

CHAPTER XI.

RENTS, PRICES AND WAGES.

I. RENTS.

Land
Tenures.

THE sum payable by the occupant of unalienated land to Government is revenue rather than rent and is determined mainly by the class of soil and the kind of cultivation carried on. The principles of assessment will be found described in the section on Revenue Survey and Settlement (Vol. III, Part II, Chapter II).

The principal measure intended to improve the position of the occupants and to relieve them from indebtedness is the collection of revenue in instalments at such intervals as would enable them to sell their crop first.

The general system of land tenure is *ruiyatwāri* under which small separate holdings are held direct from Government. The total number of holdings according to the Season and Crop Report for 1923-24 is 1,027,596 covering an extent of 7,803,612 acres. Of this total, 109,755 holdings covering an extent of 101,365 acres are each less than one acre, and 473,941 covering an extent of 1,241,014 acres are each between one and five acres. There is also a certain number of Inam tenures which are wholly or partially revenue free. Land tenures in the State are described in the sections on Survey and Settlement and Inam Settlement in Vol. III, Part II, Chapter II.

The following are the tenures prevalent in the Inam villages:—

(i) *Vāram*.—Under this tenure, an equal division of produce is made between the land-lord and the tenant. The land-lord pays the assessment;

(ii) *Mukkuppe*.—Under this tenure, two-thirds of the produce go to the cultivator and one-third to the land-lord who pays the assessment ;

(iii) *Arakandāya*.—The land-lord gets one-fourth of the produce and pays half the Government assessment and the tenant gets three-fourths of the produce and pays the other half of the assessment ;

(iv) *Volakandāya*.—The tenant pays a fixed money rent to the land-lord for a specified period ;

(v) *Guttige*.—The rent is paid in kind.

An hereditary right of occupation is attached to all *kandāyam* lands. As long as the registered occupant pays Government dues, he has no fear of displacement, and virtually possesses an absolute tenant right as distinct from that of proprietorship. When the Government finds it necessary to assume the land occupied by him for public purposes, he is always paid compensation, fixed by mutual consent or under the Land Acquisition Regulation. Sections 63, 64 and 65 of the Land Revenue Code lay down the conditions and limitations under which an occupant may use his land for purposes other than agriculture. The Land Revenue Code (Regulation No. IV of 1888 as amended by subsequent Regulations) and the rules framed thereunder deal *in extenso* with the various conditions to be fulfilled for holding the land and the rights and privileges attached thereto.

Relations between Government and registered occupants in unalienated villages.

Chapter VII of the Land Revenue Code deals with the rights and obligations of inamdars and their tenants. Such tenants as pay a rent assessed at the authorised rates of Government land revenue are declared to have the rights of occupants of Government land. Tenants are protected from the capricious enhancement of rent by inamdars and the grounds upon which and the mode in which rent is enhanceable are definitely laid down. Provision is made for inamdars granting written leases

Relations between the holders of alienated villages and their tenants.

and obtaining counterparts of them from their tenants. Where written leases have been executed, the inamdars are enabled to recover their rent through the revenue authorities as if it were a demand for Government land revenue.

The Land Revenue Code authorises Government to issue a commission to any holder of alienated lands conferring upon him special powers with regard to the recovery of land revenue.

A commission
of inquiry.

Questions regarding the relationship of inamdars and their tenants and the administration of Inam villages generally have formed the subject of discussion for a long time. In July 1918, Government appointed a Commission with the Revenue Commissioner as President for investigating how far the existing rules and standing orders furnish a satisfactory solution of all outstanding questions, in what respects they are defective and what specific amendments are necessary. In their order constituting the Commission, the Government referred the following matters for its consideration:—

I. Should the introduction of Survey and Settlement be made compulsory in all inam villages? Or, subject to what conditions may it be made compulsory on the motion of (a) Inamdars, (b) Tenants, and (c) Government?

II. In what manner are the provisions of Sections 63 to 78 of the Land Revenue Code relating to rights of occupants, etc., to be applied in the case of tenants of inam villages into which Survey and Settlement has been introduced?

III. In what respects may Section 236 of the Land Revenue Code be amended and the provisions of Chapter VII on the rights and responsibilities of the inamdars and their tenants made more definite?

IV. Should Rule 99 (c) of the Land Revenue Rules regarding the recovery of arrears of quit-rent due in inam villages be amended, and if so, in what respects?

V. How should the responsibilities of an inamdar and the raiyats of an inam village in regard to the restoration and

maintenance of irrigation works, situated wholly within an inam village, be fixed ?

VI. Who should be held responsible for contribution and water-rate payable to Government on lands newly converted into wet in an inam village from a Government source of irrigation, and what compensation, if any, may be given to Inamdars if they offer to collect on behalf of Government ? Can the Block System of irrigation be introduced without the inamdars' consent ?

VII. Do the existing rules in the matter of the assumption of the management of inam villages by Government require any modification, and if so, what ?

VIII. Subject to what conditions may inam villages be placed in the same position as Sircar villages in the matter of their securing the benefits of the various measures inaugurated for rural improvement, *e.g.*, the Village Improvement Scheme, the Tank Panchayet Scheme, the Village Forest Scheme, etc., and the application of the Land Acquisition Regulation for the extension of village sites, etc. ?

IX. In what other directions are changes in the existing rules or the enactment of new rules necessary to effect an improvement in the relations subsisting between Inamdars and tenants, and to better the condition of inam villages generally ?

X. Is it necessary to have a separate regulation consolidating all the laws in force and now proposed to be enacted, making the relationship between :—

- (1) Government and Inamdars,
- (2) Inamdars and Tenants,
- (3) Tenants and Government,

More clear and definite ?

If so, the rough lines on which such legislation may be undertaken may be indicated.

The Commission, which was presided over by Mr. K. Chandy—added two other matters to the above questions referred by Government, *viz.*

- (1) relationship between the Inamdars and the village officials, and
- (2) appointment of agents for *vritti* villages.

Suitable and exhaustive interrogatories were framed by the Commission and sent to representative gentlemen

all over the State. Twenty-eight witnesses were examined. Altogether, the Commission met on 15 days for the examination of the witnesses and for the deliberation of the subjects referred to it. In February 1920, the Commission submitted their report to Government, and in July 1925, Government issued their orders on it, after a careful consideration of all the representations received on it.

In regard to the question whether introduction of Survey and Settlement should be made compulsory in all Inam villages, Government have directed that when re-survey operations are in progress in any taluk, survey shall be introduced compulsorily into all Inam and Kayamgutta villages situated in it, the entire cost of the Survey Establishment being borne by Government. The incidental charges on account of flag-holders, etc., is to be met by Inamdars and tenants as hitherto. Government may also order the introduction of survey in an alienated or Kayamgutta village independently of the re-survey operations of the taluk on an application to that effect made in writing by the holder of the village or where there are more holders than one, on the application of so many of them as hold in the aggregate not less than two-thirds of the shares in such village. In such cases, the Inamdar or Inamdars should pay the cost of the Survey Establishment. As regards settlement, Government have ruled that the existing facilities for introducing settlement should be considerably improved. They have therefore directed that settlement may be introduced on the application of the majority of Inamdars if they also hold not less than two-thirds of the *vrittis*, or on the application of not less than half the number of the Kadim tenants in the village. In the latter case, the Inamdar will be called upon to show cause why settlement should not be introduced and after hearing his objections, the

Revenue Commissioner may pass orders, an appeal against his order lying to Government, whose decision will be final. As regards the cost of settlement, it will be waived if the settlement is made at the instance of the Inamdars, whether it synchronizes with the revision settlement of the taluk or not. If the settlement is introduced on the motion of the Kadim tenants, those who ask for it should bear the entire cost of the settlement.

In regard to the second point referred to the Commission, Government have ruled that in settled Inam villages whose owners do not hold a Commission under Section 99 to exercise powers under Sections 63 and 64 of the Land Revenue Code, these powers may be exercised by the Deputy Commissioner on the application of the Inamdar or tenant, after due enquiry of both parties. One half of any penalty or fine that may be imposed and recovered by the Deputy Commissioner in such case will be paid to the Inamdar and the other half credited to Government.

Next, as to the third point referred to the Commission, rendering more definite the provisions of Chapter VII (of the Land Revenue Code) on the rights and responsibilities of the Inamdars and tenants, the Commission recommended that the provisions of that Chapter, except Section 79, be left unaltered. They proposed that the following classes of raiyats should be considered as permanent tenants :—

(i) Those who have been recognized as such, by the landlords, or by Courts in cases to which the land-lords were parties ;

(ii) holders of lands in respect of which any alienation has been recognized by the Inamdars, or by Courts in cases to which the Inamdars were parties or which have not been contested by Inamdars for 12 years ; and

(iii) where the tenants have effected permanent improvements, such as the construction of wells, tanks, or other works

for the storage of water for purposes of agriculture, the preparation of land for irrigation, reclamation, drainage, etc., of land for garden cultivation, and are left in undisturbed possession for 12 years thereafter, provided that the Inamdars have made no contributions for such improvements nor recovered enhanced rent.

These recommendations of the Commission were unanimous, but a majority of four against two further added that permanent tenancy should be presumed when the Inamdar is unable to prove the origin of the tenancy and where the tenant establishes the fact of possession on payment of a fixed rent for 12 years or more. The Commission's recommendations have been accepted by the Government with the modification that the period of 12 years suggested by them to establish permanency of tenure may be raised to 30 years. They have ordered the amendment of Section 79 of the Land Revenue Code in the light of these orders.

In regard to the fourth point, whether the rule in regard to the recovery of arrears of quit-rent due in Inam villages be amended, the Commission recommended, to obviate the difficulties created by the joint responsibility of *vrittidars* and the consequent impossibility of putting purchasers in possession of the shares bought by them, that *vrittis* should be compulsorily allocated on the land, the officer appointed for the purpose being vested with plenary powers to allocate the lands among the *vrittidars* in proportion to the income received and *jodi* payable by them in cases where they do not come to any agreement among themselves and that the rules regarding the registry of Inam lands laid down by Government in February 1893 should be strictly enforced. Government have expressed the opinion that it is not practicable to undertake the compulsory allocation of *vrittis*, as suggested by the Commission, where they are enjoyed in common by all the *vrittidars* together and that the

existing rules should therefore continue to operate. In view of the recommendation of the Commission that, in the case of alienated holdings, permanent tenants and Kadim tenants are entitled to protection at the hands of Government, Government have ordered that necessary action be taken to amend the Land Revenue Code (Section 54) so that the position of these particular classes of tenants may in no way be affected by the forfeiture and sale of alienated holdings.

Then as to the fifth point, the fixing up of responsibilities of Inamdars and their raiyats in regard to the restoration and maintenance of irrigation works situated wholly in an Inam village, the Commission recommended that the raiyats in Inam villages should be treated in the same manner as raiyats in Government villages. As regards maintenance, the *Hanchige patti* (the allocation statement) prepared by village officials should be prepared by the Amildar, and it should be incumbent on the Inamdar to get work carried out according to it. As regards restoration, raiyats in Inam villages should be held responsible for the same portion of the cost of restoration as raiyats in Government villages and the balance of the estimate should be borne by the Government and Inamdars in the proportion of the *Jodi* and the *gari*. In all cases of restoration, the plans and estimates should be sent to the Deputy Commissioner for approval, and the Government quota of cost should be paid only after the work is inspected and approved by the Deputy Commissioner or the officer deputed by him. They also recommended that the restoration of serial tanks and tanks above Railway lines should be made compulsory and that in other cases restoration should be insisted upon, where the Inamdar or a majority of *vrittidars* or a majority of tenants ask for it and when the cost of restoration does not exceed 20 times the income under the tank. Government have accepted all these recommendations but have

ordered that the work of restoration should be always done by the Public Works Department, the contributions due from the Inamdars and the tenants being collected in the same manner as contributions in respect of tanks in Government villages. Steps are being taken to amend the Minor Tank Restoration Regulation accordingly.

As regards the sixth point, the fixing of liability for contribution and water-rate payable to Government on lands newly converted into wet in an Inam village, from a Government source of irrigation, and what commission should be paid to Inamdars for collecting the same, Government have ordered that all applications for water from tenants in Inam villages, in cases of this kind, should be made through the Inamdars and that the compensation to the Inamdars should be fixed at 12½ per cent. On the question of the introduction of the Block System of irrigation into Inam villages, the Commission declared that they did not favour the proposal. Government have accepted this view of the Commission.

On the seventh point, whether any modifications in regard to the assumption of the management of Inam villages by Government are called for and if so, on what lines, Government have ordered that while Inam villages should not be taken up under Government management ordinarily, Government should have power to interfere and take up the management in cases of gross mismanagement or unsoundness of mind. They have ordered the amendment of Section 120 of the Land Revenue Code so as to make it applicable to cases of management that may arise under this newly added provision.

As to the eighth point, on what conditions may Inam villages be placed in the same position as Government villages to secure the benefits arising from the various measures inaugurated from time to time by Government, such as the Village Improvement scheme, the Village

Forest scheme, etc., Government have directed attention to the fact that Inam villages can have the benefit of the Village Improvement scheme under their orders dated 9th May 1914 and that there is no legal objection to the contribution of Village Forest, Village Courts and Tank Panchayets in Inam villages. As regards the acquisition of land, the Commission recommended that the Land Acquisition Regulation should be suitably amended so as to make it possible to apply it to cases where lands have to be acquired for village extension or other improvement for the benefit of Inam villages, even though payment is not made from the public Treasury. Under Government order dated 19th August 1922, the duty of providing village sites in the rural areas, whether in Government or in alienated villages, devolves on the District Board. Proposals for extension of village sites should, it is pointed out, be formulated by the District Board on whose behalf acquisition of lands under the Land Acquisition Regulation is permissible at present. Consequential changes in the Land Revenue Code (Sections 40, 59 and 194) and the rules framed under it and in the Land Improvement Loans Regulation (Section 4) are, in the light of these observations of Government, being separately provided for.

On the ninth point, in what other directions changes in the existing rules or the enactment of new rules are necessary to effect an improvement in the relations subsisting between Inamdars and their tenants and to better the condition of Inam villages generally, the Commission recommended among other things the following:—

(a) Raiyats should be protected against Inamdars in the appropriation of *gomal* and communal lands;

(b) Raiyats in villages should be given the benefit of *Takavi* Loans and Forest privileges, as in Government villages;

(c) As in Government villages, Revenue Officers should make necessary enquiries as regards channel offences on complaints made by Inamdars ; and

(d) In cases of widespread famine, where Government grant remission of revenue, the Inamdars, on proof forthcoming of their having granted similar remission, may be allowed appropriate remission of *jōdi* payable by them to Government.

Government have approved of these recommendations and in regard to *gomal* and communal lands, have ordered that Inamdars should not be allowed to dispose of them without the approval of the Deputy Commissioner. They have also directed the necessary amendments to the Regulations bearing on the recommendations.

Finally, in regard to point ten, whether any separate Regulation consolidating all the laws in force, making the relationship between the Government and the Inamdars, Inamdars and tenants, and tenants and Government, more clear and definite, the Commission were of opinion that there is no need for any special enactment of the kind mentioned and that the Land Revenue Code and the rules thereunder, with suitable amendments, would be sufficient. Government have expressed their agreement with this opinion.

Besides the ten points referred to the Inam Commission for investigation, the Commission included two more points in their Report :—

- (1) The relation between Inamdars and Village officials ; and
- (2) The appointment of Agents for *Vritti* villages.

As regards the former, they stated that under Government Order dated 23rd March 1876, Inamdars can appoint village officials, subject to confirmation by the Deputy Commissioner. As regards punishment, they recommended that Inamdars of settled villages should be given the powers of an Amildar and competent Inamdars should be given the powers of an Assistant Commissioner. They proposed that the present rule

regarding the payment of *potgi* in Inam villages may stand and as regards accounts, etc., to be maintained by the village officials, they suggested that they might be left to the decision of Inamdars. Government accepted these recommendations with the modification that, in the case of settled villages, the *potgi* payable to the village officers, Patels and Shanbhogs may, in the absence of custom or agreement to the contrary, be fixed at half of that for Government villages, as they have less work than village officers in Government villages. They have also ruled that the exercise of punitive powers by the Inamdars should, in every case, be duly authorized by Government by a commission under Section 7 (3) of the Village Officers Regulation. They have also provided for appeals against the orders passed by Inamdars holding commissions under Section 99 of the Land Revenue Code, by the addition of a specific provision in it. Appeals against the orders of an Inamdar exercising an Amildar's powers will lie to the Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Division and appeals in the case of an Inamdar exercising the powers of an Assistant Commissioner will lie to the Deputy Commissioner of the District.

Regarding the appointment of Agents for *Vritti* villages, the Commission was of opinion that the rules laid down by Government in their order dated 28th September 1871 in the matter of the recognition of Agents for *Vritti* villages are sufficient and should be strictly enforced. They, however, added that, where there is no agreement among the *Vrittidars* as regards the person who is to be appointed as Agent, one of the *Vrittidars* may be selected, failing which the Patel or the Shanbhog may be made Agent and that five per cent of the gross collection should be paid as remuneration to him. Government have approved of these recommendations of the Commission.

Relations between the registered occupants and their tenants.

Certain phases in the relations between registered occupants and tenants are dealt with in Sections 64 and 77, Land Revenue Code and Rule 40 of the Land Revenue Rules.

An occupant of land appropriated for purposes of agriculture is entitled by himself, his tenants or legal representatives to erect farm buildings and dwelling houses for agriculturists and their labourers, construct wells or tanks, or make any other improvement thereon for the better cultivation of the land or its more convenient occupation for the purposes aforesaid. But, if the holding or any part thereof is to be appropriated for any other purpose, the registered occupant should invariably apply to the Deputy Commissioner for permission to so appropriate the holding and, unless the Deputy Commissioner shall in particular instances otherwise direct, no such application shall be recognized except it be made by the registered occupant. Any tenant or any occupant or any other person holding under or through an occupant who shall, without the registered occupant's consent, appropriate any land appropriated for purposes of agriculture to any purpose unconnected with agriculture and thereby render the registered occupant liable to the penalties prescribed in the Land Revenue Code shall be responsible to the registered occupant in damages, provided that the Deputy Commissioner may, instead of fining the registered occupant as prescribed in the Code, fine any tenant or any other person holding under or through the occupant, who may have without the registered occupant's consent appropriated any such land to any purpose unconnected with agriculture.

In order to prevent the forfeiture of an occupancy under the provisions of the Land Revenue Code or of any other law for the time being in force, through non-payment, by the registered occupant, of the land revenue due on account of the occupancy, it is lawful under Section 77

of the Code for the tenant interested in the continuance of the occupancy to pay, on behalf of such registered occupant, all sums due on account of land revenue and for the Deputy Commissioner to receive the same. And in any such case, the Deputy Commissioner may give to the tenant who has paid the land revenue such aid for the recovery of the proportional amounts which he may consider to be properly payable by other persons in occupation or enjoyment of parts of a field or survey number as he might legally have given, had the tenant so paying been the registered occupant. But, the privileges conferred on the tenant by Section 77 of the Code as aforesaid do not affect the rights of the tenant and the registered occupant as the same may be established in any suit between them in a Court of competent jurisdiction.

The tenant of a registered occupant is entitled, under Rule 40 of the Land Revenue Rules, to notice before the occupancy is declared forfeited for non-payment of the land revenue due on it, provided he registers his name and his interest in the occupancy in a Register kept in the Taluk Cutcherry for the purpose and pays on every application for such registry a fee of one Rupee in the shape of Court Fee Stamps of that value to be affixed to the application. The registry thus made does not give a right to the tenant so registering to receive notices under this rule for more than five official years beginning with the year of registry unless a fresh application is made before the expiry of the period and the entry in the register is renewed. No fee will, however, be charged on application for such renewal.

The following extract from the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* may be said to hold good generally in Mysore also:—

Influence of
custom on
rents.

“The incidence of rents may be said generally to depend

on the interaction of three forces, custom, competition and legislation. In the early days of British rule, custom was everywhere paramount and even now, the influence of competition is comparatively restricted. A rise of prices, for instance, even in unfettered tenancies, does not necessarily entail a concurrent rise in rents. The rent legislation of India starts from a basis of custom and while accepting the legitimate influence of competition, seeks to confine that influence within reasonable limits. It aims not so much at the curtailment of advantages naturally accruing to landlords as at the maintenance of rights already conferred on tenants by custom. Custom is, therefore, still to a large extent the foundation of Indian rents."

II. PRICES.

Retail prices.

Since the year 1866, the prices of some of the articles have been published in the *Mysore Gazette* under the head "Nirakpatti" or "Prices current." The prices have also been reported in fortnightly returns from the Districts. An abstract of each year's prices has been made and embodied in an official publication entitled "Retail prices of some principal articles of food in Mysore," first issued in March 1901.

Standard food grains.

The statement given below, of retail prices from 1886, is confined only to four principal food grains, viz., Rice, Ragi, Jolam (*Sorghum-vulgare*) and Bengalgram (*Cicer Arietinum*), for which a complete record exists.

Method of expressing prices.

Prices are expressed, according to the usual Indian method, in terms of the number of seers sold for a rupee.

Statistics of retail prices.

The averages for each quinquennium between 1886 and 1915 and the years 1916 to 1923 are given. The average is for all the eight Districts in the State.

AVERAGE QUANTITY OF GRAIN IN SEERS PER RUPEE.

Years	Rice	Ragi	Jolam (Sorghum- vulgare)	Bengal-gram (Cicer Arretinum)	Years	Rice	Ragi	Jolam (Sorghum- vulgare)	Bengal-gram (Cicer Arretinum)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1886-90 ...	13.51	39.96	28.90	12.72	1918 ...	6.92	14.86	12.20	6.75
1891-95 ...	11.42	28.11	23.64	10.59	1918-19 ...	4.65	8.86	6.89	4.12
1896-00 ...	9.54	22.28	19.05	9.19	1919-20 ...	4.21	7.53	8.83	3.54
1901-05 ...	10.35	24.40	18.60	9.99	1920-21 ...	4.17	7.55	8.16	3.54
1906-10 ...	7.83	14.73	14.90	8.15	1921-22 ...	4.54	10.26	8.51	3.77
1911-15 ...	7.43	16.07	15.53	8.16	1922-23 ...	4.88	9.52	9.52	4.88
1916 ...	7.22	17.08	15.35	7.09	1923-24 ...	4.70	8.51	8.33	5.88
1917 ..	7.34	17.68	15.42	7.36					

Good crops were harvested throughout the country and towards the close of 1889, owing to the apprehended scarcity in some of the neighbouring Districts of Madras, there was a large export of grains.

Prices of
1886-1890.

The year 1891-1892 was one of serious famines in most parts of Southern India, and in Mysore, it was happily a year of only moderate agricultural disturbance. The rains everywhere were below the average. The year 1892-1893 was one of agricultural prosperity. Towards the close of 1893-1894, the retail prices of the principal food grains, which during 1892-1893 remained high owing to the drought of the previous year, became more favourable and in 1894-1895 they remained almost stationary.

Prices of
1891-1895.

There was a falling off in prices during 1895-1896, but in subsequent years there was a rise and in 1899-1900, there was a general rise in the price of ragi and jola and also in that of rice in some Districts.

Prices of
1896-1900.

Prices of
1901-1905.

The prices went down gradually from 1901-1902 till the early part of the year 1904-1905, when they began to rise on account of deficiency of supply in the markets due to the withholding of a portion of the stock by the producers and merchants in view of the uncertainty of the seasons. The harvests were poor owing to deficient rainfall.

Prices of
1906-1910.

Throughout the year 1905-1906, the retail prices were higher than in the previous year. From the beginning they showed a tendency to rise and in the last fortnight of the year, they were nearly from 20 to 40 per cent higher. This was due to a general failure of the harvest owing to want of rain. The Shimoga District suffered most, the prices there being nearly 50 per cent higher than the average prices of the District, and rice had to be imported into the District from the Madras Presidency. In 1906-1907, the prices showed a tendency to rise in spite of increase in the outturn. During 1907-1908 and 1908-1909, there was a rise in the prices of rice, ragi, cholam and Bengal-gram and significantly in the case of ragi, the staple food grain of the State, which rose by 25 per cent. The higher prices are ascribed to a perceptible falling off in the total outturn of paddy and ragi in the State and the large exports of ragi from the Districts to parts of British India. The year 1908-1909 was a year of distress and relief measures were adopted. Though there was a decided improvement in the outturn of crops during 1909-1910, the fall in prices was but slight and the prices continued much above the normal average of previous years.

Prices of
1911-1915.

During 1910-1911, there was a fall in price due in a large measure to the favourable seasonal conditions and to the good harvests of the year. During the next three years, there was a general rise in the prices owing to the

failure of the *mungar* rains and also to the exportation of food grains to affected parts outside the State. There was generally no large variation during 1914-1915 in the average prices of rice and ragi though the price of Bengal-gram increased in all the Districts owing to the poor yield of the crop. The price of ragi was somewhat higher in the Hassan, Shimoga and Kadur Districts while in other Districts, there was a fall.

During the year 1916-1917, the price of rice rose slightly, due to the decrease in the outturn under paddy, in the districts of Mysore, Hassan and Shimoga. The prices of ragi and Bengal-gram, however, remained stationary in the Hassan and Chitaldrug Districts and the price of cholam rose appreciably in the Shimoga District. During 1917-18 there was an abnormal rise in the prices of all staple grains owing to exports and the conditions brought about by the Great European War.

Prices of 1916,
1917, 1918 and
1919.

During 1919-20, there was a slight rise in the prices of rice, ragi and Bengal-gram and an appreciable fall in the price of jolam. The prices were stationary during 1920-21. A general fall in the prices of these important food crops was noticeable during 1921-22 and especially that of ragi was appreciable. In 1922-23, there was a further slight fall in the prices of rice, cholam and Bengal-gram while there was a slight rise in the prices of ragi. During the last year of the quinquennium, there was a slight rise in the price of rice and an appreciable rise in the prices of ragi and cholam owing to unfavourable seasonal conditions in some parts of the State.

The General Administration Reports of the State till 1895 contain statements of wholesale prices, and the fortnightly statements of wholesale prices of food grains, etc., at the head-quarters of the eight Districts of the

Wholesale
prices.

State are being regularly published in the *Mysore Gazette* since 1899.

Variation in prices.

The following tabular statement shows the average wholesale prices of the principal food grains in the State during each year from 1881-82 to 1923-24 :—

Years	Rice	Ragi	Cholam (Sorghum-vulgare)	Bengal-gram (Cicer-Arietinum)	Years	Rice	Ragi	Cholam (Sorghum-vulgare)	Bengal-gram (Cicer-Arietinum)
1881-82 ...	12·86	27·23	26·50	14·06	1903-04 ...	10·18	36·81	31·62	10·00
1882-83 ...	15·23	33·68	26·50	14·11	1904-05 ...	6·43	20·00	22·18	11·50
1883-84 ...	16·00	36·57	31·00	15·14	1905-06 ...	6·68	14·50	14·00	9·13
1884-85 ...	14·19	25·85	27·50	15·23	1906-07 ...	7·25	17·50	17·87	67·5
1885-86 ...	12·77	26·66	22·00	13·21	1907-08 ...	6·18	15·18	15·25	7·94
1886-87 ...	14·32	54·85	30·00	14·94	1908-09 ...	5·43	11·42	11·81	6·74
1887-88 ...	14·38	43·6	37·50	14·57	1909-10 ...	6·43	14·93	14·18	7·99
1888-89 ...	12·69	40·85	35·50	13·91	1910-11 ...	7·56	10·25	20·12	9·21
1889-90 ...	11·65	39·38	32·00	11·19	1911-12 ...	5·87	14·50	14·56	8·96
1890-91 ...	9·68	28·97	29·00	12·01	1912-13 ...	5·56	16·18	15·37	8·33
1891-92 ...	8·35	20·58	17·33	11·43	1913-14 ...	6·50	14·12	12·81	7·89
1892-93 ...	10·77	27·82	25·26	9·00	1914-15 ...	6·86	15·30	14·89	6·40
1893-94 ...	10·26	30·23	26·03	9·25	1915-16 ...	7·22	17·08	15·35	7·09
1894-95 ...	9·87	31·47	24·77	12·25	1916-17 ...	7·34	17·63	15·42	7·36
1895-96 ...	10·44	34·25	30·21	10·93	1917-18 ...	6·32	14·86	12·20	6·75
1896-97 ...	9·41	23·91	19·55	8·95	1918-19 ...	4·65	8·88	6·89	4·12
1897-98 ...	8·90	21·31	17·42	7·95	1919-20 ...	4·21	7·55	8·33	3·54
1898-99 ...	10·59	23·80	23·50	10·85	1920-21 ...	4·17	7·55	8·16	3·54
1899-00 ...	9·35	17·34	15·39	9·55	1921-22 ...	4·54	10·26	8·51	3·77
1900-01 ...	8·11	14·64	13·32	7·30	1922-23 ...	4·88	9·62	9·52	4·88
1901-02 ...	10·03	17·88	21·65	9·94	1923-24 ...	4·70	8·51	8·33	5·88
1902-03 ...	10·82	25·71	25·71	10·00					

It will be observed from the above statement that, notwithstanding occasional variations, the prices all round have been showing a more or less steady tendency to rise, so that, during the 37 years from 1886 to 1923, the prices of all food grains have risen appreciably.

General conditions affecting prices.

The question remains whether any conclusions can be drawn as to the operation of general causes which have

tended to raise or depress prices. The conditions affecting prices generally may be ascribed to—

- (1) short crops owing to the failure of the north-east monsoon on which a good harvest entirely depends,
- (2) large exports to adjoining territories of British India,
- (3) the raiyats laying by in store and keeping back from the market part of their produce as a result of the experiences of distress,
- (4) the levelling of prices due to the facilities of transport by rail to parts where harvests are deficient,
- (5) the steady rise in the standard of living of the people,
- (6) the heavy exports to distant parts of the world stimulated by reduced production in countries beyond the seas, resulting in shortage in the world's supply,
- (7) the gradual displacement of food grains by more remunerative industrial crops in the area under cultivation, and
- (8) a redundant currency.

III. WAGES.

The daily wages for unskilled and skilled labour vary in different Districts from 4 annas to Re. 1-0-0, and 8 annas to Rs. 3-0-0 respectively, as may be seen from the following statement for the year 1223-24 :—

Rates for unskilled and skilled labour.

No.	District	Unskilled labour	Skilled labour
1	Bangalore ...	8 As. to Re. 1	12 As. to Rs. 2
2	Kolar ...	8 „ 12 As.	Re. 1 to Rs. 1-8-0
3	Tumkur ...	6 „ 12 As.	Re. 1 to Rs. 2-0-0
4	Mysore ...	8 „ Re. 1	Re. 1 to Rs. 2-8-0
5	Hassan ...	6 „ 8 As.	Re. 1 to Rs. 2-0-0
6	Shimoga ...	4 „ 12 As.	8 As. to Rs. 3
7	Kadur ...	6 „ Re. 1	15 As. to Rs. 2
8	Chitaldrug ...	4 „ Re. 1	8 As. to Rs. 2
	For the State...	4 As. to Re. 1	8 As. to Rs. 3

Variations of wages.

In 1876, the average rates of wages for skilled labour were 4 annas to 1 rupee a day, unskilled about 2 annas to 8 annas a day.

In 1893, the following were the rates of daily wages :—

No.	District	Unskilled labour	Skilled labour
1	Bangalore ...	2 Annas to 6 As.	8 As. to 12 As.
2	Kolar ...	4 „ 6 As.	10 „ 1 Re.
3	Tumkur ...	4 „ 6 As.	8 „ 12 As.
4	Mysore ...	2 „ 4 As.	8 „ 12 As.
5	Hassan ...	2 „ 4 As.	8 „ 1½ Rs.
6	Shimoga ...	2 „ 4 As.	8 „ 1 Re.
7	Kadur ..	3 „ 6 As.	8 „ 1 Re.
8	Chitaldrug ...	4 „ 8 As.	8 „ 1 Re.

The minimum daily wages for skilled labour had thus doubled in 17 years in all districts and that for unskilled labour had doubled in three districts and increased by a half in another.

From 1893 to 1916, during a period of 23 years, the minimum rate for skilled labour rose by 50 per cent in two districts (Tumkur and Mysore) while it remained stationary in the districts of Hassan, Kadur and Chitaldrug and it slightly fell in the Bangalore and Shimoga Districts. It increased by 20 per cent in the Kolar District. There was no perceptible change in the minimum rate of wages for unskilled labour during the same period. The wages for skilled labour have steadily risen from 6 Annas to Rs. 2½ in 1917-18 to 8 Annas to Rs. 3 in 1923-24 and those for unskilled labour have varied between 2 Annas, 8 pies to Re. 1 in 1917-18 and 4 annas to Rs. 2 during 1918-19.

General conditions affecting wages.

Agriculture being the main industry of the State, there is comparatively less demand for skilled labour. The

wages of skilled labour are not altogether regulated by the operation of the ordinary law of supply and demand and are generally more or less on a par with those paid in the adjacent parts of India. The wages of unskilled labour, however, depend mostly on custom and are not easily influenced by competition except very temporarily. In big towns and other places where there is a steady demand for skilled labour, irrespective of the conditions of the season, the tendency of wages is to increase with the rise in prices of food stuffs. Numerous coffee plantations in the west of Mysore, railway construction, large expenditure on Public Works and greater activity in house-building and the plague account for the rise in wages. The establishment of mills and factories in the State and the development of mining and other industries have exercised a great degree of influence, illustrating the economic theory that wages depend mainly on the demand and supply of labour. The failure of crops destroys a large portion of the fund used in paying wages and the numbers seeking employment are greatly enhanced, so that those, who find it, often obtain in return the barest subsistence. When, however, a rise in the price of agricultural produce is due to a larger demand, and extra profits are thus obtained by the cultivator or land-owner, wages may and do rise.

The rise or fall in the prices of food grains does not affect the wages of labour in the *malnad* tracts, as in addition to the money wages which are on a par with those prevailing in the *maidan* parts, they receive their rations. It must, however, be observed that any fluctuation in prices of food grains may not necessarily produce any immediate corresponding change in cash wages of labour on account of the deep conservative instincts of the masses and the fact that wages are generally controlled more by custom than by competition unless the demand for skilled labour increases rapidly in any specified locality.

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