

MANUAL

OF THE

BELLARY DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

The Boundaries—The Rivers—Mountains and Hills—Aspect of the Country—The Area—Number of Taluqs—Villages and Hamlets—Language.

General description of the Bellary District.—The district of Bellary (Valahari) lies between latitudes $13^{\circ} 40'$ and $15^{\circ} 58'$, and longitude $75^{\circ} 44'$ and $78^{\circ} 19'$. Its extreme length from Rampūr in the north, to Hindipūr in the south is 170 miles, and its breadth from Tadpatri on the Pennér river, to Honnūr on the Túngabadra is about 120 miles.

It is bounded on the north by the territory of H. H. the Nizam, from which it is divided by the Túngabadra river; on the south-west and south by the Mysore country, on the east by the districts of Cuddapah and Kurnool, and on the west by Mysore and the District of Dharwar in the Bombay Presidency.

The height of the plateau averages from 800 to 1,000 feet above* the level of the sea. The western taluqs are the highest, as the country there gradually slopes toward the western gháts. In the southern taluqs also, as the table-land of Mysore is reached, the elevation is not inconsiderable.

The soil in part of the western taluqs, and in Adoni, Tadpatri and Gooty is the celebrated 'régada' or black cotton soil. In the rest of the district the red soil predominates, changing in the neighbourhood of hills into gravel.

Rivers.—Of these the chief are the Túngabadra, the Haggari, the Hindri, the Pennér, and the Chittravatti. The Túngabadra is

formed by the junction of two rivers, the Túnga and the Badra. The former of these rises in the western gháts near Bednore, the latter in the Baba Booden hills near Mangalore. They unite about 70 miles from their sources at Kúrli in the Mysore territory. The Túngabadra river forms the northern boundary of the district. The best known of the towns by which it flows are Hampságra, Hospett, *Hampi, Kampli, and Rampúr. "The river at all times contains water, but in the dry season the channel being full of rocks will not admit of floats. In the rainy season it swells prodigiously, and is said to be eight or ten feet higher than the rocks. Its stream is then extremely rapid and muddy." In the dry weather it is easily fordable in most places. Alligators abound in it. In those places where the bed of the river is deep, on account of the banks approaching one another, there are ferry boats. The river is spanned by a magnificent bridge on 52 piers at Rampúr, where it is crossed by the N. W. Line of the Madras Railway.

The Pennér river is said to derive its earliest supply from a stone-tank in the ruined fort of Chandradrúg, Mysore territory. From this tank a small stream runs down the side of the mountain, and after flowing to the north-west for 30 miles enters the Bellary district near Purgí. For about 100 miles it flows due north to Uderpidrúg, where it makes an abrupt turn to the east. Passing by the town of Tádpatri it is joined by the Chittravatti river, and the two pass through the narrow gorge of Gundikota into the Cuddapah district. It eventually falls into the Bay of Bengal, after a course of about 350 miles. There are few or no rocks in the bed of the river, but it is very shallow, and is quite dry for nine months of the year. It is considered a sacred river by the natives. In the monsoon, the flood is from 10 to 15 feet in depth and the river is then crossed by means of basket boats.

The *Haggari* river rises in Mysore, and is about 125 miles in length. It is a very shallow river; though impassable, except by boats, in the three months of the monsoon. On both sides of the river are broad belts of sand, and there is reason for supposing that it is gradually changing its bed. At Moka, 12 miles from Bellary, where the river is crossed, these sand beds are two miles broad. The crossings at Permadavenhalli, and Rápangudi are not so long, but there is a sufficient width of sand to make them very tedious. It flows into the Túngabadra river near Hatsahalli. When the river is in flood, it is, though shallow, very broad, and it occasionally over-

flows its banks. In 1851 the town of Guliem, once the chief town of a taluq was washed away, and hardly a vestige of the old buildings now remains. The branch line of the Madras Railway will cross the river near Permadavenhalli.

The river *Chittra* rises in the Mysore territory and enters the district near Kodikonda. It is an insignificant stream, with a rocky bed. It is dammed up near Bukkapatnam by an immense bund which joins two hills. In this way the large tank is formed. About 20 miles lower down it is again pent back and forms the Dharmaveram tank. A little lower it is joined by the Máduléru river and winding through the hills joins the Pennér near Gundikota. Except in the height of the monsoon it is always fordable.

The Hindri hardly deserves the name of a river. It rises on the hills near Pattikonda, and after a course of about 30 miles falls into the Túngabdra at Kurnool.

Mountains and Hills.—The hill ranges most worthy of note are those of Sandúr and Kampli to the west, and the Lanka Malla hills* on the eastern frontier which separate the district from Kurnool and Cuddapah. The Sandúr and Kampli ranges have a somewhat parallel direction, and in them granite, gneiss, hornblende with ferruginous and silicious schists prevail. In other parts of the district, granite occurs in clustered and detached dome-shaped masses often crowned with tors. The principal clusters are those near Vijayanagar on the N. W. frontier, those at Pálsamudram and Pennakonda on the south, and those in the neighbourhood of Adoni. The Copper mountain to the south-west of Bellary has an elevation by trigonometrical measurement of 3,148 feet.

“There are apparently no valleys which have been entirely caused by the erosive action of water; but there are many rifts in the land-stone and slate-hills which have been deepened and widened from this cause. Deep vertical fissures cross the sandstone ranges often cleaving the hills to their base, which, (from the absence of disturbance in the stratification) appear to have originated in the contraction of the rock during its solidification, and to have been subsequently enlarged by the action of springs or by the rivers which find a vent through them. The spaces between the granite hills, for they cannot with propriety be called valleys, are often strewn with, or blocked up by large masses of stone, precipitated by spontaneous splitting and exfoliation from the summits and sides of the adjacent clusters of rock.”—(*Captain Newbold.*)

Aspect.—The general character is that of an extensive plateau, elevated on the shoulders of the western and eastern gháts, the plain of which forms a considerable angle with the horizon inclining towards the east coast of the peninsula. Thus at Belgaum, in the South Mahratta country, the height of the plain is 2,500 feet above the level of the sea, at Bellary it is 1,600 feet, the average altitude of the black cotton plain between Bellary and Gooty is 1,182, while at Tádpatrí, at the extreme east of the district, it is about 900 feet above sea level. The western gháts clearly form the antíclinal line to which the arenaceous and schistous eastern ranges are more or less conformable. The plain has another and more gentle dip toward the north, to the beds of the Kistna and Túngabadra rivers. The bed of the Túngabadra is a little more than 1,000 feet above the level of the sea, the plain rises as we proceed south, and in the centre of the district it is 1,500 feet, and on the Mysore frontier in the south 2,223 feet above the sea.

To the centre of the district the surface of the plain presents a monotonous and almost treeless extent, bounded by the horizon, and unbroken, save by a few rocky elevations that stand forth abruptly from the sheet of black soil like rocks from the ocean. Of this tract, Sir T. MONRO wrote, "These districts are more destitute of trees than any part of Scotland I ever saw; the traveller scarcely meets with one in twenty miles and nowhere with a clump of fifty." Since this was written large sums of money have been spent in planting topes and trees and some success has been attained. It has however been found almost impossible to get trees to grow in this soil, and those that do take root are stunted miserable-looking objects. Water is very scarce, and what there is, is brackish and highly impregnated with lime.

The Madaksira taluq alone, the garden of the district, is well watered by streams and springs from the neighbouring heights and is studded with topes and tanks. To the west of Bellary the country is wild and hilly to the verge of the Kampli hills whence it descends in a gently sloping plain to the bed of the Túngabadra.

Area.—The exact area of the district does not appear to be accurately known, but various experiments have been made giving more or less accurate results. In 1858 the Board of Revenue obtained from the Chief Engineer's Office the lithographed map of the district on the scale of 32 miles to an inch, and transferred it to a

piece of ordinary paper. A square of the same paper corresponding to 10,000 square miles on the map was then cut out and weighed, and it was found to weigh 17·625 grains. As the piece representing the Bellary district weighed 21·642 grains, the area was easily calculated. The balance used was a very fine one turning with $\frac{1}{400}$ of a grain. At the same time the Chief Engineer was conducting experiments. His process was to cover the map with small squares, each representing a certain area, and then, laying them on the map to see how many squares and portions of squares were used. In the process of "plotting," the district was divided into trapeziums and the diagonals and perpendiculars measured on a scale of 32 miles to an inch. The results are given below.

1.—In a return furnished to House of Commons.....	13,056 sq. miles.
2.—By weight (Board of Revenue).....	12,280 " "
3.—Estimate of Chief Engineer.....	12,101 " "
4.—By Plotting.....	12,536 " "

In 1861 the Panchapalliem taluq was transferred to Kurnool, and since then on several occasions, villages have been transferred to Kurnool and Cuddapah, and in some cases others have been received from those districts.

The area of the district, including the Sandúr Jaghire is generally considered to be 11,496 square miles. The Jaghire is 145 square miles.

At the time of the cession that portion of the Ceded Provinces which now constitutes the district of Bellary was divided into twenty taluqs. These were called, Gooty, Yadiki, Chennampalli, Raidrúg, Tádmarí, Tádpatrí, Anantapúr, Kodikonda, Dharma-veram, Pennakonda, Madaksira, Kámpli, Harpanhalli, Hadagalli, Bellary, Kúdlighi, Nagaldinna, Panchapalliem, Guliem and Adoni.

There are now only 15 taluqs. In 1810 Nagaldinna was joined to the Adoni taluq, and in 1821 Chennampalli and Panchapalliem were similarly combined, and in 1858 this new taluq was transferred to the Kurnool district. In 1821 the taluq of Tádmarí was broken up and its villages distributed between Tádpatrí and Anantapúr. Finally in 1859 the taluq of Yadiki was merged in that of Tádpatrí. In some cases the name of the taluq has been altered; thus Kámpli has become the Hospett taluq, Kodikonda the Hindipúr taluq, and Guliem the Alúr taluq.

The following statement shows the area in square miles, the population and the revenue of each of the taluqs.

TALUQS.	Area.	Population 1866.	Population 1871.	Revenue.
Bellary ...	985	129,627	180,157	RS. 3,51,231
Raidróg ...	890	65,453	88,069	1,81,835
Hospett ...	540	74,431	91,825	1,55,689
Gooty ...	1,014	103,121	148,013	2,26,644
Tádpatri	772	105,385	116,714	1,70,511
Alúr... ..	677	73,886	94,282	2,99,799
Adoni	805	139,629	179,448	2,48,244
Anantapúr ...	789	85,052	101,558	1,33,533
Dharmaveram	1,226	96,284	119,877	1,23,738
Pennakonda	654	75,403	79,824	1,08,262
Hindipúr	481	71,978	87,763	1,33,479
Madaksira	439	60,592	79,528	1,02,049
Kúdlighi	864	74,217	93,647	1,10,101
Harpanhalli	592	62,869	86,000	1,15,739
Hadagalli	623	73,945	90,306	1,52,605
	11,351	1,291,922	1,637,011	26,13,438

Villages and Hamlets.—There are 2,541 villages (cusbas) with 1,585 attached hamlets (muzras). Full taluqwar particulars will be found in the Appendix A.

Language.—Both Canarese and Telugu are spoken. According to Wilks a line drawn from Gooty to Anantapúr and so on due south should mark the boundary between the two languages. Canarese is almost universally spoken in the western taluqs and Madaksira. The Telugu is not so pure as that of the coast districts, and, as spoken, is full of Hindustani and Canarese words. Mr. CAMPBELL fancifully derives the word “Telugu” from “Tella, white,” an appellation which might with much propriety be applied to the people of Telingana compared with the neighbouring nations. *Tenugu* may possibly be derived from “Ten,” honey, a denominature by no means inapplicable to a language which has been called the “Italian of the East.”—(*Preface to Grammar.*)