

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Land Survey and Settlement—Inam Settlement.

While Purnaiya was Dewan, a general topographical survey of the country was made by Colonel Mackenzie as well as a revenue survey by the officers of the State. Nothing however was subsequently done till Bowring's attention was called to the irregularities and frauds connected with land tenure and assessment. In 1862 several of the glaring defects in the prevailing revenue system were brought to the notice of the Government of India by Bowring and the Superintendents were ordered to carry on investigations in their respective divisions. On account of the unrecorded multiplicity of the rates of assessment prevailing in various parts of the State and there being no permanent boundary marks showing the limits of each field, it was found that it had practically come to rest with the Shanbagues or village accountants to regulate at will all payments to be made by the cultivators. In the case of Batayi as well as Inam lands also, it was found that many discrepancies existed. The Supreme Government considered that the introduction of the Revenue Survey and Settlement accompanied by an equitable assessment as prevailed in Bombay and Madras was the only effectual remedy for the removal of the evils that had established themselves. It was subsequently decided to adopt the Bombay Revenue Survey system which was believed to have proved successful in the districts of that presidency bordering on Mysore. "My reason," wrote Mr. Bowring, "for preferring the system of Survey and Settlement pursued in Bombay may be summed up thus:—"I found that in Mysore which borders both on that Presidency and Madras we had ample opportunity of comparing the method pursued in either case. The difference is as follows:— Under the Bombay system the survey, classification and settlement are all continuous links of one chain forged under the directions of the same individual whose interest it is to see that every successive link fits closely into its predecessor, every step also being carefully taken with advertance to the next one. There is no such close connection in the Madras system. The boundaries are fixed

by one person, the survey laid down by another and the settlement by a third, these several agencies not being under one responsible head. The survey, so far as I can judge, is excellent but the surveyor had not the power of altering the boundaries if incorrect. On the completion of the survey, the work was taken up by the settlement officer."

In introducing the Survey and Settlement into any taluk the first steps taken were the division of the village lands into fields, the prescribing of the limits of such fields by permanent marks and the accurate measurement of the area of each field in itself by chain and other cross-staff. In the division of the lands into fields the point kept in view was that the fields were generally to be of a size to allow being cultivated by a ryot of limited means with a pair of bullocks, the size also varying according to climate, soil, description of cultivation and methods of husbandry. Where however particular holdings were of small areas, contiguous small holdings were clubbed together to bring the area within the limits fixed. The marks used for defining the limits of fields laid out were rectangular mounds of earth at the four corners and at intervals along the side. The protraction on paper of the survey made of the village lands by cross-staff, theodolite and chain constituted the village maps affording the most minute information as to the position, size and limits of fields, roads, water courses or other similar particulars.

The next step towards the settlement of the taluk was the classification of the land with the object of determining the relative values of the fields into which the land was divided. All lands were divided into dry-crop, wet and garden land but in the two latter, in addition to soil classification, the water-supply also was taken into consideration. In the case of gardens which were irrigated by wells, in addition to the classification of soil, the supply, depth and quantity of water in the wells, the area of land under each, the distance of the garden from the village as affecting the cost of manuring and similar particulars were also ascertained. The whole of the lands into which each village had been broken up being thus classified, the taluk became ready for settlement.

The next operation was to fix the extents of the lands to which a uniform standard of assessment was to be applied. Among the most important influences admitted into the consideration of this point were climate, position with respect to markets, communications, the agricultural skill and actual condition of the cultivators generally. The villages of the taluk having been divided into groups according to their respective advantages of climate, markets and other particulars and the relative values of the fields of each village having been determined from the classification of the soils, command of water for irrigation, or other extrinsic circumstances, the maximum rate to be levied on each description of cultivation was then fixed, together with the amount of assessment to be levied as a whole. These rates were fixed with reference to the past management of the taluk for twenty years and by an examination and comparison of annual collections of previous years. The maximum rates having been fixed, the inferior rates were deduced from the relative values laid down in the classification scales and the rates so determined were applied to all descriptions of land according to their classification.

The Survey rules and the guarantee given to the cultivators while intended to secure the proper rights of the State were also meant to be equitable to the ryots possessing similar rights. The benefits of the improvements made to the lands by ryots were left to them exclusively during their terms of the lease for a period of 30 years. An assurance was also given at the same time that at the next revision the assessment would not be revised with reference to any improvements made at the ryot's cost but only with reference to natural or other events, in the benefits of which the Government had a right to share equally with the ryot.

The Survey and Settlement Department was also entrusted with the duty of revising and settling the village service emoluments. Under the new system the Aya payments, that is to say, the fees realised by Patels and Shanbagues in the shape of grain paid to them direct by the ryots were abolished and a scale of money payments was fixed in the surveyed taluks. The Aya payment which the ryot was paying was included in the land

assessment payable to Government. The Survey commenced in 1863 in the north in the Chitaldrug District and worked westwards and southwards. Upto the end of Bowring's regime in 1870 the extent of land measured was a little over $51\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of acres and that classed slightly exceeded $32\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of acres.

The Batayi tenure under which the land exclusively belonged to Government and the cultivator was only an annual tenant sharing the produce with the Government annually was gradually to cease as the settlement came into force in each taluk. In the meanwhile, it was open to the ryots to convert their occupation of Batayi lands into that of the ordinary Kandayam tenure. The ryot was given a hereditary right of occupation as long as the assessment was paid.

In the Malnad or hilly taluks of the Nagar Division situated on the plateau of the Western Ghats the holdings of the ryots were called Vargs. The Varg consisted of all the fields held by one Vargdar or farmer and these were seldom located together but were generally found scattered in different taluks. The Varg system was not of ancient origin but came into existence on the assumption of the management of the country by British officers in 1831, when the Superintendent anxious to procure an accurate record of each man's holding directed a Pahani account to be framed and the holding of each man to be therein shown with its reputed extent and assessment. The rule was that no one was allowed to relinquish or apply for a portion of the Varg unless the whole of it was resigned or taken up. The new Survey system however tended to break down these restrictions and in settled taluks the extent and assessment of each field forming the Varg was defined. Attached to each Varg were tracts of land known as Hankalu and Hadya lands for which no assessment was paid. The Hankalu was set apart for grazing purposes but in later years also came to be utilised for dry cultivation. The Hadya lands were those which were covered with low brushwood and small trees from which firewood and leaves were taken for fuel and manure.

Kans were large tracts of forest for which a cess called Kan cess was paid. The Kans were preserved for the sake of the wild

pepper-vines, bagani palms and certain gum trees that grew in them and also to enable the Vargdars to obtain wood for agricultural and domestic purposes. Later, the privilege of cutting wood in them was withdrawn and the holders of Kans were allowed only to enjoy the three kinds of produce mentioned, to clear the undergrowth and clip trees where necessary for the growth of the pepper-vine and also for manuring purposes.

Coffee Lands.

Grants of land by public auction for coffee cultivation were made out of the Government jungles, chiefly in the Western Ghats forming the Nagar and Ashtagram Malnad. A title-deed was given to the successful bidder which contained a clause that if he grew any other crop, he was liable to assessment on them according to the prevailing rates of the taluk. This restriction however was not intended to apply to plantains, castor-oil plants, or fruit-trees planted for the *bona fide* purposes of affording shelter or shade to the coffee. On the coffee trees coming to bearing, the holder was to pay an excise duty or halat of four annas on every maund which was produced. The holders were also empowered to fell and clear away the jungle on giving six months' previous notice to the authorities concerned to enable them to remove or dispose of all reserved trees.

Cardamom Cultivation.

Lands for the cultivation of cardamom were granted from the jungles on the east side of the Western Ghats where this plant grew spontaneously. Grants of land not exceeding 200 acres nor less than 10 acres were made by public auction to planters on leases running to 20 years. On the expiration of the term of the lease if the lessee was not inclined to renew the lease, he was allowed compensation for the improvements made by him from any surplus realised by the Government on the re-sale of the land. The lessee paid a halat or excise duty of Rs. 2 per maund of 28 lbs. on the cardamoms produced by him. If he grew any other crop, the land on which it was grown was assessed at the prevailing rates. He was however allowed to make use of the minor forest

produce and to fell trees in order to facilitate the growth of the cardamom.

Inam Settlement.

After the fall of Seringapatam, Dewan Purnaiya was given to understand that no alienation of land was to be made without the Resident's consent. In 1868 the Government of India sanctioned a set of rules for the settlement of these Inams or alienations of State revenue to private individuals at whatever period made. These rules based on the theory of the reversionary right of Government were so framed as to meet the several descriptions of Inam lands existing in the province testing their validity firstly, by the competency of the grant irrespective of the duration of the Inam whether 50 or less than 50 years old, secondly, by duration of the Inam for 50 or more than 50 years irrespective of the competence or otherwise of the grantor.

The following were the principles on which the settlement was conducted :—

1. When sannads had been granted by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III or by his predecessors and when they conveyed full powers of alienation and were hereditary, the Inams were to be treated as heritable and alienable property.
2. When sannads emanating as above did not convey full powers of alienation, the Inams were to be enfranchised by payment of a quit-rent equal to $1/8$ of the assessment of the tenure, except in the case of Inams granted for the performance of religious, charitable and village services which were still required to be rendered.
3. Where sannads had been granted by incompetent authorities and when they were less than 50 years old, a compulsory quit-rent equal to one-half of the assessment was to be imposed. But in doubtful cases and where there was a probability that the Inam had been enjoyed for fully 50 years, a quit-rent was to be imposed equal to one-fourth of the assessment.

The principal Inam tenures prevailing in Mysore at the time their settlement was undertaken were :—

1. Sarvamanya or villages or lands held free of all demands including Sayer and Mohatarfa.
2. Ardhamanya or lands assessed generally at half the usual rates.
3. Jodi villages or lands granted and held on a light assessment, the proportion of which to the full rates varied.
4. Jodi Agrahars which were ordinarily whole villages held by Brahmins only on a favourable tenure.
5. Bhatamanya or Brahmadaaya Inams were grants and endowments of lands held by Brahmins for their support, being personal grants as distinguished from those held on conditions of service.
6. Devadaya and Dharmadaya were grants made for the support of religious and charitable institutions and persons rendering services therein.
7. Kodagi Inams were lands granted free of tax or on a light assessment in consideration of services rendered in the construction or restoration of tanks or on condition of their being maintained in good repair.
8. Kerebandi Inams were those granted for the annual petty repairs of tanks.

Prior to the introduction of the Survey and Settlement, it was the custom dating from a very early period to maintain a tank establishment called Kerebandies who in return for certain lands held rent-free were required to maintain buffaloes for bringing earth to fill up hollows and repair washed off portions. After the introduction of the Inam settlement, this old institution was gradually extinguished by the members being released from service and being allowed to retain their Inam lands on the payment of a small quit-rent. There were also bodies of men known as Kamatis who in return for

certain privileges were liable to be called on for effecting repairs within their respective taluks. A corps called Khalihat also existed for general service in all parts of the State on road or irrigation works as might be required. These were originally palanquin bearers maintained by the State on the main roads for the benefit of travellers. With the increase of travellers and the introduction of other means of locomotion, the specific employment of this corps ceased and the men were as a body turned over to the Maramat in 1841 and afterwards to the new Department of Public Works. In 1860 the Kamatis and Khalihats were combined into a single corps of 10 companies, 100 strong each. From 1862 the system of executing work by contract was more largely resorted to than before.