farmer or collector. I call him the collector, for, however oppressive a lessee or farmer he might have been before the date of this document, he and his successors in office could have been nothing more than simple collectors of revenue after the exact definition of the government dues given in the edict itself. No doubt he must have been a terrible man in his day with an appointed function in the evolution of history, not unlike perhaps the one played by those who went forth to demand ‘ ship money ’ in the days of Hampden. The good people of Kodainallur seem to have been also equal to the occasion. Here is proof, if need be, of the independent nature and constitution of the old village assemblies of Travancore.....The *sabhas* appear as

“ permanent and well constituted public bodies that acted as a buffer between the people and the government.....The whole procedure reflects the greatest credit on all the parties concerned, their conjoint action resulting in so precious a charter to the people, and so unmistakable a monument of the sovereign's unbounded love of his subjects.' Though the wording of the document makes the enactment applicable primarily only to the village of Kodainallur, I have no doubt it was sooner or later extended to the whole of Venad. A just principle needs but once to be recognised to be applied on all hands. I hesitate not, therefore, to call this Manalikai Proclamation, one of the great charters of Travancore.

‘ But the immediate purpose for which the Manalikai charter is here introduced, is to prove the rule of Sri Vira Ravi Kerala Varma on the 28th Medam 410 M.E., or about April 1235 A.D.....Having met Sri Vira Rama Kerala Varma only 21 years prior, we may take the two reigns as having been conterminous with one another.’ ”

16. The existence of certain taxes on bamboo-grains and hill produce as well as a tax on the palmyra in the reign of Sri Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma who is said to have flourished in the 5th century of the Malabar era is mentioned in the following extract from the ‘Travancore State Manual’, Vol. I pp. 259-260 :—

Existence of some special taxes.

“ From one of the grants of Martanda Varma, we learn that bamboo-grain and hill produce were the staple products on which hillmen subsisted. To the known tax on handlooms, we find here attached a tax on the palmyra, and it looks probable that what is meant is a tax for tapping and not for otherwise using that palm. Besides fines, the government of those days appropriated certain payments under the name of *ko-muraipadu* literally ‘royal-justice income’. It could be taken to represent the court fees and judicial revenue of modern times. *Karaiyappattu* means ‘adhering to’ or ‘reaching land’, and it might be taken to include treasure-troves, mines, jetsams and floatsams, and all such royalties known to law.”

17. The origin of the Sreepadom Edavaga, comprising the villages of Attingal and Idakkod in Chirayinkil taluk is traced to this period—430 M. E. (1255 A. D.) The following brief account is given in an official report recently issued:—

Origin of Sreepadom Edavaga.

“The villages of Attingal and Idakkod in the Chirayinkil taluk, comprising an area of 21½ sq. miles, form the hereditary domain of the Ranis of Travancore. The Ranis held sway over the tract, ever since the formation of the town of Attingal in 1205 A. D. It was from Umayamma Rani that the English obtained Anjengo in 1684. In 1737, the then Rani resigned her

“sovereignty in favour of the Travancore (Maha Rajah. Since then, the two villages are enjoyed by the Ranis (who reside at the Sreepadam Palace in Trivandrum) as their private domain.”

Mr. Shungoony Menon refers to this as follows in his ‘History of Travancore’, p. 93:—

“During the 5th century* M. E., and in the reign of king Adithya Vurmah, the Travancore royal family was under the necessity of adopting two females from the Kolathnaud royal family, and a royal residence was constructed at Attingal, for the residence of the two Ranees, and they were installed as Attingal Mootha Thumpuran and Elia Thumpuran, i.e., senior and junior Ranees of Attingal. The country around Attingal was assigned to them, and the revenue derived therefrom was placed at their disposal.”

The statement contained in the concluding portion of the above extract is evidently incorrect as the Ranis exercised sovereign authority over the tract till 912 M. E., when the Rani resigned her sovereignty in favour of the Travancore Maha Rajah.

This fact is mentioned in ‘Hamilton’s Description of Hindustan’ Vol. II, page 315, quoted in the ‘Travancore State Manual’, Vol. I p. 338:

“The Tamburetties of Attingara possessed the sovereignty of Travancore from remote antiquity, until Raja Martanden Vurmah.....persuaded the Tamburetty to resign the sovereign authority to the Rajas, both for herself and for all succeeding Tamburetties. To perpetuate these conditions, a regular treaty was executed between the Raja and the Tamburetty, which was inscribed on a silver plate, and ratified by the most solemn imprecations, limiting the successions to the offsprings of the Attingal Tamburetties. Having concluded this arrangement, Raja Martanden Vurmah directed his arms against the neighbouring States.”

The ‘Travancore State Manual’ (Vol. I. page 305) contains also the following extract from an official document drawn up in 1677 A. D., by Van Rheed then the Dutch Governor of Ceylon:

“The Princess of Attingah who is not alone the mother of Travancore but the eldest of *Tippaposorewam* has a large territory of her own independent of Travancore, is also in alliance with the Hon’ ble Company.”

18. The Travancore sovereign is said to have assumed authority over the affairs of the Vycome Devaswom in the sixth century of the Malabar era. *Vide* Shungoony Menon’s ‘History of Travancore’, p. 93:—

Control over Vycome temple.

“King Adithya Vurmah extended his sovereignty over some of the northern Devaswoms, as the accounts of the renowned pagoda at Vycome shew that in 505 M. E., (1330 A. D.,) that

“sovereign had assumed authority over the affairs of that Deva-swom.”

The details connected with this transaction are mentioned in the following extract from the Grandhavari of the Vycome temple which is published in a recent work—‘History of Cochin’ in Malayalam—by Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, Book I, pp. 189—191:—

“വയ്ക്കത്തു മേൽക്കരയിൽ ആട്ടു തിരുവല്ലാഗ്രാമത്തിൽ കൈപ്പിഴ സ്വരൂപി എന്നൊരു സമുദായ പ്രവൃത്തി നടത്തിവരുന്നവരും ആ കൈപ്പിഴ തറവാട അന്യം നിന്നുപോകയാൽ ഉത്തരായംകാർ എല്ലാവരും കൂടി ക്ഷേത്രകാര്യം വിചാരിച്ചു മൂർത്തു നടത്തുന്നതിനായി അയിരൂർ ശാർക്കരകോവിലന്മാർ മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനം കൊടുത്തു. ആ ശാർക്കരകോവിലന്മാർ ദേവസ്വം എടുപ്പെടുപ്പാൻ കാര്യം വിചാരിച്ചു വന്നു. അങ്ങിനെ ഇരിക്കുമ്പോൾ ആ കോവിലന്മാർ ക്ഷേത്രമൂർത്തു നടത്തുന്നതിന്നു ശങ്കിയില്ലാതെ തീർന്നു കരണ. ആ കോവിലന്മാരുടെ മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനം ഉപേക്ഷിച്ചു ഇവിടെ നിന്നുംപോയി. അങ്ങിനെ കോവിലന്മാർ പോയിട്ടുള്ളത് 552-ാ മതിലാകുന്നു.

ശാർക്കരകോവിലന്മാർ മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനമുപേക്ഷിച്ചു പോയതിന്റെ ശേഷം കുറേ ദിവസം ഉത്തരായംകാർതന്നെ ദേവസ്വകാര്യങ്ങൾ വിചാരിച്ചുവന്നു. അങ്ങിനെ ഇരിക്കുന്ന സമയത്തിൽ എട്ടുവരും കൂടി കാര്യം വിചാരിക്കുന്നതും അത്ര വെളിച്ചില്ലെന്നും മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനത്തെ വഹിച്ചു മൂർത്തു നടത്തുന്നതിന് ഒരാളെ ആകണമെന്നും യോഗത്തിൽനിന്നും നിശ്ചയിച്ചു. ഉത്തരായംകാർ എല്ലാവരുംകൂടി രൂപദ്രവ്യപത്തികൽ ചെന്ന് ദേവസ്വവും മൂർത്തു മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനം പരഞ്ഞു ആശ്രയിച്ചു. ആ കാലത്തു കൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന ആയിരത്തി മൂന്നുമാർക്കു കൊടുത്തു ആശ്രയിച്ചു എഴുന്നള്ളിയിരുന്ന ഉത്തരായംകാരുടെ മേൽപ്രകാരമുള്ള അപേക്ഷയെ കേട്ട് ഉടനെ വടക്കുംകൂർ, തെക്കുംകൂർ, അമ്പലപ്പുഴ, കായംകുളം, കൊട്ടാരക്കര മുതലായ രാജാക്കന്മാരുടെ ഇടയിൽ നാ. രക്ഷിക്കുന്നതിന്നു വളരെ പ്രയത്നമുണ്ടെന്നു വരികിലും നിന്നുൾ ആ രാജാക്കന്മാരെ കൈ കടന്ന് ഇവിടെ വന്നു ആശ്രയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന സ്ഥിതിക്കു എളുപ്പം വിധവും അഭിമതം സാധിച്ചുതരണമെന്നു രാജാവു പറഞ്ഞു അങ്ങിനെ പണ്ടു വെച്ച് ഉത്തരായംകാരുടെയും കൂടിച്ചുകൊണ്ടു കൊല്ലത്തുനിന്നും ആറുമാസംകൊണ്ടു എഴുന്നള്ളി ആറുമാസം ചെന്നു രൂപദ്രവ്യപത്തിലേക്കു വളരെ പ്രത്യേകമായും എറ്റവും കാർഷ്വസ്ഥാനവും ഉള്ള മാർവിജ്ഞാപനത്തിലേ വരുത്തി, അം ഉത്തരായംകാർ നമ്പൂരിമാർ അപേക്ഷിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള കാര്യത്തെ പരഞ്ഞു ഉടനെ വളരെകോയ്മസ്ഥാനവും സമുദായത്തിന് അർപ്പിച്ചു നിയമിക്കുന്ന അധികാരവും കൊടുക്കുന്നപക്ഷം മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനത്തെ വഹിക്കയും സമുദായത്തിന്നു തക്ക യോഗ്യന്മാരായിട്ടുള്ള ആളുകളെ ആക്കി ദേവസ്വനെയും മൂർത്തു മേൽക്കോയ്മസ്ഥാനം ചെല്ലാമെന്നു പണ്ടാരത്തിന്നു പറഞ്ഞു. എന്നതിന്റെ ശേഷം ആറുമാസം വലിയ പന്തൽതിൽ ആ പന്തലിൽ വെച്ച് രാജാവു ഉത്തരായംകാർ കൂടി ഇരുന്നു വലിയകോയ്മസ്ഥാനവും സമുദായത്തിന്നാളാക്കുന്ന അധികാരവും പണ്ടാരത്തിലേക്കു കൊടുത്തു. രാജാവിന്റെ ആശ്രയിച്ചു പണ്ടാരത്തിലേ പാർപ്പിച്ചു. ഇതു 554-ാ മതിലാകുന്നു.”

It is evident from the above extract that the Maha Rajah of Travancore accepted the Melkoina Sthanam or overlordship of the

Vycome temple at the earnest request of the Yogakkars after some hesitation as the temple itself was outside his dominions and several small States intervened between his territory and the temple.

The 'Travancore State Manual' contains the following reference to this transaction, Vol. II, p. 88—

"On the 18th Vrischigom, 584 M. E., the *Ooranma* managers met the Rajah of Travancore at Attungal and granted him the right of appointing *Mel-Koyimma* over the temple, which was subsequently transferred to the chief of the Vanjipuzha House who now sends as his representative or *Samudayam* as he is called, a Potti Brahmin. The temple affairs are now managed by the Sirkar, the *Ooranmakars* having lost all their power, though they still receive all their *Anubhavams* regularly for their usual functions."

19. Mr. Shungoonny Menon mentions the reign of Chera Udaya Marthanda Vurnah as being the longest in history (62 years)— from 557 to 619 M. E. The following particulars are also mentioned in connection with that period—Shungoonny Menon's 'History of Travancore' pp. 94-95 :—

"During the reign of this sovereign all the south-eastern possessions of Travancore on the Tinnevely side were regained, and the sovereign often resided at Valliyoor and Chera Maha Devi :—

"In consequence of the mild and unwarlike disposition of this king, some of the subordinate chiefs in the East became refractory, and there was constant fighting and latterly, while this sovereign was residing at Trivandrum, the chief of Rettipuram invaded Valliyoor, and the king's nephew being defeated in battle fearing disgrace, committed suicide.

"In these places, several grants of lands made by this Kulasekhara Perumal, remain some of which we have already noticed. Chera Maha Devi was his favorite residence, and consequently, this sovereign was called Chera Udaya Marthanda Vurnah.

"Towards the close of his reign, suspecting unfair proceedings on the part of the chief men of the Pandyan State, the residence of the royal family was removed to Elayadathnaud Kottarakaray ; and a Governor was appointed to rule Valliyoor and other possessions in the east".

20. The existence of special taxes for the support of the army and navy is mentioned in connection with an inscription of this period, (661 M. E.). 'Travancore State Manual', Vol. I. p. 279:—

"On the 1st Chittrai 661 M. E. (1486 A. D.) the crowned king of the Chera family by name Jayasimha Devar came on tour to Vatasseru in South Travancore. The Brahmins, the Pillamars and the other superior sections of the community looked down upon the inhabitants of Parasurama Perunteru who earned their bread by dyeing clothes and who had come from distant lands and colonised the said Perunteru. They further kept them aloof saying that they were of low origin and that they belonged to the left hand caste of the community. They were subjected to further hardships by being prevented from paying their respects to the king except through themselves, and that they should not worship the village gods as the high class people did, that they should readily submit to pay any kind of tax levied upon them and that, if any of these rules were infringed, they would be subjected to corporal punishment and forbidden from living even in their own village or from using the village wells. The poor people took advantage of the Royal presence in their midst and prayed for redress of their grievances. The king Jayasimha Deva was pleased to grant them audience and after hearing them issued orders to the following effect:—

(1) That if they had any grievances to be redressed they might appear before the king and acquaint him of the same whenever he came in procession on his elephant;

(2) That they need pay no other tax than that for the maintenance of the navy, viz., *kappalvari* (கப்பல்வரி) and that of the army, viz., *padaippanam* (படைப்பணம்);

(3) That the superior classes (including the right hand castes) should not interfere with their religious worship, with the celebration of their festivals, nor with the use of the necessary flags and other appendages within certain limits exclusively set apart for their use;

(4) That no injustice should be done to them;

(5) That they should be allowed free use of the public wells and tanks;

(6) And that any interference on the part of the Brahmins, Pillamars and other superior sections of the community with the affairs of the left hand caste would meet with Royal displeasure and be punished accordingly."

21. The construction of the Veerapuli dam across the Palayar in South Travancore is traced to the reign of Sri Vira Rama Martanda Vurmah (692-710 M. E.).
Construction of Veerapuli dam. 'Travancore State Manual', Vol. I, p. 295:—

"He was also called Puli Martanda Vurma, as he married the Chola princess whose house had the leopard for its royal

“ insignia ; the dam across the river which stands even now under the name of *Virappuli anai*, was erected at that period.”

22. It is also stated that during the reign of the same sovereign a royal writ was issued on the 20th Meenom 701 M. E., redressing certain grievances of the Christian Paravas in Cape Comorin and exempting them from the payment of certain taxes, till then levied. ‘Travancore State Manual’, Vol. I, p. 296:—

“On the 20th Minam 701 M. E. (1526 A. D.), a royal writ went forth for redressing the grievances of the Christian Paravas under the sign-manual of Bhutala Vira Sri Vira Udaya Martanda Varma to the senior and junior Kangan (the head-man and his assistant among the Hindu fishermen, who resided in the haven at Kumari-Muttam, commanding them that they should not thereafter molest or harass in any way the Christians who were exempted from paying the taxes due to the village community of the heathens, such as *idankai*, *valankai-panam* (the tax for the right and the left hand castes) *padaippanam* and *prachandakanikkai* &c. The pillar on which this edict is engraved stands in a dry field called ‘Muthanayinar Vilai’, near Cape Comorin”.

23. The existence of the tax known as ‘Anjali’ is mentioned in connection with a gift made by Aditya Varma on the 6th Mithunom 734 M. E. of certain lands for the performance of pujas in the Darsanamkope temple in Thovala taluk. ‘Travancore State Manual’, Vol. I p. 300.

“King Aditya Varma made a gift of lands to the temple of Rameswaram Udaya Nayanar at Darisanankoppu in the Taluk of Tovala, to meet the daily *puja* expenses of the temple. The lands thus given were then exempted from the tax called *anjali*. This gift was made by him on the 6th Mithunam 734 M. E. (1559 A. D.). According to the temple chronicles the reign of this king lasted till the 16th of Vrischigom 740 M. E. (1564 A. D.)”

24. The invasion of Nanjinad by Thirumala Naik of Madura is said to have occurred in 809 M. E. and necessitated the remission of taxes in 810 M. E. This is referred to and explained as follows in the ‘Travancore State Manual’, Vol. I, pp. 302-303:—

“The earliest record showing the advent of Tirumala Naik with his forces to Nanjanad, is a *neet* (edict), dated 22nd Kumbham 810 M. E. (1635 A. D.), issued by the sovereign of Travancore to the Nanjanad ryots, regarding the remission of tax. This was found among the cadjan records preserved by Periyavittu Mudaliar of Tazhakudi already referred to. The edict runs thus:—

“ ‘Whereas it has been represented to us at our residence at Kalkulam by the *nattars* ryots between Mangalam and Manakudi, including those of *perumpattu*, *tali* and *sanketam*, that the country is smitten by calamities, having had no cultivation for the *Kar* Kanni crop of 810, and that, as *Pisanam* Kumbham cultivation was not begun owing to the advent of Tirumala Nayakar's forces and as the crops raised of *Manalvari*, *Samba* and *Adikkiravi* (different kinds of paddy) suffered by blight, the ryots have not the where-withal to begin fresh cultivation, we are pleased to command on this the 22nd day of the month of Masi in the year 810 M. E., that the levying of *orupoo-melvaram* a fixed tax be given up for the *Pisanam* crop and that this fact, viz., that simple *melvaram* alone will be realized on the *Pisanam* cultivation between Mangalam and Manakudi including *Perumpattu*, *tali* and *sanketam* be duly notified to the ryots of the said places in the southern portion of Nanjanad North’.

“ It would appear from the above edict that in 810 M. E.; Kalkulam or Padmanabhapuram was the seat of government, that on account of the advent of Tirumala Nayak's forces which according to tradition were encamped in the paddy-fields), there was no cultivation for the *Kar* crop of 810 M. E., and that the *Pisanam* cultivation was not begun in time, and that Nanjanad was then divided into Nanjanad North and Nanjanad South. Mangalam is now a small village near Ponmana, nine miles north of Padmanabhapuram, and Manakudi is a seaport village in Agastiswaram Taluk, three miles along the coast from the Cape. The term *sanketam* is applied to the property of Sri Padmanabhaswamy; *tali* means temple or Deva-swam property and *perumpattu* corresponds to *Pandaravagai-pattom* or Sircar's own—a name still used in the Shencottah revenue accounts. It is evident from the edict that Tirumala's first advent took place about the close of 809 M. E. (1634 A. D.) when Venad was under the joint sovereignty of Ravi Varma and Unni Kerala Varma”.

25. In 820 M. E., (1644 A. D.), Viliñjam was granted to the English East India Company by Unni Kerala Varma for erecting a factory there for purposes of trade. This was the earliest English settlement in Travancore. *Travancore State Manual*, Vol. I, p. 302.

26. The limits and territorial divisions of Travancore as they stood in 839 M. E., (1664 A. D.), are described as follows in John Nieuhoff's 'Voyages and Travels' from which the following extract is given in the 'Travancore State Manual' Vol. I, pp. 308-309 :—

“The kingdom of *Travancore* begins at the Cape of *Comory* or *Comorin*, and extends all along the sea-coast as far as

"*Koulang*, comprehending a tract of ground of 20 or 24 leagues in length; the famous village of *Paru*, belonging to the Queen of *Singnaty* being only in the midst. To the east it borders upon the kingdom of *Madure*, and to the west upon the countries of *Peretaly* and *Kotarkery*. It has several considerable villages which are inhabited by the moors, such as *Tengepatnam*, *Kuletture*, *Korityapattam* and *Allage*..... But the chief cities lie deeper in the country, which is of a great extent all along the mountains to *Naynar* near the Cape of *Comorin* and toward *Travancore*, in all 29 great cities and villages. About a league and a half to the north of the cape is the city of *Kotate* or *Kokatti*, a place of great traffic; the populous city of *Simintra* and *Matadavalur*, famous for its bigness, being surrounded by six or seven other towns; *Verrage* is not above a quarter of a league distance from *Kotate* and *Tatikury*, the two most considerable places of the whole country. *Kalkolang* is a very large city, being a league and a half long, upon the confines of the *Neyk* of *Madure*. It is situate upon a high hill, 3 leagues from *Tengepatnam*, and 12 from *Koulang*; being on one side strengthened by inaccessible mountains, on the other by a wall, the undermost part of which is of stone, the uppermost of brickwork, in all 24 feet high; the royal palace stands at the west end, being surrounded by a stone wall. On the east side you see the ruins of an old castle, built on the top of a hill, fortified with a triple wall. *Kalkolang* is the chief residence of the king who constantly keeps a garrison of 10,000 negroes here, to secure it against the *Neyk* of *Madure* whose power is much dreaded here..... He is by some styled the *great king*, because he possesses larger territories than any other of the *Malabar* kings. He is served in great state, and maintains abundance of commanders, whom they call *Mandigals* and many councillors, called *Pullas*."

27. In 860 M. E. (1684 A. D.), the English East India Company Anjengo granted to the English East India Company. obtained from the Rani of Attingal, a sandy spot of land at Anjengo and appointed a commercial Resident there. ('Travancore State Manual' Vol. I, p. 314).

In 825 M. E. (1690 A. D.), permission was granted by the Queen to the Company to build a fort there which was completed about 1695. ('Travancore State Manual' Vol. I, p. 315.)

28. It is stated that about this period the Danes had a factory Factory of the Danes at Edawa. within the territory of the Queen of Attingal, probably Edawa. ('Travancore State Manual' Vol. 1, p. 315).

29. During the reign of Ravi Vurmah (859-893 M. E.), it is stated Administrative changes in the 9th century. that some important changes were introduced in the system of Government and Land Revenue administration. (Shungoony Menon's 'History of Travancore', pp. 110-112.)

“The system of Government and the mode of collecting the revenue appear to have been continued without any material change for a long period, but in the reign of the late king Revi Varma, who assumed the sovereignty in 859 M. E., (1684 A. D.), some alterations, in the existing system were introduced, which appear to be the following: • •

“The old system was that the revenue of every petty district should be roughly calculated, and the local chief was made responsible for the collection of the same, deducting the amount assigned for the performance of Devaswom and other religious ceremonies, for the maintenance of the militia and the collection of revenue.

“The State establishment then consisted of one Valia Karia-car (Prime Minister), one Neetaluthu Pillay, one Rayasom Pillay (head clerk), and several Rayasoms and Kanacka Pillays (writers and accountants). The minister and all his establishment held office in the palace, and the king presided over them. Every question, whether petty or important, was submitted for the king's decision, without whose order nothing was to be executed.

* * * * *

Various improvements were introduced by the King Revi Vurmah during his reign. The power of the local chiefs was curtailed and special agents appointed to various parts of the country, which was divided into districts called ‘Pacuthies’, with power to collect the revenue, which was roughly estimated before their appointment. After defraying the expenditure on religious and other institutions, the agent was to pay the surplus into the King's Treasury”.

30. The latter half of the 9th century M. E., is said to have witnessed serious troubles and difficulties in the administration of the Nanjinad consequent on the invasion of Tirumala Nayak. The following extract from the ‘Travancore State Manual’ Vol. I pp. 316—324 mentions some important facts disclosed by the old records:—

“It is recorded in the Tamil chronicles that Visvanatha Nayak subdued some chiefs of Travancore and levied tribute from them, in the name of his sovereign, the Emperor of Vijayanagar. Not long after, the great Tirumala Nayak reduced the Travancore sovereign to subjection, made the ‘Nanchi-nattu Rajah’ the foremost among his vassals—the seventy-two Poligars, and appointed him to guard the bastions of the Pandyan capital. Whether these are historical facts or not, we have ample proof of one fact, that Tirumala Nayak's forces attacked Nanjanad and made certain portions of it their own about the year 809 M. E., (1634 A. D.). The inscription of Kudiraipandivilai and Vaiyalivilai in the Talug of Agastisvaram and copies of certain edicts, throw some additional light on the political and social conditions of Nanjanad during

“the ninth century of the Malabar era. It is clear from these records that the forces of Tirumala Nayak visited the country several times conquering and plundering wherever they went and that the country was in a state of anarchy and confusion for about half a century. Even in 1694 A. D., there was an invasion of Nanjanad by the forces of the Madura Nayaks. It should be remembered that the limits of Nanjanad which now comprise the Tova and Agastisvaram Taluks, were not the then limits of that tract. The records show that a large strip of land between Mangalam near Ponmana and Manakudi, formed part of Nanjanad, while a part of Agastisvaram Taluq from the Cape to Kottaram belonged to and was governed by the officers of Tirumala Nayak and his descendants. There existed in those days a partition wall, the remnants of which are still to be seen from Manakudi to Pottaiyadi, and the triangular piece of land on the other side of the line including Variyur, Karungulam, Alagappapuram, Anjugramam, Cape Comorin, Mahadanapuram and Agastisvaram, went by the name of *Purattayanad* or *Murattanad*. There was thus great facility for the Nayak's forces to march into Nanjanad and commit depredations. Purattayanad formed part of the Pandyan kingdom and was governed by its officers during the eighth and ninth centuries M. E. One of the edicts above referred to runs as follows:—

“Inscription on the stone set up after redressing the grievances of the people on the fourth day of the month of Karthikai in the year 873 M. E., (1697 A. D.).

‘Whereas’ owing to heavy losses sustained by the people on account of the invasion of the Nayakkar's forces at different times from the year 852 M. E., (1677 A. D.) forward, we had remitted *anjali* tax in arrears for the years 849 to 869 M. E., that is for two *Kar* crops and thirteen *Pisanam* crops, or fifteen crops in all. We are pleased now and for ever to command the relinquishment of all claims for the following taxes viz., *anjali*, *kuttakai*, *kottapadivukanikkai*, supplying castor oil for torches, supplying cloths for the same and supplying paddy for royal birthdays; and whereas between Mangalam and Manakudi the people have lost their title-deeds with the baskets in which they were kept, we do hereby command that, should any of them be found in the possession of any one, they be at once torn to pieces then and there, excepting those that relate to property holdings and services which must be restored to the respective owners, that the cadjan bonds and *kanam* documents lost during the confusion and plunder caused by the forces, if they be produced by any one except the rightful owner, shall not be considered as proofs; that the paddy alone be paid as *pattom* and *melvaram*, including *tali* and *sanketam* for the *Kar* crops in the months of Alpasy and Karthikai, and for *Pisanam* crops in the months of Panguny and Chittrai and that no money shall be paid or received at commutation value; that with regard to *padukalam* (debt

“ ‘bonds) and *ubhayampalisa* which could not be realised, the monies under *padukalam* deeds are excused as well as the penalties imposed upon particular individuals and funeral fees. We are further pleased to declare with respect to *sanketam* and *perumpattu* ryots that distraint of the above properties for their debts shall be of no avail, that for the debts due from *sanketam* there shall be no distraint of the villages but should be realised out of any residue left after paying the *melvaram* dues; that during the payment of the taxes the ryots should produce the tax-receipt for the current year as well as for the year preceding; and that whenever our employees go out, the Brahmin shall not get more than twelve *nalis* and the sudra nine *nalis* per day and that in accordance with the *neets* issued under dates 17th Alpasy 870 M. E. and 13th Vycansy 871 M. E. (1694-1695 A. D.) and the stones raised at Mavilai, Kudiraipandivilai and Vaiyalivilai in evidence thereof, the ryots are required to conduct themselves accordingly.’

“ The above document, intended for the ryots inhabiting the southern portion of Nanjanad North, reveals many interesting customs and kinds of taxes to government then in vogue. There were at this time such cesses as *padukalam*, *ubhayum-palisa*, *tanittandam* and *savukavikkai* &c. In former days lands were never sold for arrears of tax, then known as *padukalam* debts, and after the said debts had been abolished the interest on the amount of arrears was levied as an extra cess called *padukalam-palisa*. The people of Nanjanad had a right to make enquiries into the crimes committed by the individual members of the community and the penalty imposed on such criminals by a fixed committee was called குற்றத்தண்டம் (fines) and பொதுத்தண்டம் (compensation to the sufferer). As the latter was abolished, the former alone remained in force and these fines were paid to the government. There were also special cesses called சாவுகாணிக் கை (death dues) and வாழ்வுகாணிககை (marriage &c., dues), the latter of which was abolished.

“From the time of the advent of the Nayakkar forces the Travancore king was paying a tribute to the Madura Kingdom. About the year 1697 A. D., owing to the disorderly state of the Madura Kingdom, the Travancore King was unpunctual in remitting his usual tribute to the Nayak's treasury. As usual an army of vadukans was sent by the Madura State to collect the arrears. This army entered Travancore through the pass near Cape Comorin. They immediately began to devastate the country in every direction and finally blockaded the king in Korkulam (Kalkulam) his principal fortress. The king of Travancore determined to put an end to these periodical visitations of the vadukans and also to get rid of the obnoxious factions in his own country viz., Madampimars and Pillamars. With this double object, he opened negotiations with the officers of the vaduka army, promising them that he would give them Korkulam and

“ a few other districts if they would assist him in getting rid of the rebellious chiefs and lords. The Madura officers gladly accepted the offer and being placed in possession of the forts carried out their agreement by seizing and putting to death one or two of the refractory lords in the Trivandrum pagoda, while the others escaped or bought themselves off. But soon after, when the officers and troops of the Madura army had dispersed themselves about the town and were in great disorder, the king of Travancore collected a large army, captured the Kalkulam fortress which yielded without resistance and nearly destroyed the Madura forces. A small body of them fled in the direction of the pass but they too were captured by the main body of the Travancore army and killed.

“ It was about 1698 A. D., that Maugammal, the Queen-regent of Madura, actuated by a desire to repair this defeat and to exact the annual tribute which the Travancore king ceased to pay, entered on a war with Travancore and sent a large army under the command of Narasappayya, the Madura Dalawa. He invaded the country, conquered the Travancore forces after hard fighting and returned to Trichinopoly with considerable booty consisting of spices, jewels and guns.

“ The attacks from Madura for collecting the arrears of tribute from the Travancore king became more frequent, while the efforts of the latter to resist them seemed to be futile. The Nanjanad people, who had to bear the brunt of these frequent attacks, became naturally very callous to pay their homage and allegiance to their sovereign who was not able to protect them from his enemies. The feudal chieftains, therefore, became recalcitrant. Fresh taxes had to be imposed on them to meet the expenses of the army which had to be maintained on a very large scale. The discontent of the people developed into open revolt and the Nanjanadians are said to have convened five meetings in different places from 1702 A. D., forward. The following edicts found among the records of the Periaivittu Mudaliar already referred to, written in Tamil, contain resolutions passed by the people of Nanjanad at four of these meetings:—

“ Resolutions (மொழிதலை) dated first of Alpasy 878 M. E., passed by the *nattars* (people of Nanjanad) between Mangalam and Manakudi assembled in solemn meeting (கிருவாசில்) at Vatasserri.

‘As our land has from the year 852 M. E., been the scene of distress on account of foreign invasions (படையும் வினையும்) from the east and of troubles from within the State, we having failed owing to lack of union (and emigration?) (கூடியும் குடிவாங்கி) to make a bold stand and to have our grievances heard in that our property (உற்பத்தி), holdings (கரைப்புள்ளி), and services (காணியாட்சி) are being usurped by others, the village

“ ‘chieftains (துரைக்காரர்) oppressing us in doing things not heard of before, the government listening to tales carried by backbiters from the country and harassing us on account of old discharged *padukalam* deeds and debt bonds and false *padukalam* deeds and false documents produced by individuals, so much so that baskets are opened and documents produced with ease from any place where they happened to be at the time, government getting hold of debt bonds executed by *pottis* (பேர்த்திகள்) and *Pillamars* (accountants) of the eleven *matams* appertaining to Sri Padmanabha Perumal and Adi Kesava Perumal, are not allowing us to sow our seeds and take the harvest, in that they tried to enforce the redemption of *chora-otti* (சேராஓற்றி) and obtaining extra monies for sub-mortgages (சிற்பொற்றி) in addition to taxes; in that we are deprived of our possessions by the (arbitrary) fixing of inscription stones; our houses and things distrained after ousting the inmates, our Paraya slaves taken away by the Sirkar and made to work for them as they pleased and such other calamities have befallen us; we do hereby resolve and determine that we do form ourselves into a body for union (and emigration) and that whenever any casualty should happen to any man in our country or to any village or *pidagai* or any affair occur that might cost some ten or sixteen fanams, the country should pay the same from the common fund and decide how best it could do under the circumstances and that whenever a calamity should happen to the country or to any village, the aggrieved person should meet in a common place and give intimation to the *pidagakkars*, when we all should assemble, resolve and decide according to circumstances and that the case of those persons who in contravention of the terms of these resolutions fail to attend and weaken the cause thereby, would be considered and decided in the public meeting. Upon the holy feet of Lord Thanumalaya Perumal these resolutions are irrevocably passed. All the *nattars* of the southern portion of Nanjanad North consenting, signed Arumukaperumal’

“ The following resolutions were passed by the *nattars* between Mangalam and Manakudi assembled in solemn meeting for the second time at Asramam near Suchindram under date, the 14th Margaly 889 M. E., corresponding to December 1713 A. D. :—

‘As royal cavalry and troops have repeatedly and in large numbers caused great damage to us, and as while from the time this land came into existence we continued to pay *anjali* and *melvaram* for lands we possess by purchase, we have been obliged to pay *kottappanam* (கோட்டைப்பணம்) and unprecedented taxes, the land has suffered very grievously. Hereafter, therefore, we should, in accordance with the royal commands of our sovereign Kulasekhara Perumal Tampuran, continue to pay *anjali* and *melvaram* alone, but not any *kottappanam* and unusual taxes, and should protest against such attempts by

“unitedly making a bold stand and (if necessary) by emigrating. We should honourably keep up all the privileges or rights which our ancestors enjoyed in olden days. If palace officers should come, we should give them allowances only at the rate of twelve measures (nalis) for each Brahmin and nine measures for each Nayar among them. As regards the balance of *kottappanam* for the *Kar* crop of the above year, we should only pay arrears as per account of the *Kelvi* (கேள்வி), but if they should demand any items as due from omission (ஒழுது) or wrong entries in accounts (கணக்குப்பிச்சுக.) we should protest against such (unjust) demands by unitedly making a bold stand and by emigrating. In thus asserting our rights, if any *pidagai* or village, or any single individual, is subjected to loss by acts of government, we should support them by reimbursing such loss from our common funds. If at such times any one should get into the secrets of government and impair the privileges or rights of the country, he should be subjected to a public enquiry by the *nattars*. We have thus passed these resolutions taking oath at the feet of our Lord Thanumalaya Perumal and our Lord Bhutanathaswamy. Signed Arumuka Perumal for the people of the northern and southern divisions of Nanjanad.’

“Resolutions of the third meeting of the *nattars* held on the 15th Vycausy 891 M. E., (1716 A. D.) at Isantimangalam:—

‘As from the year 882 M. E., on account of the annual visits of the royal cavalry and troops, the levy of unprecedented dues (இருதஇறை), and the payment of the unusual taxes which have been imposed on *Devadanam*, *Brahmadanam*, *Manipam* and *Matappuram* (மடப்புறம்) tenures, religious offerings in temples have been stopped; as Srinivasa Rao has carried away flocks of sheep and herds of cattle as well as the leaders of the people (அம்பலக்காரர்); as Reddy cowherds have been daily lifting herds of cattle from the country; as Anantoji Nayakar has, in the southern division of Nanjanad, deprived women even of their marriage badges which were only cotton threads and ruptured the lobes of their ears, has carried away herds of cattle, paddy and seed-grain from the country, and has besides appointed watchmen (மெட்டுக்காவலி) over every village and carried off paddy and seed-grain from there; as all the boxes containing documents (title-deeds), gold and silver, jewels, brass vessels, articles of dress, paddy and seed-grain of the whole country, which had been deposited at Suchindram, in the hope that it would serve as a place of safety, being within the *sanketam* (precincts of the Swamy there), have all been looted (by foreign marauders); as Suchindram and Asramam villages have been set on fire; as the shops there were all plundered; as by these acts, even the precincts of the Swamy have been tampered with; and as though there have been thus numerous kinds of troubles in the country, the Kariakars and Swarupakars have not, under royal command,

“redressed our grievances, and enabled us to live in peace, we should leave uncultivated the whole country between Mangalam and Manakudi from the *Kar* season of 892 M. E., and if after that the Kariakars and Swarupakars under royal command, redress our grievances and enable to live in peace, we may then cultivate our lands. We should keep up all privileges (or rights) in the country as in the days of our ancestors. If any in the country get into the secrets of the government and undermine the established privileges of the country, we should enquire into the matter and make such persons answer for the same both as a house (family) and as individuals, personally (சீட்டுகிறபடியும் கூட்டுகிறபடியும்). While thus managing our affairs, if the country, or any *pidagai* (புல ஈசை) or village, or any house, becomes subject to troubles, we should, as a body, make ourselves strong by making a united stand, and migrating (if necessary). Signed Arumuka Perumal on behalf of the northern and southern divisions of Nanjanad.’

“There are clear references in this edict to two invasions by the Vadukar army under Srinivasa Rao and Anantoji Nayakar, two officers or agents of the nominal suzerain at Vijayanagar.

“The following are the proceedings of the fourth meeting held on the 16th of Kartikai 898 M. E., (1722 A. D.) at Kadukkara by the ryots of Nanjanad, North and South, lying between Mangalam and Manakudi:—

‘1. On account of the heavy taxes imposed on us and the cruel treatment which we were subjected to till the Kumbham harvest of 895 M. E. (1720 A. D.) we were forced to leave our fields uncultivated during the whole of the year 896 M. E., (1721 A. D.), and retreat to the east of the mountains. The sovereign, together with the Pottimars, Pandalas, and the members of the Swarupam, encamped at Bhutapandi and summoning the people of both the divisions of Nanjanad before him, redressed all their grievances till the Kumbham crop of 896 M. E., (1721 A. D.). A royal writ was also executed to that effect and as a mark of special favour we were presented with a brass drum, a horn and a *ponthi* made of silver. Another writ was also issued cancelling all heavy taxes, prohibiting tyranny in the land and re-organising only the original imposts. It was further agreed that the assembly at Nanjanad might continue to enjoy the powers and prerogatives originally vested in them. But when the assembly exercised those privileges by instituting a regular enquiry against those that infringed its laws, the sovereign came down upon the association and demolished the houses of two chiefs in each division (*pidagai*).

‘2. Sivasaila Mudaliar, with the members of the Swarupam and their troops pressed us hard for the payment of the unjust taxes levied on the Kanni crop of 897 M. E.

“3. The sovereign himself insisted on demanding thirty fanams per *mathal* on all lands including *Devadanam*, *Brahmadanam*, *Kanduzhavi* and even on waste lands.

‘4. Government exacted 125 fanams per *kottah* from the poor ryots who were not able to realise anything from the Kanni crop of 898, since it was a complete failure and thus doubled the amount, when they actually deserved a proper reduction in their payment.

‘5. A similar exaction was made in Nallur and Villipattu from uncultivated lands.

‘6. The officials were ordered to farm out all the unjust taxes from the villages of Anumaketananallur and Viravanallur, even when the sums had already been remitted by government.

‘7. The Dalawa demanded the immediate payment of *mathalpanam*, *kottapanam* and other imposts which were declared by the sovereign’s writ, as having been prohibited in the kingdom.

‘8. The government appropriated to itself those lands which were lying barren and now cultivated by the ryots.

‘9. The ryots were ordered to pay for the dry lands the taxes levied on the wet ones, after having paid their regular dues.

‘10. One-fourth of the Kanni crop of 98 was forcibly wrested from their hands.

‘11. The whole tax levied on the wet lands was levied on the seed-bed lands too for the non-payment of which the grains stored in houses, the brass vessels and the silver utensils of these ryots were all confiscated to the government.

‘12. When the seven village watchmen were deputed to lay before the sovereign at Kalkulam their insufferable grievances and even after their representing the deplorable state of affairs before the Pottimars, Pandalas and the members of the Swarupam, no measures were taken to redress them in any way, but on the contrary Muthu Pillai with his troops besieged Darisanamkoppu and blockading all entrance into it, suffered the cows and other helpless creatures to starve there for three days and committed other atrocities within it, such as, breaking the pots of the poor women who were carrying water and confiscating paddy and other grains stored in their houses.

‘13. And lastly when the inhabitants in a body emigrated to Kadukkara, Muthu Pillai and Chittambalam Pandaram followed by hundreds of their servants surrounded us there, and when they demanded the payment of our dues on the spot, we had to scale up the hills and settle on the other side; then they plundered the whole of Kadukkara.

‘We, therefore, pass the following resolutions from the Chempakaraman Puthukal-matam, east of Alagiapandyapuram:—

'1. That the taxes on the seed-bed lands and *kottappanam* cannot be paid.

'2. That we will bind ourselves to pay only the *anjali* and the other taxes originally existing on all our lands and cannot pay the *mathalpanam* imposed on *Devadanam*, *Brahmadanam* &c.

'3. That we will be prepared to make a bold stand and resist by force, if any measures be taken to enforce the unjust imposts, and even be willing to migrate into another country, leaving our Kumbham crop behind.

'4. That if anybody—be he *pidagakar*, *oorkar*, or *ambalakar*—were to betray the proceedings of this assembly, being bribed by the Government officers, or consent to pay the unjust taxes, he shall be liable to pay with his person and property, the penalty for such gross treachery.

'5. That when we have migrated to any new country, we will demand fit retribution for the high-handed murder of the *ambalakar*s.

'6. That no *ambalakar* from our country be allowed to be employed as revenue farmers.

'7. That if the government exact such new taxes from a person, village, or whole division, by confiscating the properties attached to them, the loss sustained by the individuals or community be made good from our common fund.

'8. That if, in the period of our secession, any body be found lurking in the village and be caught by the officials he shall not only have to pay the dues himself but also be liable to pay the penalty for his treason against the commonwealth.

'9. That we will demand reparation for the destruction of the two houses in each division, which was sanctioned by the sovereign, because the assembly used its legitimate powers.

'10. That if the government does not make good their loss in this direction, we will take the money from our common funds.

'11. That if any person from Nanjanad, North and South, serve as an accountant under the government or betray our affairs, he shall pay the penalty by forfeiting his property.

'12. That, while the government has made its former promise of allowing our assembly to enjoy its former prerogatives null and void, if anybody take up arms on their side, he shall pay a similar penalty.

'13. That a similar penalty be inflicted on those who infringe the laws and customs of his class.

'14. That, if the forces of the sovereign be encamped in our country, measures be taken to represent the matter before the

“ Maharajah and the Swarupakars, or we ourselves be prepared to emigrate somewhere.

‘15. That these shall be the standing rules of our assembly and if any person attempt to dissolve our union, he shall incur the accursed sin of having butchered a cow on the banks of the Ganges; on the other hand the person who tries to consolidate our union shall reap the supreme benefit of having given a cow to a Brahmin on the banks of the same river.

‘We swear on Thanumalayaperumal and Bhutalingam to preserve the rights of our assembly. These are the resolutions arrived at by the inhabitants of Nanjanad, North and South. Signed Arumuka Perumal.’

“These edicts and the resolutions embodied in them speak for themselves and do not require any comments here. The Nanjanad people became desperate. They were harassed on the one side by the marauders from the Pandyan kingdom and on the other by the king’s officers who, when the former disappeared after plunder, put in their appearance only to demand fresh taxes for the so called defence of the land. The spirit of lawless defiance to the king’s authority engendered by this state of affairs reached its climax when the people openly met and resolved to take the life of any man who acted against the interests of the public therein assembled. Such a person was to be treated as a common enemy and dealt with accordingly. The people also more than once abandoned their houses and took to the neighbouring hills refusing to return to their villages unless the king promised redress to their grievances.”

31. On the 19th March 901 M. E. (1726 A. D.), the Queen of Edawa granted to the English in 901 M. E. Attingal granted to the Anjengo factors the factory of Edawa. The following copy of the grant is given in the “Travancore State Manual”, Vol. I. p. 328 :—

“All that, which the Commander has spoken to Gristnava (the bearer of the usual presents to the Queen) he has related to me; the place which is now granted in Edawa for a factory, is not for any interest of Government, but that of obtaining the favour and help of the Honourable Company during all the time which this Government and the Honourable Company should last, as well as that of augmenting the custom duties of this Government. No Commanders, who came in these days here, have obtained such a place as this Commander, so that he may acquire greater fame in the service of the Honourable Company it is that I have granted this place. The presents sent by the Commander through Gristnava to me and Pulamars have been received”.

32. The Kilimanur Edavaga was granted to the Koil Tampurans in 903 M. E. The following account of it is given in the ‘List of Rajahs and Chiefs in Travancore’:—

“ The original home of this family is Tattari Kovilakam, in British Malabar. In 1695 A. D., the Dowager Rani, Umayamma of Travancore, finding that there were no female members in the family to perpetuate the line, applied to the Rajah of Kolatnad in British Malabar to permit her to adopt two princesses from that house. The Kolatnad Rajah would not accede to the request. Not long after, the Senior Koil Tampuran of Tattari Kovilakam happened to be a guest of the Rani, on his way back from a pilgrimage to Rameswaram. He had married into the Putiapalli Kovilakam branch of Kolatnad, and he promised to help the Rani. Finding that the Rajah was obstinate, the Koil Tampuran contrived to take his own family, as well as that of Putiapalli Kovilakam, to Travancore, on the pretence of another pilgrimage. He had two sons and two daughters, all of whom were adopted into the reigning family. One of the nephews of the Koil Tampuran married one of the adopted princesses, and as a result of the union, Maha Rajah Martanda Varma, the maker of modern Travancore, was born in 1705. Another princess was adopted in 1718 and married Ravi Varma, another of the Koil Tampuran's nephews. The issue of this marriage was Maha Rajah Rama Varma, the successor of Maha Rajah Martanda Varma, born in 1723. In 1728, while the young prince and his mother were travelling from Trivandrum to Attingal, they were waylaid by a party of rebels, who attempted to kill them. The brave Ravi Varma Koil Tampuran contrived to send the mother and child in safety to Attingal, and, fighting single handed against the enemy, lost his life in the struggle. In recognition of this act of self-sacrifice, the estate of Kilimanur, comprising the whole village of that name in the Chirayinkil taluk, was granted as a freehold to the family of the Koil Tampuran. The grant is being enjoyed to this day.”

33. The year 903 M. E. marks the close of what may be called the early history of Travancore. The form of Government and system of Land Revenue administration in vogue at the time are summarised as follows in the ‘Travancore State Manual,’ Vol. 1. pp. 329-330:

Land Revenue system
and administration in
903 M. E.

“ The administration was in the main what it is now. The head of the administration under the direct orders of the king was known as the *Valia Sarvadhikariakar* corresponding to the Dewan of our days. Under him were the *Neetexhuthu Pillay* or Secretary, *Rayasom Pillay* (the Assistant or Under-Secretary), several *Rayasoms* or clerks and *Kanakku Pillamars* or accountants. Inferior in rank to the *Valia Sarvadhikariakar* or Dewan, were officers known as *Sarvadhikaris* who had jurisdiction over districts. Political correspondence with neighbouring States or Europeans was carried on by the *Valia Sarvadhikari*; for, he signed treaties and agreements. The office of the Dewan was held in the palace in the immediate presence of the king. All important questions were finally decided by the king himself.

"*State of the country and chief events.*" Travancore at this period extended from Attungal to Nagercoil. The dynasty of Jayasimha still continued to rule the country between Azhikkal (Karrunagapalli Taluq) in the north and Paravur in the south, and, as noted above, there was an alliance in 1727 A. D., between the chiefs of Chinganad and other States to crush the power of Travancore.

"Nanjanad which once formed part of Travancore was at this time occupied by the Pandyans. The district between Chinganad and Nanjanad was the true Travancore and even in this small territory, the king's authority was nominal. The Ettuvittil Pillamars and the Madampimars usurped all power and the king was constantly in fear for his own life. King Aditya Varma and the five sons of his niece Umayamma Rani were cruelly murdered by the Ettuvittil Pillamars and the Rani herself fled for her life. Kerala Varma, the prince who was invited from Kottayam regained for the Rani and her son the lost kingdom. Martanda Varma whose career we shall notice hereafter, tried his best to keep the confederates in check during the last two reigns of the period but was not successful. At the close of the epoch we find that King Rama Varma himself went to Trichinopoly to solicit aid to put down the rebels and restore order in his own dominions. Later on, the Queen and her son were waylaid and an attempt was made to murder them. Besides the Pillamars, the Yogakkars and the Madampimars, there appeared to have been other petty chieftains whose tributes contributed to the revenues of the State. These also grew refractory and the result was that the king was left literally without men or money. As a natural consequence, anarchy and confusion in their worst forms stalked the land. The neighbouring chiefs came with armed marauders and committed dacoities from time to time plundering the people wholesale, not sparing even the *tali* on their necks and the jewels on the ears of women. The headman of each village in his turn similarly treated his inferiors. The people of Nanjanad in a body fled to the adjoining hills on more than two occasions, complaining bitterly to the king of his effeteness and their own helplessness."

34. Many of the archæological and other records of the period mentioned above relate to grants of land by various sovereigns for pujas, etc., in temples and for charitable purposes. They are omitted from the above enumeration, as they have no direct bearing on Land Revenue History. There is however one point deserving mention in this connection. As all land in Kerala originally belonged to *jennmis*, the sovereigns could have come in possession of such lands only by escheat, conquest or confiscation. It is evidently lands of this description that were given away as gifts for religious and charitable purposes. The mention of

numerous gifts of this nature at various periods shows that the sovereign (State) had acquired lands in the manner above mentioned from the earliest times.

35. In regard to the origin of Sirkar lands, Dewan Mr. Seshia Origin of sirkar Sastri wrote as follows in his 'Administration lands. Report for 1048 and 1049,' p. 42:—

" 211. It is not easy to state precisely how the proprietary right in such lands came to be vested in the Sirkar or the governing power, while the primeval tenure of *all lands* on the coast was pure Jenm, according to accepted tradition; very probably when the Rajahs were called in once in 12 years by election by the Numboory landlords for the purpose of Government some lands were granted to them—accretions of escheated lands, all unoccupied lands, reclaimed in course of years, annexed home-farms of a very large number of subjugated chiefs—also lands purchased for money from the Dutch, &c., have contributed to swell the roll of Sirkar lands".

36. The accession of Martanda Varma to the throne (904 M. E.) Commencement of marks the commencement of the modern history modern history-904 of Travancore. The state of the country at the M. E. time of his accession and the changes wrought in his reign are briefly summarised in the following extract from the 'Travancore State Manual,' Vol. I, pp. 333-334:—

" Martanda Varma, the founder of modern Travancore, succeeded his uncle at the early age of twenty-three. He ascended the musnud in 904 M. E. (1729 A. D.). At the time of his accession the state of the country was far from happy. There were no organised departments for the transaction of State business. The finances were in an extremely unsatisfactory condition. The country was honeycombed with petty chieftains, who collecting around themselves bands of brigands, subsisted on pillage and plunder and harassed the Rajah and his people by turns, frustrating all attempts to establish order or any settled form of Government. The Rajah's following was small and his authority so nominal that the Ettuvittil Pillamars and the Madampimars were more or less independent rulers of their own estates. Anarchy prevailed in South Travancore to a sad extent which was further intensified by the regicidal proclivities of these petty chieftains and the Yogakkars—a body of managers of the temple of Sri Padmanabhaswamy owning enormous landed wealth and commanding the influence and power which go with it. The young Rajah had a very hard task before him. Even as First Prince and Elaya Rajah of tender years, he set himself to put down with a strong hand the lawlessness of these disloyal chiefs. In consequence, he had earned their undying hatred and his life was more than once attempted. He sought the aid of the English and the Dutch and would have completely quelled the rebels but for the timidity and weakness of his uncle the King who compelled him to desist. He had fled from place

“to place and on several occasions slept on the tops of trees in far off jungles.

“Now that he was the acknowledged sovereign of the land he, with the instincts of a true soldier, set to work to establish his sway and consolidate the State, and before the close of his reign in 1758 A. D., he had regained all the lost tracts, strengthened his rule, established order and improved his resources thus wiping out the ignominy and humiliation to which his ancestors had been subjected for two centuries.”

37. The chief events bearing on the Land Revenue History of the period will now be dealt with in chronological order.

38. In 906 M. E. (1731 A. D.) the gardens of Palatady and Kottudali were granted by the Queen of Attingal to the English East India Company who had already established a factory at Anjengo. The following is an extract from the grant relating thereto given in Mr. Logan's 'Malabar Manual', Vol. III, p. 19.

Gardens in Palatady and Kottudali granted to the Anjengo factory.

“Towards Cherreungue are the gardens of Palatady and Cottudali which were formerly bought by the Commander of Anjengo, but, when on 15th April 1721 he and ten other persons went to Atengal to make presents to the Queen, they were killed by the treachery of Pullays and Kariakars, who seized the money of the Honourable Company. Seeing the loss and damage thus done to the Honourable Company, we have ceded the same gardens to them, giving up their revenues and the right of cutting trees and all other privileges, which the Company may take and they and heirs may enjoy these gardens without any obstacle or having any obstruction; but we are obliged to ask for a free passage and protection on the part of the Honourable Company. Thus, in truth, we confirm (the grants) with our signatures to the Commander on the 10th January 1731”.

39. In 910 M. E. the Puthen Dam and the Padmanabhapuram Construction of the Puthenar Channel were constructed with the object of extending to the taluks of Kalkulam and Puthenar Channel. Eraniel the benefits of irrigation which had been provided for Nanjinad by the Pandian Dam and Channel constructed about 8 centuries previously. These works were restored in 1060 M. E. and in the address presented to His Highness the late Maha Rajah on the occasion of the opening of the Pandian Kal Head Works, the Ag. Chief Engineer Mr. S. Horsely referred to this work as follows:—

“That Sovereign who in the year 910 M. E. or 150 years ago, visited the very spots which your Highness has just now walked over, was, so history tells us, so much impressed with the value of irrigation, and was so determined that his subjects should be benefited by an extension of the system of irrigation which had been initiated many hundred years before, that at considerable personal risk and inconvenience he encouraged his subjects and the

“labourers collected by them to execute his commands, by personally superintending the execution of many of the important works in the Padmanabhapuram Poothenaur.”

His Highness observed in his reply to the address :

“The Pandian Dam and Channel are, under the safest calculation, about 8 centuries old, when Akbar and Ahalya Bhaiji, the most beneficent and wisest of Indian rulers, were yet in the womb of time. It is these works by the Kings of the Pandian Dynasty that chiefly stimulated my illustrious ancestor to construct the Poothen Dam and Poothenar Channel, facing and vanquishing almost superhuman difficulties and this, in days when scientific engineering and European appliances, including steam power, were perfectly unknown.” ‘Kodayar Printed Papers’ Vol. 1, pages 103 to 106.

Sovereignty of Attingal transferred by the Rani to the Maha-Rajah. 40. In 912 M. E. the sovereignty over the Attingal Rani's dominions was transferred by the Rani to the Maha Rajah. *Vide* extract given under para 17.

Settlement of 914 M. E. 41. In 914 M. E. the first revenue settlement recorded in history took place. It comprised the old limits of Travancore as it stood before the extensive conquests of Marthanda Varma Rajah. This settlement stands out prominently as the first noteworthy fact in the Land Revenue History of Travancore. Dewan Mr. Seshia Sastri observed as follows in his 'Administration Report for 1048 and 1049' p. 50:—

“257 The earliest survey (or Ayacut) remembered by the oldest living accountant is that of the year 914/1738 when Travancore was within its own ancient limits.”

Though 40 years ago Mr. Seshia Sastri was not able to get anything more than a hearsay report based on the personal recollection of an old accountant, it is gratifying to note that some original records relating to this settlement have now been discovered in connection with the preparation of the Land Revenue Manual. They were found among the cadjan records preserved in the archives of the Sri Padmanabhaswamy temple, Trivandrum. The records now extant, though fragmentary, contain some useful information regarding the tenures in vogue and the nature of the settlement.

Main features of that settlement. 42. The main features of the settlement of 914 M. E. are mentioned in the following extract from the Grandhavari of the Sri Padmanabhaswamy temple.

ശ്രീപദ്മാഭായ കണക്കു മല്ലൻ ശങ്കരനൈകാണ്ടു രാജ്യം അടക്കം നിയത്തി
 നം പുരയിടത്തിനും കണ്ടെടുതി തിട്ടാവരുത്തി ദേവദായം. ബ്രഹ്മദായം, ദാനം,
 ഉകേപുവദാനം, ടിജനം, ചണ്ടാരവകരറി, പാട്ട, ഇറയിലി, കുഴൽവകള
 രയിലി, ശാപേരവുവിരുത്തി, കഡംബവഴത്തി, കൊടുവിരുത്തി, ശംഖ്വിരു

ത്തി, താക്കോൽവിരത്തി, മേൽപ്പാതി, പടകലംപലിശ, കടിപലിശ, ചന്തിരച്ചിശ
 വ, നേരപലിശ, രക്ഷാഭാഗം, അമ്മാലി, വിരയിട്ട, ചത്തശ്ശേലി, മാത്താൽപയ
 ര, തരികടമ, തൊൽപാട്ടം, കപ്പക്കായ്ക്ക, ഉരപ്പട്ടവകുവകതിരിച്ചുകഴുകും പേരും
 അടവും ആയക്കടും എഴുതിച്ച ആയക്കെട്ടിൻപടിമുതൽക്കൂട്ടം ആരമരം ശ്രീപ
 ണ്ദരവക നിലത്തിനും പുരയിടുങ്ങിനും നെല്ലവക പണവകക്കും കണക്കും
 എഴുതികണ്ടു”

(Translation). In the year 914 M. E. a settlement of all the wet and garden lands in the State was conducted under the supervision of Kanakku Mallan Sankaran. The land revenue and cesses falling under the different heads known as Devadayam, Brahadayam, Danom, Udakapurvadanom, Kudi-jennom, Pandaravaka Otti, Pattom, Erayili, Kulalvaka Eravili, Chavettu Viruthi, Kuldumbha Viruthi, Kottu Viruthi, Sanku Viruthi, Thakole Viruthi, Melpathi, Padukalam palisa, Kudi palisa, Chandra chilavu, Nerpalisa, Rakshabhogam, Anjali, Verayeedu, Chatha kooli, Mathal payaru, Tharikadama, Thole pattom, Kuppakazhcha, and other items were brought to account and an Olugu, list of holders, and consolidated abstract were prepared, as well as an Ayacut showing the aggregate revenue and the increase due to settlement. A similar account was prepared for the wet and garden lands and the revenue in paddy and money belonging to the six Madoms constituting the Sri pandaravaka.

43. The following records relating to this settlement were found in the temple:—

Available records relating there to:

Year.	Description of record.
(1) 913 M. E.	Olugu of rice lands.
(2) 913	Vilangiper of Madamvaka lands.
(3) 913 & 914 M. E.	Do. Do.
(4) 913 & 914	Olugu of garden lands.
(5) 913 & 914	Vilangiper.
(6) 914 M. E.	Do.
(7) 914	Do.
(8) 914	Do.
(9) 914	Do.
(10) 914	Do. (Madamvaka).
(11) 914	Do.
(12) 914	Do.
(13) 914	Do. (Moniamvaka)
(14) 914	Sreepandaravaka perupidi.
(15) 914	Vilangiper (Melkanganam lands.)
(16) 914	Vilangiper.
(17) 914	Peruvazhi of Arumadamvaka lands.
(18) 914	Ayacut of Madamvaga lands.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Description of record.</i>
(19) 914 & 915 M. E.	Variola Thirattu of Sri Pandaravaga gardens.
(20) 915 M. E. ...	Vilangiper (Madamvaga).
(21) 915	Peruvazhi Ayacut Variola for Madamvaga lands.
(22) 915 & 916 M. E.	Olugu of garden lands.
(23) 918 M. E. ...	Vilangiper.
(24) 918	Do.
(25) 918	Olugu of Melkanganom gardens.
(26) 906 to 918 M. E.	Account showing increase of revenue due to Adukuvathu.
(27) 920 to 923 ..	Adavu as per Olugu of Pandaravaga gardens.
(28) 922 M. E. ...	Anu of gardens in Trivandrum Mandapathumvathukal.
(29) 921 & 922 M. E.	Account showing increase of revenue under Adukuvathu for Sankethamvaga lands.
(30) 921 M. E. ...	Ayacut Variola and Thirattu.
(31) 922	Thirattu of lands in Vanchiyur Adhigarom.

44. It will be seen that the above records extend over a period from 913 to 922 M. E. The year by which a settlement is known represents the year in which the new tax was collected, but the preparation of the records connected with settlement always took several years to finish. There were also preliminary processes connected with settlement *e. g.* preparation of Olugu &c. which relate to the years prior to the year of settlement. From some of the old records in the temple, it is seen that the preliminary processes connected with the settlement of 914 were started in 911 M. E.

45. Most of the records enumerated above relate to Sripandaravaga lands or the lands belonging to the Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple. The terms 'Sripandaravaga', 'Sanketham' and 'Melkanganom' were in use at the settlement of 914. In addition, the term 'Madomvaga' occurs, which denotes the lands belonging to the six Madoms attached to the temple. These Madoms were known as Panchandom Madom (പഞ്ചാണ്ടം മഠം), Kanchipurathu Madom (കാഞ്ചിപുരത്തു മഠം), Ramavarman thiru Madom (രാമവർമ്മൻ തിരുമഠം), Marthanda Madom (മാർത്താണ്ഡമഠം), Palpayasa Madom (പാൽപായസമഠം), and Kunnandan Madom (കുന്നാണ്ടൻമഠം). These names are mentioned in the Thirattu of lands in Vanchiyur Adhigarom (No. 31 in the list given

above). The lands belonging to these Madoms lay in South Travancore and were probably included in the Madapad department of later days, which like the Sanketham and Melkanganam departments was solely employed in the administration of Sripandaravaga lands.

46. The tenures recognised in the settlement of 914 M. E. are summarised as follows in the Thirattu of 923 M. E. of the Vanchiyur Adhigarom.

Tenures in *reguc.*

I. DEVASWOMVAGA. (ദേവസ്വപം വക)

- (1) *Thanathu* (തനത്)
- (2) *Karanma* (കാരാണ)
- (3) *Danom* (ദാനം)
- (4) *Anubhogam* (അനുഭോഗം)
- (5) *Otti* (ഒറ്റി)
- (6) *Pattom* (പാട്ടം)
- (7) *Kudipulli* (കുടിപ്പള്ളി)
- (8) *Vectu Viruthi* (വീട്ടുവിരുത്തി)

II. BRAHMASWOMVAGA. (ബ്രഹ്മസ്വപം വക)

- (1) *Phanthu* (തനത്)
- (2) *Karanma* (കാരാണ)
- (3) *Anubhogam* (അനുഭോഗം)
- (4) *Thaliveethu* (താളീവ് തത്)
- (5) *Vyapiam* (വ്യാപ്തം)
- (6) *Erayili* (ഇറയിലി)
- (7) *Otti* (ഒറ്റി)
- (8) *Pattom* (പാട്ടം)
- (9) *Ner otti* (നെരൊറ്റി)
- (10) *Danom* (ദാനം)

III. DANOM (ദാനം)

IV. PANDARAVAGA (പണ്ടാരവക)

- (1) *Kudipuli* (കുടിപ്പള്ളി)
- (2) *Otti* (ഒറ്റി)
- (3) *Chavettu Viruthi* (ചാവട്ടു വിരുത്തി)
- (4) *Kudumbha Poruthi* (കുഡുംബപൊരത്തി)
- (5) *Erayili* (ഇറയിലി)
- (6) *Gnaru Pattom* (ങ്ങാറപാട്ടം)
- (7) *Veta Kandom* (വേടകടം)
- (8) *Kudumbha Necttu* (കുഡുംബനീട്ടു)
- (9) *Rakshabhogam* (രക്ഷാഭോഗം)
- (10) *Karanma Pattom* (കാരാണപാട്ടം)
- (11) *Thanathu Pattom* (തനത് പാട്ടം)
- (12) *Erayili Kuzhikanom* (ഇറയിലികുഴിക്കാണം)
- (13) *Ozharu Otti* (ഓഴവ് ഒറ്റി)

47. The same record makes mention of the following extra cesses:

- (1) *Chandrachilavoo* (ചന്ദ്രചിലവ്)
- (2) *Nerpalisa* (നേർപ്പലിശ)
- (3) *Peralpathi* (പെരാപ്പാതി)
- (4) *Rakshabhogam* (രക്ഷഭോഗം)

48. The tenures and cesses mentioned above relate to the Vanchiyur Adhikarom alone, to which the Thirattu relates. Hence they are not identical with the classification given in the Grandhavari quoted in para 42 *supra*. The explanation for this lies in the fact that the latter represents the condensed summary for the whole State, while the former is based on a fragmentary record. It is noteworthy, however, that there is much in common between the two, and both, taken together, disclose much valuable information regarding the tenures and cesses recognised at the settlement of 914 M. E.

49. The records mentioned in para 43 *supra* and other records examined in this connection have disclosed a few stray facts noted below, regarding the settlement of 914 M. E. and the land revenue procedure in vogue between that settlement and the subsequent settlement in 926 M. E. :—

- (1) The tenure known as *Danom* comprised not only grants to Brahmins but also grants to Pandarams and Acharies (carpenters). (*No. 31 in the list given in para 43.*)
- (2) The method of assessment for wet lands was to determine the pattom for single crop and calculate the same amount for each crop. Thus a doublecrop land was assessed at twice the pattom for a single crop land, unlike the present rule which allows only an increase of 50 per cent. on account of the second crop. (*Vilangiper of 914 M. E., Mathilagom Records.*)
- (3) A document known as *Kuri* (കുറി) was granted to the ryots corresponding to the Pathivoo and Patta of later settlements. (*Account of 914 M. E., Mathilagom Records.*)
- (4) There were assignments of revenue from the Pandaravaga lands in favour of Devaswoms and Brahmaswoms. (*Grandhavari, Mathilagom Records.*)
- (5) In the case of some tenures, *Karanams* (deeds) and *Neets* were given in lieu of *Kuri* or *Patta*. (*Thirattu of 926 M. E.*)
- (6) Remissions were granted for failure of crop and pooriness of yield on wet lands, *karivu* (കരിവ്) and *thanmai* (തന്നൈ), generally to the extent of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the pattom fixed. The latter kind of remission is not now allowed at all. (*Account of 914 M. E. Mathilagom Records.*)
- (7) There were other remissions known as *tharisu* (തരിശു) and *uchupalisa* (ഊപ്പലിശ). (*Ibid.*)

- (8) Documents dating so far back as 734 M. E. were examined in connection with the registration of individual properties at the settlement of 914 M. E. (*Ibid.*)
- (9) A tax known as *Nilavari* was levied from 904 to 911 M. E. (*Ibid.*)
- (10) There was a tenure known as 'Marapattom' (permanent Pattom. (*Ibid.*))
- (11) In the case of *Otti* tenure, there was an item of payment known as *Adukkumuthal* (അടുകുമുതൽ) (*Ibid.*)
- (12) There was a tenure known as *Chora-otti* (ചോര ഓറ്റി.) It was an irrecoverable tenure, in the nature of *Kudi-jcumom* (*Vilangiper of 914 M. E., Mathilagom Records.*)
- (13) The term *Pancharavaga thanuthu* was applied to lands held under *viruthi* tenure. (*Olugu of 918, Huzur Central Vernacular Records.*)
- (14) There was an item known as *Vilankaduma*. (*Account of 920 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (15) There was alienation of land on *Otti* tenure in consideration of money received as loan. (*Account of 920 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (16) The Sirkar realised renewal fees (വെച്ചുതുരുമുതൽ) in respect of some lands in *Alagiapandiapuram Pdaga Kelvi* in 920 M. E. (*Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (17) A large block of land lying to the east of the river *Pazhayar* at *Suchindram* which had been included within the *Sanketham* limits was acquired by the Sirkar on *Chora-otti* from the temple authorities (9 Pottimars) and a settlement made with the tenants who held under the old proprietors on certain terms and conditions. The lands were set apart for the maintenance of the military garrison stationed at the eastern frontier near *Cape Comorin*. (*Account dated 21st Alpasi 921 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (18) There was a revision of assessment in 921 in regard to garden lands within the area described as lying to the east of the *Kuzhithura* river and west of *Kumarivasal* (*Cape Comorin*). (*Account dated 10th Karthigai, 921 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (19) For expenses connected with the restoration of some portions of the *Suchindram* temple and the purificatory ceremonies connected therewith, the revenue derived from renewal fees *Vachazhuthu* on the lands lying east of the *Suchindram* river was utilised. (*Account dated 10th Karthigai 921 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (20) There were 7 *Kelvis* in *Nanjinaid* in 921 M. E. (*Account dated 18th Kartigai 921 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records.*)
- (21) When Sirkar lands were given out on *Pattom*, certain fees known as *adukumathu*, *chittipanam*, *neettupanam* etc. were

- realised. (*Account dated 19th Kartigai 921 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).
- (22) In 921 M. E. Sirkar lands were given out on *Chittotti* for a term of 30 years ($2\frac{1}{2}$ Viazhavattams). The consideration was fixed according to the prevailing rates for otti. From the pattom or assessment fixed, a deduction was made for *anjali melvarom* and the residue was taken into account for fixing the mortgage amount. Allowance was made for the prior mortgage, if any, and for improvements on the lands (*Vettozhivu*). There were particular forms of mortgage known as *Vila otti* (വിളവെട്ടി) *Manai otti* (മാനൈട്ടി) and *Melvara otti* (മേൽവാരെട്ടി). (*Thirattu of Agastiswaram Taluk, 921 M. E.*)
- (23) In 921 M. E. an assignment of land revenue in lump in the shape of paddy was made by the sovereign in favour of the Trichur and Thirunavoi Yogais in lieu of piece meal assignments of revenue made in 912 M. E., and the latter were utilised for assignments in the Sreekanteswaram and Palkulangara temples. (*Grandhavari, Mathilagam Records*).
- (24) When a distributary channel was cut by the ryots from Mekara to Thirupadisaram and the lands utilised for the purpose included in their private transactions, the Sirkar recovered from the ryots a price for such lands, after making allowance for the cost of constructing the channel. (*Account of 922 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).
- (25) When dry lands belonging to the Thiruvettar Devaswom were cleared and brought under cultivation by the ryots, the Sirkar levied a tax in the nature of *kadama*. (*Account of 923 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).
- (26) In 923 M. E. the Nanjinad Puthenar was extended from the Thalakudiar kal to Agastiswaram Vattakili and the dry lands served by the channel converted into wet by the expenditure of Sirkar funds which was recovered from the ryots in the nature of Adiyara fees and the like. (*Account dated 12th Puratasi 923 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).
- (27) When the N. Puthenar was constructed by the Sirkar, the assessment on the lands brought under irrigation as the effect of that Project was raised to the extent of one kottah of paddy for each kottah of land and the lands were also brought under measurement according to a new standard then fixed. (*Account dated 12th Purattasi 923 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).
- (28) A consolidated Account showing the land revenue from the tract described as 'Nanjinad and Malayalam' between the years 919 to 923 M. E. shows that lands were given out on *otti* for periods extending to 30 years ($2\frac{1}{2}$ Viazhavattams) and 48 years (4 Viazhavattams). This account also mentions items of expenditure for construction of irrigation tanks

and anicuts under the N. Puthanar and other Channels. (*Thirattu of 923 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).

- (29) The tenure known as *kudi-jenmom* is mentioned in an account of 925 M. E. (*Vilangiper of 925 M. E., Agastiswaram Taluk Records*).
- (30) Lands granted as *Chora-otti* in 912 M. E. were settled as *kudi-jenmom* in 925 M. E. (*Ibid.*)
- (31) Some lands which had been granted as *Anjalivila* in 815 M. E. for being converted into garden were treated as *kudi-jenmom* in 925 M. E. (*Ibid.*)
- (32) Some lands which had been originally granted by the Sovereign as *danom* to a Brahmin in Keralapuram in 821 M. E. were in 925 treated as *kudi-jenmom* in the hands of an alienee (of the Pattu-nool caste) who held it under an *otti* from the original holder (*Ibid.*)
- (33) When some lands were found in the hands of an alienee under *otti*, and a series of mortgage transactions extending from 783 to 910 M. E. were proved, the lands were treated as *kudijenma-otti* in 925 M. E., as no document relating to the alleged original *kudi-jenmom* tenure was forthcoming. (*Ibid.*)
- (34) Certain lands held by an artisan and alleged to have been granted under a tenure known as *silparivuthi* from a Devaswom were treated as *kudi-jenmom* in 925 M. E. (*Ibid.*)
- (35) Some Devaswom lands granted as *chora-otti* in 892 M. E. were treated as *kudi-jenmom* in 925 M. E. (*Ibid.*)

50. It is significant that the special features noted above were recognised and re-affirmed at subsequent settlements and most of them continue to this day, though in different forms. All this indicates not only the antiquity of the existing system but also the policy adopted by a long line of distinguished administrators to retain intact the essential features of the time-honoured system.

51. The reign of Marthanda Varmah is famous for the extensive conquests achieved by his military genius and valour. These conquests were supplemented by extensions of territory by treaty and subjugation of petty chiefs who held independent sway in their dominions. All this led to the augmentation of the State Ayacut as well as the land revenue of the State to a very considerable extent. They also brought into the Land Records of the State various forms of land tenures which obtained in the several kingdoms which were annexed to Travancore. Apart from their political significance, these territorial extensions have thus a direct bearing on the Land Revenue History of the State.

The nature and extent of these territorial extensions are summarised below in chronological order from information chiefly obtained

from the Malayalam Translation by the old Book Committee, of Sir T. Madava Row's unpublished 'History of Travancore, from 904 to 978 M. E.'

- (1) At the commencement of Marthanda Varmah's reign the limits of the State extended from Aramoli to Warkalay with some isolated patches of territory at Eastern Kallada, Mavelikara (north of Kayankulam and south of Tekkumkur) and other places.
- (2) In 909 M. E. the territories of Elayadath Swaroopam comprising Shencottah, Klankad, Karkudi, Nedumangad, Kottarakara and Pathanapuram were annexed to Travancore. Subsequently the Dutch espoused the cause of the Rajah of Elayadath Swaroopam and waged war with Travancore on his account. They were defeated and the territory finally annexed in 916 M. E.
- (3) In 906 M. E. the Rajah of Desinganad or Quilon was brought under subjection as a tributary Chief. But on the death of the Quilon Rajah in 909 M. E., the Kayankulam Rajah took possession of his territory and thereupon a conflict arose between the Kayankulam Rajah and Travancore which was set at rest in 917 M. E. by the final overthrow of Quilon. (*Shungoony Menon's History of Travancore, p. 145.*)
- (4) In 917 M. E. by the treaty of Manar between Kayankulam and Travancore, a good portion of the former territory passed to the latter with a stipulation for the payment of an annual tribute from Kayankulam to Travancore.
- (5) In 921 M. E. the whole of the Kayankulam territory was acquired by conquest. At this period, the limits of Travancore were extended from Warkalay to Thrikunnappuzha and from Kayankulam to Kumpazha. The village of Samboorvada-gara in Shencottah was also included in Travancore territory.
- (6) In 925 M. E. the territories of Thekkumkur were acquired by conquest. This extended the limits of Travancore to Kunnaragam, Aiymanam, Kypalli, Ettumanur, Kidangoor, Lalam and Kundur.
- (7) Soon after, the territories of Vadakkumkur which extended up to the Muvattupuzha river were also annexed to Travancore as the Chief fled to Calicut, abandoning his State, after the conquest of Thekkumkur by Travancore. This extended the Travancore limits up to the Periyar river. The territories of the Alengad and Parur Rajahs alone remained outside these limits. They were then tributary States under Cochin.
- (8) In 929 M. E. the territories of the Chempakaseri or Ambalappuzha Rajah were acquired by conquest. This extended the Travancore limits northward up to Shertalay taluk which belonged to Cochin and eastward up to the Chenganoor river which was the limit of Thekkumkur.

- (9) In 929 M. E. a treaty was concluded between the Dutch and Travancore at Mavelikarai, which secured to Travancore the alliance of the Dutch in maintaining the territorial conquests and took away the Dutch support from the petty chiefs who had been or had to be conquered.
- (10) In 930 M. E. the tract known as Karapuram (Shertalay taluk) which belonged to Cochin was annexed to Travancore by conquest after the decisive victory gained by Rama Iyen Dalawah in the battle of Poracaud against the combined forces of Cochin, Thekkumkur, Vadakumkur and Chempakaseri Rajahs.
- (11) In 927 M. E. a tract of territory extending from Cape Comorin to Kalakad, i. e., Valliyur, Kalakad and other places which originally belonged to Travancore but had been wrongly taken possession of by the Nabob of the Carnatic was retaken by Travancore from one Moodemiah, the Viceroy of the Nabob of the Carnatic in the Madura and Trichinapoly Districts on payment of a heavy consideration. In 930 M. E. this territory was taken back by the Nabob of the Carnatic with the assistance of the English, as Moodemiah's alienation of it was unauthorised. Subsequently, in the same year the Travancore forces led by Moodemiah with the help of Puli Thevan conquered this territory and re-annexed it to Travancore. At this period, the Travancore territory extended from Periar in the north to Kalakad in the south.
- (12) By the treaty of 932 M. E. between Cochin and Travancore, the former agreed to the latter retaining all the territories acquired by conquest and relinquished its claims to the Principalities of Alengad and Parur.

52. The events enumerated above do not all fall within the period covered by this Chapter but they form a connected chain in the extension and consolidation of the State and are, therefore, presented here in one view.

53. Though fully occupied with his military expeditions and extensive conquests, Marthanda Varma Raja always devoted special attention to the development of the resources of the State and the extension of cultivation. The construction of the Puthen Dam across the Paraliyar has been already referred to. In 920 M. E. another important irrigation work was carried out in Nanjinad. This was the construction of the Nanjinad Puthenar from Bhuthapandi to Cape Comorin. This has continued ever since to be an important branch of the irrigation system of Nanjinad. The construction of this channel is mentioned in the following extract from the Grandhavari of the Sri Padmanabhaswamy temple:—

പ്രകാശമാണു ശ്രീചിത്രത്തു പേരറിനു മിഴകുള്ള നീരൂടെയും കരകരും
ശ്രീചിത്രത്തു ക പേരറിമാരും പേരറിമാരി എഴുതിവെണ്ടിച്ചു അഗസ്തി

ശ്യാമത്തു പട്ടുപുറം നിയമം കരക്കടം കുലശാഖപുരത്തു ഗ്രാമത്താലൂക്കു
 ചോരപൊരി എഴുതിവെണ്ടിച്ചു പുത്തനായിട്ടു കുളവും വെട്ടിച്ചു നിലം തിരു
 ത്തുന്നതിനു ഭൂതപ്പാലി വകെ പറളിത്തറയിൽ ചാരക്കാലണയിൽ നിന്നും
 ഉയർത്തി അണ കെട്ടി അവിടെനിന്നു പുത്തനായിട്ടു തുറവെട്ടി കന്നിമാക
 മാരിചരയ്യം തുറവെട്ടിച്ചു കൊണ്ടുവിട്ടു നിലങ്ങളും കൃഷിചെയ്തു ചുരുവ
 ക്കു നെല്ലുകൾ കേൾവിയിൽനിന്നും മുതലും എടുത്തു തോടാള അഗസ്തിശ്യാമം
 ഉൾപ്പെട്ട കോട്ടപ്പടിയിൽ കറവാലായിട്ടു പാക്കുന്ന കുഞ്ഞുകൂട്ടം പുളളിക്കു വക
 വയ്ക്കയും ചെയ്തു”.

54. From the copy of a Royal writ, dated 29th Thy 923 M. E. (in
 the Mathilagam Records) it is seen that in that
 year, a special staff was employed for constructing
 some irrigation tanks and forming puravoos in
 Agastiswarom taluk, east of Therur tank and
 south of Marunkur.

55. The constitution of the village and taluk organisation, as it ob-
 tained at this period, as well as the functions de-
 volving on the Proverticars, are clearly explained
 in a Variola dated, 29th Thy 923 M. E., and the
 Royal writs of the same date issued to the Prover-
 ticars in Nanjinad in that year, copies of which were found in the
 Mathilgam Records. These records disclose the following interesting
 facts :

- (1) The village (kelvi) was the unit of administration and was presided over by the Proverticar, who received his appointment from the sovereign.
- (2) Under the Proverticar there were different accountants known as Karivu Karathu Pillai, Karivelathu Kanakku Kanakkan, as well as Thandakars.
- (3) The Proverticar had power to fine persons, up to the limit of 9 fanams, all cases for higher punishment being sent up to higher authority.
- (4) The officer to whom the Proverticar was subordinate was known as Kariakar, corresponding to the modern Tahsildar.
- (5) The Taluks were known as Mandapathumvathukals.
- (6) The Proverticar was the local officer responsible for receipts and expenditure in respect of items sanctioned by the Sovereign, as well as disbursements ordered by the Kariakar.
- (7) The Proverticars were to exercise supervision over the Devaswoms and see that the Sreekariakarans paid proper attention to the proper performance of poojahs at stated times and make arrangements for the performance of the poojahs, when the same were neglected.
- (8) In times of drought or scarcity, the Proverticar was to inspect the lands belonging to the Devaswoms as well as to Pandaravaga in company with the Karivu Karathu Pillai,

Kelvi Pillai and four assessors (thadasters) and prepare accounts for the remissions due to failure of crop (karivu) and poorness of yield (thanua). In the latter case, when the probable yield could not be determined to the satisfaction of the ryot, the Proverticar was to have the field harvested in the presence of his own men and find out the actual yield and the amount of remission, if any, due to thanua.

- (9) The Thovala Proverticar was to attend to the construction of the Thovala fort.
- (10) The Proverticar was to send up monthly statements to the Mandapathunvathukal for the receipts and disbursements in his village.
- (11) The Proverticar was to supply provisions for the Oolsavoms and Bhadradeepams in the Capital and obtain receipts from the Chandrakaran of Oolsavamadam.
- (12) The Proverticar was required to attend to the irrigation works in his village *i. e.*, excavation of tanks, conversion of dry lands into wet, and maintenance of channels and anicuts. The new lands brought under wet cultivation were to be included under the Ayacut of the respective tanks.
- (13) The items included in the village accounts comprised Anjali (അഞ്ചാലി), Melvarom (മേൽവാറം), Piravaga (പിറവക), Rckshabhogam (രക്ഷാഭോഗം) etc. There was also an item known as Sauchayam or 'miscellaneous revenue'.
- (14) The remuneration paid to the village staff was as follows:

Proverticar	24 kottahs of paddy per annum.
Kelvi Accountant	...	18	Do. Do.
Karivu Karathu Kanakkan	...	18	Do. Do.
Thandal	...	12	Do. Do.

There was another item known as (കുതിരകളുടെ അടുത്തുണ്ട്) horse allowance and other perquisites amounting to 540 fanams per annum.

- (15) There was an allotment for Mahanavami poojah and decorations etc. for the same in the Kelvi each year.

- (16) Royal writs were also issued to the following functionaries:—

- (a) Karivu Karathu Kanakan.
- (b) Sreekariakaran and Pillamars of Suchindram temple.
- (c) Pidakakars.
- (d) The outgoing Proverticar.
- (e) Pidaka Muthalpidi.
- (f) Nadanmar of Keelpathu and Melpathu in Agastiswaram Pidaka.

56. After extending the limits of Travancore from Cape Comorin to the Periyar, that is the whole of modern Travancore with the exception of the Alangad and Parur Principalities which were annexed later on, Marthanda Varmah Rajah signalized his reign by a great act of State known as the 'Thirupadidanom' or dedication of the State to Sri Padmanabha Swamy, the Family Deity of the Sovereigns of Travancore. This epoch-making event took place in 925 M. E.

57. The original document relating to this transaction which is preserved in the Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple runs as follows :

“വൃശ്ചികശുക്ലമിനപുഷ്പം ചെന്ന കൊല്ലം തൊള്ളായിരത്തു ഇരുപത്തുവരമാണ്ടു മകരമാസം രണ്ടു-ബുധനാഴ്ചയും പുഷ്പകുന്ദത്തു സപ്തമിയും രേവതിയും ഇന്നാളാൽ എഴുതിയ സർവ്വപാപ്പണ കാലൈ കരണമാവിതു.

ശ്രീഭണ്ടാരകാർട്ടും ചെമ്പാർകളായ ബാലമാർത്താണ്ഡവർമ്മരായ തൃപ്പാപ്പൂർ മൂപ്പിന്നു തങ്ങൾക്കുള്ള തോവാള കോട്ടയും പടിഞ്ഞാറ കവണാററിനും കിഴക്കുള്ള രാജ്യത്തിനകത്തുള്ള നാളതുവരെ നമുക്കു അവകാശമായിട്ടു അനുഭവിച്ചുവരുന്ന വസ്തു കൃത്യങ്ങളും സ്ഥാനമനങ്ങളും മറ്റു എപ്രേർപ്പെട്ടതും പൈതൃകം ശ്രീപത്മനാഭപൈതൃകം ശ്രീഭണ്ടാരത്തിലേക്കു സർവ്വപാപ്പണമാകട്ടെ ചെമ്പാർകളായ എഴുതികൊടുത്താർ. ശ്രീഭണ്ടാരകാർട്ടും ചെമ്പാർകളായ ബാലമാർത്താണ്ഡവർമ്മരായ തൃപ്പാപ്പൂർ മൂപ്പിന്നു ഇമ്മാർട്ടമെ.രം സർവ്വപാപ്പണ കാലൈ ശകരകുമാരമാർത്താണ്ഡൻ ”

(Translation).— Deed of absolute gift and dedication executed this day of the Revathi Star, Wednesday, the fifth Makarom 925 M. E., and the seventh day after New Moon, when Saturn is in *Scorpio* and Jupiter in *Pisces*.

We, Bala Marthanda Varmah, the senior member of Trippappur and Sreepandarakaraiam Cheyvarkal have this day transferred by absolute gift and dedication, to endure as long as the Sun and Moon shall last, all the lands and functions appertaining thereto, together with all rights and dignities and all other possessions that We have been hitherto enjoying as of right within the territories between the Thovala Fort in the east and the Kavanar river in the west, in favour of Perumal Sri Padmanabha Perumal. In token whereof, We have this day executed this deed of absolute gift and dedication. Bala Marthanda Varmah Rajah, the senior member of Trippappur and Sripandarakaraiam Cheyvarkal.

SIGN MANUAL.

Written by Sankara Kumaru Marthandan.

58. The Grandhavari in Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple contains the following extracts on the subject:—

“തെക്കുംകൂറും വടക്കുംകൂറും അടങ്ങുകയ്ക്കു ചെമ്പു പില്ലാകം തോവാളമുതൽ കടന്നാറുവരെ രാജ്യവും തൃപ്പടിയിൽ ദാനം ചെയ്തു. ചെമ്പരം ശ്രീപത്മ

നാഭചെരുമുൾസപാമിള കുമാര-രാജാവരെയും ബ്രഹ്മശി ഉത്സവം നടന്നു വരികയിൽ കുമാര-രാജാവു മുരൽക്കു പൈകനി തിരുഉത്സവം ഉടങ്ങണമെന്നു കഴിച്ചു”

(Translation).— After the annexation of the Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur Principalities, the whole State extending from Thovala to Kavanar was made over as gift and dedication to Perumal Sri Padmanabha Perumal Swamy; and from 925 M. E. the Punguni Oolsavom in the temple was commenced in addition to the Alpasi Oolsavom which alone was performed up to 924 M. E.

“രോവാളുമുതൽ കവണാരവരെ രാജ്യം കുമാര-രാജാവു മകരമാസം 5-ാം തൃപ്പിയിൽ ചാനവു ചെയ്തു കോവിൽക്കു കൈയ്യും കുമാര-രാജാവു മിഥുനമാസം 28-ാം പെരുമാറ്റം കോട്ടാരം ആക്കി ത്രി പത്മനാഭ ഭഗവതേ വഞ്ചി ബാല മാർത്താണ്ഡവർമ്മ കുമാരവരദേശ്വരൻ എന്നു തിരുനാമരൂപം എന്നു.”

(Translation).—On the 5th Makaram 925 M. E. the Kingdom extending from Thovala to Kavanar was made over in absolute gift and dedication to Sri Padmanabha Swamy; the Koikal (Palace) was converted into Perumal Kottarom Palace appertaining to the Deity on 28th Mithunom 925 M. E; and the title ‘Sri-Padmanabha Dasa Vanchi Bala Marthanda Varmah Kulasekara Perumal’ was assumed by the sovereign.

59. The nature and importance of this measure are explained in the following extracts:

(1) *Sir. T. Madava Row's History of Travancore (Malayalam translation)* :—

“പരമഭക്തനായ മഹാരാജാവു മദ്ധ്യമാള വയം കുമാര മകരമാസം 5-ാം തൃപ്പി നാഴ്ച ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് വയം 1715 ജനുവരിയിൽ മതിലകത്തു എഴുന്നള്ളിതന്നെയും തന്റെ സകലത്തെയും പത്തനാടാർപ്പണമായി സങ്കല്പിച്ചു. തന്റെ ഉടവെട്ടു തൃപ്പിയിൽവെച്ചു പിന്നീട് തിരിച്ചു വാങ്ങിച്ചു. തിരുവിതാംകൂടു മഹാരാജാക്കന്മാർ ഇന്നു ഉടയാളിനെ പത്മനാഭന്റെ ചാസന്മാരായി ധരിച്ചുവരുന്നതു എന്നാണ് സങ്കല്പം. ഇതുനിമിത്തമാകുന്നു തിരുവിതാംകൂടു മഹാരാജാക്കന്മാർ പത്മനാഭഭഗവതേ പേരുള്ളതു. ഇപ്രകാരം രാജ്യം മുഴുവനും പത്മനാഭഭഗവതേ അർപ്പണമാക്കിയെന്നു നിന്നാൽ അതിനെ പ്രത്യേകമായി പരാശരണൻ സ്മരണയ്ക്കുമാക്കിയെന്നു മഹാരാജാവു വിചാരിച്ചു.”

(Translation).—The devoted Maha Rajah proceeded to the temple on Wednesday 5th Makaram 925 M. E. (January 1715 A. D.) and dedicated himself to Sri Padmanabha Swami together with all that belonged to him. He placed the royal sword in front of the Deity and afterwards took it back. It is understood that to this day, the Maha Rajahs of Travancore hold this sword as the agent of Sri Padmanabha Swami. For the same reason, the Travancore Maha Rajahs are known as ‘Padmanabha Dasa’. By thus dedicating the whole State to Sri Padmanabha Swami the Maha

Rajah realised that he had placed the State under the special protection of the Deity.

(2) *Administration Report for 1048 and 1049 pp. 49 to 50:—*

“The land of *Sree Padmanabha Sicami* extend over all Southern Travancore from Shepengheel to Thovallay; and are for purposes of account divided into 3 divisions, Madapaud, Neendakara Sanketham and Kolatoor. Melanganom. The tenure which is pure Jenu dates from very remote antiquity, and the lands formed the private property of the Pagoda, long before the whole State of Travancore was solemnly given over in gift to the same Pagoda by two former Rajahs, the greater part in the year 933/1757 A. D., a small part in A. D. 973/1797 A. D.”

(3) *Shungoony Menon's History of Travancore pp. 170 to 171:—*

“Though Travancore was now perfectly freed from the long continued molestations and opposition of the Ettu Veetil Pillamar and their confederate chiefs, and the recurrence of oppression on their part had been rendered impossible by the subjugation of the insurgent feudatories; though all sources of danger from neighbouring principalities had been removed by the expulsion of the petty Rajahs from their strongholds; and though success had attended all the acts of the Maha Rajah in enforcing order and regularity in the kingdom, constructing fortifications, introducing a scheme of military organisation, promulgating a sound system of administration, and bringing about a reign of perfect peace throughout the Maha Rajah's dominions, still His Highness' prudence and wisdom suggested his resorting to further measures for the protection of his ancient house and his dearly acquired possessions. Consequently, this wise and remarkable sovereign, who had latterly become more of a religious devotee than a despotic king, adopted a most important precautionary measure as a lasting and powerful check on any future internal commotion in the country. This was effected by connecting the Government of the State with religion, and making the kingdom sacred in the eyes of all Hindus, in the manner following :

“After the conquest of Kayemkulam, and taking possession of Dasinganad, Elayada Swaroopam, and re-establishing the Travancore dominions up to Valliyur in the east and Thricunnapulay in the north, the Maha Rajah proceeded on the morning of the 5th Madom 925 M. E. (17th January 1750 A. D.), to the great pagoda at Trivandrum, accompanied by the heir-apparent with the other male and female members of the family, and the prime minister Rama Iyen. After assembling all the priests and the Brahmanical body attached to the pagoda called the Yogakar; the Maha Rajah with great reverence and devotion laid his State sword on the Ottakal Mandapom, in the presence of the image of Sree Padmanabha Swamy, and made over the kingdom of Travancore to the Devaswom, declaring that from that day

forward, he was the vassal or agent of the deity, Sree Padmanabha Swamy, and that he would conduct the affairs of the kingdom as a trustee of the Devaswom. From this day, the Maha Rajah assumed the title of 'Sree Padmanabha Dasa,' i. e., a servant or minister of Sree Padmanabhan. This measure, we may reasonably believe, had the desired effect, for since that time the people of Travancore have had a devoted attachment and sacred regard for the royal house, and this has continued unchanged up to this day."

(4) *Travancore State Manual Vol. 1, p. 362 :—*

"*Dedication of Travancore to Sri Padmanabhaswamy.* For the better safety of his ancient house and the consolidation of his acquired dominions so as to make internal disturbances in the country impossible and make his own position secure, the thoughtful Maha Rajah determined upon the bold step of dedicating his kingdom to Sri Padmanabhaswamy, the tutelary deity of the Royal house of Travancore. Accordingly, on the morning of the 5th Makaram 925 M. E. (January 1750 A. D.), accompanied by the heir-apparent and all the other male and female members of the Royal family, the Maha Rajah with his Prime Minister proceeded to Sri Padmanabha's temple where all the priests and Yogakars had also been summoned. His Highness laid his State sword before the God on the *Ottakkal Mantapam* and made over the whole territory to the Devaswom and assumed its management as the vassal of that deity. From this day forward 'he styled himself *Sri Padmanabha Dasa* meaning, the servant of Sri Padmabhaswamy.' This stroke of policy had the desired effect and the people of Travancore have ever after regarded the country as the possession of the God and the person of the sovereign as His representative to them on earth."

(5) *Dewan Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao's Address at the First Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly :—*

"Among the Native States in India, Travancore holds a unique position. This is the only Hindu State which has not come under Mahomedan domination and which retains unimpaired its ancient Hindu type and character. Those who are familiar with the history of the State know and realise the full import and significance of the great act of State policy adopted in the middle of the 18th century by the illustrious Rajah Martanda Varma of immortal fame by which the Sovereign, after subjugating the different principalities and chieftainships and consolidating them into the compact kingdom as you find it to-day, dedicated the whole State to the presiding Deity in Trivandrum and constituted himself the servant and agent of the Deity. The character thus stamped on the constitution of the State has never been lost sight of by his successors on the Throne of Travancore and they have striven to discharge the sacred trust handed down to them with unswerving loyalty."

(6) *Dewan Mr. Gopalachari's reply to Representation No. 179 at the Third Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly :—*

“ Any reform that is proposed must be consistent with the essential features of the constitution under which the Sovereign administers this State as the agent of the Deity. He is bound to maintain the same on Hindu principles. Who that has studied the history of Travancore does not know and realize the full significance of the great act of State policy adopted by Maharaja Martanda Varma, by which he made a gift of the whole State to the Deity after pouring water in a manner to which tradition attaches efficacy and styled himself as Sri Padmanabha Dasa or the servant and agent of that Deity. That being so, it is impossible for the Sovereign of this State to divest himself of Devaswom management. Devaswoms are part and parcel of the State, and it is not possible with the present growing demands upon the finances of the State to constitute a separate department for the administration of Devaswoms which have appertained to the Revenue department from time immemorial. From tradition, prestige and authority, the Revenue department seems to be the best fitted to manage them.”

60. In regard to the observation made in some of the statements contained in the above extracts that the term Mandapathumvathukal was introduced after the Thirupadidanom, it has to be mentioned that this term occurs in some of the old accounts prior to 925 M. E. the year of Thirupadidanom. The record referred to in para 55 is a clear authority on the point. The term ‘Sreepandarakarlam Cheyvar-kal’ (ശ്രീപണ്ടാരകാലം ചെയാർകൽ) appears also to have been in use prior to the Thirupadidanom. It is used in the Thirupadidanom deed itself as an expression already in vogue, when that deed was executed. This term has been retained all along and has also been recognised at the recent settlement. All *thanathuchitta* lands, or lands occupied by Government buildings or institutions are entered in the name of Sreepandarakarlam Cheyvar-kal (ശ്രീപണ്ടാരകാലം ചെയാർകൽ) which means ‘Sirkar.’

61. The dedication of the State to the family Deity of the sovereign is thus a distinctive feature of the constitution and constitutes the basis or foundation of the existing land revenue system.