THE RYOTWARI SETTLEMENT

**Fixed and Moderate Assessment of Land.**

"In order to make the land saleable, to encourage the Ryots to improve it, and to regard it as a permanent property, the assessment must be fixed and more moderate in general than it is now; and above all, so clearly defined as not to be liable to increase from ignorance or caprice. . . .

"The Ryot is the real proprietor, for whatever land does not belong to the Sovereign belongs to him. The demand for public revenue, according as it is high or low in different places and at different times, affects his share; but whether it leaves him with only the bare profit of his stock, or a small surplus beyond it as landlord's rent, he is still the true proprietor, and possesses all that is not claimed by the Sovereign as revenue. . . .

"It is the ever-varying assessment which has prevented, and as long as it continues will prevent, land from becoming a valuable property; for even where the assessment is lowest, the knowledge that it may at any time be raised, hinders the land from acquiring such a value as to render it a saleable article. We cannot communicate to it the value which it ought to possess, or render it a private property capable of being easily sold or mortgaged, unless the public assessment upon every part of it be previously fixed. When it is fixed, all uncertainty is removed, and all land, which is not absolutely over-assessed, soon acquires a value which is every day increased by improvements, made in consequence of the certainty of reaping all the profit arising from them."

**Employment of Indians in Administrative Work.**

"With what grace can we talk of our paternal Government if we exclude them from every important office, and say, as we did till very lately, that in a
country containing fifteen millions of inhabitants, no man but a European shall be entrusted with so much authority as to order the punishment of a single stroke of a rattan. Such an interdiction is to pass a sentence of degradation on a whole people for which no benefit can ever compensate. There is no instance in the world of so humiliating a sentence having ever been passed upon any nation. The weak and mistaken humanity which is the motive of it can never be viewed by the natives as any just excuse for the disgrace inflicted on them, by being pronounced to be unworthy of trust in deciding on the petty offences of their countrymen. We profess to seek their improvement, but propose means the most adverse to success. The advocates of improvement do not seem to have perceived the great springs on which it depends; they propose to place no confidence in the natives, to give them no authority, and to exclude them from all office as much as possible, but they are ardent in their zeal for enlightening them by the general diffusion of knowledge.

"No conceit more wild and absurd than this was ever engendered in the darkest ages, for what is in every age and every country the great stimulus to the pursuit of knowledge but the prospect of fame, or wealth, or power? or what is even the use of great attainments, if they are not to be devoted to their noblest purpose, the service of the community, by employing those who possess them, according to their respective qualification, in the various duties of the public administration of the country? . . .

"Our books alone will do little or nothing; dry simple literature will never improve the character of a nation. To produce this effect, it must open the road to wealth, and honour, and public employment. Without the prospect of such a reward, no attainments in science will ever raise the character of the people."
"This is true of every nation as well as India; it is true of our own. Let Britain be subjugated by a foreign power to-morrow, let the people be excluded from all share in the Government, from public honours, from every office of high trust or emolument, and let them in every situation be considered as unworthy of trust, and all their knowledge and all their literature, sacred and profane, would not save them from becoming, in another generation or two, a low-minded, deceitful, and dishonest race.

"Even if we could suppose that it were practicable without the aid of a single native to conduct the whole affairs of the country both in the higher and in all the subordinate offices, by means of Europeans, it ought not to be done, because it would be both politically and morally wrong. The great number of public offices in which the natives are employed is one of the strongest causes of their attachment to our Government. In proportion as we exclude them from these, we lose our hold on them, and were the exclusion entire, we should have their hatred in place of their attachment, their feelings would be communicated to the whole population, and to the native troops, and would excite a spirit of discontent too powerful for us to subdue or resist. But were it possible that they could submit silently and without opposition, the case would be worse, they would sink in character, they would lose with the hope of public office and distinction all laudable ambition, and would degenerate into an indolent and abject race, incapable of any higher pursuit than the mere gratification of their appetites. It would certainly be more desirable that we should be expelled from the country altogether, than that the result of our system of government should be such a debasement of a whole people."
"The right of the people to be taxed only by their own consent has always, in every free country, been esteemed amongst the most important of all privileges; it is that which has most exercised the minds of men, and which has oftenest been asserted by the defenders of liberty. Even in countries in which there is no freedom, taxation is the most important function of government, because it is that which most universally affects the comfort and happiness of the people, and that which has oftenest excited them to resistance, and hence both its utility and its danger have, under the most despotic governments, taught the necessity of employing in its administration the ablest men of the country. . . .

"In other countries, Government and its officers are part of the community, and are of course acquainted with the effect of every public measure and the opinion of the country regarding it, but here Government is deprived of this advantage, it makes laws for the people who have no voice in the matter, and of whom it knows very little, and it is therefore evident that it cannot adapt its laws to the circumstances of the people, unless it receive accurate information upon this subject from active and intelligent local officers, whose duty it is to investigate carefully the conditions and opinions of the inhabitants, and to report upon them. But these officers can acquire this information only through an establishment of experienced native servants, who have, beyond all other men, from the very nature of their official duties, the best means of obtaining it."
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BRITISH RULE.

"If we make a summary comparison of the advantages and disadvantages which have occurred to the natives from our Government, the result, I fear, will hardly be so much in its favour as it ought to have been. They are more secure from the calamities both of foreign war and internal commotions; their persons and property are more secure from violence; they cannot be wantonly punished or their property seized by persons in power and their taxation is, on the whole, lighter. But, on the other hand, they have no share in making laws for themselves, little in administering them, except in very subordinate offices; they can rise to no high station, civil or military; they are everywhere regarded as an inferior race, and often rather as vassals or servants than as the ancient owners and masters of the country.

"It is not enough that we confer on the natives the benefits of just laws and of moderate taxation, unless we endeavour to raise their character; but under a foreign government there are so many causes which tend to depress it that it is not easy to prevent it from sinking. It is an old observation that he who loses his liberty loses half his virtue. This is true of nations as well as of individuals. To have no property scarcely degrades more in the one case than in the other to have property at the disposal of a foreign government in which we have no share. The enslaved nation loses the privileges of a nation as the slave does those of a freeman, it loses the privilege of taxing itself, of making its own laws, of having any share in their administration, or in the general government of the country. British India has none of these privileges. . . .

"One of the greatest disadvantages of our Govern-
ment in India is its tendency to lower or destroy the higher ranks of society, to bring them all too much to one level, and by depriving them of their former weight and influence to render them less useful instruments in the internal administration of the country. The native governments had a class of richer gentry, composed of Jagheerdars and Enamadors and of all the higher civil and military officers. These, with the principal merchants and Ryots, formed a large body, wealthy or at least easy in their circumstances. The Jagheers and Enams of one prince were often resumed by another, and the civil and military officers were liable to frequent removal, but as they were replaced by others, and as new Jagheers and Enams were granted to new claimants, these changes had the effect of continually throwing into the country a supply of men whose wealth enabled them to encourage its cultivation and manufactories. These advantages have almost entirely ceased under our Government. All the civil and military offices of any importance are now held by Europeans, whose savings go to their own country."

**Future of India.**

"There is one great question to which we should look in all our arrangements; what is to be their final result on the character of the people? Is it to be raised or is it to be lowered? Are we to be satisfied with merely securing our power and protecting the inhabitants, leaving them to sink gradually in character, lower than at present, or are we to endeavour to raise their character, and to render them worthy of filling higher situations in the management of their country, and of devising plans for its improvement? It ought undoubtedly to be our aim to raise the minds of the natives, and to take care that whenever our connection with India might cease, it did not appear that the only
fruit of our dominion there had been to leave the people more abject and less able to govern themselves than when we found them. Many different plans may be suggested for the improvement of their character, but none of them can be successful, unless it be first laid down as a main principle of our policy, that the improvement must be made. This principle, once established, we must trust to time and perseverance for realising the object of it. We have had too little experience, and are too little acquainted with the natives, to be able to determine without trial what means would be most likely to facilitate their improvements. Various measures might be suggested, which might all probably be more or less useful; but no one appears to me so well calculated to ensure success, as that of endeavouring to give them a higher opinion of themselves, by placing more confidence in them, by employing them in important situations, and perhaps by rendering them eligible to almost every office under the Government. It is not necessary to define at present the exact limit to which their eligibility should be carried, but there seems to be no reason why they should be excluded from any office for which they were qualified, without danger to the preservation of our own ascendancy. . . .

"When we reflect how much the character of nations has always been influenced by that of governments, and that some, once the most cultivated, have sunk into barbarism, while others, formerly the rudest, have attained the highest point of civilisation, we shall see no reason to doubt that, if we pursue steadily the proper measures, we shall in time so far improve the character of our Indian subjects, as to enable them to govern and protect themselves."

Three-quarters of a century have elapsed since the death of Sir Thomas Munro. Administrators of the stamp of Thomas Munro are rare, and the difficult task of realising an equitable land-tax from 150,000 tenants
in each district in the Province of Madras has not been satisfactorily performed. Twenty-five years after the death of Munro, another eminent Scotchman, who rose to high distinction as an Indian administrator, wrote thus of the Madras system:

"Only imagine one Collector dealing with 150,000 tenants, not one of whom has a lease; but each pays according as he cultivates and gets a crop, and with reference to the number of his 'cattle, sheep, and children'; and each of whom gets a reduction if he can make out a sufficiently good case. What a cry of agricultural distress and large families there would be in England or any other country under such a system! Would any farmer ever admit that his farm had yielded anything, that his cattle had produced, or that his wife had not produced? If the Collector were one of the prophets, and remained in the same district to the age of Methuselah, he would not be fit for the duty; and as he is but an ordinary man and a foreigner, and continually changed, it would be strange if the native subordinates could not do as they liked, and, having the power, did not abuse it. Accordingly, it is generally agreed that the abuses of the whole system, and specially that of remissions, is something frightful, chicanery, and intrigue of all kinds. are unbounded, while the reliance of the Madras Collector on informers by no means mends the matter."

Sir Thomas Munro had laboured all his life to obtain for the cultivator of Madras a fixity of rental, so that all improvements made by him might lead to his own profit. And though such a fixity of rental was not declared by any Act or Proclamation, it was accepted as a fact by the Madras Government forty years after the time of Thomas Munro. The Madras Ryot, said the Administration Report of 1855–56, "cannot be ejected by Government so long

1 Modern India, by George Campbell, London, 1852.
as he pays the fixed assessment. . . . The Ryot under the system is virtually a proprietor on a simple and perfect title, and has all the benefits of a perpetual lease.” “A Madras Ryot,” said the Board of Revenue in 1857, “is able to retain his land perpetually without any increase of assessment.” “There can be no question,” said the Government of Madras in 1862 to the Government of India, “that one fundamental principle of the Ryotwari system is that the Government demand on the land is fixed for ever.”

These repeated assurances, as emphatic as words can make them, have now been ignored and set aside. Since the survey operations organised in 1855, the land-tax assessed on each holding is fixed at the discretion of revenue officers at each recurring settlement. The Madras Ryot has no fixity of rental, no security against enhancements, no adequate motive for improvements. The uncertainty of the land-tax hangs like the sword of Damocles on his head.

What is the Land Tax? The Court of Directors declared in 1856 that the right of the Government is not a rent which consists of all the surplus produce after paying the cost of cultivation and the profits of agricultural stocks, but a land revenue only. Two years after this, the East India Company was abolished, and the first Secretary of State for India under the Crown, Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax, declared that he desired to take only a share, generally a half share, of the rent as Land Tax.

This is a very high rate, but fixes a clear and intelligible limit. In practice, even this high limit is exceeded; and what is realised as Land Tax in Madras often sweeps away the whole of the economic rent. The maximum limit now fixed by the Government

1 Letter of 18th February 1862.
2 Despatch of 17th December 1856.
3 Despatch of 1864.
is one-third the field produce; and this is virtually the whole of the economic rent. For in small farms, yielding a produce of about £12 in the year, the cost of cultivation and the profits of agricultural stocks approximate to £7 or £8, and the claim of the Government to £4 as Land-Tax is virtually a claim, not to 50 per cent., but to 100 per cent., of the economic rent.

The evils of an uncertain State demand grew with the lapse of years; the Madras cultivators remained resourceless; the famine of 1877 found them helpless and swept away five millions of the population of that province. The Marquis of Ripon came to India as Viceroy three years after, and he at last grappled with the Madras Land Question.

Without conceding to the Madras cultivator that absolute fixity of the Land Tax which had been acknowledged as one of his rights by the Madras Government in 1856 and 1862, Lord Ripon laid down a rule that in districts which had once been surveyed and settled, the Land Tax would not be raised except on the equitable ground of a rise in prices. It left the door open for the enhancement of the land revenue, while at the same time it gave the cultivators an assurance against such enhancement except on the reasonable ground of a rise in the prices of the field produce. It was the most reasonable compromise which could be effected after the right of an absolutely fixed rental had been ignored; and it gave some security to the agricultural population of Madras, without which agriculture cannot flourish in any part of the world.

The Marquis of Ripon left India in December 1884, and in January 1885, the Secretary of State for India cancelled the equitable rule he had established. The India Office thus proved itself as un-

1 Despatch of 17th October 1882.
generous and harsh to the Indian cultivators as the old Court of Directors. And the Madras cultivator to-day (1901) has no effectual security against uncertain State demands and unjust enhancements, and has therefore no motive to save and no power to improve his own condition.
CHAPTER X

LORD WELLESLEY AND CONQUESTS IN NORTHERN
INDIA (1795–1815)

The Province of India now called the North-Western
Provinces and Oudh, came under British rule at different
dates. Benares and some adjoining districts were an-
nexed by Warren Hastings on the death of the Nawab
of Oudh in 1775 by a treaty with his successor. Allah-
habad and some other districts were ceded by the
Nawab of Oudh to the British, under pressure from
Lord Wellesley, in 1801. Agra and the basin of the
Ganges and the Jumna were conquered by Lord Lake
in the Mahratta war of 1803. And the remaining por-
tion of Oudh was annexed by Lord Dalhousie in 1856.

Cornwallis and Shore were anxious to extend to
Benares the same Permanent Zemindari Settlement
which had been concluded in Bengal in 1793. Nego-
tiations were conducted with the Raja of Benares from
1787 to 1794, and an agreement was concluded on
the 27th October 1794. The Raja of Benares re-
linquished to the British the rights which he had
hitherto exercised over the whole of his State, re-
taining his Zemindari rights over a small tract which
had formed the patrimony of his family. On the
conclusion of this agreement, Sir John Shore, then
Governor-General of India, made land revenue settle-
ments with village Zemindars in the relinquished tracts,
and also restored many estates to old Zemindars who had
lost them under the Raja’s administration. The division
of the crop between the Government and the cultivator,
in proportions which varied slightly in different parts of the country, furnished the rule for fixing the land revenue; and a Permanent Settlement of the revenue was made in 1795 over the whole of the Benares country. The Code of Regulations for Bengal, Behar, and Orissa were extended to Benares with little alteration, and the civil and criminal laws administered were the same.

Six years after this, the Nawab of Oudh ceded to the East India Company the district of Allahabad and other districts called by the general name of the "Ceded Districts." The long negotiations between the Nawab and Lord Wellesley relating to this event, the threats under which the cession was ultimately made in commutation of the subsidy, and the charge of high crimes and misdemeanours which was subsequently framed against Lord Wellesley for these transactions, are matters of political history which do not come within the scope of the present work.  


2 "The subsidy which, according to the treaty of Lord Teignmouth, was already paid by the Vizir [Nawab of Oudh] amounted to Rs. 7,600,000; the annual expense of the additional force with which he was to be loaded was Rs. 5,412,929; the whole would amount to Rs. 13,012,929. The Nawab was required to make a cession of territory, in perpetual sovereignty to the English, the revenue of which even in its present unproductive state, and without any regard to the improvements of which it might be susceptible, should amount to such a sum, over and above the whole expense of collection. The revenue remaining to the Vizir after such a reduction would have been Rs. 10,000,000. The territory, then, of which he was to be deprived, amounted to more than one-half, to not much less than two-thirds, of his whole dominions. . . .

"If, on the other hand, this measure should, unfortunately, not obtain his consent, he was desired to consider the territorial cession as a measure which force, if necessary, would be employed to accomplish."—Mill's British India, Book VI. chap. ix.

See also State Papers relating to Lord Wellesley's administration. By a singular good fortune I have in my possession the identical copy of the State Papers in four volumes, which belonged to Lord Wellesley himself, and which was sold with the rest of his books after his death. These volumes contain interlineations and occasional short notes in the Marquis's own handwriting. Very amusing are his remarks on the policy of his peaceful successors, Cornwallis and Barlow, who reversed some of his acts. "Most infamous," "an abrogation in itself iniquitous," are some of the notes made by the late Marquis in reference to his successors' policy.
On the same day on which Lord Wellesley ratified the treaty by which the Company obtained the "Ceded Districts," he formed a Commission for the administration and settlement of those districts. Three civil servants were appointed to form a Board of Commissioners, and the Governor-General's brother, Henry Wellesley, was nominated Lieutenant-Governor of the new territory and President of the Board. Henry Wellesley made a settlement of the land revenue for three years with the Zemindars and farmers, and his first settlement report, dated 10th February 1803, discloses the same over-assessment which the Company's servants made in every newly-acquired territory in India.

"3. The settlement of the provinces had, however, been formed by the Collectors previously to my arrival at Barcilly, at a Jumma [assessment] fully equal to that at which it had been ceded by his Excellency the Nawab Vizir, and although I was still apprehensive that this settlement had been made upon an erroneous calculation of the existing assets of the country, and that the amount would be with difficulty realised, I determined not to annul the engagements which had been recently concluded by the Collectors, from an apprehension that any immediate interference on my part might tend to weaken their authority, which at that critical period, it appeared to me so necessary to support. . . .

"18. From the documents which I have been enabled to collect relative to the annual revenue of these provinces during the Moghal Government, it would appear that it amounted to nearly two and a half crores of rupees [two and a half millions sterling]. . . . Under the mild and equitable system of the British Government I have no hesitation in stating my expectation that the land revenue of these provinces, when fully cultivated, will amount to two crores and fifty lakhs of rupees [two and a half million sterling]. . . .
“24. Under the regulations recently introduced, the revenue arising from the Abkaree, or duty on the sale of spirituous liquors, will at least equal the amount for which credit is taken in the statement. . . .

“30. I now proceed to lay before your Lordship the arrangements which I have adopted for the purpose of placing the exclusive privilege of the purchase and sale of salt in the hands of the Company.”

In the statement appended to this report the following figures are given:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rupees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of the Nawab’s land revenue assessment</td>
<td>13,523,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of the British assessment, first year</td>
<td>15,619,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of the British assessment, second year</td>
<td>16,162,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of the British assessment, third year</td>
<td>16,823,063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will appear from these figures that the blunder which had been committed in Bengal and in Madras on the first acquisition of those provinces was repeated in Northern India. Large tracts of country, harassed by frequent wars and impoverished by severe exactions, had passed under the rule of a great and civilised power. It was a suitable occasion for giving the peaceful and industrious population some relief; it was an opportunity of lightening their burdens and improving their resources. But in the very first year of Henry Wellesley’s administration, the Company’s demand from the Ceded Districts was raised beyond the Nawab’s demand by two million Rupees, or two hundred thousand pounds; and another million Rupees was added before the third year was out. And while the Nawab’s demand was only nominal—collections being made according to the state of the crops—the Company’s demand was realised with a rigidity which

1 Paper 1 of Papers relating to East India Affairs, 1806, p. 34 et seq.
the people of India had never known before. One Collector, Mr. Dumbleton, complained that the settlement of 1802 "pressed beyond a reasonable demand," and that the British Government continued the heavy rates of the Nawab's Government "without the same elasticity in realising."

In other respects, every endeavour was made to bring the newly acquired territory under organised government. The Bengal Regulations were extended to it on the 24th May 1803, and the country was divided into seven districts. A civil servant, exercising the functions of Judge and Magistrate, was appointed to each district, and another civil servant performed the duties of Collector. A Court of Appeal and Circuit was established at Bareilly, and Tehsildars and landholders were empowered, as at Benares, to apprehend robbers and to preserve the peace within their jurisdiction.¹

An important Regulation was also enacted,² recognising the triennial settlement of the land revenue already made, and notifying that, at the expiration of that term, another settlement would be made for three years, to be followed by a settlement for four years, at the expiration of which a Permanent Settlement would be concluded.

"In these terms," says the Select Committee of the House of Commons,³ "the Supreme Government pledged itself to the landholders for the introduction of a Permanent Settlement" at the expiration of an aggregate period of ten years from the first settlement of Henry Wellesley.

In 1803 General Wellesley (another brother of the Governor-General, and afterwards Duke of Wellington) broke the Mahratta power in the south in the famous battle of Assaye; and Lord Lake crushed the same power in the north in the battle of Laswaree. The

¹ Regulation xxxv. of 1803. ² Regulation xxv. of 1803. ³ Fifth Report, 1812, p. 51.
country between the Jumna and the Ganges was annexed, and this country was called the Conquered Provinces, as distinguished from the Ceded Districts obtained from the Nawab of Oudh two years before. Bandelkhand and Cuttack were also annexed in 1803.

The Conquered Provinces were first placed under the administration of Lord Lake, but in 1805 they were formed into five districts, under the administration of judicial and revenue officers, and placed under the control of the supreme authorities at Calcutta like the Ceded Districts. The Regulations recently introduced in the Ceded Districts were introduced in the Conquered Provinces, and the same pledge which had been given to the landholders of the former country was given in the latter; settlements of one, three, and four years were to be made in succession, and the last settlement was to be permanent, if agreed to by the landholders.¹ Two years after the pledge was repeated, but with the proviso that the conclusion of the Permanent Settlement would depend on the confirmation of the Court of Directors.²

Northern India had been ravaged by the Mahratta war of 1803, and the severe land assessments made by the servants of the Company gave the people no chance of improving their condition. The result was the widespread famine of 1804. The Government was then compelled to make large remissions of the land revenue; loans and advances were made to the landowners; and a bounty was offered on grain exported into Benares, Allahabad, Cawnpore, and Fatehgarh. A Special Commission was appointed in 1807 to superintend the settlement for four years, which was to become permanent according to the regulations already enacted.

We now enter upon the famous discussion which took place on the question of a Permanent Settlement in Northern India.

¹ Regulation iv. of 1805. ² Regulation x. of 1807.
The Special Commissioners, R. W. Cox and Henry St. George Tucker, submitted their report admitting the benefits of a Permanent Settlement, but declaring themselves adverse to the immediate conclusion of such a settlement in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces.

"230. We are ourselves fully sensible of the many advantages which may be expected to result from a limitation of the public demand upon the land. We are aware that temporary settlements are harassing to the people, and that they afford opportunities for frauds and abuses. It has been questioned, indeed, whether a country can make any considerable advances in improvement while the public taxes are progressively increased, and the individual is not permitted to enjoy any benefit from the execution of greater industry; but with every previous disposition in favour of the principle of a Permanent Settlement, we submit to your Lordship in Council our deliberate and unqualified opinion that the measure, considered with relation to the Ceded and Conquered Provinces generally, is at this moment unseasonable, and that any premature attempt to introduce it must necessarily be attended with a material sacrifice of the public resources, and may, in particular cases, prove injurious to the parties themselves, whose prosperity it is the chief object of the measure to secure upon a durable foundation."¹

This was the first note of alarm raised in Northern India against a Permanent Settlement, and the fear of a "material sacrifice of the public revenues" inspired this alarm. The arguments of the Special Commissioners, however, received a conclusive reply from H. Colebrooke.

"3. Government is pledged, by the proclamation of the 4th July 1802 and 11th July 1805, to con-

¹ Report dated 13th April 1808.
clude a Permanent Settlement with the landholders, at the expiration of the periods there specified, for such lands as may be in a sufficiently improved state of cultivation to warrant the measure, on fair and equitable terms. It was judged expedient, on full consideration of the subject, and with ample knowledge of the circumstances now alleged, to anticipate these periods; and accordingly, in June 1807, the Governor-General in Council notified to the Zemindars and other proprietors, by Regulation x., 1807, that the Jumma assessed for the last year of the ensuing settlement shall remain fixed for ever, if they be willing to engage, and the arrangement shall receive the sanction of the Court of Directors.

"4. The pledge which has thus been solemnly contracted cannot be forfeited without such a glaring violation of promise as would lose us deservedly the confidence of the people. . . .

"9. The argument on which, if I mistake not, the late Commissioners chiefly rely, is that the right of participating in future improvement ought not to be relinquished, because Government is in a manner the landholder and proprietor of a vast estate. . . .

"26. Upon the important occasions of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal and Behar, and of the territories on the coast of Coromandel, and after mature deliberation, a claim of participation in the future improvement of the waste lands was relinquished to a greater extent than the proportion at which they are computed by the late Board of Commissioners in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces.

"27. The happy result of the measure is now witnessed in Bengal. The reviving prosperity of the country, its increased wealth and rapid improvement, are unquestionably due to the Permanent Settlement, the principle of which was so wise that even the serious errors that were committed in filling up the
outline of the plan could not ultimately disappoint its views.

"32. I appeal to this experience in preference to any speculative argument. . . . It was expected that the improvement of estates by the culture of waste lands would enrich the landholder by the increase of his usual income, and enable him to meet the variations of seasons and temporary calamities of drought and inundation without needing remissions of revenue.

"33. These expectations have been realised. . . .

"38. It appears to be a very prevalent opinion that the British system of administration is not generally palatable to our Indian subjects. Admitting this opinion to be not unfounded, it follows that while they taste none but the unpalatable parts of the system, and while the only boon which would be acceptable to them is withheld, the landed proprietors, and with them the body of the people, must be more and more estranged from the Government, in proportion to the expectations which they formed, and the disappointment which they will have experienced. . . .

"63. I shall conclude by declaring my concurrence in the Commissioners’ recommendation, that steadiness, moderation, and justice should be the features borne by the administration of Government. But it is not by abandoning a measure deliberately resolved on, and beneficial to our subjects, that we shall prove our steadiness. It is not by grasping at the highest revenue, and wringing from our peasants the utmost rent, that we shall convince our moderation; nor is it by depriving the sons of our petty landholders of their birthright that we shall demonstrate our sense of justice."¹

This Minute, together with a similar Minute from

¹ Colebrooke’s Minute of 1808.
Lumsden, another member of Council, was forwarded by Lord Minto, then Governor-General, to the Court of Directors. And Lord Minto himself was equally explicit in his opinion.

"That on a mature consideration of all the documents connected with the establishment of a Permanent Settlement in the provinces of Bengal, Behar, Orissa, and Benares, and in the territories dependent on the Presidency of Fort St. George, and of all the reports and minutes respecting the proposed Permanent Settlement in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, he was entirely satisfied of the sound policy, or rather of the urgent necessity, of the measure."  

But the Directors had made up their minds. They had been once influenced by circumstances to sacrifice a prospective increase in their profits for the good of a nation. Lord Cornwallis was now dead, and the Directors were never guilty of such generosity again. "Grasping at the highest revenue and wringing from our peasants the utmost rent" was now their policy.

"No settlement," they replied, "shall be declared permanent in Cuttack or in any other of our Provinces till the whole proceedings preparatory to it have been submitted to us, and till your resolutions upon these proceedings have received our sanction and concurrence." Nine months after they again wrote that "the object of the present despatch is to caution you in the most pointed manner against pledging us to the extension of the Bengal fixed assessment to our newly acquired territories."  

The Governor-General was taken aback by these despatches. They directed not only the abandonment of a measure absolutely necessary for the good of the people of India, but also the violation of a solemn pledge.

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1 Letter dated 15th September 1808.  
2 Despatches of 1st February 1811 and 27th November 1811.
twice made unconditionally to the people, and incorporated in the Regulations of 1803 and 1805. The Proclamation which formed a part of Section 29 of Regulation xxv. of 1803 (for the Ceded Provinces) contained this clause:

“At the end of these ten years, a Permanent Settlement will be concluded with the same persons (if willing to engage, and if no others who have a better claim shall come forward) for such lands as may be in a sufficiently improved state of cultivation to warrant the measure, on such terms as Government shall deem fair and equitable.”

And the Proclamation embodied in Regulation ix. of 1805 (for the Conquered Provinces) repeated the pledge in these terms:

“At the end of ten years, expiring with the year 1222 Fusly, a Permanent Settlement will be concluded with the same persons (if willing to engage, and if no other persons having a better claim shall come forward) for such lands as may be in a sufficiently improved state of cultivation to warrant the measure, on such terms as Government shall deem fair and equitable.”

These pledges were given unconditionally to the people of India by the responsible servants and agents of the Company, and were therefore binding on the Company. In 1807 the pledge was repeated a third time in Regulation x. of 1807 (for the Ceded and Conquered Provinces), and the condition was then inserted for the first time that the Permanent Settlement shall be made if “the arrangement shall receive the sanction of the Honourable the Court of Directors.”

How could these pledges be violated by the mandate of the Directors issued in 1811? “Had the Honourable Court’s dissent,” wrote the Indian Government in 1812, “to the arrangements established by the Regulations of 1803 and 1805 been signified at an early period after the enactment of those Regulations,
the inherent powers of control possessed by the Court might have been urged in support of such dissent, although those Regulations contained no reserve of the Court's approval; but now that the whole term of the contract has expired in the Coded Provinces, and two-thirds of it in the Conquered Countries, the annulment of it, at this distant period, could not, we apprehend, as already intimated, be reconciled to the dictates either of policy or justice." ¹

And Lord Minto, in a Minute recorded by himself, endeavoured to construe the Directors' recent orders in a restricted sense, as he could not reconcile a literal construction of those orders "with the maintenance of the faith of Government so publicly and so solemnly pledged to the landlords." ²

One more protest was submitted by Lord Minto against the Directors' orders before he left India in 1813. He pointed out that a Permanent Settlement involved no sacrifice of revenues; that a variable land-tax had been condemned even by Adam Smith, in his Wealth of Nations, as a discouragement to improvements in land; that a Permanent Settlement could be effected for the estates actually held by the landlords in Northern India without including the waste lands; and finally, if the object of good government was "to ameliorate generally the conditions of the natives, it is our firm conviction that no arrangement or measure will lend so speedily and effectually to the accomplishment of those important objects as the establishment of a Permanent Settlement." ³

But the Directors of the Company were obdurate. Their professed desire for the good of the people of India would not move them to surrender their own profits. They had indeed fixed upon a plan of getting out of the pledges given in 1803 and 1805. They

¹ Letter dated 9th October 1812. ² Minute dated 11th July 1812. ³ Letter dated 17th July 1813.
suggested an evasion which would not be held valid by any Court of Justice, and which was unworthy of honest merchants, not to speak of the rulers of an empire.

"Continued possession and a punctual discharge of the dues of Government during the triennial leases formed only one part of the condition on which Government pledged itself to a Permanent Settlement with the landholders. There was another and still more important clause in the condition, viz. that the land should, in the interval, be brought to a sufficiently advanced stage of cultivation to warrant us in fixing perpetual limits to our demand upon it. The precise point of improvement at which such a measure might become expedient, or even justifiable, was not determined by the Regulation of 1803 and 1805, and would not, indeed, be determined by any prospective Regulation. The question was left completely open for the future exercise of the judgment of Government; nor is there anything in these Regulations by which its decision can, or ought to be, in the smallest degree fettered."¹

If this argument had been used in good faith and honesty, it would have led to Permanent Settlements in some advanced estates at once, and delayed them in others. But it was used artfully to evade a pledge, and the pledge was evaded. No Permanent Settlements were made in any estates in 1813, or have been made since.

Lord Moira, afterwards Marquis of Hastings, succeeded Lord Minto as Governor-General of India. His administration is famous in history for the Nepal war, the Pindaree war, and the last Mahratta war, which led to the annexation of the Province of Bombay in 1817. In the midst of these distractions, Lord Hastings was unable for a time to devote his attention to the settlement of Northern India.

¹ Letter dated 16th March 1813.
CHAPTER XI

LORD HASTINGS AND THE MAHALWARI SETTLEMENT IN NORTHERN INDIA (1815–1822)

The last Mahratta war was over, and the last of the Peshwas was captured in 1818; and Lord Hastings was forced to face the problem of a proper land administration in India, far more difficult to deal with than swarms of the Pindaries or armies of the Mahrattas. The task of conquests and annexations was easy enough, when disciplined troops faced undisciplined hordes in the field of battle. But the story of such conquests is not the history of India; the story of the administration, and of the condition of the people under the new rule, is the true history of the country.

The Board of Commissioners in the Conquered and Ceded Provinces (Northern India), consisting of Sir Edward Colebrooke and Mr. Trant, submitted their report on land settlements in the different districts—Moradabad, Bareilly, Shajehanpur, and Rohilkhand; and they once more pressed that the assessments made should be made permanent.

"We should not fulfil the duty of the station in which it has pleased the Government to place us if we were to abstain from offering it as our decided opinion that the greatest injury cannot but occur to the interests of the British Government in this quarter of its possessions by any longer withholding the benefits of a Permanent Settlement, which have been so long and so anxiously expected by the mass of the population of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces.
"We shall not enter upon any discussion of the advantages of the measure in a fiscal point of view, although we are fully satisfied of them, because we consider the faith of the Government to have been pledged by the promulgation of the two Regulations above quoted, which having been enacted, as we understood, after a full discussion of the question of the Permanent Settlement with the Honourable the Court of Directors, was to be considered as the absolute and final determination of the supreme authorities, both in this country and in Europe. . . .

"We at the same time take the liberty of again expressing our conviction, both individually and collectively, that no measure short of a general permanency to the settlements of the whole of these provinces will meet the expectations of the landholders, founded on what they consider a solemn promise of Government." 1

In the following year, 1819, a minute was recorded by Mr. Dowdeswell on the same subject on the eve of his retirement from India after a long and distinguished service. And he spoke in no uncertain voice.

"The position, then, which I maintain is, that the faith of Government was irrevocably pledged to the great body of the people to extend to them the benefits of a Permanent Settlement, with the limited exceptions above stated, at the expiration of the term of ten years, reckoning from the period of the cession and conquest respectively. . . .

"It is painful to me to be compelled to state facts and opinions which, I am sensible, cannot prove agreeable to those for whose consideration they are chiefly intended; but the Honourable Court [of Directors] will, I am persuaded, do justice to the motives which actuate me. Had I thought myself free to choose, I

1 Report dated 27th October 1818.
THE MAHALWARI SETTLEMENT

should most readily have declined the task in which I am at present engaged. It is only because I thought the exposition of my sentiments to be a duty of more than ordinary exigency that I have been led to place them on record.

"It will answer every object which I have at heart if I can aid in showing that the measure would conduce to the best interests of the Government in promoting the agricultural improvement of the country, and more specially in cementing the attachment of the people to the British name and power, without any inordinate sacrifice of the public resources. The landholders, I doubt not, would be fully satisfied to improve their means of subsistence by gradually reclaiming such small portions of land as lie intermixed with those already reduced to a state of cultivation, or in other words, within the limits of a Pergana, Mouza, or other division of an estate for which the settlement might be formed; the rest, as shown in preceding paragraphs, would belong de jure to Government.

"On the other hand, I neither deem it wise, just, or politic that Government should gradually so enhance the assessments as to draw from the land the maximum revenue which it can possibly pay. I believe that, generally speaking, the assessment has already been raised as high as is consistent with the well-being of the agricultural classes and the gradual improvement of the country.

"I now quit the subject, in all probability for ever. It is equally a source of pride and satisfaction to me to reflect that I have contributed something towards the internal peace and good order of the country; that I have laboured according to the extent of my means for the improvement and the administration of civil and criminal justice; and that the public resources generally have not suffered from the share I have had in the management of them. Wide, therefore, as the
range is, I should scarcely have had a wish ungratified could I have witnessed, previously to quitting the country, the establishment of a Permanent Settlement in the western provinces."\(^1\)

A still more distinguished officer, Sir Edward Colebrooke, was now about to leave India after his forty-two years' useful and distinguished service in the country. And he too made one more endeavour, on the eve of his retirement, to secure to the people of the country some prospect of wealth and of future gain from the soil, against the ever increasing and impoverishing demands of the Court of Directors. With his Minute, recorded in 1820, he submitted a statement showing how the land revenue of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces had been continuously increased during twelve years, from 1807 to 1818; and he recommended the promised limitation of the land revenue demand which would leave "to the landholders the fruits of their improved industry."\(^2\)

The following figures are taken from Sir Edward Colebrooke's statement, accepting ten Rupees as equivalent to a pound sterling.

### Conquered and Ceded Provinces, Northern India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Land Revenue</th>
<th>Gross Revenue</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>2,008,955</td>
<td>2,65,396</td>
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<td>2,042,147</td>
<td>2,304,004</td>
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<td>2,254,791</td>
<td>2,579,949</td>
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<td>1810</td>
<td>2,392,852</td>
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<td>1811</td>
<td>2,414,737</td>
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<td>1812</td>
<td>2,274,809</td>
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<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>2,892,789</td>
<td>3,262,366</td>
</tr>
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</table>

\(^1\) Minute dated 7th October 1819.

\(^2\) Minute dated 17th March 1820.
In a later Minute, recorded in the same year, Sir Edward Colebrooke made his last recommendation for securing the prosperity of the people of India among whom he had lived so long.

"On the eve of finally quitting a country in which I have resided forty-two years, and a service in which, through the early partiality of the late Warren Hastings in selecting me for Persian Secretary to Government so long ago as the beginning of 1780, I have borne an efficient and responsible part from the age of eighteen, I should feel a true satisfaction if, by the last act of my official existence, I could flatter myself in having contributed to secure the blessings of a limited assessment to that portion of the British territories in which the last twelve years of an active life have been employed. . . . I cannot, however, forget that to the general character of the landholders of those provinces I am indebted for the success of my labours, and common gratitude, if even my conviction of the propriety of the measure were less strong, might dictate this return."

A noble sentiment this, but futile. The loyal and peaceful character of the Indian people has never induced the Government to abate its own pecuniary demands; it has often had the contrary effect of encouraging the Government to enhance its demands till the people became impoverished and resourceless, in spite of the peace and security secured by the British rule, and in spite of the thrift and industry of the people, and the richness and fertility of their land.

Armed with the Reports and Minutes of the Board of Commissioners, of Mr. Dowdeswell and Sir Edward Colebrooke, as well as of Messrs. Stuart, Adam, and Fendall, the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, made his final appeal to the Court of Directors for that measure of Permanent Settlement, which had
been solemnly promised by the British Government, and which was needed for the prosperity of the people.

"It is, then, our unanimous opinion, that the system of a Permanent Settlement of the land revenue, either upon the principle of a fixed Jumma, or of an assessment determinable by a fixed and invariable rate ought to be extended to the Ceded and Conquered Provinces." ¹

The Directors of a trading company, now owners of an empire, refused the proposals of Lord Hastings with a curtness which betrayed how little real regard they entertained for the happiness of the people when their own pecuniary interests were concerned.

"We must again pointedly apprise you that we are not prepared to assent to the opinion to which you say, you have unanimously come, 'that the system of a Permanent Settlement of the land revenue, either upon the principle of a fixed Jumma, or of an assessment determinable by a fixed and invariable rate, ought to be extended to the Ceded and Conquered Provinces;' and we distinctly repeat the injunction contained in the eighty-sixth paragraph of our letter in this department, dated the 15th January 1819, against any Permanent Settlement of land revenue; and we desire that you will abstain not only from making any such settlement, but from taking any measures which may raise the expectation that a settlement in perpetuity will hereafter be formed." ² The controversy was thus closed for forty years.

Holt Mackenzie, then Secretary to the Board, had in the meantime recorded his famous Minute of 1819,

¹ Revenue Letter to the Court of Directors, signed by the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, and members of his Council, Messrs. Stuart, Adam, and Fendall, dated 16th September 1820.
² Revenue Letter from the Court of Directors to the Governor-General in Council, dated 1st August 1821.
revealing the existence of Village Communities in Northern India, and recommending a settlement with these communities where they existed, after a systematic survey and inquiry.\textsuperscript{1} The Minute contained a review of the different districts and suggested that the villages should now be surveyed, that a record of rights be prepared, and that Village Communities should be represented by head-men who should be called Lambardars, or persons having a "number" in the Collector's register of persons liable to pay land revenue to the State. It was also suggested that the rates of assessment should be equalised rather than enhanced; and that revenue payers should have their rights secured such as they were.

All ideas of a Permanent Settlement being abandoned in 1821, the minute of Holt MacKenzie was accepted as the basis of settlement. The idea was that settlements should be made with landlords where they existed, and with Village Communities where they held land in common tenancy. And it was specially desired that the land tax should be fixed at a moderate rate. This was particularly insisted upon in the Government Resolution of 1822.

"87. It appears, indeed, that the ancient Hindu laws assigned to the Sovereign a certain and moderate share of the produce. But if we judge of the practice of ancient times by that of more modern Hindu principalities, it may apparently be assumed that the actual sums levied from the cultivators were by no means always limited by the nominal rates. . . .

"88. So also in the Moghal system as described by Mr. Grant, who states the ordinary money rates to have been fixed by an average valuation of one-fourth of the produce. . . .

"93. On the whole, indeed, his Lordship in Council is disposed to conclude that although the

\textsuperscript{1} Minute dated 1st July 1819.
native governments to which we succeeded allowed considerable weight to ancient customs, even in adjusting their pecuniary demands, and though in later days especially, they were too weak to enforce all that they might regard as their just dues, yet that (subject to the general obligation of consulting the case of the Ryots) the right of the ruling power to fix the rate of its demand was never questioned. . . .

"101. In the case of Government especial caution is necessary to guard against an excessive demand; for there must always be great danger lest, while we imagine that we take only a share of the net rent, we in fact encroach on the fair wages of labour and profits of stock. . . .

"129. When the rates of rent payable by the cultivators are settled, it will remain to determine the nature and extent of the advantages to be assigned to the intermediate managers and others [landlords], and the manner and proportion in which the net rent and profits arising out of the limitation of the Government demand is to be distributed. . . .

"373. His Lordship in Council has derived much satisfaction from the evidence afforded on other occasions, that the native revenue officers have a lively sense of the distinction of honorary rewards. That feeling it is most important to cherish, and it can never be the wish of Government to practise, in regard to any class of public functionaries, the fallacious economy which leaves to officers invested with extensive trust the alternative of poverty or dishonour.1

A week after the date of this Resolution was passed Regulation vii. of 1822, "declaring the principles according to which settlement of the land revenue in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, including Cuttack, Pattaspore, and its dependencies, is to be hereafter made."

1 Resolution of Government dated 1st August 1822.
The revision of the settlement was to be made village by village and estate by estate, and as an estate is called a Mahal in the Indian language, the settlement which was made in Northern India is known as the Mahalwari Settlement. The revenue demand was not to be raised in any estate unless it was clear that the landlords' profits exceeded one-fifth of that demand. In such cases "the assessment shall be so regulated as to leave the Zemindars and others aforesaid a net profit of twenty per cent. of the amount of the Jumna," or revenue demand. Thus in an estate with a rental of £1200, the State-demand was to be raised to £1000, so as to leave to the landlord £200, or one-fifth of the State-demand. The State-demand was thus to be over 83 per cent. of the rental of estates.

Revenue Collectors were empowered to grant leases to cultivators, specifying the rents payable by them. In cases in which estates were held not by landlords but by cultivators in common tenancy, the State-demand might be raised to 95 per cent. of the rents, i.e. to the entire rental "with a deduction of 5 per cent. on account of Malikana, or such other rate not being less than 5 per cent. as Government may determine." In such cases the Revenue Collector was empowered to make a fresh partition of the lands of the village; or of the proportion of the State-demand payable by each cultivator.

Revenue Collectors might be empowered to try suits between landlords and tenants, to determine the rents payable, to adjust accounts between them, and to decide all matters connected with lands, rents, leases, and engagements between landlords and tenants. An appeal was allowed from the decision of the Collector to the Board, and finally by a regular suit in Civil Courts.¹

¹ Regulation vii. of 1822.
Such was the first comprehensive Land Act of Northern India, passed twenty years after Northern India was ceded to or conquered by the British; and a careful examination of its clauses discloses its defects. The Act prescribed no equitable standard of rents payable by cultivators except the judgment of the Revenue Collector. It prescribed no equitable margin of profits to landlords except a bare 17 per cent. of the rental. In curious contrast to frequent professions "to guard against an excessive demand," and to "take only a share of the net rent," it swept away virtually the whole of the rental of the country, leaving landlords and cultivators equally impoverished. It made any accumulation of wealth and any improvement in the material condition of the people impossible; and it fixed no limits to the State-demand in future and recurring settlements after the brief period of the first settlement was over.

The system broke down ultimately by reason of its own harshness. Some relief was at last given to the people of Northern India in 1833 by the best and greatest of the Company's Governor-Generals, Lord William Bentinck. To an account of the Land Settlement of 1833 we shall revert in a future chapter.
CHAPTER XII

ECONOMIC HISTORY OF SOUTHERN INDIA (1800)

In the preceding chapters we have dwelt on the history of Land Settlements in Bengal, Madras, and Northern India. We have seen that everywhere the local authorities pressed for a Permanent Settlement of the land revenues. In Bengal a Permanent Zemindari Settlement was made in 1793, and this was extended to Benares in 1805. In Madras a Permanent Zemindari Settlement was made in the Northern Circars and elsewhere between 1802 and 1805, and then there was a change in the policy of the Directors. Thomas Munro recommended a Permanent Ryotwari Settlement, and the Board of Revenue recommended a Permanent Village Settlement; a Ryotwari Settlement was made, but it was not declared permanent. In Northern India Lord Wellesley pledged the faith of the British Government in 1803 and 1805 to conclude a Permanent Zemindari Settlement, and Lord Minto and Lord Hastings pressed the Directors to redeem this pledge. The Directors broke the pledge and ordered a Mahalwari Settlement, not permanent.

Such is the history of Land Settlements in India during the second period of British rule in India. The first generation of British rulers—the generation of Clive and Warren Hastings—settled nothing; they were bewildered by the land question, and their harsh and ever-changing methods ended in oppression and failure. The second generation—that of Cornwallis and Wellesley and Lord Hastings—gave a Permanent
Zemindari Settlement to Bengal, Benares, and the Northern Circars; a Ryotwari Settlement, not declared permanent, to the newer acquisitions in Madras; and a Mahalwari Settlement, not permanent, to the Ceded and Conquered Provinces of Northern India.

We shall pause now in the course of our narrative to examine the economic condition of the people of India at the commencement of the nineteenth century. It is necessary to examine somewhat minutely how the people of India lived, and tilled their fields, and produced their manufactures, what incomes and wages were earned by men, what employment occupied the women. No study is more interesting and instructive in the history of nations than the study of the material condition of the people from age to age. And, fortunately, we have in the valuable works of Dr. Francis Buchanan—the first statistical inquirer employed by the British Government in India—some detailed information concerning the occupations and industries of the people of India.

On the 24th February 1800, Lord Wellesley, then Governor-General of India, directed Dr. Francis Buchanan, a medical officer in the employment of the East India Company, to make a journey through Southern India; with a view to make economic inquiries into the condition of the people and their agriculture and manufactures. Dr. Buchanan travelled from Madras territory into the Karnatic, Mysore, Coimbatur, Malabar, and Canara, and the diary of his journey and the results of his inquiries were published in London in 1807, in three quarto volumes. This work will be our guide in the present chapter, which deals with the condition of the people of Southern India in 1800. The later inquiries of Dr. Buchanan in Northern India will be dealt with in the next chapter.
THE JAIGIR OF MADRAS.

On the 23rd April 1800, Dr. Buchanan left Madras on his tour of statistical inquiry. There was little waste land in the immediate vicinity of Madras, and the soil produced a good crop of rice if the rainfall was sufficient. In some places the people irrigated their fields from old tanks and reservoirs, and these fields were covered with rice. Charitable people had built Choultries or inns on the wayside for the free accommodation of travellers.

Further on, the road westward passed through a country “at present naked,” but showing some signs of improvement in the shape of plantations of cocoanut palms. At Condaturu the country assumed a different and pleasing aspect, and Dr. Buchanan saw one of those old Hindu irrigation works for which Southern India was always famous. It was a large reservoir formed by shutting up with an artificial bank an opening between two natural ridges of ground. The sheet of water was seven or eight miles in length and three in width, and was let out in numerous small canals to irrigate fields in the dry season. In the rains it was replenished from the Chir Nadli, there were sluices at different places twenty or thirty feet wide; and these sluices were fortified by stones, placed in a sloping direction, to let out the superfluous water. The reservoir could irrigate the lands of thirty-two villages during a drought of eighteen months. “In a country liable to famine from want of rain,” wrote Dr. Buchanan, “a reservoir such as this is of inestimable value.”

Further westward, between Condaturu and Sri-Parmaturu, the country was poor and overrun with low prickly bushes. There was little cultivation, and in most places a crop would not be worth the seed. Palms and wild dates grew, however, on the soil
almost spontaneously, and the former produced drinks in the shape of Tari and Jagari.

At Sri-Parmaturu there was another old reservoir which irrigated the fields of the village containing over two thousand acres of rice lands. Beyond this spot the land was again bare and barren, and there was very little cultivation, until Dr. Buchanan came to the ancient Hindu capital of Kanchi, now called Conjeeveram.

Conjeeveram boasted of a large old reservoir which irrigated many fields covered with a thriving crop of rice. The Dewan of Nawab Mahomed Ali had also constructed a fine tank lined all round with cut granite, which descended to the bottom in steps. Choultries or inns were also built of granite on the sides of the tanks for the shelter of travellers, and the pillars were elaborately carved.

Conjeeveram was a large town and regularly built, but was not populous. Many of the buildings were unoccupied, and the houses were only one storey high. They had mud walls and were roofed with tiles, and were built in the form of a square with a court in the centre. The streets were wide and clean and crossed each other at right angles, and on each side there was a row of cocoanut trees. Most of the Brahmins of the place were the followers either of Sankara-Acharya or of Ramanuja-Acharya. The former lived in the ninth century and was a rigid Vedantist, resolving all universe into the one Primal Soul. The latter lived in the eleventh century and was a more popular Vedantist, inculcating the faith of a Personal God. In modern times, the doctrines of Sankara are often identified with the cult of Siva, while those of Ramanuja blend themselves with the cult of Vishnu.

After leaving Conjeeveram, Dr. Buchanan found the country once more a desert till he came to Damerlu, the last village in the Jaigir of Madras. A canal from
the Palar river irrigated much valuable rice land between Damerlu and Oulur. At Oulur the soil was good but was fit only for dry grains, and bushes and trees grew in the midst of fields.

On the whole the Jaigir of Madras, which had been in the possession of the East India Company for half a century, was not in a flourishing condition. Frequent wars, a heavy land-tax, and the diversion of the revenues from possible local improvements to the purchase of the Company's Investments, left the country poor and the population sparse. At Condaturu the Collector, Mr. Place, had repaired the old reservoir during his administration, and had augmented the land-tax considerably. But long stretches of the country remained unirrigated, uncultivated, and sparsely populated—"a desert," as Dr. Buchanan calls it.

**The Karnatic.**

Lord Wellesley had not yet annexed the Karnatic when Dr. Buchanan travelled through the country, and it was therefore still nominally under the Nawab of Arcot, though virtually under the administration of the servants of the Company.

On his way to Arcot, Dr. Buchanan saw another splendid old Hindu reservoir, called the Kaveri-Pak. The reservoir "is about eight miles long and three broad, and fertilises a considerable extent of country. I never viewed a public work with more satisfaction, a work that supplies a great body of people with every comfort which their moral situation will permit them to enjoy."

The road from Kaveri-Pak to Arcot was bad, and scarcely fit for wheel-carriage. People travelled, however, on bullock carts, and Mahomedan women sometimes rode bullocks, wrapped in white veils. The city
of Arcot was extensive, and produced coarse cotton fabrics. The houses were about as good as in the towns of the Madras Jaigir. The hills in the vicinity were barren, composed of granite rapidly decaying. The country between Arcot and the western hills contained some good land which served for gardens and dry grains, while others were altogether barren.

The road westward from Arcot to Vellore, and from Vellore to Paligonda, lay along the valley of the Palar river, and the country was fertile and verdant. The fort of Vellore was large and beautiful, and the town was also large and built in the Hindu fashion. The villages along the road were, however, poor and miserable, and some of them in ruins. The people of Paligonda procured water from the Palar river by digging canals in the sand six or seven feet deep. The water was then conveyed by other canals to irrigate the fields, and thus rendered the valley of Vellore the finest tract of country in the Karnatic.

**Baramahal.**

Dr. Buchanan then ascended the Eastern Ghats and reached Venkatagiri in Baramahal on the 4th May. The country had been settled by Thomas Munro some years before, and reminded Dr. Buchanan of England by its swells and undulations. As far as he could judge, one-half of the country had been ploughed, while the remainder was copse land and served for pasture. Iron was smelted from ores and black sand, and common salt was found in many parts of the country. The soil was reddish ferruginous clay intermixed with quartz and granite, and walls of huts in towns and villages were built of this mud, and were smoothed and painted with alternate vertical broad stripes of white and red. In some places the flat roofs of the houses were also terraced with this mud.
Eastern Mysore.

Dr. Buchanan now entered into the territory of the Raja of Mysore, who had been placed on the throne by Lord Wellesley after the fall of Tipu Sultan in the preceding year. He found Waluru a large town with a weekly fair, and manufacturing coarse cotton cloths much of which was exported. Coarse blankets, known as Curalies, were also largely manufactured in the neighbouring villages. The arable lands amounted to seven-tenths of the whole, and perhaps a twentieth part of them was irrigated. Rice grew on the banks of the Pennar river. Fields were manured by women who carried the manure in baskets, and were ploughed by buffaloes and oxen.

On the 10th May, Dr. Buchanan arrived at Bangalore, which had been constructed by Haidar Ali as a frontier fortress after the best fashion of Mahomedan military architecture, and had been destroyed by his son, Tipu Sultan, who found it useless against the valour of British troops. The gardens were extensive and divided into square plots, the cypress and vine grew luxuriantly in that climate, the apple and the peach produced fruits, and some pine and oak plants introduced from the Cape of Good Hope were thriving. The arable land in the vicinity of Bangalore did not exceed four-tenths of the country, and the small proportion of irrigated land, formerly under cultivation, was mostly waste, owing to the neglect of the reservoirs during the recent wars. Tipu Sultan had received the kingdom in a flourishing state from Haidar Ali, of whom all people spoke to Dr. Buchanan in terms of high praise. But the oppressions of wars of Tipu had caused much misery, and had driven four-tenths of the cultivators from their home and country.

On the 18th May, Dr. Buchanan presented his credentials at Seringapatam, then the capital of the
Mysore Raja. On the following day he had an inter-
view with Purnea, the famous Hindu minister whose
administration received the highest commendation
from General Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellin-
ton), and from every other Englishman in India who
came in contact with him. Purnea had enjoyed much
authority even under Tipu Sultan, and might have
saved him if he had listened to his counsels. After
the fall of Tipu, he became the virtual ruler of Mysore
under the new Raja.

Seringapatam, which had a population of perhaps
150,000 under Tipu Sultan, was now reduced to a
miserable state by the wars, and had scarcely more
than 32,000 people. The district on the north bank
of the Kaveri was called Pattana Ashta-gram, while
that to the south of the river was known as Mahasura
Ashta-gram. The country rose gradually on both
sides of the river, was naturally fertile, and was irri-
gated by a noble system of canals sending out branches
to water the intermediate spaces. The water of the
Kaveri river was forced into the sources of these
canals by anicuts or dams, formed of large blocks of
granite at a great expense. Dr. Buchanan does not
tell us if these useful and noble works were constructed
by Haidar Ali or by his Hindu predecessors; but during
the wars of Tipu Sultan very great damage was done,
temples, villages, and dams were broken down, and
canals were choked. Under the administration of
Purnea, however, agriculture and industries were re-
viving. "Everything wears an aspect of beginning
restoration. The villages are rebuilding, the canals are
clearing, and in place of antelopes and forest guards,
we have the peaceful bullock returning to his useful
labour."\footnote{Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c. (London, 1807), vol. i. p. 83.}

The manner of reaping and preserving rice in
Mysore has been minutely described. Water was let

\footnote{Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c. (London, 1807), vol. i. p. 83.}
off from the rice fields a week before the reaping, and the rice was then cut down, about four inches from the ground, and stacked with the ears inwards. After another week it was spread on the threshing-floor and trodden out by bullocks, and then put up in heaps containing 60 Kandakas or 334 bushels. Each heap was marked with clay and covered with straw, and so left for twenty or thirty days till the division between the cultivator and the Government. The cultivators then stored their share in various different ways. Some kept it in narrow shafts, about 24 feet deep, in hard, stony soil, the floor, sides, and roof being lined with straw, and each pit containing 84 to 168 bushels. Others stored it in store-houses, strongly floored with planks. Others again stored it in cylinders made of clay, the mouth being covered by an inverted pot, and the rice being drawn out from a hole in the bottom when required. Lastly, some cultivators stored their rice in bags made of straw. Besides rice, Mung, sesamum, and sugar-cane were grown near Seringapatam. Ragi was extensively cultivated in dry fields, and supplied the lower classes of people with their common food; and Jowar and Bajra were the next most important dry corns.

Each farm near Seringapatam consisted generally of two or three ploughs of land. One plough was a poor stock, while the possessor of four or five was a great farmer. With five ploughs a man cultivated about 12½ acres of wet land and 25 acres of dry field. The farmer or cultivator was not turned out of his holding “so long as he pays his customary rent. Even in the reign of Tipu such an act would have been looked upon as an astonishing grievance.” On the other hand, the Government which received the rent was “bound to keep the canals and tanks in repair.”

1 Buchanan’s Journey from Mudras, &c., vol i. p. 124.
6s. 3½d. a month, while away from the town it was 5s. 4d. a month. Women often worked in the fields and carried manure in baskets on their heads. They were generally well dressed, and elegantly formed; “I have never seen finer forms,” says Dr. Buchanan, “than even the labouring women of that country frequently possess. Their necks and arms are, in particular, remarkably well shaped.”

On the 6th June, Dr. Buchanan left Seringapatam on his way back to Bangalore. At Mundium he found the rice land irrigated entirely from tanks and reservoirs. At Maduru he found a large reservoir, said to have been built by Vishnu Vardhana Raya seven hundred years before. It received a supply from the neighbouring river by means of a dam and a canal, and when in proper repair was capable of irrigating all the neighbouring fields, under the level of its bank, throughout the year. At Chinapattam, formerly the residence of a Polygar family known as Jasadeva Rayas, glass and ornamental rings, steel wires for musical instruments, pure white sugar, and various other commodities were manufactured. Ramagiri was the next important place on the way, but had grievously suffered by Lord Cornwallis’s invasion of Mysore in 1792, and a large proportion of the inhabitants had perished of hunger. At Magadi the road passed through a wild and romantic country, consisting of low hills and valleys cultivated with dry grains. Valuable timber and bamboos grew near Savana-durga, which Lord Cornwallis had taken by assault, and had been deserted ever since. Iron was smelted in the neighbouring hills, and was repeatedly forged and purified for being wrought into instruments of husbandry, and steel was manufactured for weapons. Sandal-wood and much valuable timber was grown in the neighbourhood, and the lac insect was reared.

1 Buchanan’s Journey from Madras, &c., vol i. p. 135
for that famous dye which used to be one of the best-known products of India from olden times. On the 21st June Dr. Buchanan reached Bangalore.

Bangalore had possessed a large trade and extensive manufactures under Haidar Ali. Tipu Sultan had foolishly forbidden all commerce, both with the Nizam’s Dominions and with the Karnatic, and the trade of Bangalore had declined; but the place was again rising in importance after the restoration of the Hindu dynasty. Poona merchants brought shawls and saffron and musk from Kashmir and pearls from Surat; Burhanpur traders imported chintz and gold lace, cloth and thread; red cotton cloth, flowered with gold and silver, came from the Nizam’s Dominions; and salt, tin, lead, copper, and European goods came from the Karnatic. The exports from Bangalore were chiefly betel-nut, sandal-wood, pepper, cardamom, and tamarinds. A vast quantity of blankets and cotton-wool was also imported.

Goods were transported by cattle in loads. In one year, 1500 bullock-loads of cotton wool, 50 bullock-loads of cotton thread, 230 bullock-loads of raw silk, 7000 bullock-loads of salt, and 300 bullock-loads of foreign goods were imported; while 4000 bullock-loads of betel-nut and 400 bullock-loads of pepper were exported. Cotton weavers made cloths for home use, and silk weavers prepared a rich strong fabric. The silks were dyed red with lac, or orange colour with Capili-podi, or yellow with turmeric. Workmen who made cotton cloths with silk borders earned 8d. a day, and those who made silk cloth earned 6d. Weavers obtained advances from merchants, and sold their goods to merchants or to private customers, never carrying them to public markets. Various kinds of white muslins were manufactured, and had a considerable sale. Women of all castes, except Brahmans, bought cotton wool at weekly markets, spun them at home, and sold the thread to weavers. And thus people of
all classes—men and women—found in spinning and weaving a profitable occupation.

Indigo was considerably used for dyeing; the tanning of leather was a paying industry; and castor oil, cocoanut oil, sesamum oil, and various other oils, were largely manufactured and sold.

In a village near Bangalore Dr. Buchanan was informed that merchants often advanced money to the cultivators to pay their rents, and were afterwards content to receive one-half of the crop for the advance and for interest. The system of division of crops in a Village Community, described by Dr. Buchanan, is interesting. A heap of grain, consisting on the average of twenty Kandakas or 2400 Seers (about 4800 lbs.), was thus divided—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Meets</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village priests</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village charity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village astrologer</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village Brahman</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Village barber</td>
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<td>Village potter</td>
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<td>Village blacksmith</td>
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<td>Village washerman</td>
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<td>Village measurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village heelde</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village chief</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village accountant</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village watchman</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village accountant</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village chief</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conductor of water</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus a payment of 5½ per cent. of the produce of the fields secured to the villagers the professional services of the barber, the potter and the blacksmith, the priest and the astrologer. Of the remainder, the Deshmukh or Zemindar claimed 10 per cent.; and the balance was divided equally between the Government and the
farmer. When Haidar Ali abolished the Deshmukhs, he claimed their share also for the Government.¹

NORTHERN MYSORE.

Leaving Bangalore on the 3rd July, Dr. Buchanan made a long and circuitous tour through the northern portions of Mysore. In the country round Colar he found the lands watered entirely by means of the reservoirs, often excavated by private individuals, while the larger ones were excavated at the expense of the Government. The old Hindu rate of revenue, laid down in the ancient law-books, was one-sixth or one-eighth or one-twelfth the produce; and when rulers and chiefs in Southern India claimed so large a share as one-half the produce, they made cultivation possible by excavating and maintaining vast irrigation works at their own cost, and they took their share in kind, not in money.

Rice, sugar-cane, betel-leaf, and vegetables were grown on wet lands at Colar, and the quantity of rice grown was nearly equal to that of the dry crop Ragi. Poppy was also plentifully cultivated, both for making opium and on account of the seed which was used for sweet cakes. The quantity of wheat grown was about one-half of the rice. Farm servants got 29½ bushels of grain and 13s. 5d. annually; the rate for day-labourers was about 3d. for men and 2d. for women.

Both Colar and Silagutta had suffered greatly under Tipu Sultan’s arbitrary rule and frequent wars, but were reviving after his fall. Cotton cloths of various kinds were the most important manufactures. Travelling westwards, Dr. Buchanan came to the famous Nandi-Durga, in the vicinity of which the Northern Pennar, the Palar, and the Southern Pennar all take their rise. The country beyond the hills was desolate, one-third

¹ Buchanan’s Journey from Madras, &c., vol. i. p. 265 et seq.
of what had been formerly cultivated was waste, and villages were deserted since the invasion of Lord Cornwallis. The people said they had suffered from five great evils—the failure of rain, the three invading armies, and the defending army of Mysore!

On the 18th July, Dr. Buchanan came to the great Balapura, which had become an independent State under its Polygar Narayan Swami on the dissolution of the Vijainagar kingdom in the sixteenth century. The State, however, had subsequently fallen under the power of the Moghal and the Mahratta, the Nizam and Haidar Ali; and had finally passed under the administration of the restored Hindu dynasty. It imported chintz and muslin, and exported sugar.

Further to the west was Madhu-giri, which had also become the seat of an independent Polygar on the fall of the Vijainagar kingdom, but had since passed under the rule of Mysore. Haidar Ali had improved the fortifications of the hill, and turned it into a considerable mart with a hundred families of weavers. The place had declined under Tipu Sultan, and finally ruined by the wars of Mysore with the Mahrattas and with Lord Cornwallis. Rice and Ragi, sugar-cane and wheat, cotton, pulses, sesameum, and various kitchen vegetables were grown here when Dr. Buchanan visited the place. Dry soil, fit for Ragi, paid a rent of 1s. 1d. to 3s. 4d. the acre. If irrigated, it paid 9s. to 11s. an acre. The cultivator had a claim to his lands, and could reclaim them even after an absence of years. If, in the meantime, the temporary tenant had made improvements, the original cultivator was required to pay for them. A labouring man earned 4s. a month, and a woman 3s. 4d. There was frequent scarcity in this part of the country owing to failure of rain, but seldom any famine causing loss of life. "It is when war is joined to scarcity, and interrupts the transportation of grain, that famine produces all its horrors. These were never so severely
felt here as during the invasion of Lord Cornwallis; when the country being attacked on all sides, and penetrated in every direction by hostile armies, or by defending ones little less destructive, one-half at least of the inhabitants perished of absolute want."  

On the 31st July Dr. Buchanan reached Sira, which was a large and prosperous town under the Moghals with 50,000 houses, and therefore a population of a quarter of a million. It then passed under the rule of Haidar Ali, and was ruined by the Mahratta invasions and the oppressions of Tipu Sultan. Rice and Ragi, wheat and sugar-cane, pulses and cotton, were the principal produce. Rent was paid sometimes in money and sometimes in a share of the crops. Betel-nut, pepper, sandal-wood, and spices were imported into Sira, while blankets, cloths, oil, butter, ginger, and cocoa-nuts were exported. A thin, coarse muslin and certain varieties of thick cloths were the principal manufactures.

Retracing his steps to Madhu-giri, Dr. Buchanan made some inquiries as to the famous cattle of the place, and found that every town and village in that hilly country had herds of breeding cattle. The Goalas or cowherds lived in small villages near the skirts of the woods, cultivated a little ground, and sold the produce of their dairy in the towns. Every family paid a small tax of four shillings a year to the Government, or rather to the Beni Chavedi or butter-officer, who paid an annual revenue to the Government. Iron was smelted and steel was manufactured at Madhu-giri and many neighbouring districts.

Travelling southwards, Dr. Buchanan found the fields well cultivated at Tavina-Karay, but saw much waste land at Tumkur; and all the villages were fortified. Ragi was largely grown here, but there

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1 Buchanan’s Journey from Madras, &c., vol. i. p. 390.
were also many rice fields. Gubi, further south, was a mart of some importance with 154 shops and a weekly fair. Coarse cotton cloth, both white and coloured, blankets, sackcloth, betel-nut, cocoa-nut, tamarind. grains, lac, iron, and steel from all the country round were sold at this mart.

Dora-Guda had iron mines, and Taniva-Karay was a place of importance with an outer and inner fort and an open suburb with 700 houses. It formerly belonged to a powerful family of Polygars, and one of them had built four temples and four great reservoirs for the irrigation of lands. The country round was once completely cultivated, but had been desolate since the invasion of the Mahrattas under Parashuram Bhao. Further south was Beluru, where there was a good deal of fine rice ground, as well as a fine reservoir. The whole of the country between Beluru in the north to Seringapatam in the south—a distance of forty miles as the crow flies—had been laid waste at the time of the invasion of Cornwallis in 1792; and the people had been forced by Tipu Sultan to leave the open country and retire to the woods, where they lived in huts and procured provisions as best they could. A large proportion of them had perished of hunger, and the country was only half populated even in 1800, when Dr. Buchanan visited it.

Not far from Beluru was the district of Naga-Mangala, where each Gauda or village-head partly rented his village and partly collected on the public account. The cultivators had a fixed property in the land, and so long as they paid rents according to the old valuation, they could not be turned out of possession. The rice ground paid its rent by a division of crops, and the dry field paid a money rent.

Mail-Kotay, about fifteen miles north of Seringapatam, was finely situated on a high hill, commanding a noble view of the valley of the Kaveri and the hills of
CONDITION OF SOUTHERN INDIA

Mysore in the south, of the Ghats in the west, and of Savana-Durga and Siva-Ganga in the east. It was a famous place of Hindu worship with a temple of great dimensions surrounded by a colonnade; and the fine large tank was surrounded by many buildings for the accommodation of travellers. It is said that even Tipu Sultan was afraid of seizing the jewels of this temple; they were kept in the treasury at Seringapatam; and the British troops spared them when they captured that capital.

At Tonuru, to the south of Mail-Kotay, Dr. Buchanan saw the magnificent reservoir of Yadava-Nadi, ascribed to the famous religious reformer Ramanuja who lived in the eleventh century. "Two mountain torrents here had united their streams, and forced a way through a gap between two rocky hills. Ramanuja stopped up this gap by a mound, said to be 78 cubits high, 150 long, and at the base 250 cubits thick. The superfluous water is let off by a channel which has been cut with great labour through one of the hills, at such length as to enable it to water a great deal of the subjacent plain which is three or four miles in extent. When the reservoir is full it contains a sufficient quantity of water to supply the cultivators for two years." ¹

On the 1st September Dr. Buchanan returned to Seringapatam.

SOUTHERN MYSORE.

Leaving Seringapatam on the 5th September, Dr. Buchanan made a tour through the southern parts of Mysore. Near Pal-Hully, which had been entirely destroyed at the recent war, he saw the two canals from the Kaveri river which irrigated the district of Mahasura-Ashtagram. One of these canals contained a fine stream which never became entirely dry, and

¹ Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. ii. pp. 82, 83.
which enabled the cultivators to have a crop of rice even in the dry season.

The Lakshman-Tirtha river, a tributary of the Kaveri, rises from the hills of Coorg. Six canals were constructed from this river to irrigate the country, and dams which forced the water into the canals were fine works and produced beautiful cascades. The whole land formerly irrigated by these canals was about 18,000 acres.

There were no hereditary Gaudas or village-chiefs in these parts, and the revenue was collected by renters, who could not take from the cultivators more than was fixed by the custom established by the old Mysore Rajas. Haidar Ali had appointed Harkaras, or superintendents of land revenue, who kept the renters in check, and listened to the complaints of the people. Tipu Sultan had abolished the Harkaras, with the effect that the people were oppressed and the Government defrauded.

Further west, the country had been depopulated first by the invasion of Baji Rao and his Mahrattas in 1761, and then by the invasion of Cornwallis in 1792. Priya-Pattan, called Poriapatam in the English maps, was a place of great importance in olden days, and had belonged to a Polygar family called Nandi Raj. This family held the territory bounded by the Kaveri on the north and the Coorg frontier on the west, and yielding an annual revenue of £9,361 to the Rajas of Coorg. It is said that a Polygar prince of this family defended himself gallantly against Mysore about 1640, and finding further resistance impossible, killed his women and children, and perished, sword in hand, in the midst of his enemies. Priya-Pattan continued after this to be the scene of frontier wars between Coorg and Mysore; suffered when Tipu Sultan conquered Coorg; and was utterly destroyed by Tipu's wars with the British.
"Tigers," says Dr. Buchanan, 'have taken entire possession of its ruins, a horse that strayed in a few nights ago was destroyed, and even at midday it is considered as dangerous for a solitary person to enter. It was deemed imprudent for me, who was followed by a multitude, to enter into any of the temples, which serve the tigers as shelter from the heat of the day." 1

The wet lands near Priya-Pattan were entirely irrigated from reservoirs, but in the southern parts of the district canals from the Lakshman-Tirtha river afforded water to the cultivators. The Hainu or wet rice, Karu or dry rice, sugar-cane, ragi, horse grain, pulses, sesamum and other crops were grown in this district. Farm labourers got from £1 to £1, 7s. a year besides one meal a day; and women labourers got 6s. a year besides two meals a day. Before the last Mysore war the poorest cultivator had two ploughs, and the richer ones had fifteen. A man who had two ploughs often possessed forty oxen and fifty cows, six or seven buffaloes, and one hundred sheep or goats. The produce of wet lands was equally divided between the Government and the cultivator after the village dues had been paid. There were extensive palm gardens before the war, and the pasture was good. Sandal-wood grew in the skirts of the forest.

South-east from Priya-Pattan, near Hanagodu, Dr. Buchanan saw one of the dams of the Lakshman-Tirtha river. "Advantage has been taken of a natural ledge of rocks which cross the channel, and stones have been thrown in to fill up the deficiencies. The whole now forms a fine dam, over which rushes a cascade about 100 yards long and 14 feet high, which in a verdant and finely wooded country looks remarkably well. This dam sends off

1 Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. ii. p. 96.
its canal to the eastward. . . . The ground irrigated will amount to 2678 acres."  

South-east from Hanagadu lay the old kingdom of Hegodu Deva, who was said to have cleared this country and peopled it about the beginning of the fifteenth century. Down to the time of Haidar Ali the town contained a thousand houses; there were only eighty when Dr. Buchanan visited it. The district was famous for its sandal-wood, while Mota-Beta, further to the east, was known for its rich iron ores.

On the 1st October Dr. Buchanan reached Tairuru on the Kampini river, a tributary of the Kaveri. In some villages of this district the Gaudas or village-chiefs were hereditary, and they were preferred, both by the Government and by the people, to the mere renters who also went by the same name. The hereditary Gaudas were better acquainted with the cultivators, were more cheerfully obeyed, and had greater credit with the money-lenders for the making up their rents at the fixed terms of payment. On failure of payment the crops were seized by the Government Accountant, whose duty it also was to sell the Government's share of the crops collected as rent. Both at Tairuru and at Narsingpur the country was beautiful, and every field was enclosed with quick-set hedges and well cultivated, the whole being high ground without rice lands.

Narsingpur was on the banks of the Kaveri river, and had two temples and about two hundred houses. There was rich black soil close to it where cotton was extensively grown. Wheat and Womun were raised in equal quantities, and Ragi was grown on the red soil fit for its cultivation.

\[1\] Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. ii. p. 119.
COIMBATUR

Early in October, Dr. Buchanan left Mysore and entered into British territory on his way to Coimbatur. Colegala District was well cultivated, and contained forty or fifty large reservoirs for irrigation, repaired by the Mysore authorities eighty years before, and some of them repaired again by the Company's servants after the district had come to the possession of the Company. Passing through the grounds of the decayed reservoirs not yet repaired, Dr. Buchanan found the land entirely waste, so much did cultivation depend on irrigation works in this country. Major Macleod, the Collector, had set aside the authority of the Gaudas or village-chiefs, and had only employed them on fixed salaries to collect the land revenue from cultivators. The policy no doubt added to the land revenue, but weakened the ancient village-system of India.

The magnificent falls of Gangana-Chuki and the island of Sivana-Samudra struck Dr. Buchanan with wonder. The southern fall of Birra-Chuki was even more pleasing to his eye. He was told that the State of Sivana-Samudra had been founded by Ganga Raja about A.D. 1200, but he gives 1523 as a more probable date. The State fell, after the reign of three princes, under the combined attack of neighbouring powers.

The country near Colegala and Sategala lay immediately west, the mountains of the Eastern Ghats rising to a height of 2000 feet above the level of the upper country. The country was well cultivated as far as Pallia, but beyond that place more than half the lands were uncultivated, and the tanks were in ruins. Travelling farther eastwards, Dr. Buchanan entered the Ghats at Mathully, and threaded his way through the mountains until he reached Kaoripura on the Kaveri river, where a fort had been built by a frontier Polygar to protect the pass.
There was an old irrigation reservoir at Kaveripura which watered over five hundred acres of land; but it had burst fifty years before and had never been repaired. A considerable trade passed by Kaveripura between the upper and the lower country, and Dr. Buchanan met forty or fifty loaded cattle every day. Along the course of the Tumbula, a tributary of the Kaveri, there were five old reservoirs which had all burst fifty years before, and had never been repaired.

The village-heads, as stated above, had been set aside under the Company's rule, and the country under Major Macleod paid a land revenue of £10,293 to £16,545 a year, realised through paid Tahsilars, who combined in themselves the powers of revenue collector, civil magistrate, and police. Farm labourers got from cultivators a pay of 5s. to 6s. 8d. the year, and a house to live in, and 1½ rds bushel of grain monthly; and their wives received daily wages if able to work. The implements of husbandry in the plains were more miserable and fewer in number than those used above the Ghats.

On the 19th October Dr. Buchanan arrived at Nala-Rayana on the Bhawani river, after travelling through a country three-fourths of which seemed to be waste. A dam on the Bhawani sent off a canal on each side of the river, and the lands watered by these canals gave one unfailing crop in the year. A little land watered by reservoirs gave two crops, but the supply of water was uncertain. Cultivators under the Company's rule were required to pay the full rent for the lands they cultivated, irrespective of the quantity of produce. This they felt as a hardship, and they desired to be placed on the old footing.

At Ana-Codavery, rice was grown on lands watered by canals taken from the Bhawani river. The dam on the river had been constructed by Nunjay Raja a
hundred and twenty years before. In lands which were not irrigated, not over a sixth part of the ground was under cultivation. The soil was good, but the invasion of General Meadows had stopped cultivation; the inhabitants had retired to the hills and had perished in large numbers.

The Company’s Commercial Resident at Salem had visited these parts some months before Dr. Buchanan’s arrival, and had made advances to weavers for the Company’s Investment. The cloth ordered was Shalambru, resembling the Bafta of Bengal, and was made 36 cubits long and 2½ cubits broad.

Travelling southwards through much uncultivated country, Dr. Buchanan arrived at the important city of Coimbatur on the 28th October. The chief of the place was the twentieth in descent from the first founder of the town. The family originally paid tribute to the Rajas of Madura, and afterwards came under the rule of Mysore. The place had suffered much during the Mysore wars, but was recovering, and contained two thousand houses.

There was much rice ground in the neighbourhood, watered by reservoirs which were filled by canals from the Noyel river. Ragi and other crops were raised on dry lands; cotton and tobacco were grown in some places, betel-nut and cocoa-nut were cultivated by rich farmers, and iron was smelted at Topun Beta, five miles from Coimbatur. 459 looms worked in the district; the wives of all the low caste cultivators were great spinners; and the thread was dyed red or blue as required. The Commercial Resident at Salem had twice made advances to the Coimbatur weavers. The weavers formerly paid a duty of about 4s. on each loom annually, and this was replaced by a stamp duty under the Company’s rule. The weavers thought this was harder, and requested the Collector to restore the former mode of assessment, without success.
Tripura, to the east of Coimbatur, was an open town with 300 houses and a weekly market. The rice land in the neighbourhood produced only one crop, and was irrigated partly from reservoirs and partly from canals brought from the Noyel river. Owing to want of repairs, more than one-third of the lands previously cultivated was out of cultivation. The poorest fields were set aside for pasture, and paid a small rent. Iron was smelted at China Mali, further east, and a duty of a thirtyth part of the smelted iron was paid as duty to Government in addition to a duty for cutting timber for fuel. China Mali had only 125 houses, and was suffering from small-pox. Lands in the district were irrigated from the Capely river, but no rice was grown.

Perandur, north of China Mali, had 118 houses, and the district had 800 looms. Erodi on the Kaveri had had 3000 houses in the time of Haidar Ali, but had declined under Tipu Sultan. It was utterly destroyed during the invasion of General Meadows, but was reviving after the conclusion of peace. The canal passing by Erodi was a splendid work, said to have been constructed by one Kaling Raya four hundred years before, and still watered 3459 acres of land.

Further down the Kaveri river was the important town of Codomudi with an ancient temple and 118 houses. A canal taken from the Kaveri was conducted over the Noyel river to Pagolur village, and irrigated a large tract of land. The rent fixed in these parts by Tipu Sultan was four-tenths of the produce, but this was converted into a money rent, 3s. 5d. per acre, by the British Government in 1799, and the rent for 1800 had not yet been fixed.

Major Macleod, the Collector of the Northern Division of Coimbatur, informed Dr. Buchanan that by the custom of the country no tenant could be turned
out of his holding as long as he paid his rent. The
Major thought it was impracticable for the British
Government to receive the land revenue in kind with-
out leaving a door open to excessive embezzlements.
When the Company obtained possession of the Salem
country, the rice grounds, watered by the fine canals
from the Kaveri, paid rent in kind. The Company's
servants had changed this into money rent against
the murmurs of the people, had extended cultivation
and increased the land revenue. The Ryotwari system
was preferred to the Zemindari system because it
brought more revenue. "The regulations introduced
by Colonel Read for collecting the revenue seem to me
sufficient to secure the regular payment of more than
can ever be procured from Zemindars; and I am per-
suaded that any deficiencies must arise either from a
neglect of duty, or from dishonesty in the Collectors. I
here allude to hereditary Zemindars merely as affecting
the revenue and political state of the country, they
must be considered as useful toward the improvement
of agriculture."¹

Caruru was a considerable town with 1000 houses
on the Amaravati river, a tributary of the Kaveri.
But the merchants were petty dealers, and the weavers
were not numerous. Two canals from the Kaveri
and several from the Amaravati irrigated this district.
Sugar-cane, rice, and dry crops were grown.

On the 17th November Dr. Buchanan reached
Daraporam (Dharma-pura), the headquarters of Mr.
Hurdis, the Collector of the Southern Division of
Coimbatur. The Collector was an active, intelligent
and sympathetic young officer mixed with the people,
settled their caste disputes, and knew them well.
"Mr. Hurdis thinks that the present rents are greatly
too high; and, no doubt, the peasantry here, as well as
in almost every part of India, are miserably poor. . . .

¹ Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. ii. p. 296.
One great cause, indeed, of the poverty of the farmers, and consequent poverty of crops in many parts of India, is the custom of forcing land upon people who have no means of cultivating it. Thus all lands are apparently occupied, but it is in a manner that is worse than if one-half of them were entirely waste."¹

The reason for this has been explained elsewhere. The Company desired to obtain its revenue from the entire arable land, whether they could be properly cultivated or not. The rents were enormously high; betel-leaf lands were assessed at £3, 16s. 9d. an acre, rice lands at £1, 15s. 9½d. to £1, 5s. 2d. per acre.

Travelling further westwards, Dr. Buchanan reached Palachy on the 24th November. Roman coins in a pot had been dug up in this place, showing the trade of this ancient Pandya country with Rome at the time of Augustus and Tiberius. The worst grounds in this district were left for pasture and paid no rent, and the remainder belonging to each village was reckoned as arable, and had an average assessment fixed, ranging from 2s. 10½d. to 7s. 3d. the acre. "The farmers complain that the land is forced on them, and that they are compelled to rent more than they have stock to enable them to cultivate. A man who rents seventeen Bullas of land (a Bulla = 4½ to 6 acres) is able only to plough nine of them whereas, if he had full stock, he would plough between eleven and twelve, leaving one-third part in fallow. The rents, however, have been lowered, in some villages one-fifth, in others one-third, in order to compensate the loss which the farmer suffers by this manner of renting lands, where there is not a sufficient stock to cultivate the whole. This sort of tenure seems to be a great evil."²

¹ Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. ii. p. 309.
On the 29th November, Dr. Buchanan entered Malabar, which had been transferred from the Government of Bombay to the Government of Madras only a few months before. He entered the territory of the Tamura Raja, known as the Zamorin to European writers. High mountains on the south poured down cascades from great heights, and cornfields were mixed with lofty forests and plantations of fruit trees. But the dry land was neglected, and the quantity of rice land was not great. The town of Colangodu contained a thousand houses, many of them inhabited by weavers, who imported their cotton from Coimbatur. Palighat was the most beautiful country that Dr. Buchanan had seen, resembling the finest parts of Bengal, but the cultivation of high lands was neglected. The fort there had been built by Haidar Ali after his conquest of Malabar. There was no land tax under the Government of the old Rajas, but Haidar Ali had imposed one called Nagadi on the low and fertile lands, exempting the higher grounds. Tipu Sultan's oppression drove many of the proprietors into Travancore in the south.

The average produce of rice at the time of Dr. Buchanan's visit to Palighat was 7½ seeds, and the rental was 4½ seeds, or over sixty per cent. of the produce. According to Mr. Smeeu's valuation, the Land Tax assessed on the landlords was at the enormous rate of 84 per cent. on their rental. The annual rainfall was sufficient to bring one crop of rice into maturity, while reservoirs constructed and maintained at the expense of landlords secured a second. The cattle was of very small size, and insufficient for the requirements of the country. Iron was forged at Colangodu.

On the 6th December, Dr. Buchanan entered the

1 Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. ii. p. 369
territory of the Raja of Cochin, who paid an annual tribute to the East India Company, but retained full jurisdiction, civil and military, within his own realm. "His country is so far better administered than that more fully under the authority of the Company, that neither Moplas nor Nairs presume to make any disturbance."\(^1\) At Cacadu the hills were mostly uncultivated, but the pasture was tolerable, the cattle in good condition, and the valleys were covered with corn, skirted by the houses of the inhabitants shaded by groves of fruit trees. Close by was a Christian village, and the Papa or priest informed Dr. Buchanan that Christianity had been introduced by St. Thomas who had visited Madras in the year A.D. 60.

The Moplas of Malabar had been rich traders about the middle of the eighteenth century, and possessed vessels which sailed to Surat, Mocha, and Madras. Dr. Buchanan found them quiet and industrious on the coast, but "fierce, bloodthirsty, and bigoted ruffians" in the interior. Their religious leader claimed descent from Fatima, the daughter of Mahomed.

Returning from Cochin to Malabar, Dr. Buchanan travelled northwards till he reached Vencata-Cotay on the 22nd December. The valleys were beautiful, the declivities of the hills were formed into terraces for cultivation, but the summits of the ridges were waste. The cultivators complained of the Land Tax, "every evil in Malabar is ascribed to that as its source."\(^2\) Agriculture was much neglected between Tiruvana and Parupa-nada, and this was due to the want of people and the poverty of those who were in the country. The sea-coast near the latter place was, however, filled with highly productive coconut gardens. On Christmas day the doctor reached Calicut, the old capital of Malabar.

\(^1\) Buchanan's *Journey from Madras, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 388.
Mr. Torin, the commercial resident, was endeavouring to establish the manufacture of long-cloth at this place. The pieces were 72 cubits long, and the prices given to weavers were 18s. 6¾d. to 16s. 4½d. the piece. There were 344 weavers, brought from Travancore and Cochin, and they worked 237 looms, and produced 468 pieces of cloth monthly. Mr. Torin had also established a manufactory at Palighat, which was better and cheaper.

Dr. Buchanan made estimates of the produce, rental, and the Land Tax of this neighbourhood, with the following results:

For a Field of Poor Quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Tax</td>
<td>£0 12 9½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges of collection</td>
<td>0 1 3½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed</td>
<td>0 9 4½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expense of cultivation</td>
<td>0 9 4½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>0 1 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest of money advanced</td>
<td>0 1 6½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivator</td>
<td>0 7 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£2 3 ½

Or approximately the gross Land Tax was 14s.; the expenses of cultivation came to 19s.; the owners of the land retained only 10s.

For a Field of the Best Quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Tax and collection charges</td>
<td>£0 16 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed</td>
<td>0 9 4½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expense of cultivation</td>
<td>0 9 4½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>0 1 0½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>0 8 6½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivator</td>
<td>1 5 6½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£3 10 8½

Or approximately the Land Tax was 17s.; the expenses of cultivation came to 19s.; the owners of the land had £1, 14s.
On the 1st of January 1801, Dr. Buchanan reached Tamara-Chery. All the lands here had passed into the hands of Mopla mortgagees. Owing to the persecution of the Hindus by Tipu Sultan, and the warfare of the Moplas, one-fourth of the rice lands at Kurumbara was waste and overgrown with forest trees. Some great farmers had ten ploughs, twenty oxen, twenty male and female slaves, ten servants, and twenty-five milch cows, but the number of such farmers was small. Male slaves sold at the low price of 9s. 6½d. to 28s. 8d., and women slaves at half the price.

The Collector, Mr. Coward, who accompanied Dr. Buchanan through his district, was of opinion that one-fourth of the district was capable of irrigation and rice-cultivation, about one-half was high ground fit for dry grains or plantation, and the remainder was steep and rocky. "Mr. Coward thinks the Land Tax so high that it impedes agriculture." ¹

Leaving Mr. Coward on 5th January, Dr. Buchanan proceeded with Captain Osburne to Kutiporum, the residence of the Raja, who paid a tribute to the Company and had absolute authority in his territory. Here the Land Tax was 40 per cent., the landlord kept 27 per cent., and the cultivator 33 per cent. of the produce. Though accompanied by Captain Osburne, the worthy traveller did not receive kind greetings from the women of the country. "The Nairs being at enmity with Europeans have persuaded the women that we are a kind of hobgoblins who have long tails," and the women naturally ran away at their approach! ²

Tellicherry, Mahe, and Dharmapatam formed a circle under the management of Mr. Strachy, "a very promising young gentleman." The whole of the circle, Mr. Strachy thought, might be cultivated or planted

² Ibid., vol. ii. p. 514.
with fruit trees, but much of it was waste. The tax on rice lands amounted to 25 per cent. of the rent. The commerce of the circle was of great importance, and the principal articles of commerce were pepper, sandal-wood, and cardamoms.

Mr. Hodgson, Collector of the Northern District of Malabar, received Dr. Buchanan at Cananore. A Mopla lady, who went under the title of Bibi or The Lady, was the descendant of those who had originally purchased Cananore from the Dutch, and entertained Dr. Buchanan at a grand dinner. The Biby paid 14,000 rupees to the Company as Land Tax, and owned Cananore and most of the Laccadive Islands. Succession, as among the Nairs, went by the female line.

Cherical was mountainous and very little cultivated, and the number of houses at Cananore and Cherical was 10,386. About the middle of January Dr. Buchanan left Malabar and went northwards to Canara.

Canara.

Thomas Munro, the most distinguished and successful administrator of his time, had been sent after his settlement of Baranahal to settle Canara in 1798, as we have seen in a previous chapter. The Raja of Canara was then ill, but his sister’s son or heir waited on Munro, and Munro had cautiously informed him that his claims to the State would be laid before the Company. In the meantime, it was placed under the management of Talusildars or revenue collectors, the Raja was deprived of his powers, and was allowed a remission of the Land Tax on his private estate for his support. The Nairs complained of a want of good faith in the British officers in these arrangements.¹ Munro levied a Land Tax of 24,000 rupees against a nominal claim of 32,000 rupees under the government

¹ Buchanan’s Journey from Madras, &c., vol. iii. p. 12.
of Tipu Sultan, but this reduced tax was all that the country could pay and consumed the whole rent of the lands. Trinula Rao, the Talsildar, considered the tax heavier than at Arcot.

Dr. Buchanan stayed for a week at Mangalore, situated on a lake separated from the sea by a beach of sand. It had been a harbour at one time, but the depth of the opening had diminished, and vessels drawing more than ten feet could not enter at the time of Buchanan’s visit. The fort of Mangalore had been destroyed by Tipu Sultan.

Imams or lands assigned for the support of temples had been reclaimed by Tipu, but some of them had been concealed. Thomas Munro and his successor Ravenshaw permitted things to remain as before, and the principal Hindu temple had an income of £193, 8s. 3d. the year. Munro’s land assessment was felt as heavy, and gave rise to much complaint. “The proprietors allege that the tax amounts to more than the rent, and that they are obliged to borrow money, or to give part of the profit from the lands cultivated with their own stock, to enable them to satisfy the claims of Government... The universal cry of poverty however, that prevails in every part of India, and the care, owing to long oppression, with which everything is concealed, render it very difficult to know the real circumstances of the cultivator. We may safely, however, conclude from the violent contest for landed property of every kind in Canara that each occupant has still a considerable interest in the soil, besides the reward due to him for cultivating whatever his stock enables him to do. It is indeed sincerely to be wished that this property may long continue unmolested, as no country can thrive where the absolute property of the soil is vested in the State.”

1 Buchanan’s Journey from Madras, &c., vol. iii. pp. 33-35.
India, even when the land is over-assessed, is due to the fact that land is virtually the sole means of subsistence for the nation; the cultivator must have his holding on any terms or starve.

Rice land was irrigated by canals from streams in the low valleys and from reservoirs in higher lands; while on very high lands the crop depended entirely on rains. Sugar-cane was cultivated mainly by the Christian population, and betel-nut and black pepper were grown in plantations. Salt was manufactured by the people as at Malabar, but the quantity produced was inadequate. Rice, betel-nut, and pepper were the principal articles of export; cotton and silk cloths, sugar and salt were imported.

Ten miles from Mangalore was Arcola, also called Firingy-Patta, because it was formerly inhabited by the Concan Christians. The whole country resembled Malabar, and the sides of the hills were formed into terraces for cultivation, but with less industry than at Malabar. Great damage had been done in the vicinity by Tipu Sultan and the Raja of Coorg in the recent wars. Dr. Buchanan found on the roadside many of the guns which Tipu had ordered to be transported from Mangalore to Seringapatam. A dam had been constructed across Bamala river, forming a large reservoir for cultivation.

On the 5th February Dr. Buchanan came to Einuru town, where he found eight Jain temples and a colossal Jain image, formed of one solid piece of granite and standing in the open air. The extent of lands held by the Jain temples at the time of Haidar Ali had been reduced by Tipu Sultan, restored by Thomas Munro, and again reduced by his successor Ravenshaw. The image of Gautama Raja (Buddha) at Carculla was one solid piece of granite, 38 feet high, and, according to the inscription, was made 369 years before Buchanan's visit, i.e. about 1432.
At Haryadika, further to the west, which Dr Buchanan reached on the 10th February, he made some inquiries into the incidence of the Land Tax, and found it was one-half of the rent. But "these people say that when the rice is cheap, the whole rent is not equal to the Land Tax."

On the following day he came within sight of the Arabian Sea once more at Udipu, where the name of Madhava-Acharya, the great Hindu scholar and reformer of the fourteenth century, was still revered, and his sect flourished. There were three temples and fourteen convents belonging to Sanyasins, who were religious teachers. Rice was grown from Udipu to the sea. "According to the valuation of five villages in this neighbourhood, I find that out of 2048 Pagodas, the gross value of their produce, the cultivators retain 1295 Pagodas. The share of the Government amounts in general to one quarter of the gross produce, and in these villages are 671 Pagodas, of which 37 are alienated in Imam or charity lands, as they are called. What remains to the landlord is 82 Pagodas."¹

Travelling northwards, Dr. Buchanan reached Kundapura, and crossing the river, entered the Northern Division of Canara, then under the management of Mr. Read, "a young gentleman brought up in the same school with Mr. Ravenshaw." Further north were Beiduru with its temple dedicated to Siva and the larger town of Batuculla with 500 houses. Travelling further northwards, he found the plain between the sea and the low hills only half a mile to a mile and a half in breadth, and cultivated for rice. The temple of Murodeswara stood on a lofty fortified promontory. Not far from it was the Pigeon Island, frequented by wild pigeons, and also by boats for coral, with which the place abounded. On the

¹ Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. iii. p. 103.
21st February Dr. Buchanan reached the great lake and town of Onore.

Onore was formerly a large town and a place of great commerce, and Haidar Ali had made a dock here for building ships of war. His foolish and despotic son demolished this great mart after he had recovered it by the treaty of Mangalore, and the town was desolate when Dr. Buchanan visited it. Boats came from Goa for trade, and merchants lived scattered near the banks of the lake, and purchased rice, pepper, cocoa-nuts, betel-nuts, and salt-fish for export. Most of the cultivated lands were private property, but the hills and forests belonged to the Government. Every man paid a Land Tax for the whole of his property, and cultivated it in whatever manner he pleased. Cultivators in moderate circumstances had four to six ploughs, but a great number of them had only one plough, and were poor. Cultivators obtained leases for four to ten years, and paid rents to proprietors, who paid the Land Tax to the Government.

"The proprietor ought to find security for the payment of the Land Tax. If he does not, a revenue officer is sent to superintend the harvest, to sell the produce, and to deduct the revenue from the proceeds. This is a miserable system, and one of true Hindustani invention, as the person sent to collect the harvest received an allowance from the farmer, and thus one of the idle tatterdemalions that formed part of the clamorous suite of some great man, had for a while the cravings of his appetite satisfied. If a man has given security, and fails in payment, on the third day after the term, the security is called upon and confined until the revenue is paid." ¹

An estate, which paid twenty Pagodas as Land Tax, sold for a hundred Pagodas, and could be mortgaged for fifty Pagodas. Sons divided their father's estate

¹ Buchanan’s Journey from Madras, &c., vol. iii. p. 140.
equally among them, but the eldest managed the whole, and they all lived together. When a division took place among a number of cousins, the estate was commonly let and the rent divided. A good field produced 20 to 33 bushels of rice per acre, while poor soil produced 6 to 16 bushels. Sugar-cane, pepper, sandal-wood, cardamoms, betel-nut, and cocoa-nuts were articles of trade.

Gokarna, to the north of Onore, was a place of note, owing to the celebrated image of Siva, called Mahabaleswar, which was worshipped there. It is said that Ravana, King of Ceylon, was carrying this image from the northern mountains, and deposited it here to take rest, and could not lift it again. The town had 500 houses, one-half of which was occupied by Brahmans. There was a large tank with a convent near it, and an image of Sankara-Narayana was kept in a temple, "and it is a strong proof of the early prevalence of the doctrine . . . that Siva and Vishnu are different names for the same God."

Ancola produced an annual revenue of 29,000 Pagodas, while Onore yielded 51,000, and Kundapura 50,000. One-third of the good lands was waste. The Bazar in the town of Ancola had been frequently burnt by robbers, but was recovering under British rule. Thomas Munro's land assessment was nominally lighter than that of Tipu Sultan, but his collections were really higher. "Major Munro, according to the account of the revenue officers, considerably reduced the rate of the Land Tax, but owing to his care and strictness in the collections, the revenue which he raised was much greater than was ever before realised." ¹

This is precisely what happened in most parts of India. The Company's servants sometimes maintained or raised, and sometimes reduced, the old revenue, but their collections were more rigorous than the people of India had ever known before.

CONDITION OF SOUTHERN INDIA

The greater portion of three northern districts, Kundapura, Onore, and Ancola was rocky and barren, and unfit for cultivation. Mr. Read estimated the different kinds of land thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cultivated Land</th>
<th>Capable of Cultivation</th>
<th>Sterile.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kundapura</td>
<td>0 32</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onore</td>
<td>0 26</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancola</td>
<td>0 20</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The revenue, notwithstanding so much waste land, is said to have been greater during the first year of Major Munro's management than it was ever before known to have been. Mr. Read attributes this to an increase of rent on the lands actually under cultivation, but of this I have much doubt." ¹

It is unnecessary for us to trace the return journey of Dr. Buchanan through Mysore to Madras, which he reached on the 6th July 1801. The account of his journey through Southern India, from the eastern to the western sea, which we have condensed in this chapter, is one of the most valuable records we possess of the economic condition of the country under the old regime, and under the new rule of the East India Company. Everywhere the extension of the Company's rule meant the cessation of wars and disturbances, and the return of peace. With all these blessings which it conferred, the Company's administration committed the fatal blunder of over-assessing the soil: and the condition of the people under the Company's rule was therefore one of hopeless poverty—worse than in the native State of Mysore under the native minister Purnea.

¹ Buchanan's Journey from Madras, &c., vol. iii. p. 191.
CHAPTER XIII

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF NORTHERN INDIA
(1808-1815)

The Court of Directors recognised the value of Dr. Francis Buchanan's economic inquiries in Southern India, and desired that similar inquiries should be made by the same eminent authority in Northern India. Dr. Buchanan was accordingly directed in 1807 to make a statistical survey of some of the districts of Bengal and Northern India. The inquiry was carefully conducted for seven years, at a cost of £30,000.

The valuable materials thus collected were forwarded by the Indian Government to England, but were left unused for a long time. Dr. Buchanan came in for a large property in Scotland, took the name of Hamilton on acquiring the estate, and died in retirement before his labours saw the light.

It was then that Montgomery Martin, historian of the British Colonies and a thoughtful and careful writer on Indian subjects, asked and obtained permission to examine the manuscripts left by Dr. Buchanan. A judicious selection from the information collected with so much labour was published in London, in three volumes, in 1838, and these volumes contain the best and most reliable account that we possess of the economic condition of Northern India in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In pursuance of the scope and object of the present work we proceed to give a summary of the statistical portions of these volumes in the present chapter.
Rice was the most important crop throughout the district. Rice in husk sold on the average at the price of one rupee per 70 seers, or about 70 lbs. for the shilling. Wheat and barley were the next important crops, and were sometimes sown intermixed. Flour was taken as cakes (Roti), or parched and ground (Chhatu). Maxar was raised entirely as a summer crop; maize and Janar were grown mostly on the banks of the Ganges.

Khesari, Bhut, pease, lentils, Arhar, Mung and succulent vegetables were also grown for food, and Til and other plants for oil. Potatoes had been introduced from Europe. Cotton was grown on 8000 acres of land, three-fourths of which yielded no other crop, and sugar-cane was raised on 7000 acres. Poppy was cultivated in garden lands near villages, and tobacco on 160 acres. The betel-leaf of Behar was considered superior to all others, and was exported to Calcutta, Benares, and Lucknow. The cultivation of indigo was on the decline, the landlords being averse to it, but Kusum or safflower was extensively grown.

The rents paid by cultivators to landlords were usually one-half the crop after deducting the expense of harvesting; but, on the other hand, the landlords paid all the expense of making and repairing canals and reservoirs required for irrigating lands.\(^1\)

Large reservoirs, a mile and upwards in length, cost about 500 rupees (£50) in excavating, but the smaller ones, which were more numerous, cost from 25 to 100 rupees. Many canals were several miles in length, and often conveyed more water than remained in the channel of the river in the dry season. The greater portion of

winter crops, vegetables, and sugar-cane was irrigated from wells. Of pasture, there were 27 square miles of inundated land, 384 miles of woods or scattered bushes, 640 miles of plantations, 205 miles of high lands, and 417 miles of broken corners, banks, and barren lands. Except in the cities of Patna and Gaya, the cultivators paid nothing for the ground occupied by their houses; “No person who rents a farm pays for his house.” Artificers, traders, and labourers paid a ground rent, either in money or in work.¹

It will thus appear that the cultivator’s rent was half the produce after deducting the cost of harvesting, and this rent included the ground rent for his dwelling, the cost of irrigation, and free pasture. Nor was this half-produce rent very strictly levied. “The division is so troublesome that, instead of their respective shares, both master and tenant, when the crop is ripe, usually agree the one to take and the other to give a certain quantity of grain, or its value in money.” “The arrears due by the tenant to their landlords are quite trifling except in one estate, where the owner has been in the habit of giving much money in advance. . . . The custom of advances (Takávi) from the landlord to the tenant, to enable him to cultivate, is not very common, although it exists to some extent.”² A general change, which was taking place at the time of Dr. Buchanan’s inquiries, was the substitution of money rents for rents paid in kind.

A plough servant’s annual wages ranged from 16 rupees to 22 rupees a year, or between three and four shillings the month. Day labourers employed with the hoe, or in transplanting rice, or in watering winter-crops, were paid three or four paisas (twopence) a day; and women employed to weed and transplant rice

¹ History of Eastern India, by Montgomery Martin (London, 1838), vol. i. p. 299
² Ibid., vol. i. pp. 303 and 305.
received the same allowance as men, and assisted in the harvest.

Spinning and weaving were the great national industry of India next after agriculture. All the spinners were women, and Dr Buchanan estimates their number in this district at 330,426. "By far the greater part of these spin only a few hours in the afternoon, and upon the average estimate the whole value of the thread that each spins in a year is worth nearly 7 rupees, 2 anas, 8 pies, giving for the total annual value Rs.2,367,277, and by a similar calculation the raw material at the retail price will amount to Rs.1,286,272, leaving a profit of Rs.1,081,005 for the spinners, or Rs.3 1/4 (6s. 6d. the year) for each. . . . As the demand, therefore, for fine goods has for some years been constantly diminishing, the women have suffered very much."  

Cotton weavers were numerous. The total number of looms employed in the manufacture of Chadaras or table-cloths was 750, and the value of the annual manufacture was Rs.540,000, leaving a profit of Rs.81,400, deducting the value of thread. This gave a profit of Rs.108 for each loom worked by three persons, or in other words an income of Rs.36 (72s.) a year for each person. But the greater part of the cotton weavers made coarse cloth for country use to the value of Rs.2,438,621 annually, which left a profit of Rs.667,242 after deduction of cost of thread. This gave a profit of Rs.28 (56s.) for each loom.

The system pursued by the East India Company is thus described: "Each man, on becoming bound (Asami) to the Company, received two rupees, and engaged not to work for any person until he had made as much as the Company required, and no other advance has ever been made by the Commercial Residents.

The agent orders each man to make a certain number of pieces of such or such goods, and he is paid for each on its delivery, according to the price stated in the tables.”¹

Weavers who made cloth wholly or in part of Tasar silk lived mostly at Phatuha Gaya, and Nawada. The total annual value of the produce was Rs.4,21,710, leaving a profit ranging from 33 rupees to 90 rupees a year for each loom, requiring the services of a man and a woman.

Paper manufacture, leather work, perfumery, ironwork, gold and silver work, stone-cutting, pottery, bricklaying and lime manufacture, dyeing, blanket-weaving and the manufacture of gold and silver thread and cloth, were among the other important industries. Much of the internal trade of the district was carried on by Baldiya-Beparis, or traders possessing pack-bullocks. One ox and 5 rupees of capital enabled a Bepari to start his trade; he sold goods to the value of Rs.50 a month, making a profit of 6 to 12 per cent., and thus securing an income of 32 rupees (6.4s.) a year. Goods were conveyed from Patna to Calcutta by boats, and the freight was 12 to 15 rupees (24s. to 30s.) for carrying 100 maunds (800 lbs.) of grain. Cartmen conveyed goods over shorter distances, and the hire for a bullock-cart for carrying 12 to 15 maunds (960 to 1200 lbs.) from Patna to Gaya (72 miles) was 3 rupees or 6s.

In going over this list of the principal trades and professions of India, a hundred years ago, one sees how greatly these sources of income have been narrowed within this period. Weaving and spinning are practically dead, as most of the thread and cloth used by the people are supplied by Lancashire. Paper manufacture has also declined; skins are now sent

to Europe for all the better kinds of leather work, the dyes of the country have been replaced by aniline dyes. The Beparis and their pack-bullocks have become things of the past, and the profits of the carrying trade are now earned, not by boatmen, but by railways owned by foreign capitalists. Agriculture has become virtually the sole means of subsistence for the people with the loss of their many trades and industries.

Shahabad District.

(Area, 4087 square miles; population, 1,419,520.)

Rice was the greatest crop, but through the neglect of some landlords to repair the reservoirs on their estates, the cultivation of that grain had somewhat diminished. One-half of the district was under rice cultivation. With extended irrigation, Shahabad could be as productive as Patna and Behar, but the quality of the Shahabad rice was not as fine.

The lowest allowance given to the day labourer for mere reaping was nearly 3½ per cent. of the gross produce, while the highest allowance was 8½ per cent. On an average, 195 lbs. of grain were reaped by one man daily, for which, if he was a day labourer, he was allowed rather more than 6 per cent., and if a farm-servant, rather less than 7½ per cent. The grain intended for seed was preserved in vessels made of clay; the most common granaries were composed of a kind of basket made, like the bee-hives usual in Scotland, of a straw-ropes coiled spirally. These granaries contained 29,360 lbs. of rice. The large ones stood in the farm-yard, and were covered with a terrace of clay. The smaller ones were placed at the end of the hut.

"By far the greater part of the proprietors of
assessed estates in this District complain that the assessment [by the Company’s Government] is too heavy, so as to leave them little or no profit, and in many cases to exceed the value of the lands, and as a proof quote that many estates having been put up to sale, no bidder has offered, and the arrears having been lost to Government, the lands have been let at a reduced price; and they also allege that the revenue is so high as leaving nothing to the owners, these have been unable to defray the expense of keeping the reservoirs in repair, and, of course, that the country is growing daily less able to pay the revenue.”

Exclusive of the high table-land, the Government land revenue amounted to Rs.1,132,677 in Shahabad on an extent of 3151 square miles capable of being ploughed; while in Patna and Behar the land revenue was Rs 1,412,269 on an extent of 5051 square miles capable of being ploughed.

Spinning and weaving were the great national industries of Shahabad. 159,500 women were employed in spinning, and produced thread to the value of Rs.1,250,000 a year. Deducting the value of the cotton, each woman made only Rs.1½ or 3s. a year. This was little enough, but this little was added to the income of the families to which the women belonged.

Weavers worked in cotton only, as there were few silk weavers in Shahabad. 7025 houses of weavers working in cotton in the District had 7950 looms. Each loom made an annual income of Rs.20½ or 41s. 6d. a year and each loom required the labour of a man and his wife, as well as one boy or girl. But as a family could not be supported for less than Rs.48 or £4, 16s. a year, Dr. Buchanan suspected that the income of each loom, given above, was understated.

1 History of Eastern India, by Montgomery Martin (London, 1883), vol. i. p 541.
CONDITION OF NORTHERN INDIA

Paper, perfumery, oils, salt, and spirituous liquors were manufactured in Shahabad. Rice was the great article both of import and export, barley was exported to Benares, and Arhar pulse to Murshedabad. Tobacco was imported from Chupra, sugar from Mirzapar, iron from Ramgarh, and zinc, copper, lead, and tin from Patna. Raw silk, cloth, salt, and fancy articles were exported to the Mahratta country of Ratanpur.

The weekly markets were fewer than in Behar, but most of the purchases and sales were made there. Bank notes had not entered into common currency, and "gold has almost totally disappeared, for the same reasons no doubt as in Behar." The milled copper coinage of the Company was current only in the city of Arra; in the interior rude masses of Gorukpur copper coins and Madhusahi and Shorguji Paisas were in use, and Cowri shells were current in exchange for copper coins.

Boats were fewer than in Behar; the fare for 100 maunds of goods (8000 lbs.) from Bindhuliya to Benares, a distance of 140 miles, was Rs.12 or 24s. Two great roads traversed the District, one the military road from Calcutta to Benares kept up by the public, and the other along the old bank of the Ganges kept up by a tax of 1 per cent. on the whole assessed land of the District. Both were impracticable in the rainy season.

The Raja of Bhojpur, Hardar Sing a Kayest, Abdul Nasur a Mahomedan landlord, Bibi Asmat a Mahomedan lady, Lala Rajrap and Lala Kananga, both Kayests, distinguished themselves among others by feeding all strangers and mendicants who came for help. This ancient rite of hospitality to the poor was known to the Hindoos as Sada-brata or ceaseless devotion to God.
Bhagalpur District.

(Area, 8225 square miles; population, 2,019,900.)

Rice was the greatest crop, and 60 seers of the rough rice gave 37½ seers of clean husked rice. Wheat was the next large crop, and barley was sown a great deal mixed with the field pea. Maize was grown on the higher lands, and the next culmiferous crop Marua. Kheri, Kodo, Cheena, Janera and Bajra were also cultivated.

Kalai, Arhar, and Khosari were important leguminous plants. Til and numerous other plants yielding oil were extensively grown, and ginger, vegetables, greens, and spices were raised for consumption in the District.

Cotton was cultivated on 4000 acres, besides a considerable quantity raised by hill tribes on their native hills. Sugar-cane was chiefly grown near the banks of rivers where the fields could be irrigated by means of canals. The tobacco raised was not sufficient for the requirements of the District. One-half of the gross produce covered the cost of cultivation, and the rent paid to the landlords did not quite amount to one-half of the remainder.¹ Owing however to the system of advances being little known the people were not much involved in debt. The money rent was collected by instalments, rent in kind was taken when the crops were reaped. "Various deductions, before division, are made from the crop, specially the whole expense of harvest, and after these deductions the landlord in some places receives one-half, in others ½; but then the landlord, as I have said, is at all the expense of the canals, and generally at all that of the reservoir for irrigation, and

¹ History of Eastern India, by Montgomery Martin (London, 1838), vol. II. p. 220