

small body of troops sent out from Bellary. A pair of gold bangles worth Rupees 700 were given by Government to the Tahsildar for his bravery.

In 1857 Harpanhalli was again the cause of great anxiety. There had been a rising in the Dharwar district, caused ostensibly by a search for arms, and the rich town of Dummul had been plundered. M. Bhima Rau, Tahsildar of Harpanhalli, with such men as he could collect, joined the insurgents. They endeavoured to cross the river near Hossúr, with a view to attacking Ramandrúg, but the river was not fordable, and while waiting for it to go down, a small force sent out from Bellary reached Hospett. The rebels fell back on Kopala, but the place was stormed by a wing of the 74th Highlanders under Major Hughes and was easily captured. Bhima Rau was killed while endeavouring to escape down the hill.

CHAPTER II.

REVENUE HISTORY.

SECTION I.

EARLY REVENUE HISTORY DOWN TO 1800, THE DATE OF THE CESSION OF THE COUNTRY TO THE HONORABLE COMPANY.

The revenue under the Vijayanagar Rayels—Under the Sultáns of Bijapúr and Golconda—Under Aurungzebe—Under the Mah-rattas—Under Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultán—Causes of the decline of revenue—The Jaghire of Adoni—Colonel Monro's estimate of what the revenue should be.

Before commencing this section of the manual it is necessary to point out that Bellary, as a district, has only been recognized since 1808. Colonel Monro was Commissioner not of Bellary alone but of Bellary, Cuddapah and part of Kurnool, of all the territories, in short, ceded in 1800. It has been found impossible to distinguish between the revenue history of Bellary and that of other portions of the ceded provinces, and it should therefore be borne in mind that the facts stated and figures quoted in this and the succeeding chapter refer to the whole of the ceded districts.

“The land seems at all times to have been regarded as the property of the State. No traces can be discovered of its ever having been that of the cultivators or renters. The Inam sanads of the Vijayanagar Rayels as well as those of more ancient princes universally grant the soil as well as the rent, a convincing proof that it was considered to belong to the sovereign.

The Vijayanagar Government.—Nothing is now known of the revenue under the Vijayanagar government. Tradition says it was paid in kind in the proportion of half the produce, and that this half was commuted for money at a price unfavorable to the cultivator; a circumstance which must have been an insurmountable bar not only to the establishment of private property, but also to every kind of agricultural improvement.

The Bijapur Government.—Though there is no direct evidence on the subject, both because authentic documents are altogether wanting, and because it was impossible that the rental could be fixed when it was regulated by the continually varying produce of the crop, yet there is every reason to believe that it exceeded Controy Pagodas 24,84,188 (Rupees 74,52,564) which was the “Kamil” assessment fixed a few years after the subversion of the empire by the Muhammadan conquerors. It is impossible that such an event effected by an invader at the head of an army of horse could have been accomplished without a great destruction of the inhabitants and their property; and if the country could pay such a sum to the conquerors, it must have yielded a much higher revenue in the peaceful days which had preceded the invasion.

The “Kamil” in Raidrúg, Harpanhalli and some other of the western taluqs which were reduced by the Bijapúr Sultáns appears to have been settled without any regular survey. But in Gurrumkonda, Kambham, Cuddapah and the more eastern districts comprising the principal portion of the ceded provinces, it was founded upon an actual survey which was begun early in the seventeenth century (soon after the country fell under the dominion of the Sultáns of Golcondā) and finished in about four years. The avowed principle of the assessment was the equal division of the crop between government and the cultivator; but as all rents were to be paid in money, the equivalent of the half produce in kind was found by taking the estimated gross produce of the different sorts

of dry and wet land and converting it into money at the average price of the preceding ten years.

The fragments of accounts which are still (1801) extant afford no means of judging whether the produce was over-rated or not, but it is not likely that the survey was so conducted as to leave the ryot less than one-half, for so small a share both upon the wet and the dry crop, would have been insufficient to enable him to extend his cultivation. From connivance at first, and from negligence afterwards, almost every trace of the ancient measurements is now obliterated.

Village Service and Religious Inams.—The ample Inams to village servants, to Brahmins and those set apart for the support of Pagodas were continued as under the former governments. Indeed the substitution of a money-rent for a rent in kind seems to have been the only change introduced by the conquerors, a change which would have been highly favorable to the inhabitants had the demand always been limited to the fixed rent. But in this, as in most other systems of Indian revenue, whatever might have been professed, the uniform practise was to take as much as could be got. What the cultivator gained by a fixed rent was exacted from him as a forced loan in aid of government.

There were at this time very few chiefs or Poligars. Those who might have become so by holding tracts of country at a fixed reduced rent on condition of military service, were rated at the full 'Kamil' assessment and their services remitted. The Poligars of Anantapúr, Raidrúg and Oukh, who had held the Dewani and other great offices of state under the Vijayanagar Rajas, received their districts in jaghire for their maintenance and probably as the price of their revolt. The Anegundi Poligars though they preserved their independence for many years, when finally reduced were permitted in the same manner to hold Anegundi, Harpanhalli and a few other places. These jaghires though free at first were all afterwards subjected to a Peishkush (fixed tribute). The numerous petty Poligars who in after-years became so notorious and who committed so much mischief, arose between this period and the reign of the emperor Aurungzebe.

The Government under Aurungzebe.—The emperor appears to have adopted the 'Kamil' which he found established, for it is by it (after making allowance for loss) that lands are valued in his sanads. No documents now remain whence the amount of

the revenue in his reign can be ascertained, but it was probably a good deal below the 'Kamil,' because in most of his grants the Kamil is entered and a deduction made for waste. This decrease of cultivation was no doubt due to the depredations of the Poligars, during the decline of the Bijapúr and Hyderabad kingdoms previous to their total subjugation by the emperor.

The Mahrattas.—Nor is there any possibility now of discovering what the revenue was under the Mahrattas, when in 1756 they defeated the Nawab of Cuddapah and compelled him to surrender half his country.

Hyder Ali.—The assessment fixed by Hyder Ali was Controy Pagodas 19,77,776 (= Rupees 59,33,328). Though he endeavoured to augment the revenue by the resumption of Inams and Russooms, and in some instances by the conversion of Peishkush into rent, it is not probable that he realized more than had been collected under the Mahratta government. This result may be ascribed to the ravages committed by the troops on both sides while he was engaged in subduing the different chiefs who possessed the ceded districts; to the falsification of accounts always practised by the Karnams on a change of government; and to the fact that his invasion of the Carnatic in the following year (1780) gave him no time to enquire thoroughly into the revenue system. The resumption of Inams and Russooms added from 5 to 10 per cent. to the revenue. The assessment was also raised in several districts where it had fallen far below the "Kamil" assessment.

Tippu Sultan.—The revenue continued to increase from 1779 to 1788. Tippu Sultán raised it by the same means as his father the resumption of Inams, the augmentation of low rents, and the expulsion of the Poligars. In many taluqs the rise was the result naturally following several years of tranquillity and vigorous administration. The actual assessment of 1788 was C. Pagodas 22,77,999 (= Rupees 68,33,997) though about three lakhs were afterwards remitted.

Government under the Nizam.—Between 1788 and 1799 the revenue fell off considerably, for the collections dwindled down from C. Pagodas 19,81,758 to C. Pagodas 15,02,608. The diminution was much less considerable in those districts which had remained under Tippu Sultán than in those which had been ceded to the Nizam by the treaty of 1792. In these the decay was rapid from the weakness of the government, from the constant changes of

managers, and from the return of the Poligars to whom new districts were given in addition to their old ones in return for 'Nuzzeranas.' It was also hastened by increasing the rents to the utmost, and exacting, exclusive of fines for offences, sums from every head farmer according to his reputed wealth and by turning loose ill-paid horsemen to collect their arrears by Tunkhas ("requisitions") on the villages where they lived at free cost, and by their outrages drove many of the inhabitants away. The collections of the government usually exceeded their settlements, because they paid no regard to their engagements but levied additional sums wherever there was an extra produce. They were higher in some years in many of the Cuddapah taluqs than they had been even under Tippu Sultan, but as they were made without any principle they could not possibly be permanent. It was not so much the sum raised as the unskilful mode of doing it that exhausted the country.

In Gooty, Bellary, Raidrúg and Pennakonda the revenue was reduced partly from the causes alluded to above, but in a greater degree by a severe famine which extended over all the western districts in 1792 and 1793. Had the officers of government lowered the assessment or even allowed it to remain as it was, the effects of the famine would probably only have been felt so long as it lasted but as they raised it nearly 50 per cent. wherever there was a crop, this addition to the high prices necessarily ruling rendered grain so dear that very little could be purchased by the lower classes of the inhabitants and great numbers of them perished in consequence. The famine also visited Harpanhalli, but as the Amildar was a man who conducted himself with great moderation, its effects were not so marked as in the southern districts.

The Jaghire of Adoni.—The revenue in the jaghire of Adoni had been steadily falling for a series of years. In 1752 when the district was in the possession of Mohdin Khan the assessment was C. Pagodas 3,17,001, at which rate it continued with little variation till 1757 when in consequence of a famine which had happened in the preceding year and probably also through indolent management on the part of Basalut Jung who had just succeeded to the jaghire it fell in the course of a few years to C. Pagodas 2,27,727. It remained nearly at the same level till 1781 when Mohabat Jung having succeeded to the jaghire it fell in three or four years to C. Pagodas 1,98,022, at which it stood till 1792. But from the loss of population by the famine of that year it fell in 1793 to C.

Pagodas 1,56,000, and continued still to descend till 1799 when it was C. Pagodas 1,32,451. It was not so much the famines of 1756 and 1792 as the weak administration of affairs that had ruined the country. The revenue of Adoni had for a long period been entirely under the charge of three Zemindars who were responsible for all failures. The officers of government had scarcely any communication with the cultivators, and as they were frequently desirous of anticipating the kists they had no means of doing so but by seizing the persons of the Zemindars. These on the other hand, in order to secure themselves against such indignity, augmented the number of their followers and paid them from the revenue, and in time they became so powerful that a military force was usually required to make them pay their arrears. Every person who advanced a few thousand Rupees to the Circar was permitted to re-pay himself in any way he chose. A writing was given specifying that the bearer had advanced money to government and that he was authorized to raise it in a certain village. Armed with this power the adventurer collected a party of peons, surrounded the village and confined or tortured the principal inhabitants till they discovered their wealth. Every head of a village who had a dispute with the head of a neighbouring one was at liberty, on paying a small sum, to march with all his adherents against him and put him to death if he fell into his hands. Many lives were lost and villages burned in these petty conflicts, and, amidst such scenes of outrage and anarchy, it is not surprising that the cultivated portion of the district should have been reduced to one-half of its former extent.

During the Mysore wars the country was over-run by armies of plundering horse and by hordes of Brinjaris no less destructive. Both were alike active in carrying off whatever was valuable and in destroying what they could not remove, and, being masters not only of the open country but likewise of almost all the forts, they were enabled at their leisure to rob the rich inhabitants, who with their effects had taken refuge in them from the first fury of invasion."

The systems of assessment and the fluctuations of the land revenue, down to the time when the district passed into the possession of the British government, have now been briefly explained.

After due consideration of the data given above, Colonel Monro was of opinion that the revenue of the ceded districts should amount to rather more than 20 lakhs of Pagodas, one year being taken with another, and his argument is as follows:

It is not probable that the full amount of the 'Kamil' assessment was ever collected. If $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs be deducted, the balance will nearly represent the real collections. Hyder Ali succeeded in collecting nearly the full assessment, but Tippu notoriously over-assessed his districts and never collected within 2 lakhs of his standard. The approximate collections therefore were:

| | | | |
|--|-----|------------|-----------|
| Total 'Kamil' (after deducting $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs) | = | C. Pagodas | 22,34,188 |
| Revenue between 1750 and 1760.... | = | do. | 19,79,975 |
| Revenue in 1779 (deducting 30,000 from standard)..... | } = | do. | 19,47,776 |
| Revenue from 1784 to 1788 (deduct- ing 2,30,000)..... | } = | do. | 20,54,244 |

Total C. Pagodas...82,16,183

The average C. Pagodas 20,54,046 (Rupees 61,62,138) represented in Colonel Monro's opinion a fair annual revenue.

SECTION II.

REVENUE HISTORY FROM THE CESSION OF THE COUNTRY TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE TRIENNIAL LEASE.

Sketch of the condition of the district—Colonel Monro the first Collector—Official division of the district—The ryotwari settlement introduced—The survey—System of assessment—Inam lands—Village Service Inams—Monro's scale—Account of the survey and settlement—The season and cultivation from 1800—1804, the famine, the great storm—Instructions to introduce the system of leases—The opinion of the Collector asked—Colonel Monro's objections—His summary of the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems—Abstract of his proposed settlement—His second plan—The objection of the Governor to the renting system—Minutes by Mr. Thackeray and Mr. Hodgson—Instructions to Collectors on the subject—Colonel Monro resigns—Re-distribution of the district—Introduction of the Triennial Lease—Unfavorable reports of the Collectors—Their objections combated by the Board—The villages to be leased for 10 years.

Sketch of the condition of the district.—The state of the district in 1800 when we received it from the officers of the Nizam has been thus described:—"Probably no part of Southern India was in a more

unsettled state or less acquainted either by experience or tradition with the blessings of a settled government. The collection of the revenue being entrusted entirely to Zemindars, Poligars and Potails, each of these became the leader of a little army, and carried on destructive feuds with the villages immediately contiguous to him. Bands of robbers wandered through the country, plundering and murdering such travellers as refused to submit to their exactions, while the government conscious of its own weakness scarcely attempted to interfere. It is computed that in the year 1800 when the ceded districts were transferred to the Company's rule, there were scattered through them, exclusive of the Nizam's troops, about 30,000 armed peons, the whole of whom under the command of eighty Poligars, subsisted by rapine and committed everywhere the greatest excesses."—(*Gleig's Life of Monro.*)

Colonel Monro the first Collector.—To rule over this turbulent province, Major (afterwards Sir Thomas) Monro was, at his own request, transferred from Canara, and four assistants were placed at his disposal.

At this time the ceded districts were divided into 37 taluqs, yielding a revenue of something under 49 lakhs of Rupees per annum. These Colonel Monro apportioned among his assistants, reserving for himself the southern taluqs of the Bellary district and making his head-quarters at Anantapúr.

The four Sub-Collectors as they are styled in the records were stationed at Harpanhalli, Adoni, Cuddapah and Kambham. The last two sub-divisions have nothing to do with the present Bellary district and need no further remark.

Official Division of the district.—The 20 taluqs comprised in the Bellary district were thus apportioned. The eleven taluqs of Gooty, Yadiki, Chennampalli, Raidrúg, Tádmari, Tádpatri, Anantapúr, Dharmaveram, Kodikonda, (now Hindipúr), Pennakonda and Madak-sira were under the immediate charge of Colonel Monro. The Harpanhalli division under Mr. Cochrane consisted of the Bellary, Hadagalli, Kúdlighi, Harpanhalli and Kampli, (now Hospett) taluqs; while to Mr. Thackeray at Adoni were entrusted those of Adoni,* Nagaldinna, Gúliem (now Alúr) and Pauchapalliem.

The Ryotwari Settlement introduced.—Instead of collecting the revenue by the agency of renters intermediate between the govern-

ment and the cultivators, a new system was introduced. The Collector entered into direct engagements with every ryot or cultivator for the revenue he was to pay on account of the land he occupied. This mode of renting has generally been called a *ryotwar settlement*. There was some slight opposition at first on the part of the potails, but in time their objections passed away. For the future their concern with the revenues of the villages to which they belonged was confined to "the duty originally assigned to them under the Hindu governments, of collecting on behalf of government, the rent due by the ryots, subject to the control and under the orders of the Company's Collector."

The Survey.—In connection with this new mode of management, and in order to secure the advantages to be derived from it, a regular survey of the lands was undertaken, "by which was ascertained the actual extent of land cultivated, the different descriptions of it, both with reference to the tenures under which it was held and the kinds of produce which it yielded, what quantity a given portion of seed would yield of a particular produce, and what was the extent of land either uncultivated or waste."

The System of Assessment.—As the survey progressed, and the value of the different kinds of soil was ascertained, measures were taken to fix the rates of assessment: "The share of the produce considered to belong to the Circar was converted into a fixed money-rent regulated by the price of grain in the market for a series of years. The cultivator thus enjoyed exclusively without any participation on the part of government, the benefits of whatever additional labour or additional improvements he might bestow on the land while the demand on him being simplified and defined, was calculated to relieve him as well as the State from the frauds and impositions which the revenue officers were at all times disposed to practise." "Alterations in the assessment were indeed gradually made, as the circumstances of the cultivator and the state of agriculture improved, in order to raise it to what was considered the *standard rent*, but having reached that point it remained at that amount unless the ryot under his yearly settlements either threw up part of his land or extended his cultivation by engaging for a larger quantity."

"The first thing to be done under a ryotwar settlement was for the Collector or his assistants to make a tour at the commencement

of the season for the purpose of learning from the ryots, who were assembled at convenient situations, their engagements for cultivation. This being ascertained, it was then settled what should be the utmost demand to which they were liable for the year. If the country was in an ordinary state of prosperity, that is, if no circumstances of so adverse a nature had occurred as to render the ryots unable, with reference to the productiveness of their land to answer for an amount of revenue equal to the survey or standard rent, that amount was declared to be the demand. On the other hand, if the districts had by any calamity been reduced to a state of distress, and if the circumstances of the ryot rendered him unable to pay the standard assessment, it was lowered, and to such as stood in need of it, Tuccavi or advances of money were made to purchase seeds and implements and to hire labourers." "Under this mode of adjusting the rents of a village, the ryot knew before he set his oxen to the plough and dropped his seed into the ground what was the utmost limit of rent that he could be called on to pay, and was aware that in an unfavourable season an abatement of that demand would be made in his favour if his diminished means rendered him unable to satisfy it. He also knew that if the Potal required him to pay more than the sum at which his rent had been fixed, he had only to prefer his complaint to secure redress. His puttah not only specified the land he occupied but also the rent he had to pay, while the receipt which the Potal was obliged to grant him for every payment he made was evidence of what he had actually accounted for as rent. He further knew that the advantage of additional labour employed upon his fields would be all his own, as well as the advantage of increased produce in an abundant season."

Inam Lands.—With regard to Inam lands the principle on which the Collector acted is stated in his letter to government of July 7, 1801 :—"As the country" he says "had been transferred upon the valuation of the schedule of 1792, it appeared to me that there could not be a fairer principle assumed for regulating the Inams than that of the standard of that period. I therefore directed that all of a subsequent date should be re-annexed to the Circar lands. The district of Adoni forming no part of the cessions of 1792, I did not limit the Inams there to any particular year but allowed all those to be retained which had been recognized by the Nizam or by Basalat Jung."

Collector to Government,
July 7,
1801.

On the other hand, all Inams that had been enjoyed under Tippu Sultán but discontinued by the Hyderabad government were restored.

Collector to Board,
31st January 1804.

Village Service Inams.—An enquiry was also instituted into the tenure of existing Service Inams, and as a temporary measure most of them were summarily resumed. Under the weak administration of the Nizam and during the Mahratta war numerous unauthorized alienations had been made. Each petty Poligar pretended to assign away as Inam, land which never belonged to him, while the Potails and Karnams during the general distraction surreptitiously added field after field to their already large Inams.

Soon after taking charge of the district, Colonel Monro stated that "the Inams were above 54 per cent. of the land rent," and about half of these lands were attached to village offices. These village Inams were established under the Vijayanagar government, and a few of the original sanads were then existing, though too few to enable the Collector to decide with certainty on what grounds, or in what proportion to the extent of the village they had originally been granted. Under Tippu they were for a time resumed, and a monthly payment substituted. Monro was in favor of remunerating the village officers with Inams, as he believed this would assist the introduction of a system of private property. He therefore drew up a scale of remuneration for village officers, regulated by the rent roll of the village. Every Potal who possessed an Inam greater by 10 per cent. than that laid down in the scale was compelled to cultivate, or at all events to pay assessment on, a certain quantity of waste land which was called his "Appanam Puttah." This appanam system was only done away with two years ago. Till that time no Potal was at liberty to resign his appanam land, but was obliged to pay the assessment on it, whether he cultivated it or not, so long as his Inam continued in excess of the prescribed scale. A copy of "Monro's Scale" will be found in the appendix.

From Collector to
Board, 23rd June
1801.

Account of the Survey and Settlement.—It has been mentioned that one of the first measures carried out by Colonel Monro was a minute and trustworthy survey and a classification of all the land in the district. The survey was commenced in 1802 and finished in 1805. The classification of the lands began in 1804 and was completed in 1806. In the survey account thus prepared, the extent

of each field (or number) is given with its boundaries, and cultivated lands are distinguished from the waste, and Circar lands from Inam. The area is calculated by the English acre, which is subdivided into 40 guntas, each gunta being 11 yards square.

The surveyors were paid according to the work done, and the average pay earned by them was about Rupees 21 per month. To examine the work performed by these men, Inspection parties were employed, whose chief business was to re-measure the lands of the Potails and Karnams, and the Village Inams. Azmaishdars were employed to classify the land so surveyed, while Head classifiers came after them and revised the work done. The accounts were afterwards examined and approved by the Collector in the presence of the villagers concerned.

In reporting the conclusion of the survey, some general remarks on the condition of the district and some statistics were given by the Collector which may be abstracted in this place. During the progress of the survey a general census had been taken and the population was estimated at 1,917,376 souls, a number greater by 689,263 than is shown in similar returns prepared in 1802. The number of black cattle was estimated at 1,198,613, and that of buffaloes at 403,906, although a considerable number of both had perished in the severe droughts of 1802 and 1803.

The quantity of Circar land under cultivation was 3,203,859 acres on which the assessment was Star Pagodas 17,08,115, and the quit-rent, and extra rent Star Pagodas 1,44,840; in all Star Pagodas 18,52,955 (= Rupees 55,58,865.) The waste land including both that which had been in cultivation during the last twenty years, and that which from various causes was utterly unfit for cultivation, was estimated to be more than six million acres.

The cost of the survey was 80,000 Pagodas, or about 5 per cent. of the annual revenue.

The survey and classification of lands, the enquiry into the tenure of Inams, and the formation of an annual settlement on fixed and regular principles, occupied Colonel Monro's time and thoughts till the end of 1806.

The season and cultivation of 1800-1804; the famine; the great storm.—The revenue was collected with not a little difficulty for the first four years of Colonel Monro's administration. "At the time of the cession the resources of the district had been

greatly impaired by the frequent change of masters, the ravages of large bodies of horse and Pindaris during the Mysore wars, the commotions of rebellious Poligars, the effects of the famine in 1792 and 1793, and the still more recent abuses and oppressions of the Nizam's government." The seasons of 1801 and 1802 were very unfavorable, and in 1803 the scarcity almost amounted to famine. Colonel Monro in a letter to the Board states that the state of the season was worse than had ever been known before, worse even than that of 1792 when rice sold for two seers for the rupee. Prices rose from 200 to 300 per cent., and the ryots in large bodies emigrated. The famine was even more severely felt in the Kambham division and in the Nizam's territories, and Colonel Monro was induced to suspend all duties on the importation of grain, and to impose an *ad valorem* duty of 3 per cent. on all grain sent beyond the Túngabadra. The scarcity continued in 1804, and the usual south-west monsoon almost entirely failed. Cattle died in large numbers and emigration still went on. This lasted till October 1804 when at the break of the monsoon the district was visited by a series of terrific storms. Tanks were breached all over the country, and irrigation channels and wells choked up and utterly spoiled. In a letter written a few months after this catastrophe, the Principal Collector informs the Board that seven lakhs of rupees will be required to make good the damage done, and expresses his opinion that not less than 1,000 tanks had been breached, and 800 channels and wells utterly spoiled. But neither scarcity nor ruin daunted Monro and his subordinates. The duty on exportations was at once taken off, the needful remissions were made, advances to a large extent given, and every effort was made to repair as many of the irrigation works as time would allow. The damage caused was to a great extent counter-balanced by the great increase of cultivation all over the district on dry lands, and on the lands irrigated by tanks which had remained undamaged; and towards the end of the year the Collector reported the season to have been the best the district had ever seen. The following year (1805) was also an extremely favorable one. The area of cultivation was increased to a great extent, and the collections continued steadily to rise. The collections this year amounted to C. Pagodas 19,28,288; being less than the settlement of Tippu Sultán in 1789, (when the country had not as yet suffered from the causes above alluded to) by C. Pagodas 50,632. In reporting on the settlement for the year (Fasli 1215) Colonel Monro wrote: "The settiement is

now nearly as high as it ought to be, and it is not likely that it can for some years receive any material augmentation. Whatever increase of revenue may be obtained from the raising of the rents in the taluqs as yet unsurveyed, or from increase of cultivation in some of those already surveyed, will most probably be counter-balanced by a diminution of cultivation in others, for the present season has been remarkably favorable, and a greater quantity of land has in consequence been cultivated than can be expected to be permanently occupied until the circumstances of the inhabitants are better than they now are."

Instructions to introduce a system of leases. The opinions of the Collectors asked.—The system thus inaugurated was excellent in theory and worked well in practice, but it was viewed with disfavor by the Bengal school of statesmen. About this time the Government of Fort St. George received a Despatch from the Supreme Government directing the introduction of triennial village rents as a preliminary step to a permanent settlement of the land revenue.

The Madras authorities (especially Lord William Bentinck, the Governor, who had succeeded Lord Clive in 1803) were opposed to the proposed alteration, but in order to carry out the instructions they

To Colonel Monro,
27th December 1804.

had received they called on the Collectors "severally to report the nature and terms of the lease they thought best adapted to the particular circumstances of their respective districts."

Colonel Monro's objection.—In replying to this communication Colonel Monro gave it as his opinion that the abolition of the system by which the revenues of the State had been received direct from the culti-

From Col. Monro,
25th August 1805.

vator would be attended with injurious consequences, and that the arrangement which it was proposed to introduce in its stead was ill-adapted to the province under his charge. It appeared to him that "the institutions of the people; the obligation which their religion imposed on persons of both sexes of marrying at an early age, the equal division of the land amongst all the sons, and the general practice of adoption in default of male issue, were incompatible with the existence of large estates, and that any attempt to introduce such a system would be only forcing for a time the landed property of the country from the form in which it had always been and to which it must inevitably return." He went on to show that the Reddi Mirasidars would be the only class of people likely to become land-

holders, and that they were totally unfit for the duties it was proposed to impose upon them. "So far from promoting any improvement by assisting the poorer classes with advances or allowing them to participate in the remissions granted by Government, they may be expected to press heavily on the ryots and reduce them to a worse state than that in which they find them."

The proposed system of farming out villages for three years was most distasteful to him. He too clearly saw what the result would be if a speculator or adventurer were allowed to come between the Government Officer and the cultivator. He foresaw the mismanagement and the oppression which would ensue, and to the proposed measure he offered the strongest opposition. A settlement direct with the cultivators appeared to him "more suited to the manners and prejudices of the inhabitants, because it was the system which had always been followed; more adapted to the narrowness of their circumstances, because it does not insist on the same amount of revenue being paid every year but limits it by the extent of cultivation which increases or diminishes as the season is favorable or otherwise; more likely to reclaim them from their wandering habits and fix them to their fields by giving them an interest in their improvement; less liable to embarrass the Government by considerable failures, and more calculated to promote the general prosperity of the country and the people." Believing also "that the system of great estates would raise less produce from the soil than that of small farms; that it would be far more liable to failures and afford less security to the revenue; that it would be less agreeable to the inhabitants, and that it could not be permanent because their laws and customs continually urge on the rapid division of landed property," he was induced to recommend the ryotwar system or settlement with the cultivators, not only as a temporary arrangement but as a permanency.

His summary of the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems.—In a later letter Colonel Monro rapidly sums up the comparative advantages of a Ryotwari and Zemindari settlement. Of this letter an abstract is given:—

To Government
20th June 1806.

I. The advantages of a ryotwari settlement are:

- a. That it causes no innovation, but perpetuates the ancient custom.

- b. That it diffuses more widely than any other system the benefits of private property in land.
- c. It is well adapted to the narrow circumstances of the ryots.
- d. It tends to make the ryots more independent.
- e. It enables the country to yield a greater produce and perhaps a higher revenue than any other system does.

The disadvantages of a Ryotwari settlement are:—

- a. The expense of collection.
- b. The great detail of accounts.
- c. The interference of revenue servants in the agricultural concerns of the ryots.
- d. The difficulty of repairing great tanks.
- e. The necessity of issuing Tuccavi (advances.)
- f. The fluctuation of revenue.

II. The advantages of a Zemindari system are:—

- a. The immediate encouragement of agriculture.
- b. The possibility of apportioning the rents to the circumstances of the ryots.
- c. Indulgence to the ryots in general and in particular to the poorer classes.
- d. The speedy establishment of private ownership in land.
- e. The possibility of reducing the number of revenue servants and the expenses of collection.
- f. The transfer from government to individuals of the direction of tank repairs.

The disadvantages of a Zemindari system are:—

- a. Altering the established state of things.
- b. The concentrating of landed property in a few hands.
- c. The power of raising at will the rent of the ryots.
- d. The general poverty of the Potails, the class most likely to become Proprietors.

After considering at some length all that could be urged on either side, Colonel Monro pronounced very strongly in favor of an individual or ryotwari settlement.

A set of rules for the formation of a ryotwari settlement was therefore drawn up by the Collector. The object he proposed to himself was to render "the cultivators stationary, the lands saleable, and the farms small estates."

Abstract of his proposed settlement.—The main principle of the arrangement then proposed by the Principal Collector was “that every village and every taluq should have a standard rental to be fixed by the survey then in progress; that a reduction of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. should be made from the survey assessment, and all extra cultivation of waste lands, not exceeding 10 per cent. of the assessment, given up rent-free to the ryots of the district generally, and lastly, that every ryot should be considered the proprietor of the land he occupied so long as he continued to pay the established assessment.”

To Board, 25th August 1805.

This was the scheme submitted to the Board as the one which was in the opinion of Colonel Monro most suited to the requirements of the district. It was his opinion, that by this arrangement and by gradually allowing the ryots to contract or extend their cultivation at pleasure they would be led to relinquish their wandering habits, and that in the course of 20 or 25 years land would attain sufficient value to be generally saleable and would be converted into small estates like those on the Malabar Coast.

This letter of Colonel Monro's was dated August 25th, 1805, (the beginning of Fasli 1215.) The season of the following year (Fasli 1216) proved exceedingly adverse from the failure of the periodical rains, and the revenue in consequence was three lakhs of Rupees below the revenue of the preceding year.

At the commencement of Fasli 1217, the Principal Collector reported the completion of the survey and once more resumed the subject of the settlement which he considered best adapted for the district, and after again adverting to the relative advantages and defects of the Zemindari and ryotwari systems he concluded by earnestly recommending government to adhere to the latter system, and to give to the cultivators the benefit of the remission which in the other case would be conferred on the Proprietors.

From Col. Monro, 15th August 1807.

His second plan.—The main principle of the plan he now proposed was, that a remission of 25 per cent. on the survey rate of assessment should be allowed on all lands; an additional reduction of 8 per cent, making together 33 per cent, on all lands watered by wells, or by water raised by machinery from rivers and nullahs, provided the cultivators should agree to keep the wells or embankments in repair at their own expense; that a similar reduction

should be given on lands watered by small tanks, the cultivators in this case also agreeing to bear the expense of repairs; that the ryots should be at liberty at the end of every year either to throw up a part of the land or to occupy more according to their circumstances, provided only that they threw up or took proportional shares of good and bad together; that every ryot should be considered proprietor of the soil so long as he paid his rent, and should be at liberty to let or sell his field at pleasure, and lastly, that all unoccupied land should be reserved to the government, and the rent thereof when brought under cultivation added to the "Jamma," (Revenue.)

These with other minor provisions formed the principal groundwork of the proposed arrangement. It was urged by the Principal Collector that "besides being calculated to produce an immediate revenue at least equalising that to which the demand of government would be for ever limited under the Zemindari system, it would have the further advantage of leaving the land-rent to increase with the population and wealth of the country; of being better suited to the means and institutions of the people, and, (by making the remission to those by whom the land is cultivated and from whom all rent is in fact derived), of fixing the ryots to their farms instead of keeping them as before for ever unsettled without attachment to their lands, without any wish to improve them, and wandering from one Zemindari to another in search of more favorable terms."

As the cultivation had increased nearly one half between 1800 and 1805, notwithstanding the gradual raising of the rent by the survey, he thought there "could be no doubt of its continuing to extend rapidly after the reduction of 25 per cent. from the assessment, although from the inadequacy of the population, not perhaps in the same extraordinary degree as before; there being at that time actually in cultivation lands lately taken up from waste paying 60,000 Pagodas less than the fixed assessment, which sum remained to be added to the jamma in the course of four or five years."

With regard to the period when his proposed reduction of rates should come into force, Colonel Monro observed: "As long as the public exigencies require a high revenue, the present assessment may be realized after making the usual allowances for bad seasons, &c., but when government is in a position to relinquish part of its

demand, the proposed remission is that which would place the ceded districts on an equality with those provinces where the permanent settlement has already been established. It would in the meantime, however, be advisable to grant the remission, without delay, to wells, in order to induce the ryots to repair them, for it is chiefly by the cultivation of well-lands that the country is secured against scarcity."

Under the system above described, the Collector conceived that the land-rent would rise a lakh of Pagodas in four years, and that at the end of 10 or 15 years it would probably be so far increased as to make up for the original remission, and that the yearly revenue would then be from 17½ to 18 lakhs of Pagodas.

The objection of the Governor; Minutes of Mr. Thackeray and Mr. Hodgson.—The Government of Madras was also opposed to the projected change. The Governor, Lord William Bentinck, wrote: "The more I consider this important question the stronger is my conviction . . . that the creation of Zemindars is a measure incompatible with the true interest of the government and of the community at large. . . I fully concur in the application of the system to the existing circumstances of Bengal, but here the same circumstances do not exist." Mr. Thackeray, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, was deputed to make a tour through the recently-acquired districts, in order that he might submit a report as to the revenue system which it would be desirable to pursue. He reported very strongly in favour of a ryotwari settlement. A Minute, advocating opposite views was drawn up by Mr. Hodgson, also a Member of the Board of Revenue. These two reports which bring forward and exhaust all the arguments which can be used on either side, will be found in the Appendix of the fifth Report of the Committee of the House of Commons (1810.)

Lease-hold system insisted on.—But the Supreme Government considered that what was suitable for Bengal must of necessity be suited to the rest of India, and they still pressed for a return to the system of village settlements which had formerly been adopted in the different districts, but which had been superseded by the more detailed system of settling with each individual cultivator.

Instructions to Collectors on the subject.—It was therefore directed that the necessary steps should be taken for introducing the "village-rent system" into all the government lands in the Presi-

gency of Fort St. George, and instructions to this effect were circulated by the Board to all districts. The Board stated it to be their

From Board, 25th April 1808. opinion that the system of renting out villages would be found more economical, and that the revenue would be collected with more facility.

From Board, 25th May 1808. It was supposed by them to have the "further

recommendation of according with the long established usage of the country; of being compatible with its progressive improvement; of being adapted to the system of judicature recently introduced into the country, and of facilitating the future introduction of a permanent settlement." According to the principles prescribed for the formation of the new settlement, the chief cultivators were to farm the revenues of their respective villages upon such terms as might be deemed moderate and equitable. The rents were to be payable under all circumstances, and no deduction was to be made in adverse seasons. In the event of the Pottail or chief cultivators refusing to farm the village, the Collector was empowered to arrange with any stranger who might be willing to do so.

Colonel Monro resigns--Re-distribution of the districts.—About this time (October 1807) Colonel Monro resigned his appointment with the view of returning to England. On his resignation the government "deemed it to be inexpedient to continue the appointment of a Principal Collector, and directed the country to be divided into three separate divisions or collectorates, corresponding with the jurisdiction of the Zillah Courts then recently established." In pursuance of this arrangement, Bellary, (Mr. Gahagan), Cuddapah, (Mr. Chaplin), and Kodikonda, (Mr. Travers), were fixed upon as the head stations of the three collectorates. This arrangement only lasted for one year, for in 1808, on the death of Mr. Shaw, then Collector, the Kodikonda division was absorbed in the other two, and the Ceded districts were divided into the Bellary and Cuddapah Zillahs; Cuddapah being entrusted to Mr. Ross, and Bellary to Mr. Chaplin.

In the Cuddapah Zillah the triennial lease was introduced from Fasli 1218. In the Bellary district on account of the very unfavorable nature of the season, and at the special request of the Collector its introduction was postponed for one year. The subjoined table shows the annual revenue in the Bellary Zillah alone, from the cession of the province (A. D. 1800) to the conclusion of the triennial lease

| Faslis. | | Annual Assess- ment exclusive of Moturpha. | Collection. | Balance written off. |
|---|-----------|--|-------------|-------------------------|
| Amani (under the direct management of Government.) | | RS. | RS. | RS. |
| | 1210 | 16,51,648 | 16,50,910 | 737 |
| | 1211 | 19,59,732 | 19,57,436 | 2,295 |
| | 1212 | 19,95,849 | 19,95,849 | |
| | 1213 | 21,47,170 | 21,47,170 | |
| | 1214 | 25,21,353 | 25,21,353 | |
| | 1215 | 27,26,857 | 27,26,224 | 633 |
| | 1216 | 24,25,979 | 24,25,979 | |
| | 1217 | 23,53,479 | 23,53,479 | |
| 1218 | 26,67,963 | 26,64,377 | 3,585 | |
| Triennial Lease. | Total... | 2,04,50,030 | 2,04,42,780 | 7,252 |
| | Average | 22,72,226 | 22,71,420 | |
| | 1219 | 24,02,697 | 23,96,498 | 6,199 |
| | 1220 | 25,65,590 | 25,16,553 | 49,036 |
| | 1221 | 26,47,927 | 25,73,201 | 74,726 |
| | Total... | 76,16,215 | 74,86,252 | 1,29,962 |
| | Average | 25,38,738 | 24,95,414 | |

The triennial lease system commenced in the district in Fasli 1219 (1809-1810) and continued till Fasli 1221 (1811-1812).

Introduction of the Triennial Lease--reports of the Collectors.

—The season during Fasli 1219 (1809-1810) was very unfavorable. The periodical rains failed, chiefly in the northern taluqs, and the crops all over the district were below the average. The Collector's own opinion, which he urged forcibly on the Board, was that the introduction of the lease system was to say the least of it premature, and that it pressed hardly on all classes. The system on which he disposed of the leases is best described in his own words: "A decided preference was given to the offers of the Potails and Mirasidars whenever they would consent to reasonable conditions, and in general this class of people were retained in their situations as chiefs of villages. In many instances no doubt the Mirasidars apprehensive of being turned out of what they term their estates, of which they have had possession for many generations, and fearful of being superseded in their stations of hereditary management by new comers, have accepted higher conditions of rent than the extent of the cultivation and the scanty means of their under-tenants, will enable them to fulfil." As a rule, "in fixing the rent of a village, its general state of cultivation and capacity of improvement, as well as the means of the inhabitants and the ability of the Potal, were taken into consideration. The renters were generally speaking, left to collect the full survey rent of the lands occupied by the inhabitants, whether the crop had failed entirely or partially. It is to be hoped, however, that their own interest in the promotion of the cultivation of the ensuing year will prevent them from making an undue use of their authority. Many farmers will however look to present profits rather than to future success, and as there is no restriction upon the relinquishment of land by the ryots, there will be considerable emigration from one part of the country to the other."

The Revenue Board in submitting this report to government, by no means adopt the views of the Collector. They attribute everything to the unfavorable nature of the past season, and "consider the prospect which these engagements hold forth in the event of a prosperous season to be very satisfactory. They therefore recommended to government the rendering permanent of the village leases.

The revenue realized from the country during this lease, if viewed only with reference to the amount, would appear to be by no means

Board to Govern-
ment, 29th October
1810.

unfavorable, but it is to be feared that its effects were in no slight degree injurious to the real interests of the State as well as of the people. It was stated by the Collectors of Cuddapah and Bellary that "in some cases from the oppressions, in others from the weakness of the renters, the resources of the country had suffered material injury; that the collections had been realized with difficulty; that notwithstanding their endeavours to restrict the ryots from throwing up their lands or availing themselves of better offers from other renters or Inamdars, the cultivation of many villages had very much diminished from that cause, and they were apprehensive that the losses which the Potails (for they were the renters) had incurred, would deter them from undertaking the responsibility of another rent." "I believe" said the Collector of Cuddapah, "that few or

From Mr. Ross,
January 19th, 1811.

none have been benefitted by their bargain, nearly all have been losers, some have been ruined."

Mr. Chaplin speaks still more strongly: "So many of the renters" he observes, "have suffered losses by undertaking the tricennial rent that probably not ten in a

From Mr. Chaplin,
5th October 1811.

hundred, except in a particular district or two, will of themselves come forward to offer for the

septennial or decennial leases. The fear of being dispossessed of their mirás, enmities and jealousies, competitions and rival-ships, persuasion and intimidation, a display of advantages which do not exist, and many other means and motives must all be called into action before they will consent without great reductions to become septennial or decennial renters. A few being thus gained over, the rest will readily follow the example." Both these gentlemen were advocates for a settlement with the cultivators. But the Collector of Cuddapah assuming the continuance of the renting system to have been already determined upon, confined himself to the consideration of the nature and terms of the lease most likely to secure success. The Collector of Bellary, on the other hand, recommended a return to a ryotwari settlement upon the principles suggested by Colonel Monro. The evils prophesied by that officer, Mr. Chaplin thought, had been fully realized. During the trial which had been already made, the competition for the stock and labour of the cultivating classes had led many even of the most substantial ryots to leave their villages, and he thought that the further prosecution of the system could only tend to reduce the resources of the country still lower.

To the Board, however, it appeared that the difficulties represented by the Collectors had not arisen from any defect inherent in the system itself, but were rather to be ascribed to the effects of too high a rent and too short a lease; to the fall in the value of produce, and to the discontinuance of certain restrictions formerly imposed on cultivators but then no longer capable of being practised in consequence of the institution of Civil Courts. These and other considerations connected with the finances of government (which were not in a condition to admit of the arrangement proposed by Colonel Monro and supported by Mr. Chaplin) induced the Board again to recommend to government that the present settlement should be declared permanent.

These objections confuted by the Board.—The object of the Board, they said “is to fix the demand of government as it now stands, leaving it to the people to acquire private property in the soil by improvements and by raising the gross profits to such a degree that the proportion retained by the ryots shall amount to two-thirds or three-fourths of the gross produce instead of to only one-half as it now does. To effect this object a maximum must be fixed, the demand must be limited, and government must never exceed though they may remit part of that demand. It will be better to make the settlement so high as to require occasional remission than to grant a reduction at once to secure the revenue against losses which may never come.”

The government concurred generally in these remarks, and it was resolved to commence with a decennial lease to be developed eventually into a fixed settlement. A standard rent was to be fixed for each village calculated upon the collections of past years, but the assessment on lands irrigated by large tanks was for the present to be conditional and dependent on the supply of water. Where the hereditary Potails might be willing to undertake the lease preference was to be given to them, but if they refused to accede to fair terms, their Inams were to be resumed and the settlement concluded with any other person.

Proceedings of
Board, 9th May and
1st July 1811.

From Government,
31st December 1811.

SECTION III.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DECENNIAL LEASE.

Introduction of decennial lease—The system pursued by the Collector—The first year—The second—The third—The fourth—Orders from the Directors to return to a ryotwari settlement—The fifth, sixth and seventh years—Mr. Thackeray's proposal for a settlement—Mr. Campbell appointed Collector—Mr. Thackeray's settlement approved—General reduction of rates ordered—Not attended to by Mr. Campbell, who submits another plan—His plan condemned—Mr. Robertson, Collector—Collections under the decennial lease-system.

The system pursued by the Collector.—The decennial lease commenced in Bellary in Fasli 1222 (A D. 1812) and as the Collector was of opinion that in a country where “the variation of season is so great as is in this part of the ceded districts, it would be in vain to attempt to estimate with tolerable accuracy what might possibly be the amount of future defalcations below the actual settlement; that balances must accrue in the very best seasons, and that no general reduction of the lease-settlement would effectually secure a fixed and certain revenue to be depended upon under all circumstances,” he appears to have calculated the rents of the respective villages with reference to the amount which he conceived them capable of yielding in favourable years, rather than from an expectation that they could be realized in all seasons. “I have” he says, “fixed a maximum rent which is calculated to secure the average of the collections of the seven previous years leaving out of the account years of dearth and calamity which will probably reduce the revenues *communibus annis* infinitely below the prescribed standard. “Remissions will of course be allowed as inseparable from the system and will be considered (as government has expressed its intention to consider them) as drawbacks the risk and burden of which are preferable to the certain loss which would be occasioned by the permanent reduction of the jamma.”

In all cases where the Potal Mirasidars acceded to what the Collector considered to be a fair rent, he made a point of accepting their tender in preference even to other competitors who offered to give

From Collector,
2nd May 1812; 1st
May 1813; 8th May
1814.

1st May 1813.

From Collector, 1st
May 1813.

substantial security for a higher revenue. On the other hand, when the Potails refused to agree to such conditions, he gave every encouragement to all classes of competitors whether ryots, resident inhabitants, or others, to come forward. In a great many of the taluqs he found an almost universal combination amongst the Mirasidars to force down the revenue which compelled him to have recourse to this measure of competition, and to avail himself of the authority which the Board had entrusted to him on former occasions of ousting such as were refractory. The possession however of the power was sufficient, and it was not often used, but it had the effect of inducing a large proportion of the Potails, who were in every respect the class of persons best suited for the management, to take their villages. Such as obstinately held out were told that their services were thenceforward dispensed with, and the Inam was in some cases given along with the village to those persons who offered the best terms.

The first year.—The first year of the lease (Fasli 1222) was productive of several failures, although the fear of being sent to jail sometimes induced the well-disposed when brought to the Huzur to make arrangements for their balances. There were however some cases in which the Collector was compelled to resort to distraint and confinement, while in others the defaulters escaped by flight. From the explanation given by Mr. Chaplin, it would appear that this untoward result was chiefly to be ascribed to the "mismanagement or incapacity of the renters, the opposition and intrigues of those who had been excluded from the lease, the general poverty and migration of the ryots, the combination of the inhabitants to enforce their own terms, and the frequent quarrels between joint-partners, by which the cultivation was often delayed until the season had passed by."

The second year.—Nor was the result of the second year more satisfactory. Notwithstanding the season proved more than usually favorable, and grain continued to maintain its price, the revenue was realized with difficulty and the balances continued to increase. The causes of this disappointment are detailed at great length in the Collector's letter of July 19, 1814, and appear to be little different from those already mentioned. The struggles between the ryots and the renters were stated to have led to the abandon-

From Collector, 20th
September 1813.

From Collector,
July 19, 1814, and
Janabandi Report
of Fasli 1223.

ment of the survey assessment: "In many of the districts the renters have been compelled to give up their lands upon the most reduced terms, and the ancient practice, which under the ryotwari system had become obsolete, of renting for a share of the produce, has been generally resorted to." But when the renters possessed sufficient authority to overcome the resistance of the ryots they took money wherever it was to be had, whether justly due or otherwise. In other instances "considerable losses have been sustained from the difficulty of collecting the rents from obstinate and refractory tenants who refused to perform engagements actually entered into and absconded in order to obtain an abatement of the demands against them." At the close of the Fasli, about two-fifths of the balance was due from persons who had collected the whole of the amount from their under-tenants, but from whom little or nothing could be recovered, their property having been previously concealed, and the only ostensible means of realizing the demand of the government being limited to the sale of their bullocks and implements of husbandry which, equally with the confinement of their persons, deprived them of the means of cultivating in the ensuing Fasli and entailed still further losses on the government.

The third year.—In the third year of the lease (Fasli 1224) the season and the harvest proved extremely favorable, and as the price of grain rose above the ordinary rates in consequence of the presence of the force composing the army of reserve, and of the large purchases by the Commissariat Department, it was expected that the rents would be realized with more than ordinary facility. But to the punctual collection of the Circar dues there were obstacles of a complicated and varied description. The more substantial ryots still persevered in withholding the balances of villages in which the rents had not only been collected by them without loss but in many instances with considerable profit. The struggle between the cultivators and the renters still prevailed and seemed likely to continue. A considerable loss had likewise arisen from a deficient cultivation in villages which had reverted to "Amani" management on the failure of the renters. Speaking of these villages, Mr. Chaplin remarks: "From the circumstances under which these failures occur, the resources of such villages are certain to suffer much dilapidation, and the ryots having in the meantime gone off to the neighbouring

From Collector, 11th
July 1815.

rented villages their cultivation must for some years be considerably reduced."

The fourth year.—The fourth year of the lease showed the same state of things (Fasli 1225). Many villages came back to the government, exhausted both in resources and in population, and with heavy balances caused by the flight or poverty of renters. It was the opinion of the Collector that very few of these failures were owing to over-assessment, the heaviest losses having been occasioned "by disputes among the renters themselves which have split the villages into parties and factions and thrown everything into confusion; by dissensions between the renters and their tenants, and by the emigration of ryots in search of cheap land."

From Collector, 10th
September 1816.

The Court of Directors send orders for a Return to a Ryotwari Settlement.—To the Board however it seemed that the ill-success which had marked the past progress of the lease had originated in too high an assessment, and they in consequence recommended the reduction of the rents or an immediate return to the ryotwari system, in pursuance of orders recently received from the Court of Directors for the re-establishment of that mode of settlement on the expiration of the existing engagements. Mr. Chaplin in reply pointed out at great length the difficulties which would attend the carrying out of the first of these proposals, and eventually it was determined to accept the surrender of the leases in all cases where the renters might be willing to relinquish them and to renew the settlements direct with the cultivators.

Board's Proceedings,
29th February 1816.

Hitherto the seasons had been favorable, and the system of leases had had in every way a fair trial, but in Fasli 1226 it was subjected to a severer test and failed still more signally.

From Collector, 30th
September 1817.

The rainfall was small and the harvest in consequence scanty. "It is the worst year that has occurred since the commencement of the decennial lease, and the effect of it has been to produce much difficulty in realizing the revenue from the lease-holders, of whom a great number indeed have become defaulters." The Collector availed himself of this circumstance to cancel a great number of the leases (as he was enabled to do under the terms of the puttah) and thus to bring back the villages under his own management. Other renters,

From Collector, 30th
September 1817.

availing themselves of the option given to them, voluntarily relinquished their leases. "Of the whole land revenue of the district which amounts to about Star Pagodas 8,82,800, the sum of Star Pagodas 4,13,300 only remains under the renting system, and more villages will, it is expected, be relinquished by the renters from the commencement of next Fasli."

The return to a ryotwari system had been rendered easy throughout the district, but when bringing this to the notice of Government the Board of Revenue endeavoured to cast the admitted failure of the village rent system upon the Collector, arguing that the principle itself was a sound one, but that it never had a fair trial. They urged that the Collector was unwise in concluding his settlements with the Reddi Mirasidars only, instead of with the main body of the ryots, and that he was also wrong in fixing the rents so high that "it was impossible that they should be advantageous to the renter under all the fluctuations in the seasons known and expected."

The Collector was however ordered to return as soon as possible to a ryotwari or field rent system.

Colonel Monro had returned to India in 1816 and was then in command of the field force at Dharwar. His opinion having been asked, he advised that the renters should be encouraged to surrender the leases still current by promising them remission of all outstanding balances, and this accomplished, that the assessment should be generally lowered as proposed in 1807. "A temporary loss of revenue will be the necessary consequence.....but this will soon be compensated by the revenue rising to its former level and continuing to advance progressively under a lighter taxation and a greater encouragement to agriculture." These proposals having been approved by Government the Collector was desired to carry them out, and in the beginning of 1818 he reported he had "cancelled the leases for most of those villages where considerable balances were due and would commence the reduction of the assessment in the black-land taluqs of Raidrúg and Gooty." He at the same time pointed out that the loss of revenue would be very large, for great changes had taken place in the condition of the district since Colonel Monro first submitted his proposals in 1807. "The villages have been returned to the Collector with their resources most lamentably dilapidated... ..the survey rates of assessment have everywhere been

Board's Proceedings
18th December 1818.

From Col. Monro
to Government, 22d
August 1817.

abandoned and lands already lightly taxed have been let out for a mere quit-rent, the rents have been paid in kind and the land has in consequence been poorly tilled. These evils have been aggravated by two successive bad seasons, for in Fasli 1226 the rains failed to a considerable extent, and in the present Fasli (1227) we have had almost a deluge. From these causes and from the loss of crops and the destruction caused by the march of troops and the irruption of the Pindaris, the revenue fell off in Fasli 1227 nearly two lakhs."

In Fasli 1228 (the seventh year of the lease) Mr. Chaplin was removed to the Dekhan and was succeeded by Mr. Thackeray, a Member of the Board of Revenue. In his letter of October 21, 1819, he expressed his opinion that the renting system was "under any circumstances unsuitable to this country. The moral effects on all have been bad, and the district is in a worse state than it was in 1807 and in some respects than it was in 1801." He recommended that the survey assessment should be lowered generally 25 per cent., but he thought that in some cases it should be reduced still more, and an additional reduction of 8 per cent. was to be granted in the case of well-lands. To save the Government from the great loss that would ensue if these reductions were carried out at once, Mr. Thackeray proposed to give each ryot a quantity of waste-land, the assessment of which should be equal to the amount of the reduction in his puttah. The old rules about Inam were to be rigidly enforced, particularly "the Appanam rules and the rule that no Inam land is to be touched by a circar ryot until the circar land usually cultivated has first been ploughed."

Such were Mr. Thackeray's proposals for the formation of a ryotwari settlement, but with a view to render the decrease of revenue as small as possible, one taluq only (Tádmari) was settled on this plan. In the other taluqs no reduction was made, and soon after, Mr. Thackeray's declining health compelling him to leave the district, the charge devolved in Fasli 1229 (1819) on Mr. Campbell, Secretary Board of Revenue.

The Board approved of the proposed settlement. "The ryotwar survey of the Ceded districts by which an assessment was fixed upon each field has universally been admitted to have been conducted in a manner superior to that of any other district under this presidency. It seems however to have been intended by Colonel Monro rather as a preliminary than a final standard of assessment; rather

as the data than the rule by which the demand upon the country should be fixed. It is true that for a few years after it was completed it formed the chief standard of demand, and the revenue was then raised as high as the country would bear under an arbitrary system most ably managed, but Colonel Monro himself admitted that the continual payment of this assessment would be beyond the capability of the country, and when, towards the close of his administration he proposed a final settlement of the land revenue a general reduction in the survey assessment to the extent of 25 per cent. was the basis of the arrangement." With respect to making it a condition of the reduction that the ryots shall extend their cultivation, and take up fresh waste land, the Board "entirely approve of it when the ryot may voluntarily agree to this arrangement," but in no case must waste be forced or "saddled" on the people. On the alleged relinquishment of Circar for Inam lands the Board remark: "In Bellary the Circar or Government land amounts to 19 lakhs of acres, and the land of which the revenue has been alienated exceeds 16 lakhs of acres, a great portion of it, so it is understood, held on invalid titles. The Board propose that entire freedom of choice should be proclaimed and that Government should look for indemnification for the loss of revenue that must inevitably ensue to the Inamdars who will obtain benefits which it was never contemplated they should have at the time their grants were made."

Mr. Thackeray's proposed settlement approved of.—On a perusal of Mr. Thackeray's report the Government were induced to sanction the reduction in the assessment so strongly recommended by each successive Collector: "That measure was proposed in 1807 to promote the prosperity of the district. It is now required to arrest its progress toward ruin." Mr. Thackeray's plan of reducing the assessment in a few taluqs at a time was approved but pronounced too slow a remedy for the evil, and the Government were satisfied that the reduction ought to be introduced at once throughout the whole province if the deterioration of its resources was to be checked. The Collector's plan of 'saddling' the ryots with waste whether they liked it or not was strongly disapproved of, and the rule laid down that the ryots were to be at liberty to cultivate as much or as little as they pleased. It was therefore ordered:

From Government,
8th September 1820.

- I. That a reduction of 25 per cent. on all dry and wet lands,

and of 33 per cent. on the assessment of well lands (as proposed in 1807) be made in Bellary.

- II. That the reduction be made by a uniform lowering of the survey rate; that it be made immediately and that public notice of it be given in all the villages.
- III. That the ryots be left at liberty to increase or diminish their cultivation with no other restriction than ~~that~~ of their not being permitted to separate the good and bad lands which by the custom of the village are annually rented together.
- IV. That no restraint be imposed on the cultivation of Inam lands.

General reduction of assessment.—These reductions were to come into force in the villages which had either been resumed or surrendered by the renters from the commencement of Fasli 1230. In addition to the issue of the proclamation directed, the

From Collector, 28th
April 1821.

Collector reported that he had addressed the whole of the ryots in bodies of from 400 to 600 at a time in elucidation of the objects of the new arrangement. The Government Order was not however carried out to the full. Anxious to keep up the revenues of his district as much as possible, Mr. Campbell on his own authority resolved to impose waste land to the extent of one-half of the sanctioned reduction "on such ryots as were willing to take it," a measure which he says he "requested them to accede to." The waste thus added was assessed at Rupees 1,18,420. His example was of course followed by the Head Assistant and Assistant Collectors. On

From Government,
10th August 1821.

this coming to the notice of Government they naturally expressed their strong disapprobation, and as "the tendency of the measure was to defeat the object of the remission, and as it was evident that although the ryots were represented to have been willing to take it, it was not of their own seeking," it was once more directed that the enlargement or contraction of their farms was to be left entirely to their own choice with no further limitation than that before explained.

Not attended to by Mr. Campbell.—To these orders Mr. Campbell appears to have paid no attention, though it was obviously his duty at once to notify to the ryots that they were at liberty to

throw up or retain all or any of the waste thus added to their puttahs. This however was not done. In Fasli 1231 there was no material alteration of the jamabandi of the previous year, and the assessment of the waste then arbitrarily added was again collected. The result of this was that Mr. Campbell was again severely reprimanded and the Government Orders reiterated, and on June 25, 1822, which was two years after the reduction had been ordered, the Collector informed the Board that he "would no longer be deterred by mere apprehension of a present loss of revenue from conferring upon the people the full remissions and entire freedom of cultivation."

This brings us to Fasli 1232 (1822-1823) and the year is an important one, being the year when the last of the leases fell in and the whole district came once more under the direct control of the Collector, and also because as we have seen, in this Fasli the reductions sanctioned by the government came into full force and effect for the first time. Space must therefore be found for an abstract of the jamabandi report for that Fasli, and of the Orders of the Board and Government upon it.

Mr Campbell commences his report by stating that the reduction of the survey rates and the grant of the privilege of entire freedom in relinquishing or retaining land had led him to anticipate a very large falling off in the revenues. But the season had been unusually favorable, and instead of a loss the settlement was in excess of that of Fasli 1231 by no less a sum than Rupees 49,595. The revenue had increased in fourteen taluqs, but had fallen off in Tádpatrí, Yádiki and Hadagalli. In these fertile taluqs there was little or no waste land to take up, and there was therefore no opportunity, as in the other taluqs, of balancing the loss caused by the remissions of 25 and 33 per cent. by an increase of revenue arising from increased cultivation. The Collector was however of opinion that the rates were still too high, and that he had proved beyond controversy that the better kinds of soil were too highly assessed when compared with the inferior kinds. The remedy he proposed was still further to reduce the assessment on irrigated lands and the better black soils, not indeed on any fixed principle but entirely at the discretion of the Collector. Though disapproving of it, he was not prepared to tamper with the field settlement which had been fully and well

From Collector, 29th
June 1823.

introduced, but he preferred to consider it as the standard, the general basis or the prescribed limit of a Collector's settlement, and thought that full power should be given to the Collector, and by him to the Tahsildars, to still further reduce the survey rates by extra discretionary reductions, under the name of "Moonasib Kammi."

The Board's remarks on this report must have surprised Mr. Campbell not a little. After expressing a modest hope that his administration during the year, which had resulted in changing an expected loss of revenue into an actual gain, might be thought not wholly unsatisfactory, he recommended three Tahsildars for rewards of Rupees 500 each. The Board declined to discuss the last proposal but characterize it as 'highly objectionable,' and in effect informed the Collector that they would rather have heard of a heavy loss of revenue than of a gain procured by direct and continued disobedience to government orders. "It is in fact but too clear even from the Collector's own letter that notwithstanding that freedom of cultivation was again proclaimed it was but little attended to in the settlement." It was Mr. Campbell's custom when he found a ryot cultivating part of a field to saddle him, *volens volens*, with the rest of it on so-called Cowle Tenure "rather," to borrow the Collector's own words, "with the hope of exciting him to cultivate it than in the expectation that he will be able to do so." "What excitement" says the Board "such a measure could be supposed likely to produce, beyond the fear of being compelled to pay for the land whether cultivated or not, it is difficult to conceive, but that the land thus included this year amounting to the large sum of Rupees 1,07,390 was not sought by the inhabitants is manifest. It appears indeed that they were known, for the most part, not to have the means of tilling it. Injurious therefore as such a proceeding must have been in keeping up the impression that the liberty so often promised was never to be granted, it is open to the further objection of sacrificing the public confidence in pursuit of an object which was known at the time to be beyond the reach of attainment." With these incisive remarks the Board cancelled all the puttahs granted by the Collector.

His settlement condemned by the Board.—The next point objected to is Mr. Campbell's assertion that the abandonment of good land for bad, and the deteriorated condition of the ryots were caused

by the system of field assessment. Their reply is that that system "was abandoned as soon as completed and may almost be said never yet to have been fairly in operation. The officer who introduced the field assessment had no sooner completed his work . . . and left India than the ryotwari system was supplanted by the village lease settlement, and the field assessments were then gradually abandoned for a division of the crop."

With more or less success the Board disprove the theory that good lands have been relinquished and inferior soils taken up on account of high assessment and the disproportion between the survey rates. They consider it is the natural and inevitable result of the decline in the resources of the people under the renters, but the main cause is in fact to be traced to the source before mentioned "the unjust addition of waste." They add also that the Collector's figures are so incorrect that it would be wasting time to discuss the inferences he has drawn from them. In conclusion the Board express their disapproval of Mr. Campbell's proposed settlement "on an entire farm without assessing each separate field of it at different rates." They point out that it has been attempted by Mr. Sullivan in Coimbatore and by Colonel Read in the Baramahl "but after a trial of some years aided by three of the most experienced servants government ever had, Captains Graham, Monro and McLeod, it was found necessary to abandon it." The Board conclude by observing "that they differ entirely from the Collector in all his views, and that they have shown that he is wrong in his conception of the nature of his accounts, wrong in the inferences thence drawn, wrong in his conclusions, and wrong in every assertion he has founded on them."

Mr. Robertson appointed Collector.—The result of this was that Mr. Campbell was promoted to the Judicial Bench and appointed Judge of Chittūr. His successor was Mr. F. W. Robertson, and though more than thirty years have gone by since his remains were laid in the Gooty Cemetery, his memory is still affectionately revered, and the munificence and benevolence of "Rob. Sahib" is still a favorite theme among the old members of a village community.

At the close of the ten years there remained with the renters 776 villages (assessed at Rupees 6,08,716,) which appear to have profited from the causes which produced the failure of others and which

were then finally resumed. The balance outstanding was Rupees 2,05,627, and this under the direction of government was remitted.

Table of revenue.—A table is appended showing the yearly demand and collection during the decennial lease. If compared with the table given before, it will be seen that the collections during this period were 2·5 below the average collections under the triennial lease system, and greater by 3·5 than the average of the collections of the seven previous years :—

| Faslis. | Total Assessment. | Collections. | Balance. |
|---------|-------------------|--------------|----------|
| | RS. | RS. | RS. |
| 1222 | 24,38,637 | 24,31,151 | 7,485 |
| 1223 | 25,72,668 | 25,46,103 | 26,564 |
| 1224 | 25,85,571 | 25,61,153 | 24,418 |
| 1225 | 26,28,460 | 25,80,517 | 47,943 |
| 1226 | 25,64,368 | 24,59,701 | 1,04,666 |
| 1227 | 24,92,105 | 24,90,279 | 1,826 |
| 1228 | 23,84,410 | 23,77,255 | 7,154 |
| 1229 | 24,38,944 | 24,38,484 | 460 |
| 1230 | 21,98,363 | 21,94,059 | 4,304 |
| 1231 | 22,42,849 | 22,42,030 | 813 |
| Average | 24,54,638 | 24,32,074 | 22,563 |

SECTION IV.

MR. ROBERTSON'S COLLECTORATE.

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*Rules for the settlement of Fasli 1234—Inam taffrik rules—
Extension of cultivation on cowle tenure—Planting of topes
—Partial revision of assessment—The continued fall in price
of grain—Death of Mr. Robertson—Fall of prices continues—
Remarks on the results of the general reduction of assessment—
Mr. Mellor recommends a further reduction—Remarks of the
Board and Government*

Mr. Robertson was appointed Collector in April 1824, by which time the jamabandi of Fasli 1233 had been almost completed, and all that he found himself able to do towards carrying out the wishes of government was to strike the waste out of the puttahs in cases where an entire field had been uncultivated. In those cases where parts only of the field had been left waste, this

From Collector, 1st May 1824. "Shamilat Bunjer (partial waste) was left in the puttah, but the assessment was as a matter of course remitted. At the same time the ryots were informed that in future no remissions would be allowed, and that they must either relinquish such whole fields as they were not prepared to cultivate or pay the assessment thereon."

Until 1821 the Collector had worked the district almost single-handed. He resided at Anantapūr as Colonel Monro had done, and his Head Assistant had charge of Bellary and the four western taluqs. One and sometimes two assistants were with the Collector, but had no special charge. In 1822 the first Sub-Collector, Mr. Dalzell, was appointed, and soon after this the Collector moved to Bellary, on the ground that this was a more central station, and that circumstances no longer required his presence at Anantapūr. Government, however, cancelled the arrangement as soon as they heard of it, and one of the first of Mr. Robertson's letters announces the return of the cutcherry to Anantapūr. With the sanction of the Board, the following instructions for the settlement of Fasli 1234 were issued :—

"1. Any ryot holding a puttah possesses absolute property over the land so long as he pays his dues and may sell, transfer, add to or relinquish it.

2. All waste which the ryots do not care to retain is to be taken out of their puttahs, unless such a course would be contrary to the custom of the country or any rules approved by government (Ryots were not at liberty to resign less than a whole field, and were to resign the good and bad in equal proportions. Nor were Reddi Mirasidars, who cultivated more Inam land than under the rules was permitted, to resign any portion of the Appanam).

3. When there is no Circar land untilled the ryots may cultivate as much Inam as they choose, but in other cases they are only to cultivate in the proportion of 1 of Inam to 10 of Circar. This of course applies to ryots who are not Inamdars.

4. No assessment will be levied on improvements effected at the cost of the ryot himself.

5. Remissions will be given on tank-irrigated land when the water supply fails, if the ryots have done all in their power to obtain a crop.

6. Ryots are to state before ploughing time what they intend to make their holdings during the ensuing year."

The season of Fasli 1233 was unusually bad. The N. E. monsoon failed almost entirely, and partly on this account and partly from * relieving the ryots of the waste saddled upon them by Mr. Thackeray and Mr. Campbell, the revenue fell off about 4 lakhs. The season of Fasli 1234 did not open more favorably, and the Collector "authorized the Amildars in nine of the principal taluqs to perform the usual religious ceremonies on account of the want of rain." Seasonable and abundant rain fell in October, and the revenue for the Fasli was two lakhs higher than in Fasli 1233. A portion of this increase was due to a new tax or cess imposed by Mr. Robertson which needs some notice. Almost from the time of the cession, it had been a general complaint that ryots were deserting the Government lands and cultivating Inam lands which they were enabled to rent on very favorable terms. The public revenues suffered while the Inamdars gained. Years before Mr. Robertson became Collector, the Board had published some general instructions, one being that no ryot was to be allowed to cultivate more Inam land than was equal to one-tenth of the land entered in his ryotwari puttah. This order had never been carried out, there was no way of enforcing it, and so in Fasli 1235, and apparently on his own responsibility Mr.

Robertson imposed the tax known as "Inam Taffrik" under the following rules:—

1. In the case of a ryot who has no Circar land; cultivating Inam he is to pay an Inam Taffrik of 10 per cent. of the assessment of the Inam he cultivates.

2. If he has some Circar land he is allowed without charge to hold Inam land equivalent to 10 per cent. of his puttah holdings.

3. If, however, he cultivates more than this he must pay Taffrik calculated at 5 per cent. of the assessment of this excess portion.

4. If a ryot relinquishes Circar land, and devotes himself entirely to Inam land, he must pay for that year the full assessment of the land relinquished."

* From accounts prepared at this time, it appears that "of the total ayacut of the district 39 per cent. was Inam land. This proportion was largely increased if the waste and porumboke lands were eliminated. Of lands actually under cultivation, 47 per cent. was Inam and 53 Circar."

At first this Taffrik was imposed only on the cultivators of Service Inams, but in a year or two, by direction of the Board, it was extended to the cultivators of Inam land of every kind.

In Fasli 1235 the revenue again rose more than a lakh, though about a quarter of this increase is due to the lapse of the Narayen-deverakerra jaghire. The Collector attributed part of the increase to the operation of the "Taffrik rules," and to show the necessity for them, proved clearly that until the previous year the cultivation of Inam land had been steadily on the increase. "Since the survey, the Inam cultivation has increased more than 18 per cent., and this extension has been at the expense of Circar cultivation."

During the years of the triennial and decennial leases much of the finest, and therefore the highest assessed, black lands in the taluqs of Gooty, Raidrúg and Alúr had been abandoned and were now over-grown with nutt-grass and weeds, and in a state quite unfit for cultivation. These lands were given out on cowle tenure. For the first year no assessment was charged, in the second one-fourth of the full assessment, in the third one-half and so on till in the fifth year the full assessment was payable. These terms attracted ryots from Mysore and the surrounding districts, and a very large extent of land was at once brought under the plough.

The Cowle rules and the Inam Taffrik rules were formally approved of by the Board in the following year : " A cowle ought not on the one hand to be so favorable as to allure a ryot to take more land than he can properly till, while on the other hand it should be sufficiently encouraging to secure to him an ample return."

Under Mr. Robertson's auspices extensive repairs were made to tanks and channels, by which much land hitherto left waste was brought under cultivation. He also pushed on with vigour the planting of topes and avenues. In a report, written 15 years after, the Collector says, " The Circar topes were undertaken at the recommendation of Mr. Campbell in 1821. For this purpose an annual grant of Rupees 4,000 was given, and a further grant of the same amount was added in 1834. Up to this time 665 topes containing 173,813 trees have been planted at a cost of Rupees 91,463. When all the trees have come into bearing the expense of planting will be covered and the outlay will be beneficial to government even in a financial point of view, while the topes are the admiration of strangers and the ornament of the province.—(From Collector, November 1, 1841.)

The seasons of 1236 and 1237 (1826 and 1827) were very unfavorable, and again the revenue decreased by 3 lakhs of Rupees. Mr. Robertson seems hardly to have been able to make up his mind whether this decrease in cultivation was to be attributed to over-assessment, or to the fact that the price of grain had been steadily falling for a series of years.

In many instances, under authority from government, and especially in the black land taluqs where the land which had been given on cowle was now paying the full assessment, he revised and corrected the rates when he considered them oppressive, but no general scheme of remission was prepared by him, though he was of opinion that this would be necessary unless prices again rose.

Still however when a favorable year came, the facility with which the revenue was collected was very remarkable, as in Fasli 1238, when the rainfall was both abundant and seasonable, and in Fasli 1240 when " the season was extremely favorable and the early dry crops which are estimated to pay 30 per cent. of the revenue yielded everywhere an abundant harvest." Still however prices continued to fall, and even the scarcity caused by the bad years Fasli 1237 and

Fasli 1239, made no difference. In explanation of his remarks, Mr. Robertson submitted to government the following table of prices:—

| | Cholum (Garce). | Paddy (Garce). | Cotton (Candy). |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Average from Faslis 1194 to 1214 (excluding 1202— 1204) which were famine years (1784—1804)... | 120 | 130 | 66 |
| 2. Do. from 1218—1227 (1808—1817)..... | 130 | 108 | 64 |
| 3. Do. from 1228—1237 (1818—1827)..... | 145 | 113 | 60 |
| 1238 (1828) | 93 | 99 | 39 |
| 1239 (1829)..... | 90 | 92 | 40 |
| 1240 (1830)..... | 79 | 81 | 39 |

“This cheapness no doubt arises in part from the extension of cultivation, but is chiefly to be ascribed to the diminution of demand from Kurnool and the other side of the Tūngabadra.” The Board were of opinion “that the general depreciation in the value of produce is in some measure attributable to the export of the precious metals by public as well as private means; and to the state of trade which besides diminishing the adventures of individuals has led to the discontinuance of the public investment by means of which formerly the money collected by government was returned to circulation.”

The season of 1241 was moderately favorable, the settlement of that year being only Rupees 59,743 less than in the preceding year. In Fasli 1242 the September and October rains failed entirely, and the season is described as “beyond all comparison worse than any that has ever been known.” In September, in consequence of large purchases of grain for export to Hyderabad, where the famine was equally felt, the price of cholium rose suddenly from 75 to 30 seers per Rupee, and the result was grain riots at Gooty and Bellary. In consequence of the distress the net settlement was Rupees 3,26,999 below that of the preceding year.

Fortunately the season of 1243 was an unusually good one, and * the ryots were also benefitted by the high prices obtainable for grain. Land bearing an assessment of Rupees 30,000 was reclaimed from waste, and the net revenue was Rupees 21,04,479, or an increase of Rupees 4,32,192 over that of the preceding Fasli.

each of which is placed under the special charge of one of the district officers. The divisions are :—

| | Area in square miles. | Revenue. | Population | Names of Taluqs. |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|---|
| 1. Collector ... | 2,420 | 4,95,500 | 270,000 | 3 <i>Bellary</i> , <i>Raidrúg</i> , <i>Hospett</i> . |
| 2. Sub Collr. ... | 4,057 | 14,61,405 | 507,073 | 5. <i>Tádpatri</i> , <i>Gooty</i> , <i>Alúr</i> , <i>Adoni</i> , <i>Anantapúr</i> . |
| 3. Hd. At. Collr. | 1,770 | 5,98,922 | 304,317 | 4. <i>Dharmaveram</i> , <i>Hindipúr</i> , <i>Pennakonda</i> , <i>Madaksira</i> . |
| 4. Dy. Collr.... | 2,079 | 3,39,731 | 194,403 | 3. <i>Kúdlighi</i> , <i>Harpanhalli</i> , <i>Hadagalli</i> . |

NOTE.—The towns *in italics* are the head quarters of the divisions.

2 Over each taluq is a Tahsildar. In the larger taluqs there is an Assistant or Deputy Tahsildar who is stationed at one of the chief towns.

The stations of these Deputy Tahsildars, their pay, and the number of villages over which they have jurisdiction, subject to the control of the Tahsildar, is shown below :—

| Taluq. | Villages. | Deputy Tahsildar. | Salary. | Villages in his charge. |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| <i>Bellary</i> | 175 | <i>Siragúpa</i> | Rs. 70 | 75 |
| <i>Gooty</i> | 144 | <i>Uravakonda</i> | 70 | 51 |
| <i>Tádpatri</i> | 93 | <i>Rayelcheruvu</i> | 50 | 36 |
| <i>Adoni</i> | 180 | <i>Emmiganúr</i> | 50 | 83 |
| <i>Dharmaveram</i> ... | 185 | <i>Kalyandrúg</i> | 100 | 100 |
| <i>Pennakonda</i> | 90 | <i>Bukkapatnam</i> | 70 | 42 |
| <i>Hospett</i> | 125 | <i>Kampli</i> | 70 | 55 |
| | | <i>Ramandrúg</i> | 70 | 18 |

The number of subordinates in each taluq, their grades and salaries are shown in one of the tables in the appendix.

3. Each taluq is composed of a certain number of villages, each of which may be looked on as a separate municipal institution. The chief village servants are the Headman (Potal, Reddi, Gowda or Munsiff) the Karnam, the Shroff, the Nirgunti, the Toti or Vetti and the Taliari.

Other village servants are the potter, the smith, the carpenter, &c.

1. *The Headman* is the Collector of revenue of the village over which he presides, and he is also the Magistrate and the head of the Village Police. He is or ought to be one of the largest landholders in the village and should exercise a great deal of influence over the people under his charge, but in many instances the emoluments of office have been frittered away, or the man is incompetent and his powers and duties have been usurped by the karnam or the subordinate taluq officials. His duties do not require much laborious work, but the post is one of honor and is much sought after.

2. *The Karnams* (Shanboga in Canarese taluqs) is an officer who has much work to do in keeping all the official revenue accounts, besides being the general scribe for the village. The karnams are invariably Brahmins and men of some education. Karnam Mirasidars are found in all ranks of the public service; a late Deputy Collector of the district was one.

3. *The Shroff* is found only in a few villages in Gooty, Tadpatri, and Anantapur. His duty is to test and sometimes to take care of the money collections.

4. *The Nirgunti* has charge of the irrigation of the village lands and regulates the supply of water. In some villages his work is done by the vetti or by the cultivators themselves.

5. *Vetti or Toti*, is simply a village peon acting under the orders of the headman, and is almost invariably of the Boya caste. Lands and fees have been assigned for the support of these servants, but are generally quite inadequate, when the duties to be performed are considered. The Inam is frequently divided between many sharers who do work by turns.

6. *The Taliari* is the village policeman, and a more detailed account of this set of village servants will be found under the head of "Police."

Madigas and Malas are required to provide such articles as buckets, ropes, &c., used by the ryots for agricultural purposes, to provide them with sandals, assist in thrashing out the grain, and to patrol the village at nights. Their habits are filthy to a degree, and they are looked on as the lowest of the low. By custom they are entitled to half the skin of the dead cattle of ryots and the whole of those of other villagers.

These village servants, both those described above and those who

render no service to Government, such as the carpenter, potter, barber, &c., are remunerated by

1. Lands held rent-free or on favorable terms.
2. Fees collected from the inhabitants.
3. Direct money-payments from the general revenues.

1. Lands held free or on favorable terms (Inams.)

The land itself is by some considered the emolument of office, but more properly the assessment leviable and which is not demanded, is the real emolument. It is not the land which the State relinquishes, it is the assessment which would otherwise be collected. Sometimes when an office-holder is removed and another appointed the land is transferred to the new incumbent; sometimes and more generally the land remains in the possession of the party removed, and the assessment only is made over to the incoming officer. These lands have come to be looked on as the private property of the Mirasidars (as the members of the family or families entitled to hold the office are called) and have been divided and subdivided among the members of this family for several generations. Fuller particulars of the extent, assessment, &c., of these Inams will be found later on.

2. Fees or collections of grain made from the cultivators.

They take the form of a percentage on the out-turn of the crop, but the proportion varies in every village. In case of dispute the proper percentage is decided by referring to an old account called the "Rewaz-putti" and fees in arrears are collected under Act II of 1864 as arrears of land revenue. These fees are known as "Mera-vertana;" the mera fees being paid by the agricultural villagers, and the vertana being a kind of house-tax on the merchants and bazaar-men. "These fees were charged on the ryots by Sir T. Monro according to the customary rates as ascertained by enquiry."

3. Fixed money-payments. Remuneration of this kind is not given except in very exceptional cases. In the villages of Chippigiri and Hattibellagal, the Inam lands of all the Reddi and Karnam Mirasidars have been attached on account of the contumacy and insubordination of the holders, and from the assessment levied provisional Reddis and Karnams are paid.

In 1860 the Government directed Mr. Pelly of the Board of Revenue to revise the Village Revenue Establishments of all districts. The object (G. O. 3rd September 1859, No. 1187) was to restore them to their original and proper use of collecting the revenue and paying it into the taluq treasury, and to restore the Village Inams and

fees to their legitimate purposes. "The village servants to whom the revision applied included the five classes of Reddi, Karnam, Shroff, Nirgunti and Vetti, and the Order of Government did not in any way apply to those village servants who have only private duties to perform. There was never to be more than one officer in each village of the first three classes; and the number of Vettis and Nirguntis was to be regulated by the actual requirements of the village, the revenue deciding the number of the former, while the latter were settled according to its irrigated area.

After a great deal of correspondence it was decided (Govt. Order, February 15, 1860) that the fees were to be taken as the substantive part of the remuneration of the village officers, who were to be paid according to a fixed scale, and that these fees were to be supplemented by so much of the Inam land as might be found necessary in each case. The remainder of the Inam was to be enfranchised with a quit-rent of half the assessment. At a later date a new principle was adopted. (Government Order, 22nd March 1861). The government then authorized the enfranchisement of the whole of the Service Inams at two-thirds of their assessment, and the payment of money stipends to the office-bearers. This rate was afterwards (Government Order, 26th April 1861, No. 939) changed to five-eighths or 10 Annas in the Rupee, but the quit rent, if any, payable on the Inam, was to be deducted before the calculation was made. The reason of this change was that all Inam lands would be liable to the general fee cess of one Anna in the Rupee which it was in contemplation to impose in lieu of all fees. This order for the general enfranchisement first applied to Kurnool only, but was afterwards extended to Cuddapah and Bellary. (15th May 1861). Another feature in the scheme was to reduce the number of villages, and thus of village servants, by grouping them or clubbing three or four small villages together. Mr. Pelly in his final report proposed to reduce the number of villages from 2,540 to 1,392.

On the subject of the commutation of fees there was a long discussion, the result of which was the Village Cess Act (Act IV of 1864, Madras) which however has not been extended to the Bellary district.

Mr. Pelly's scheme for the revision of the establishments of the Bellary district was afterwards rejected by government, and the subject has only been alluded to here on account of the valuable statements showing the emoluments of the village officers from all sources, which accompanied his report. Part of the remuneration was

The Board in reply remark, "the uncultivated portion of Inam amounts to nearly half a million acres, and it will be impossible to reduce the assessment so low as to compete with this," and they quote the opinion of Sir Thomas Monro:—"It is a great abuse if Inam land which was granted to aid the cultivation is permitted to interfere with it. In that case we have a clear right to tax the Inam and must exercise it."

Board, 28th January
1856.

Early in 1857 government sanctioned a general reduction of the assessment throughout the district.

The reduced rates were to hold good until the general survey, and were to be calculated thus:—

I.—DRY.

- a.—Lands assessed at and above Rs. 4 to be reduced to Rs 3-0.
- b.—Between Rs. 3 and Rs. 4..... „ 2-8.
- c.— „ „ 2½ and „ 3..... „ 2-4.
- d.— „ „ 2¼ and „ 2½..... „ 2-0.

The rates below this down to Rupee 1 were to be reduced at the discretion of the Collector, but the average reduction was not to exceed 12½ per cent., which in application would be 20 per cent. of the higher rates and 4 per cent. of the lower. These new rates were to descend by gradations of 2 annas.

II.—IRRIGATED.

The reductions were thus calculated:—

- a.—Lands above Rupees 16 to be reduced to Rupees 12-0
- b.—Between Rupees 15 and 16 „ „ 11-8
- c.— „ „ 14 and 15 „ „ 11-0
- d.— „ „ 13 and 14 „ „ 10-8
- e.— „ „ 12 and 13 „ „ 10-0

All rates between Rupees 6 and Rupees 12 were to be reduced at the discretion of the Collector, but on the whole, the reduction was not to exceed 12 per cent. No reduction of the rates below Rupees 6 was considered necessary, and no irrigated land was to bear a lower assessment than Rupee 1 per acre. Any Nunjah land bearing a lower rate was to be assessed at Rupee 1 or to be transferred to Punjah, and all land classed as Nunjah but which could not be

irrigated was also to be altered. The new scale was to descend by quarter Rupees, from Rupees 12 to Rupees 6.

The plan of consolidating all descriptions of Nunjah Inam land under the three heads of (1) Tanks, (2) Channels, (3) Wells was also approved.

The impost called 'Rewaz-jasti,' a tax levied on certain old betel and cocoanut gardens, was abolished, as was also the old distinction between Ekfasl and Dofasl lands, (lands bearing one or two crops.)

In future all wet land was to be classed as "one-crop," and a tax of 50 per cent. of the assessment was to be levied when a second crop was raised. The application of this rule was subsequently extended to well-lands.

The assessment on Inam lands was to be reduced in the same way as that of Circar. Whenever the Jodi (quit-rent) payable on any land exceeded the new rate of assessment, the Inamdar was at liberty to retain the land paying the new assessment, but on condition that the Inam tenure ceased.

Finally formal sanction was given for writing the accounts in Rupees and Annas instead of in Pagodas and Fanams.

To aid Mr. Pelly, an additional Sub-Collector was appointed, and an establishment provided at an estimated cost of Rupees 33,000.

"Native officers were sent out into all the taluqs, and when they had the accounts ready were followed by the Collector. The revision commenced in August, 1857 and was concluded by the end of the following year. In each taluq the work was supervised by the Collector in person. The rates in the old survey accounts were converted from Pagodas into Rupees, the sanctioned remissions of 1822 of 25 and 33 per cent. were then deducted, and the net assessment was then reduced according to the sanctioned scale. The former numerous rates were reduced in Punjab land to 26 rates, (the highest being Rupees 3 per acre and the lowest two Annas) and in the Nunjah lands to 41 rates (the highest being Rupees 12 and the lowest Rupee 1.)"

The average reduction of the assessment throughout the district was, as is shown in the following table, 8.8 per cent. In the

Appendix will be found a table giving fuller particulars for each taluq and showing how far the revenue was affected :—

| | Acres. | Former Assessment. | After Mr. Pelly's reduction. | Percentage. |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Dry. | | RS. | RS. | |
| a. Black soil..... | 1,041,527 | 12,71,189 | 11,02,005 | 13·5 |
| b. Mixed and red..... | 4,094,138 | 14,00,511 | 13,47,323 | 3·8 |
| Total..... | 5,135,665 | 26,71,700 | 24,49,328 | 8·5 |
| 2. Irrigated. | | | | |
| a. Tank..... | 96,439 | 4,79,927 | 4,43,475 | 7·7 |
| b. Channel..... | 55,626 | 3,14,791 | 2,66,858 | 15·8 |
| c. Well..... | 63,267 | 2,30,293 | 2,14,283 | 6·9 |
| Total..... | 215,332 | 10,25,011 | 9,24,616 | 9·8 |
| Grand Total..... | 5,350,997 | 36,96,711 | 33,73,944 | 8·8 |

The result is thus summed up by the Collector :—"The district was surveyed and assessed by Colonel Monro in 1806-7. The survey assessment on all lands then amounted to Rupees 50,59,822. In 1822 a general reduction was made which reduced it to Rupees 38,92,858. And now the higher rates of assessment have been again lowered which has reduced the assessment to Rupees 34,02,304. But the relief given is not so great as might at first appear, for though there has been a reduction of Rupees 3,22,702, the greater portion of this is on waste land. And of the rest (Rupees 1,56,186) granted on lands occupied in Fasli 1266, much has already been remitted by the customary annual remissions. The direct and immediate aid given to the ryots does not perhaps exceed Rupees 90,000 to 96,000.

At the Jamabandi of Fasli 1267 the settlement in five taluqs was made on the revised assessment, and in the other twelve taluqs on the basis of the survey assessment after deducting the usual remissions of 25 and 33 per cent. The year had not been a favorable one, the rainfall had been six inches less than the average, and the harvest both on irrigated lands and on the black cotton soil was very poor. From these causes the revenue of the year was Rupees 1,01,490 less than in Fasli 1260. The high prices prevailing enabled the ryots to pay their rent without difficulty.

Fasli 1268.—At the commencement of this Fasli the Panchapalliem taluq was transferred to the Kurnool district, and this fact must not be lost sight of when comparing the revenue under the revised settlement with that raised in previous years. The new rates were introduced in the eleven remaining taluqs, and this and the fall of abundant and seasonable rain had the effect of greatly extending the cultivation. During this year many petty little taxes, such as on the bark used in distilling arrack, on gum collected from the acacia and on certain leaves used in the preparation of indigo, were abolished.

In Fasli 1270 the Yadiki taluq was broken up and its villages divided between the Gooty and Tâdpatri taluqs. In this and the three following years prices continued to rise, and the ryots of the Alûr and Adoni taluqs made enormous profits by cotton. Price lists are given in the appendix.

The season of 1275 was most unfavorable and in Fasli 1276 the distress amounted to famine. The south-west monsoon totally failed, cholera swept over the district, and prices rose 300 per cent., on account of the general scarcity and because it was impossible to procure means of transport. An account of the famine and the relief measures adopted will be found in another place.

Two other points call for notice before this chapter is closed; the one is the abolition of the Appanam system, the other the enquiry into existing Inams and their enfranchisement under certain rules. The first was peculiar to this and the Cuddapah district, and was finally abolished in Fasli 1277. The latter was part of a scheme extending to the whole of the Presidency.

CHAPTER III.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

The charges of the Collector and Division Officers.—Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars and their establishments.—Village officers, their duties and their remuneration.—Statement of Inam held by them and estimate of their fees.—Method of collecting land revenue.—The district Hukamnama, (code of rules applicable to the land revenue.)

The authority of the Collector is general throughout the district, but for the sake of convenience the district is divided into *divisions*,