

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

UNDER the patronage of the erstwhile Mysore rulers many handicrafts thrived. Craftsmen of various skills were at their peak performance, due to the patronage from the palace. Magnificent buildings and temples built by the rulers beautified Mysore and put the place on the tourist map of the country.

The district was known for a variety of products such as gold and silver jewellery, mats (sent to Sathyamangalam in Tamilnadu), leather shoes, *agarbathi*, rosewood and inlaid handicrafts, brass ware, *kambli*s etc. Many of them are being made even now. Deterioration in the conditions of these crafts (eg., pottery, leather goods, *kambli* weaving, brass and copperware) started with the import of foreign and machine-made goods and growth of modern industries. If the epidemics, plague and influenza killed many skilled craftsman, the famine relief works like laying the railways attracted many others. The establishment of the Chamarajendra Technical Institute, followed by a chain of other training centres in the post-independence period was a right step in the direction of reviving the dying crafts. Bleak future in their old pursuits had forced many workers either to join factories or to start other business. In the wake of modern life many new occupations have also sprung up. Another striking feature in the district is that in the employment pattern of many callings like *agarbathi*, beedi rolling, dining leave stitching, and vegetable and flower selling, women outnumbered men and their contribution to the economic prosperity was not small. The number of persons engaged in old and new occupations ran into thousands. It is attempted here to present an account of some of these occupations.

Sculpture

The sculptors of Mysore are well known for their excellent work on stone. Encouragement from the former rulers had enabled the master

craftsmen to develop their traditional artistic skill and the temple of Gayathri in Mysore Palace and of the Kamakameshwari and Ganapathi with 101 images are some of the fine specimens of recent sculptural works on stone at Mysore. Shilpi Siddalingswami was a master craftsman of his time and trained some persons in the art at Mysore and some of them are now successfully running their establishments. The Vishwakarmas are the hereditary workers and their artefacts have won State and National awards. They carve images of Gods and Goddesses, panels, pillars, statues in marble, black and soap stone. Besides some of them carve wooden door frames in relief (labour charge for teakwood door frame of good workmanship is Rs. 10,000) and make house building materials as and when customers place orders. The Speaker's wooden chair in the Bangalore Legislative Assembly Hall was made under the guidance of S. Narasimhacharya, a master craftsman. Suitable stones are obtained from the quarries located in H. D. Kote taluk. To complete a 4½ feet high image, at least four to six months time is required, and for carving a 4-feet-high image of good workmanship, about Rs. 20,000 are charged. This deal includes the cost of the stone also. The labour charge however varies according to the size and workmanship involved. The carvers have customers in the district and outside. Their work is normal throughout the year.

Soap stone articles

During the year 1955, the soap stone workers of H. D. Kote taluk were organised under the Soap Stone Industrial Workers Co-operative Society, at Lura village in the same taluk. They were noted for carving soap stone material such as soap stone bricks for soda recovery plants, decorated articles, pillar stones and furnaces, which were supplied to many parts of the State. The society was closed after some time and these skilled carvers utterly failed to exploit the prevailing demand generated for their finished products. Individual workers even today are making soap stone pillars, water storing tanks, pans, bowls and pots of various sizes on a limited scale for local and outside customers. A small quantity is being sent to Kerala from Guggowdanapura (Mysore) as per order. Most of these workers are found in H.D. Kote (Chikkanandi, Kanchanalli, Hommaragalli and Pura) and Mysore taluks (Guggowdanapura, Maddur, Arasinakere and Harohalli). Soap stone is mined from the quarries located in Government and private lands at Chikkanandi, Kanchanahalli, Hommaragalli, Harohalli and Doora village areas. The soap stone workers may earn about Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per day when there is sufficient work. Their side occupations are blacksmithy and carpentry.

Woollen carpets

Woollen carpets in beautiful colours and designs are woven by the Tibetans in the refugee rehabilitation centres at Byalakuppe (Periyapatna taluk), Gurupura (Hunsur tq) and Bylur (Kollegal tq). The carpet making units are attached to the respective co-operative societies functioning in

the refugee camps, and weaving and its allied processes are mostly attended by Tibetan women. They are not hereditary workers but trained under the master craftsmen and were paid stipend during the training. Basic raw-material is the raw-wool which is obtained from New Zealand (Marino wool), Ladakh and Amritsar. Twisted woollen yarn is dyed with the vegetable oils at the Gurupur rehabilitation centre. The weavers are paid on piece rate and for weaving one square ft of carpet they get Rs. 13 to Rs. 14. On an average, a worker can weave one square ft per day. After weaving is over, the carpet is cleaned and subjected to scissoring and trimming. Depending on the quality, the rate per square metre varies from Rs. 700 to Rs. 800. These production centres receive overseas orders (from USA, UK and other European countries) along with specimen photo, technical details etc, through the Tibetan Handloom Export Office, New Delhi. The designer draws the design on the graph and forwards it to the weavers. Marketing of carpets is channelled through the show rooms based at Bangalore and New Delhi. They are exported to U.S.A., U.K. and European countries.

Rosewood and Inlay work

Inlay work, a unique craft of Mysore City is said to have been formerly practised by the Muslims. The fine doors inlaid with ivory at the mausoleum at Shrirangapattana and similar doors of the Amba Vilas of Mysore Palace are attributed to their workmanship. Planks supporting palm-leaf manuscripts also had inlay work, as seen from the planks in the Mysore Palace. Later, the Vishwakarmas also took up this craft. The establishment of Chamarajendra Technical Institute in 1892 and the inclusion of wood carving as a subject of study in its curriculum was a major step towards the revival of the craft. In 1914, a casket and a photo frame inlaid with ivory was sent for display at the British Empire Exhibition and it bagged a gold medal. The economic position of the wood carvers improved after the Elephant Cigarette Company placed major orders. Wall panels depicting wild and tamed elephants and cases of rosewood with inlay were produced. These art pieces attracted the foreign tourists who placed huge orders in about 1930. During this period light and shade technique was introduced in this craft which became popular and soon other artisans emulated it. Magadiah a teacher at the C.T. Institute was a talented craftsman who trained many persons. The sales of inlay articles rose significantly after 1960 and now there are about 1,000 workers attending to its background cutting and finishing work. The bulk of these craftsmen are Muslims and the Vishwakarmas. Many among them are making solid wooden figures such as cranes, elephants and 'Laughing Buddha' a copy of a work from the Far East, once presented to the Maharaja. Generally, the raw-materials in this craft are rosewood, yellow wood, ebony, railway *pathang*, *pathangadamara* and other varieties of wood. The white plastic pieces and stag horn are used in the place of ivory for inlay. Before

using, stag horn is treated with hydrogen peroxide to make it look like ivory. Bee-wax is one of the main elements used for polishing. The handicrafts dealers in Mysore City have employed skilled wood carvers and carpenters in their establishments, for cutting figures and assembly work. Some other small units having a capital of about Rs. 1,000 undertake assembly work alone. A wide range of inlay wall decoration panels portraying mythological scenes, natural scenes, village life, animals, birds, solid wood figures etc. are also manufactured. Excellent furnitures, both inlay and relief (partition screens, chairs, dressing tables, dining set, centre teapots and similar pieces, are also being produced. They are not only sold through the local emporia but also through the dealers of Bombay, Bangalore, Madras, Calcutta and other places. There will be good sales between August and May annually.

At Belwattha village in the Mysore City Corporation limits, the Karnataka State Handicrafts Development Corporation has constructed living-cum-worksheds for the benefit of 100 wood carvers on lease-cum-sale basis. The Corporation is providing them marketing facilities. Sandalwood is being supplied to the carvers at concessional rate and the finished products are taken back for marketing through the Kaveri Emporium.

Manufacture of Musical Instruments

Manufacture of Musical instruments and their mending was a flourishing vocation in the past at Mysore City. With the decline of patronage to classical music and competition from machine-made items, the number of such manufacturing units has come down to nine at present. In six of the nine units, harmoniums are manufactured, in four varieties like single, double and leg operated by the skilled workers and a number of parts like reeds, brass-wire, seasoned teakwood, plastic sheets, reed boards and other components are necessary for these units. Some of them are indigenously manufactured by experienced workmen and other are secured from Bombay and Calcutta. The price of four types of harmoniums ranges from Rs. 500 to Rs. 4000. Working capital invested in these units exceeds Rs. 50,000. There will be good demand for these musical instruments after the harvest season.

Stringed musical instruments are made on order in three units by the skilled workers at Mysore. The instruments are *veena*, *tamboora*, violin, *sitar*, guitar and mandolin. Seasoned wood (of *halasu* and dealwood) stag horn, reeds, strings, gun metal, plastic, winding copper, stainless steel etc are required for the craft. Out of these items strings are obtained from Bombay and Delhi. Working tools include flat cutting file, half round cutting file, small saw etc. The period required for assembling a quality *veena* is about 35 days, *tamboora* 25 days and other instruments, a fortnight's time. The price of an ordinary *veena* is Rs. 1,000 and that of an artistic and inlaid one Rs. 5,000. An amount of more than Rs. 50,000 has to be invested in this calling. Good season for the instrument

makers will be March and April during which music examinations are held. Good quality instruments produced here are attracting customers from Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore, Mangalore and other places. Production of musical instruments is facing severe competition from imported goods from Japan and other countries.

Agarbathi Manufacture

With more than 100 big and small *agarbathi* or joss stick establishments, Mysore City has become an important centre in Karnataka for *agarbathi* making. It is a legacy of the Muslim culture. It is believed that this occupation made its humble beginning in about 1885 and was in receipt of encouragement from the former rulers of Mysore. In the midthirties, the incense sticks were weighed in bundles and sold without packing in the market. Later, some varieties of *agarbathis* under different brands such as Premaleela, Lalitha etc. were introduced with attractive packings. Presently about 20,000 people in the district are directly or indirectly connected with *agarbathi* making. The bulk of the *agarbathi* makers are women and they may earn from Rs. 10 to 15 per day as wages on piece rate. This occupation mainly depends on forest based products like bamboo split sticks, sandal spent wood dust, white chips, *gigatu* or gum, *halmaddi*, pure sandalwood, sandal oil and charcoal. *Agarbathi* making involves several stages and in the first instance, the pulverised raw-materials are mixed with the aromatic chemicals, resin and essential oils. Later the mixture is kneaded into a soft paste and coloured. The paste substance is then applied to sticks and rolled with hands on to split sticks on a smooth surface. The wet sticks are allowed to dry in the shade and finally weighed or counted and packed. Superior quality incense sticks are additionally perfumed whereas cheaper varieties are made by using charcoal and inferior gum. Considerable numbers are engaged in packing also. The key factor for the successful career of the *agarbathi* makers lies in their secret formulae. The fame and fragrance of Mysore *agarbathis* has crossed the boundaries of our nation and they enjoy a wide overseas market.

Cartmaking

Hunsur town in the past was known by the name Gadipalya where bullock carts of good quality were manufactured in large number. Till a decade ago about 50 persons were engaged in the calling and as many as 2,000 carts were assembled annually when compared to 300 to 400 carts rolled out from the eight units at present. The main reason for the steep fall in demand is the abnormal rise in the prices of iron, teak and other woods. Carts of good workmanship are being made in four qualities, out of seasoned wood purchased from the forest office at Hunsur. The price of four qualities is Rs. 5,500, Rs. 4,800, Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 3,500. A cart is completed in four days time. Advance paid by the customers ranges from Rs. 50 to Rs. 2,000 and they come from Kodagu, H.D. Kote,

K.R.Nagar and other areas. The capital invested in cart making exceeds Rs. 50,000 and most of it will go for buying seasoned wood. Between October and May, this occupation will be in full swing.

Wood meter boards

Wood meter boards (for electricity meters etc) are being made at Hunsur for the last thirty years, by skilled carpenters. A majority of them are Muslims. Presently wood meter boards and battens of various sizes are made in about 100 units. There is heavy demand for these materials from various places which is linked to the speedy electrification programmes in our State. Good wages and constant employment has attracted large number of carpenters to this vocation. Teak wood is the prime raw-material and it is bought locally from the saw mills at the rate of Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 per cart load. Many of the units have a capital investment ranging from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 25,000. The carpenters working on piece rate are paid upto Rs. 40 per day and some of them who have taken advance will get one or two rupees less than the normal rate.

Toy making

In 1926, toy making was started at Mysore by the renowned artist, the late M. Veerappa who was working in Chamarajendra Technical Institute. He produced some toys depicting Indian characters for sending them abroad as gifts to the dignitaries. As a prelude to toy making, he set up a small factory and started toy making for local market and was supplying some toys to the Chamarajendra Technical Institute also. Now, Mysore City has two toy making units and they are facing stiff competition from the cheap plastic and imported toys. They use raw-materials such as yellow teak, plywood, hard board, non-toxic paints, colours, and a small quantity of hardware. Specially trained workers are engaged on contract basis and they operate fret machine, circular saw, wood turning lathe, polishing machine for finishing and colouring. Their finished articles consists of decorative complimentary novelties and playful toys (eg: Perforated envelope, pen stand, pen and pin tray, collapsible fruit bowls, clock stands, assembly trucks and related items). Educational toys are made according to the orders only. There will be more orders for the complimentary articles during November and December. Articles produced here are supplied to private schools, the Kaveri Arts and Crafts Emporium and to the dealers from Bombay, Goa, Madras, Indore, Nagpur etc.

Kambli Weaving

In the past, Hunsur was the centre for making country woollen blankets or *kambli*s. The demand for these products declined to some extent after the entry of mill made blankets. But the Kurubas are continuing this age-old occupation, particularly in Hunsur (Kalkunake, Mallinathapura), Nanjangud (Hampapura—Hirehemmaragala), Gundlupet and in some other

taluks of the district. It is a major calling for many Kurubas, and some others depending on agriculture have taken it as a side occupation. *Kambli*s are made in grey and black colours and in two varieties. The first variety is called Tholagambli or Ujjugambli and the second one Ganji Kambli. Needed raw-wool is purchased from the sheep rearers at the rate of Rs. 2.50 and Rs. 4.00 per kg. respectively for grey and black colour wool. These rates, however, vary from place to place depending on the availability. The full time Kambli workers can weave about 8-10 *kambli*s per month and part-time workers 4 or 5. The price of fine *kambli* (double size) is Rs. 140 and coarse Rs. 68, whereas the single size costs Rs. 60 and coarse variety Rs. 45. Many customers directly place orders by paying Rs. 5 or Rs. 10 as advance. The weavers who are members of the Woollen Weavers Co-operative Society, sell their products through it. Winter is the busy season for the weavers.

Pottery

The Kumbars are the hereditary pottery workers and they have settled in many places of the district. They make country tiles, earthen vessels and also images of Gods and Goddesses and the former is widely used for roofing purpose. Suitable clay is obtained by them from tanks and open fields. Country tiles are made in the traditional method and the raw tiles are placed into the oven or *avuge* for baking. Then the finished products are taken by them on head loads or carts for marketing. The price per 1,000 tiles is about Rs. 200. The income of a potter may range from Rs. 300 to Rs.400 per month. But rainy days are their off-season. Two localities in Mysore City, the Kumbharakeri and Veeranageri are inhabited by a sizeable number of potters, and most of them are making Gowri-Ganesha images in their houses every year. They commence preliminary work in January itself and required clay is collected at the base of the Chamundi hills. As the Ganesha festival draws near, their localities will be humming with activity and it is a common sight to see women and children making images or painting them. During this period, push carts loaded with these images are taken around different parts of the city by some potters for sales.

Mat weaving

Mat weaving which was done on a smaller scale three decades back has grown manifold over the years and enabled the workers depending on it to improve their economic position. The worth mentioning among the mat making centres are Natanahalli, Shyabalu (K.R. Nagar) and Kadakola (Mysore). The mats are being woven in primitive type looms by both men and women. Important raw-material used for it is a type of grass called *cheni kaddi* or *hullu* in local parlance. It grows on the bunds of the paddy fields and on the banks of the rivers and tanks. Often some quantity of *cheni* grass will be brought from Erode in Tamilnadu. Twisted thread of *bhutale* hemp is widely used for weaving and stitching both ends

of the mats. The wet grass is properly dried before making single or double size mats. Per day, a worker can weave two single or one double size mats and may earn Rs. 10 to Rs. 15. The cost of single mat is Rs.10 to Rs. 12 and the double is Rs. 18 to Rs. 20. Capital invested in it varies from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000. Mats are directly sold to the customers and the middlemen who purchase them will in turn send them to Kodagu, Hassan and Dakshina Kannada districts.

Wild date tree leaves are extensively used for making rough variety mats in many parts of the district, particularly in (Santhe) Saragur town in H.D. Kote taluk. A good number of families have taken up this as a side occupation to supplement their income. Women play a leading role and every week, they can weave two or three mats. The leaves are collected from round about places and dried suitably before use. Long strips of about three inches width are woven by hands and these strips are then inter-woven to make mats of needed size (eg. 3'×5' or 5'×4'). These products are directly sold to the customers or through the agents by paying them Re. 0.50 or Re. 1 as commission. The mats of 5'×4' and 3½×4½ are sold at Rs. 10 to Rs. 12, Rs. 6 to 7 respectively per piece. On an average the mat workers may earn about Rs. 80 to 100 per month.

Rope making

In the taluks of Gundlupet, Nanjangud and Chamarajanagar, coir and *bhutale* hemp ropes are made by the Uppars, Naiks and others. Many of them have taken it as a side occupation. The coir rope workers in Chamarajanagar taluk, are purchasing required quantity of raw-coir from the coir factories at the rate of Rs. 75 per bundle of 35 kgs. Initially, raw-coir is taken out and rolled by hands on stones to make *bathis*. The *bathis* are then twisted into thread and after further twisting, the final finish is given with the help of rope machines. In few cases workers are engaged on daily wages of Rs. 4 or 5 with food. The cost of rope machine is about Rs. 400. Inferior variety ropes are made from the naturally grown *bhutale* hemp and its pieces are first soaked in water for some days. Later, the drenched hemp is taken out and thrashed with a big stick and allowed to dry in the sun for some time. Such hemp is twisted by hands to make ropes of required size. Both coir and *bhutale* ropes are used for domestic and agricultural purposes. An amount upto Rs. 2,000 has to be invested in this vocation. The monthly income of the rope workers is between Rs. 200 to Rs. 400. As the agricultural operations gain momentum annually, the demand for ropes will also increase. Some middlemen are operating in this occupation and they visit villages and make spot purchases to sell them for a profit later. The rope makers transport their wares on head loads or by buses to different places where it is sold for cash or kind. They are also sent to Hassan, Mandya and Kodagu districts for marketing.

Rattan Craft

The rattan craft is one of the old occupations in the district and Mysore City has 10 registered cane units. The forest department is supplying these units with required cane which is the main material. The skilled cane workers are preparing easy chairs, common chairs, baskets of different varieties and other items. Such products are being sold through the Handicrafts Co-operative Society and directly to the needy customers. Training in cane craft is being provided at the C.T.I. in Mysore.

Basketry

The traditional craft of basket making is undertaken by the Medars Koramas, certain tribals and others in Mysore district. Many of the basket workers have their habitats in towns like Mysore, K.R. Nagar, Chamarajanagar, Gundlupet, Nanjangud, Kollegal and other places where they could sell their bamboo products quickly. Bamboos are purchased from the Forest department on permit basis at the rate of 50 bamboos per worker per month. In cases of exigency, they get it from other places. Articles such as winnowing fans, ladders, cradles, baskets for packing flowers and vegetables, *chandrike* or moutage, big trays or *thattes*, grain bins and other items are manufactured by them. Of these materials, *chandrikes* and big trays or *thattes* are used for sericulture. Extensive sericulture in some taluks is a boon to these workers. *Chandrikes* and bamboo plates are made on orders and demand for them steeply rises after Dasara. In tribal areas middlemen are purchasing bamboo products from tribals. In towns, the income derived by a couple in this vocation is about Rs. 20 per day. This occupation thrives throughout the year.

Parched rice kilns

A good number of *puri bhattis* (parched rice kilns) have been established in the paddy growing taluks of K.R. Nagar, Mysore, T. Narasipur and Nanjangud. Large number of male workers are engaged in this calling on piece rate or daily wages. At Saligrama of K.R. Nagar taluk alone there are 25 *puri bhattis* and they are located in *pucca* and *semi-pucca* houses. Parched rice is made in several stages and at the outset suitable cleaned paddy is boiled in the water. Next day this paddy is parched in the pans and kept in the gunny bags for two hours and spread on the floor or on mats. The paddy is then dehusked in the mill and lightly salted water is added. It is again spread on the ground or mats. Finally, the rice is fried in the pans to get *puri* or *mandakki*. Saligrama produces about 500 bags of *puri* every day, by employing about 300 workers in this vocation. A sum of Rs. 15,000 to 25,000 on an average has been invested in each of these units. There is a very good market for *mandakki* in Hassan district and in some parts of Mysore district. During the time of *jatras* at Bettadapura, Mudukutore, Chunchanakatte, Hosur, etc. the *puri* makers open retail shops.

Bidi rolling

For the past 15 years, there has been significant expansion in the bidi rolling activities in Mysore district. In several places of Kollegal, Chamarajanagar, Mysore, T. Narasipur and Nanjangud taluks, a large number of people particularly women are engaged in bidi rolling. Some of them make bidis in the factory premises, and others working in their houses in villages and urban places are getting tobacco and wrapping leaves from the agent or contractor of the concerned companies. The finished bidis are returned to the agent. A full-time worker is able to roll upto 1,500 bidis per day, whereas many housewives roll about 500 to 1,000 bidis per day. In many houses, 2 to 3 persons are working and they can earn Rs. 25 to Rs. 35 every day. These workers are paid wages on piece rate basis twice in a week. In addition to it, the workers are getting monetary benefits like bonus, provident fund, advance and free medical aid. People in urban areas are also engaged in packing the bidis, and even children do it, and they can also earn Rs. 8 to 10 per day.

Selling of antique souvenirs

Selling of old coins and antique items is a recent development in Mysore City. Out of seven coin sellers, six belong to a class of snake charmers, who are nomadic. Their favourite selling places at Mysore are in the vicinity of palace, Chamarajendra Technical Institute, Jagannohana Palace etc. which are thronged by tourists daily. Their collection consists of medallions, old coins (mostly of the days of Mysore rulers and the British), old silver chains, glass beads, old brass articles and similar items. Usually coins and other things are collected in villages and towns at the time of their visit for holding snake charming performances. Coins of 19th century are sold at two or three rupees and for some old coins, they quote price upto Rs. 300 per piece. They may earn upto Rs. 40 per day. On occasions they also respond to the distress calls from the public for snake catching.

Vibhuti Ghattis or Cubes

Some Lingayats at Nanjangud, Mysore, Kollegal etc. are engaged in preparing *Vibhuti ghattis* or sacred ash cubes for meeting the religious needs of the Hindu population both in the district and outside. The only basic material used for it is the powder like white earth (unlike the still prevailing orthodox custom of using cow dung ash by their counter-parts in some other parts of the State). Some traders at Mysore who get white earth from Betamcherla of Andhra Pradesh are selling it at the rate of Rs. 30 per bag of 33 kgs. The *ghattis* are prepared by a simple process. White earth is mixed with water and formed into required shapes and sizes by hands. After drying in the sun for a day or two, they are packed and sent to Thalavadi (Tamilnadu), the Mahadeshvara Hill, Dharmasthala Malavalli, Somwarpet and to some pilgrim centres besides local sales.

Investment in this occupation varies from Rs. 500 to 1,000 and the monthly profit margin in some cases is upto Rs. 1,000. The retailers sell in their stalls together with miscellaneous items such as stone images of Shiva and Nandi, flowers, beads, *ashtavarna* articles etc. at pilgrimage centres. The three sizes of *ghattis*, big, medium and small are sold at Rs. 2 to 3, Rs. 1 to 1.50, and Rs. 0.50 respectively. During *jatras*, Dasara and Deepavali, the business for these products is brisk.

Stitching Dining Leaves and Cups

Stitching dining leaves or *Ootada ele* and leaf cups (*donne*) is another job for a number of women in places like Chamarajanagar, Kollegal, Hunsur etc. These women belong to poorer sections of the society and for many of them it is the main source of income for livelihood. After minding household works, they stitch them in different sizes and for different occasions. *Muttugada ele* (leaves of the tree, *Butea monosperma* (Lam Taub), collected by villagers and brought to bazars on head loads for sales. A bagful of leaves called one *pindi* locally, is being sold at Rs. 7 or 8 per bag and this rate will go upto Rs. 25 some times. With a meagre capital of Rs. 100 or Rs. 200, this calling can be run. On an average these dining leaf stitchers are getting an income of Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 per month. The rate of 1,000 big size leaves varies from Rs. 70 to Rs. 150 according to the demand. Small ones are sold at Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 per 1,000. Sales will be brisk during the marriage and festival seasons. Similarly cups are prepared by using plantain leaves.

Operating Ferries

Several ferry services are operating along the course of the river Cauvery and the Kabini in Mysore District. This age-old calling is still crucial for the economic life of the people residing on either side of the river banks, to transport essential goods or to cross the river. The fare charged per member is Re. 0.25 to 0.50 and for one bag of luggage Rs. 0.50 to 1.00. As per the customary practice, some of the boatmen are being paid in kind for the service rendered. Every day, they earn about Rs. 4 or 5 in cash and earn more during the seasons of marriages and fairs. To acquire a new boat, they may have to spend Rs. 4,000. Some use *harigolu* or basket boats. The places where services available are Hejjige (Nanjangud tq), Magudilu (H. D. Kote), Hemmige and Tadi-Malangi (T. Narasipur), Dasanapura (Kollegal) and others. The ferrymen will operate atleast one service daily even at the time of floods.

Operating Tongas

Tonga plying being an old vocation, has not only maintained its urban character but also carved out a permanent place in the urban conveyance system in Mysore district. Earlier, the Mysore Municipality was maintaining *tongas* and letting them out to the pliers on hire. Despite stiff competition from the autorikshaws, tongas are still popular with the

public in Kollegal, Nanjangud, Chamarajanagar and Mysore City. The cost of an horse and a cart may vary from Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 13,500 (an horse may cost Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 7,500 and a cart with decorative fittings Rs. 6,000). The earnings of the *tonga* plier may be upto Rs. 40 to Rs. 60 per day in the normal period and at the time of Dasara and marriage season it may exceed Rs. 100. They have to spend Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 daily for maintaining horses. There are some *tonga* owners who lend their carts and horses on daily hire charge of Rs. 10 and in some cases get 25 per cent of the daily earnings of the plier. In 1987, the number of *tongas* at various places, according to rough estimate is as follows: Mysore 600, Kollegal 40, Chamarajanagar 17, Nanjangud 53 and K. R. Nagar 1.

Breaking Jelly

Manufacture of jelly by breaking granite is a profession engaging hundreds of persons, mostly women. Jelly is used mostly in R. C. C. construction. A cart load of small boulders (of the size of an average of 10 to 12 cubic cm) is purchased by paying Rs. 8 to 10 per cart load. A worker breaks these boulders by using an iron hammer costing about Rs. 30 and in the course of three days, working on an average of 7 to 9 hours a day, crushes 20 tins (the emptied kerosene tin) of jelly. The average price per tin of jelly is Rs. two, and thus, the worker earns an average of Rs. 10 to 11 per day. Nearly 100 women (mostly SCs) are engaged in this calling at Bastipura. Dhanagere, Kunigalli, Satyagala Dadda and Hondarabalu are some of the centres of this activity. In the last named places, people of the Voddar community are engaged in this work.

Lime manufacture

Many persons are engaged in the manufacture of lime by burning lime stone in kilns (locally called *goodu*) which are found in the outskirts of the villages. Lime is used for consuming while chewing betel, white washing and for building purposes. Though majority of the persons engaged in the profession are of the Uppaligashetty community (formerly makers of rock salt), other persons too like the Parivara community (as at Hondarabalu or Hosur) have also taken to this calling. The workers themselves go to hilly or forest tracts to dig ore (lime stone) and generally Rs. 5 to 8 will have to be paid for hiring a cart to transport it. A small kiln holds one cart load and big two loads, the former burning one *khanduga* of lime and the latter two. One person can manage one small kiln, and has to pay Rs. 10 to 15 for fuel which includes charcoal, wood and dung cakes. One *khanduga* of lime is sold for Rs. 30 to 45, depending upon the market, and a kiln runner can earn a minimum of Rs. 10 to 12 per day and women also run such kilns. A country kiln is prepared by using stone and earth. Several hundred people are engaged in this ploy,

and there are 50 kilns at Kurubaradoddi, 100 at Madhuvanahalli, 20 at Hendarabalu, 10 at Mulluru, and some at Hosur, Hanur, Mahabaleshwara etc. Kilns cannot work in rainy season.

Other common occupations

Blacksmithy.—Blacksmiths are the hereditary workers (Vishwakarmas) and they are scattered all over the district. Their services are very essential to the agriculturists and implements like ploughs, sickles, cart wheels etc. are made and repaired by them. Their family members or labourers are assisting them. Agricultural season is the busy time for them. As per 1961 census, there were 1,248 blacksmiths and forgemen in this calling. This category of blacksmithy had 1,784 workers in it, in 1971. Certain sections of the Vishwakarma community also work as goldsmiths.

Florists.—Garlands and flower strings are prepared both by the traditional (Hoogars) and non-traditional workers. In towns and Mysore city, it is taken up as full time job and in other places, part-time occupation. Mostly women are occupied in this calling in their houses. In Mysore, Devaraja Market is the chief centre of this profession, and male workers sell flowers and garlands in their stalls.

Tinsmithy.—Tinsmithy is an urban oriented calling and in which are placed mostly Muslims. They are assembling and selling oil lamps, tin boxes etc. and undertake repair work of torches, stoves, umbrellas and similar items. Investment of a tinsmith is about Rs. 500 and he may earn about Rs. 10 to 20 per day.

Leather craft.—Formerly, the leather footwear made at Hunsur was very famous. Presently this old occupations, not only consists of traditional workers but also others. The introduction of machine made plastic and rubber footwear had badly affected this old craft.

Carpentry.—There is a good scope for carpenters, particularly in Mysore City and Hunsur. They are making furniture, carts, agricultural implements and house-building materials. Many of the carpenters may earn upto Rs. 30 per day. There were 3,527 carpenters, joiners and pattern makers in the district in 1961 census. According to 1971 census, the number of carpenters, cabinet makers and related workers were 5,461.

Bicycle shops.—Bicycle shops are found in all parts of the district. The self-employed workers engage labourers or trainees to run their establishments. They hire bicycles to the known persons and undertake repair work also. Some of them hire patromax lights and repair patromax lights and kerosene stoves.

Hair Cutting saloons.—Hair cutting saloons are managed by the traditional workers in urban areas. The village barbers are still continuing the practice of visiting the customer's houses. According to 1961 census,

there were 1,762 barbers and related workers. As reported in 1971 census, the category of hair dressers, barbers and related workers in the district was 1955. Beauty parlours have made their appearance recently at Mysore city and now there are four parlours.

Tailoring.—Tailoring is being pursued by a large number of people, and they include women also. Tailoring shops are scattered over the district. Currently, it is a flourishing occupation. Many manufacture ready made dress also. In the occupation of tailoring, dress making and related work, there were 4,186 persons in 1961. In 1971 census, there were 5,989 tailors, dress-makers and related workers in the district.

Laundries.—In tune with the modern trend, laundries and dry cleaning shops have come up in large numbers in the district, mostly run by hereditary workers called the Agasas. This vocation has attracted large number of others also to its fold. There were 4,040 launderers, dry cleaners and pressers as in 1961 census, of whom 1,562 were women. The district had 3,475 launderers, dry cleaners and pressers as in 1971 census.

Category-wise artisans in Mysore district as on 31st March 1985

Category	Mysore	T.N. pura	Kollegal	Nanjan- gud	C. Nagar	Gundlu- pet	Yelan- dur	Hunsur	K.R. Nagar	Periya patna	H.D. Kote	Total
1. Blacksmiths	148	423	145	45	244	144	50	52	70	80	122	1,523
2. Carpentry	442	611	264	68	300	200	62	100	75	170	296	2,588
3. Potters	141	600	229	66	290	80	78	80	64	64	160	1,852
4. Leather artisans	500	200	223	31	67	235	79	20	30	30	26	1,441
5. Stone carvers and cutters	56	19	21	36	92	155	55	53	20	28	22	557
6. Bamboo artisans	150	72	1,397	88	335	138	170	75	52	140	148	2,765
7. Coir rope makers	5	21	20	141	684	270	130	10	125	62	29	1,427
8. Mat weavers	454	35	224	223	83	160	29	25	12	18	100	1,476
9. Wool weavers	125	25	..	78	30	110	..	195	..	..	..	575
10. Silk weavers	31	..	1,029	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,060
11. Cotton handloom weavers	91	..	40	80	33	41	..	..	..	..	276	561
12. Carpet handloom weavers	10	..	200	..	..	..	..	30	..	80	..	320
13. Silk handloom	..	1	..	..	..	..	28	5	..	..	..	34
14. Rosewood inlay artisans	850	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	852
15. Sandalwood artisans	250	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	250
16. Others	1,250	2,000	2,390	1,000	1,500	1,200	1,000	320	192	214	390	11,456

Source : District Industries Centre, Mysore.