

KOTTAYAM TALUK.

By V. Chappu Menon, B.A.

Boundaries, Position and Area.—The Kottayam taluk, which comprises the old taluks of Kottayam and Tellicherry, is bounded on the north by Chirakkal, on the east by Coorg and Wynad, on the south by Wynad and Kurumbranad, and on the west by the sea. It lies immediately to the south of the Chirakkal taluk and resembles the latter in its general features.

Area.—462 square miles, of which 80 square miles may be said to be under cultivation.

Population.—The population, according to the census of 1871, was 143,761, which in 1881 rose to 165,775, showing an increase of about 15 per cent. The males were to the females as 81,345 to 84,430. The Hindus numbered 124,099, Muhammadans 39,825, Christians 1,842, and other classes 9. The population is most dense towards the coast.

The number of houses occupied in 1881 was 25,646 and of those unoccupied 6,200.

Sub-division of the Taluk for Administrative Purposes.—The taluk is divided into 28 amsams of which 16 are under the charge of the Tahsildar for magisterial purposes and the remaining 12 under the Deputy Tahsildar, Kuttuparamba. The taluk headquarters are at Tellicherry.

Public Establishments.—The various public establishments existing in the taluk are specified below :—

1. District Court, North Malabar, Tellicherry.
2. Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate's Court, Tellicherry.
3. Civil Surgeon, Tellicherry.
4. Assistant Superintendent of Police, Tellicherry.
5. Sub-Court, North Malabar, Tellicherry.
6. District Munsif's Court, Tellicherry.
7. Tahsildar and his establishment, Tellicherry.
8. Deputy Tahsildar, Kuttuparamba.
9. Sea Customs Superintendent and Port Conservator, Tellicherry.
10. District Registrar, Tellicherry, and Sub-Registrars of Kuttuparamba and Panur.
11. Police Inspectors, Tellicherry and Kuttuparamba, with station-houses at Kallai, Chavasseri, Iritti, Kannavam, Kuttuparamba, Kasba, Nagaram and Panur.
12. Postal and Telegraph offices at Tellicherry.
13. Inspector of Salt and Abkari Revenue, North Malabar.
14. Teachers of the Brennen High School and other educational institutions.
15. Local Fund Supervisor, Tellicherry sub-division.
16. Deputy Inspector of Vaccination, North Malabar.
17. Municipal establishments.

Towns.—Tellicherry (Lat. 11° 44' 53" N., Long. 75° 31' 38" E.), which is the headquarters of the taluk, was constituted a municipal town under Act X of 1865 with effect from 1st November 1866 (*vide* notification of Government, dated 13th September 1866, and G.O., dated 13th September 1866, No. 925).

The boundaries of the town are—

North.—Eranjoli river as far as the old bridge on the Coorg road.

East and South.—The Eranjoli old road as far as the Tiruvangad kovil large tank, and the cross road thence to Kodapalli kunnun on the sea-shore.

West.—The sea.

The town extends from the Koduvalli bridge on the north to the small hill in the Mailanjanmam amsam on the south ; from the sea-shore on the west to the river on the east. The distance north to south is 3 miles and east to west $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The area is about 4 square miles and the population, according to the census of 1881, was 26,410, of whom 15,488 were Hindus, 9,149 were Muhammadans, 1,765 were Christians, and 8 belonged to other classes. The males were to the females as 12,939 to 13,471. The number of houses occupied was 3,426, and of those unoccupied 2,118.

The municipal town comprises at present the whole of the Tellicherry amsam and portions of Tiruvangad and Mailanjanmam amsams. In 1880 a portion of the Nittur amsam was added to the municipality, but was excluded in 1884 as it did not derive much benefit from the municipal administration. In March 1884, proposals for the incorporation of the remaining portions of the Tiruvangad and Mailanjanmam amsams were sanctioned by Government, but the order was subsequently cancelled on the representations of the inhabitants of the locality. The receipts and charges on account of the Tellicherry Municipality for the year 1884-85 are subjoined :—

TELLICHERRY MUNICIPALITY.

1884-85.

<i>Receipts.</i>	RS.
Opening balance	179
Rates on houses and lands	11,419
Taxes on arts	4,057
Taxes on vehicles and animals	793
Registration of carts	46
Tolls	2,183
Licences	100
Licence tax .. ..	..
Assignments by Government	200
Contribution from local funds	1,050
Fees and fines	190
Endowment, etc.	1,200
Miscellaneous	6,467
Advances recovered .. ..	..
Total ..	27,884

Charges.

Grant I.

New works—Communications .. ..	..
Buildings .. ..	..
Sanitary and miscellaneous .. ..	..
Repairs—communications	2,182
Buildings	123
Sanitary and miscellaneous	67
Establishment	608
Tools and plant .. ..	..

1884-85.

				R ^{as} .
Grant II.				
Municipal schools	..	..	..	6,163
Results grants	..	..	..	543
Schools on the combined system	..	..	..	448
Inspection	..	..	..	150
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..
Grant III.				
Hospitals and dispensaries	..	..	..	4,437
Medical college	..	..	..	..
Sanitary inspection	..	..	..	..
Vaccination	..	..	..	584
Registration of births and deaths	..	..	..	344
Conservancy	..	..	..	5,585
Grant IV.				
Lighting	..	..	..	1,488
Choultries	..	..	..	123
Travellers' bungalow	..	..	..	..
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	576
Licence tax	..	..	..	..
Police	..	..	..	..
Grant V.				
Supervision and management	..	..	..	3,050
Advances recoverable	..	..	..	50
Refunds	..	..	..	152
Balances	..	..	..	1,211
Total ..				27,884

Tellicherry is a healthy and picturesque town, situated upon a group of wooded hills running down to the sea, and protected by a natural breakwater of rock. The citadel or fort, still in excellent preservation, stands to the north of the town and was used as a district jail till the latter was abolished on 1st June 1885. The buildings in the fort are now intended for public offices. The fort is built of laterite in the form of a square with flanking bastions on the south-east and north-west corners. The south-east bastion has also a cavalier bastion above it. On the north is another bastion situated on a cliff overhanging the sea, and separated from the main work by a space of about 150 yards. The immediate precincts of the fort were further protected by a strong wall of which portions still remain loopholed for musketry and with flanking towers at intervals. The native town lies to the south; the principal street runs parallel to the coast, and is a mile in length. A white dioptric light, exhibited from a small masonry tower on the fort wall, 70 feet above high water, marks the harbour.

The East India Company established a factory at *Tellicherry* in 1683 to secure the pepper and cardamom trade; and on several occasions, between 1708 and 1761, the Company obtained from the chiefs of the Kolattiri family and other local chiefs, not only grants of land in and near *Tellicherry*, but some important privileges, such as the right to collect customs, administer justice, etc., within the lands so granted.

Hyder's invasion of Malabar narrowed the Company's operations for a time, and in 1766 the factory was reduced to a residency. From 1779 to 1782 the town withstood a siege by Hyder's General, Sirdar Khan; on the arrival of relief from Bombay under Major Abington, the enemy

was severely handled in a sortie and the siege was raised. In the subsequent wars with Mysore, Tellicherry was the base of operations for the ascent of the ghats from the west coast. After the peace, the town became the seat of the Superintendent of North Malabar and of the Provincial Court of Circuit.

The various public offices existing in the taluk have been already noticed. The following edifices which exist in the town deserve mention. They are—

(1) The civil dispensary built partly with subscriptions raised by Dr. Ross, a former Civil Surgeon of the station, and partly with funds supplied by Government.

(2) A Protestant church (the foundation of which was laid by Lord Napier in 1869), raised with funds left by the late Master Attendant, Edward Brennen, Esq.

(3) A church of the German Mission.

(4) A Roman Catholic church over a century old.

(5) A large Mappilla mosque called Orta (in Portuguese, garden) Pally (ചടക്കിപ്പള്ളി) built by a very opulent Mappilla, Chovakkaran Mussa, the site being the Government garden, hence the name.

(6) Another mosque of some note, that of the Cutch Muhamadans, built by the late Ali Haji Sett, a rich merchant of this town, whose descendants are still trading here.

(7) A Hindu pagoda in Tiruvangad dedicated to Sri Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, and commonly called "Brass Pagoda" owing to its being covered with brass sheeting instead of tiles, and of which the walls and gopurams are in a state of disrepair.

(8) A high school, also built with funds left by Mr. Brennen and known as the Brennen High school.

(9) Another school in charge of German Missionaries built with money provided by a Parsee by name Kasroo—a grandson of Darashoo Cursettee, an old Parsee merchant of this place.

(10) A terrace made by the late Vice-President, Mr. Overbury, with municipal fund and which presents an agreeable appearance commanding an excellent view of the sea, and is now much resorted to by town people, especially in the evening. There are also a travellers' bungalow and two chattrams, one of which was built by the Municipality and the other by the Government. There is also another chattram, built and endowed by Moyan Kunhi Raman Nayar, who was once a ward under Government, and intended for Hindu travellers.

Of the private dwelling houses which are of some note, there are only two deserving mention here. One of these at Morakkunnu was built by Mr. James Stevens, and the other at Pallikkunnu by Mr. Thomas Harvey Baber, both first Judges of the late Western Provincial Court.

There are two large tanks within the town, the largest at Tiruvangad, measuring 250 feet by 340, belongs to the Tiruvangad temple, and the other measuring 150 feet by 150, near the High school, was sunk by the late Mr. Baber, and goes by his name.

There is no hotel here, but there is a club for Europeans situated close to the fort.

Other institutions of minor importance in the town are noted below :—

1. Lekshmi Narasimham temple (ലക്ഷ്മീനരസിംഹ ക്ഷേത്രം) roofed partly with copper and partly with tiles belonging to the Konkani Brahmins.

2. Old Jamath mosque പഴയ ജമാഅ പള്ളി.

3. Mattamprath mosque മട്ടമ്പ്രത്ത പള്ളി.

4. Lower bazaar mosque താഴെ തറക്കടവു പള്ളി.

5. Trikkayil temple dedicated to Siva തൃക്കയിൽ ക്ഷേത്രം.

6. Ayyalath palli അയ്യാലത്ത പള്ളി.

7. Seydarpalli സൈദാപട്ട പള്ളി.

Nos. 1 to 4 are in Tellicherry amsam, and Nos. 5 and 6 in Tiruvangal amsam, and No. 7 in Mailamjanmam amsam.

Kutali amsam—about 12 miles north north-west of Tellicherry, contains a bungalow known as Chalot Bungalow and a petty bazaar. It is on the high road from Cannanore to the Pudiachuram pass into Coorg.

Pattanur amsam—has nothing worthy of note, except perhaps a Vishnu temple called Nayikkali നായ്കക്കല്ലി.

Chavasseri amsam—about 4 miles north north-east of Pulassi, has a Mappilla bazaar and a palace to the north of it. It contains the Kallur temple and Palot mosque, and also a small bungalow and chattram.

Feliyambra amsam—contains the village of Iritti, which has a bridge of that name in course of construction. It contains Kuyimbil (കയിമ്പിൽ) temple and Uliyil (ഉളിയീൽ) mosque.

Mulakunnu amsam—contains a fort called Harischandra Kotta on the Purali mala hill, near this is a rock-cut cell. There are two temples known as Mulakunnu (മുലകുന്ന്) and Tillangiri (തില്ലങ്ങിരി) and a mosque called Palayil (പാലയിൽ).

Gannavam amsam—is a hilly tract containing an area of 41,440 acres, or about 65 square miles. It has a travellers' bungalow and a mussaferkhana and two religious institutions, one (Muntemparamba temple (മുന്തെമ്പരമ്പ ക്ഷേത്രം) belonging to the Hindus, and the other (Aralathpalli ആരളത്ത പള്ളി) belonging to the Mappillas. The Iritti bridge is on the boundary of Gannavam and Veliyambra amsams.

Manattana amsam—about 28 miles from Tellicherry and 8 from Kannothe, was once a military post. There is a redoubt on the summit of a low hill in good order but overrun with trees and shrubs. It is the largest and most hilly tract in the taluk, and has, according to the census of 1881, an area of 106,000 acres, or about 165 square miles, and a population of 4,365 souls. There is a temple of great celebrity called Tricharumanna at Kottiyur (തൃച്ചരൂർ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ കൊട്ടിയൂർ ക്ഷേത്രം), dedicated to Siva, and although situated in a wild woody tract, it has an annual festival in April-May attended by about 50,000 people. The nearest inhabited place to Kottiyur is Manattana, about 8 miles distant from it. The road from Manattana to Wynad passes through this village. At Nitumpoyil, there exists a chattram for the use of travellers. There is also a mosque called Kolayat (കൊളയാട്ട പള്ളി).

Kannavam amsam—is a large hilly tract about 14 miles north-east of Tellicherry, and was formerly a military post. Here is a small redoubt

on a hill in ruins. There is a good bungalow for travellers and a substantial stone bridge thrown over a small river by a battalion of pioneers employed in Wynad, in 1822-23. There is a celebrated pagoda known as Totikalam (തൊട്ടിക്കല്ലം) temple about one mile north-west of Kannothe, where, in the month of Vrischigam, Tiyvars bring tender coconuts as offerings to the deity. There are three rock-cut caves in Totikalam, said to be paved with bricks. There is also a mosque in the amsam known as the Kannothe mosque. At Kannothe there was a rich janmi known as Kannothe Nambiyar, who joined the rebellious Palassi (Pyche) Raja of Kottayam, and who disturbed the peace of the taluk for a series of years. He eventually fell into the hands of the authorities and was hanged on the hill near the bungalow, his estate being declared escheated to Government in 1805. The property known as Kannothe escheat is of large extent and lies in Kannothe and Manattana amsam. It has mostly been dealt with by the escheat department, and has a portion of it planted up with teak trees. The area of the tract is variously estimated. The Tahsildar of Kottayam once put the area at 375 square miles, but forty square miles is a very moderate estimate not taking into consideration the increased superficial area caused by the mountainous character of the locality. The forests are peopled by Kurichiyars—a class of jungle tribes who raise various products in them. The forest has been notified for reservation under the Madras Forest Act V of 1882.

Palassi amsam—was the seat of the Raja known in Malabar history as the Pychy (Palassi) Raja of Kottayam who carried on warfare against the East India Company for a long time, and who was finally killed in 1805, his whole estate being confiscated to Government. There is a small fort which is now in ruins. The two temples in this amsam are Perincheri (പെരിഞ്ചേരി) and Mattanur (മട്ടന്നൂർ). Mattanur is painfully interesting as being the scene of the terrible tragedy enacted there in 1852, wherein a whole family of Brahmans, consisting of 18 souls, were most cruelly butchered by Mappilla fanatics.

Kandamkundu amsam—is the seat of the Kuttuparamba Deputy Tahsildar's office, and contains also a Sub-Registrar's office, a Police station, a Mission school, public bungalow and an old fort now in ruins. There is also a large maidan in the possession of Government and a street inhabited by buffalo-herdsmen. It lies on the high road to the Periah pass. The Merumpoya bridge, over the river of that name, is situated in this amsam. There are also the (1) Nirveli (നിരവേലി), (2) Mananteri (മാനന്തേരി) and (3) Ramapuram (രാമപുരം) temples, and (4) Merumpoya (മെരൂമ്പുഴ) mosque and (5) Muriyat (മൂരിയാട്ട) mosque.

Patuvilai amsam—contains two Hindu temples known as Kallay (കല്ലായി) and Patuvilai (പട്ടുവിലായി) and two mosques called Kallai and Vengatti.

Dharmatam amsam.—Dharmatam (literally a place of charity) is a small island close to Tellicherry and contains a redoubt on the top of an elevated place and also an old rock-cut cave. There was here one of the earliest Muhammadan mosques now demolished. The place was ceded to the Honorable East India Company in 1734, was seized by Ravi Rama, Raja of Chirakkal, in 1788, but was retaken in 1789. There are two Hindu temples called Melur (മേലൂർ ക്ഷേത്രം) and Andalur (അണ്ടലൂർ കവാട്), a Christian church and a Jamath mosque. There is also a Trigonometrical survey station here.

Pinarayi amsam—contains an old palace belonging to the Raja of Kottayam and the Paraprath (പാരപ്രത്ത്) mosque.

Mailanjanmam amsam—contains a mosque called Seydarpalli and two small rock-cut sepulchral caves like those at Taliparamba.

Katirur amsam—about 4 miles north-east of Tellicherry, was formerly the seat of the Tahsildar and subsequently of the District Munsif. It had a palace built by the Pychy (Palassi) Raja. There are (1) Katirur temple (കതിരൂർ ക്ഷേത്രം) with a nice tank attached to it, (2) Chirumpa kavu temple (ചിരമ്പകവു), (3) Talath (താലത്ത) mosque, (4) Telayilat (തലയിലാട്ട) mosque, and (5) two rock-cut caves.

Kottayam—also called Kottayakam and Kottangadi, is a large village about 7 miles north-east of Tellicherry, and contains the palaces of the Kottayam Rajas and the houses of several wealthy Mappillas. It is celebrated for a fine temple known as Trikayikunnu (തൃകയികുന്ന്) and a big tank close to it. The rebel Pychy (Palassi) Raja belonged to one of the branches of the Kottayam family. There are three mosques called (1) Kottayath Jamath mosque (കൊട്ടയത്ത് ജമാഅത്ത് പള്ളി), (2) Mutiyanga Jamath mosque (മുതിയാങ്ങ ജമാഅത്ത് പള്ളി), (3) Cheruvancheri mosque (ചെരുവഞ്ചേരി പള്ളി).

Panur amsam.—Panur, about 7 miles from Tellicherry, was formerly the seat of a District Munsif and has now a Police station and a Sub-Registrar's office. It is a populous Mappilla village and contains a bazaar. There are the ruins of an old fort and a rock-cut sepulchral grave, the latter in Kannampalli desam. The chief religious institutions are Kutteri temple (കുറ്റേരി അമ്പലം) and Panur mosque (പാനൂർ പള്ളി).

Puttur amsam—is a jungly tract and contains Pullanhot (പുല്ലാത്തോട്ട) temple and Kallil (കല്ലിമൈപ്പള്ളി) mosque; also two rock-cut caves in Kolavallur desam.

Triprangottur amsam—is a jungly tract and contains the Vishnu temple known as Kotantram velli temple (കൊടന്ത്രംവെള്ളി ക്ഷേത്രം) and the Katavattur mosque (കടവത്തൂർ പള്ളി). Both have thatched roofs.

Panniyannur amsam—contains the temples known as Kottarattil Ampalam (കൊട്ടാരത്തിൽ അമ്പലം) and Kilaketath Ampalam (കിഴക്കെടത്തമ്പലം).

Peringalam amsam—about 8 miles from Tellicherry, contains a rock-cut cave on the top of a hill. There are also a rock-cut cave with two pillars and four caves in the amsam. The Menapratt (മെനപ്രത്ത്) and Anniyarath (അണിയാരത്ത്) temples and Peringalathur (പെരിങ്ങത്തൂർ പള്ളി) mosque are the only religious institutions of note. At Kanakamala there is a small spring which is considered sacred, and in which people bathe on certain days in the year.

Olavilam amsam—contains Olavilath Tadathil (ഔലവിലത്ത് തടത്തിൽ) temple and Tottathil (തൊട്ടത്തിൽ) mosque.

Kallayi amsam—contains two caves cut out of laterite, also Parimatam temple (പരിമതം) and Kallai mosque.

Karyad amsam—contains Pallikunil temple (പള്ളികുനീൽ അമ്പലം) dedicated to Vettakorumakan.

Mountains, Hills and Forests.—The line of ghats to the eastward, the crest of which forms the boundary dividing Kottayam from Coorg and Wynad, are lofty, some of the peaks being about 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. The valleys formed by the slopes are extensive and covered with dense forests. The Kanaka mala is a lofty ridge stretching

west from the ghats, the slopes from it approaching within 10 miles of the coast due east of Tellicherry. Purali (പുറലി) mala, situated centrally, is a long ridge about 6 miles in length east and west unconnected with the ghats. It is covered with wood and bamboos to the summit. In the north-east portion several table-lands covered with wood, apparently ~~flat~~ rise abruptly from the cultivated valleys. The country, 8 miles in a parallel with the coast, is composed of open ridges between the cultivated valleys. A few of the eminences are wooded. There is very little flat land in the district beyond a belt along the coast about Tellicherry and the cultivated valleys. The whole of the eastern portion is one dense wood with a few cultivated spots to the foot of the ghats. In the small island of Dharmapatam the only flat ground is that under wet cultivation and marsh; the rest is undulating ground falling in cliffs towards the sea. Opposite to it is a rocky island called Grove Island with some wood surrounded by rocks. About half a mile to the west of Tellicherry is a ridge of rocks which affords some shelter for craft. The description of the Kannothe forest belonging to Government will be found in the Notice of the Wynad Forests.

Soil and Productions.—The soil in some parts towards the coast is brown and sandy; on the rising grounds in the interior it is rich and gravelly; the cultivated valleys a brown loam; towards the mountains and in the forests it is rich and black.

The productions are rice of different kinds, coconut, betel, areca-nut, cardamom, pepper in great quantities and dry grains of sorts. Kottayam is celebrated for its pepper crops.

Minerals.—Iron is to be found in some parts, but it is not worked.

Manufactures.—Cloths of an inferior sort are made in several amsams. In Nittur, a suburb of Tellicherry, weaving is carried on by the Basel Mission weaving establishment. Arrack, jaggery, oil from copra and other nuts are manufactured. Copper vessels are manufactured at Tellicherry and at Mattanur in Palassi amsam.

Fairs and Markets.—Fairs are held at almost all the temples where people resort for public festivals or worship. Kottiyur is one of the most important of the pagodas in this respect. A festival is held there in April-May every year which attracts thither great trade.

Bungalows and other Public Buildings.—There are three travellers' bungalows in the taluk at—

1. Kannothe in Kannavan amsam,
2. Gannothe in Gannavam amsam, and
3. Kuthuparamba.

Mussaferkhanas are provided at—

1. Nedumpoyil in Manattana amsam.
2. Chalot in Kudali amsam.
3. Chavasseri.
4. Iritti in Veliyampra amsam.
5. Gannothe in Gannavam amsam.

Trigonometrical Station.—At Dharmapattanam.

	—	°	'	"
Lat. N.		11	45	59.76
Long. E.		75	30	09.82