

97. In later times, however, partly with the sanction of the Government and partly by the connivance of the local revenue authorities, the Patels began to appropriate to themselves a field free of rent which then became the most valuable appanage of their office, and represented the seer land now held by the proprietor. In addition to his fiscal duties the Patel had certain powers in criminal matters, and was more or less arbiter of the village destinies, at a time when law was weak, and might was right, as far as the poor man was concerned. It has been said that the office of Patel was not hereditary, but in point of fact it did descend from father to son so long as the duties of the office were duly performed and the revenue demanded was regularly paid. I have spoken elsewhere of the system of over-exaction which commenced after the peace of Deogaon, and it was during that period that the majority of the "Wutundar Patels," as they prided themselves on being termed, had to make way for a race of speculating farmers, who agreed to any conditions the revenue authorities might make in the hopes of securing a footing in the village for better times to come.

98. The first assessments also under British rule were notoriously high, and remained so more or less until the triennial Settlement of 1834, at which time owing to the low prices of grain and three consecutive bad seasons, the whole of the district was in a very depressed state. Thus it came about that during the first thirty years of this century, villages kept changing hands almost at every Settlement until in many villages the old race of "Wutundar Patels" had disappeared except as cultivators struggling to keep up a position in the village of which they formerly had been the head. Another change introduced during this time was, that whereas each village had its own Patel resident among the tenantry, now a Malgoozar, as he was termed, got hold of as many villages as he had the means of controlling, and from records of past Settlements I observe that it was the practice of our revenue authorities in former days to make the Settlement of a village not so much with the person best entitled to it on personal grounds, as with the person they thought most likely to manage the village without detriment to the interests of Government.

As I have remarked above, the country had become very much depressed in 1834 from a variety of concomitant causes, and at the triennial Settlement made in that year, and subsequently at the 20 years' Settlement made in 1837, a number of new men came in as Malgoozars; these men have held the villages ever since and prospered under a light Settlement, and in view of their long occupancy and good management have now been created proprietors of their villages to the exclusion of the descendants of the old Patels, whose claims now could not be looked upon but as obsolete.

99 These men are now in the position of cultivators and some of them have regained a certain position. In some few instances they have been declared proprietors of their holdings, but these cases are few and exceptional. It will thus be seen that the present landed proprietors of the Baitool district are, as far as some villages are concerned, comparatively a new race; they came forward as men possessed of a certain capital at a time when the old heads of village communities had been reduced to ruin, partly by accidents of seasons and chiefly no doubt owing to revenue mismanagement in the way of over-assessment; they have as a class done well by their villages and been punctual in the payment of the revenue, and the present prosperous state of the district shows them to be deserving of the rights which have been confirmed to them by our Government.

100. I trust that I have made clear the principles upon which proprietary right has been conferred, or to speak more properly, recognized. It is laid down in the instructions regarding the new Settlement conveyed in a letter from the Secretary to Government N. W. P., No. 173, dated 30th November 1853, to the address of the Secretary Sudder Board of Revenue N. W. P., that the leading object in this Settlement would be to recognize and maintain fixed rights and interests in whatever form they might have grown up, and to avoid all speculative interference with the same; in accordance with these views continued possession during the term of the present Settlement, *i. e.* since A.D. 1837, has been looked upon as conferring a right which must be respected unless under very special circumstances indeed.

101. The next and not least important element as regards the land is the tenantry, the men in fact who produce our revenue. Under the old Mahratta Government there is no trace of such a thing as tenant right, or prescriptive rights of occupancy existing in this district under any terms except in the case of Maafedars and grants of land for religious or charitable purposes. I state this on the authority of an old report by Major Low, who was thoroughly conversant with every thing connected with the district. The original Mahratta system, however, included two classes of tenants, Meerasdars, hereditary tenants, who no doubt possessed a certain proprietary right in the soil; their tenure was more or less one of military service.

As I have remarked above, I can find no traces of this tenure having existed in the Baitool district. The other class of tenants were termed Ooprees, literally strangers, and these were tenants-at-will without any rights.

102. As I have before mentioned, the amount of collections from each village was assessed every year. The details of collection were left to the Patel, who let out the lands and made his terms with the tenants each year. Such distinctions as hereditary tenants and tenants-at-will were unknown, but in the cases of the more substantial tenants, lands were held on from year to year and from father to son, so long as the rent demanded was duly paid, but no rights of holding on certain terms independent of the will of the Patel seems to have accrued from such long continuous possession. Some exception is said to have been made in the case of a cultivator who sank a well or otherwise laid out money in improving a field, and in general he would be allowed to hold on his land undisturbed, always provided that he paid the proper rent. As a rule, fresh engagements for the land were entered into every year, even where no change in occupancy took place. The fluctuations of the Government demand and the necessity on the part of the Patel to meet the requirements made on him, rendered it necessary also to assimilate the demand on each particular field, to meet the estimate of the current year according as it might be more or less than that of the one preceding, and as the Patel received only a percentage

on the amount to be collected, he would have no object but to equalize the pressure as far as possible upon the tenants, as he would be more likely in that way to realize his rents. On the whole then the system may be said to have worked fairly so long as the Government demand was moderate, but when the time of indiscriminate and unlimited exaction came, the Patel had no option but to rack-rent the tenantry to the utmost in his own defence.

103. And this state of things continued more or less for the first three Settlements under our administration. Under the moderate Settlement of 1834 and the still lighter twenty years Settlement of 1837, the Malgoozars had no necessity to drive hard bargains with their tenants, and in fact lands were given at very easy rates, and these have remained pretty much the same until the present Settlement. The rule of our courts fixing twelve years as the period constituting a title to hereditary occupancy has been generally construed as giving permission to hold on the same fixed terms as heretofore, quite irrespective of the increased value of produce and consequently of land, and hence has arisen a class of men, the great bulk of the cultivators in fact, who look upon themselves as privileged persons, independent of the Malgoozars, and entitled to hold their land for ever on the previous terms.

104. Some nicety has consequently been required in the matter of adjustment of rents, and prejudices have had to be encountered and difficulties surmounted; but the present state of the law has been fully explained to the persons concerned, and the new state of things has been generally acquiesced in, the more so that present rents were so confessedly low.

105. I append a table showing the general result of adjustment of rents for each pergunnah per acre.\*

Pergunnah.	Former rents.			Revised rents.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Baitool .....	0	8	4	0	8	7
Atnair .....	0	5	9	0	5	10
Saoligurh .....	0	5	4	0	5	6
Mooltye .....	0	6	9	0	7	6

See Statistical Statement appended.



106. Proprietary right has now been recognized and formally conferred on the basis of long and continued occupation. The question has been raised as to how far the previous Malgoozaree tenure in these Provinces has been one of service or otherwise, as mooted in paragraph 17 of the letter No. 173A of the 30th November 1853 from the Secretary to Government N. W. P. to the Secretary Sudder Board of Revenue, laying down instructions for the coming Settlement of the Saugor and Nerbudda territories. To go back to the time of the original Patels under the Mahratta empire:—whatever their tenure, it is clear that they were responsible for the Government revenue, and had to make good all deficiencies in the collections; so far then they were not mere paid agents of Government, and the fact of their responsibility would, as far as I understand the term, take their tenure out of the category of one by service only. Similarly the Malgoozaree tenure under our rule has been one of occupancy only, saddled with the payment of the Government demand with all its concomitant risks and advantages, and it is in virtue of long and continued possession on these terms that the proprietary right in the soil has now been recognized.

107. As regards the rights of tenants to be declared proprietors of their respective holdings, it is clearly laid down in the letter above referred to, paragraph 14, that only in the case of the counter claim of the Malgoozar being weak, as having possessed only a temporary and interrupted interest in the village, that the proprietary right is to be conferred upon the tenants. In accordance then with these instructions proprietary right in tenants has been recognized in the following cases only:—

In the case of mouzahs Mulkapoor and Sheekaree pergunnah Baitool which were confiscated from Sheodeen Patel in 1857 for complicity in rebellion, and given in theekadaree to one Himmutsing, whose ancestors had formerly held the village at a distant period; the tenantry are almost all of long standing, and I conceive this is a case to which the ruling of the North Western Provinces Government properly applies. Then there are a few cases of old Malgoozars

who have been long dispossessed, but who still hold the lands they occupied when in possession of the village. These and ex-Maafedars who have now been subjected to assessment under the orders sanctioned, have been created proprietors of their actual holdings; they have been assessed with their quota of the Government revenue proportional to the demand upon the entire village, besides a certain percentage to the Lumberdar for the cost and trouble of collection.

108. The following table shows the length of tenure by which proprietary right has been determined :—

Tenure.	No. of cases.
Prior to British rule .....	566
From period of first Settlement viz., A.D. 1822 ..	309
From do of last do. viz, A.D. 1837 ..	91
Since do. and prior to 1850 .....	39
Subsequent to do. ....	87

Total cases of proprietary right.... 1,092

The above includes rent-free villages not brought under Settlement.

Of the 87 cases of recent standing 55 pertain to the Sha-poor Talooka which was confiscated in 1857 for complicity on the part of the Malgoozar in rebellion, and was conferred on Ramdeen Shukul, the son of a man who had held the talooka at a prior date; the cases of 2 villages mouzah Theckaree and Mulkapoor have been referred to elsewhere at paragraph 107.

The remainder of these villages are poor estates unfavourably situated in jungles; they have naturally passed through various hands according as they have been deserted and again inhabited in course of time, and the uncertain nature of the profits at all times has rendered them even liable to be thrown up by the Malgoozar of the time being.

109. It is almost needless to add that in such villages there are no ancient cultivators possessed of any rights superior to that of the Malgoozar, however short the tenure of the latter may have been.

110. The hereditary cultivators remain on the same footing as previously in the absence of any further orders on the subject, save that their rents have been in all cases revised; this has had to be done in some cases by Punchayet, in some cases by award of the Superintending Officer, but in the majority of cases it has been done by mutual agreement between the parties, and considering that a general rise in rents has taken place throughout the district, it is satisfactory to be able to state that very little difficulty has attended this branch of the Settlement work.

111. I proceed to give a few statistics in further illustration of my remarks upon the subject of old cultivators being declared proprietors of their holdings.

112. In addition to the instructions contained in the selections embodied in the Settlement Code, your Circular No. 4, dated the 27th October 1863, contains very explicit directions on the subject; it is there laid down that "no length of occupancy as a mere cultivator can *per se* confer a title to proprietary rights," and again, "the ordinary application of capital to the land by an hereditary cultivator, such as sinking a well or planting a grove would not *per se* constitute such a right; some stronger claim to proprietorship must be brought forward and proved by the hereditary cultivator before he could be declared proprietor of his holding."

These instructions are clear enough, and coupled with the selections above referred to have formed the basis of all action in this matter.

113. In the same Circular the persons generally entitled to proprietary right over their holdings are classed as follows:—

*First*, Claimants to shares holding land rent free in commutation of their shares.

*Second*, Relations of the proprietors holding land at favourable and fixed rates.

*Third*, Descendants of former proprietors holding land at favourable and fixed rates.

*Fourth*, Cultivators of long standing who have exercised some proprietary right, such as transferring their holdings or sinking more than ordinary amount of capital in the improvement of the land.

114. The following table shows the result of the Settlement in this respect:—

Title of occupancy	No.
Old cultivators declared proprietors in the absence of better claims on the part of the proprietor (paragraph 14, Selection 11, Settlement Code) . . . . .	22
Do. under 1 and 2 of Settlement Commissioner's Circular No. 4 dated 7th October 1863 . . . . .	3
Do. under Rule 3 of do. . . . .	11
Ex-Maafedars . . . . .	203

115. I may add that each individual case was taken up by me separately and settled upon its own merits. In many instances persons entitled under the above rules to be declared proprietors have preferred to remain in the position of tenants, through fear of the responsibility thus imposed on them, and of lessening their chance of receiving advances of seed and subsistence grain from the proprietor of the village. In such cases of course I have had to defer to the wishes of the persons themselves.

The relative numbers of hereditary and non-hereditary cultivators are as follows:—

Hereditary cultivators . . . . .	9,428
Tenants-at-will . . . . .	20,904

116. From what has been said above it will be seen that the landed tenures of the district are of a simple and generally uniform character, viz., that of zemindaree villages being held by one or more members of the same family; the rents collected from the cultivators form one common fund which, after payment of the Government revenue, and deduction of other expenses, is divided among the proprietors according to their several shares.

117. Bhyacharee and putteedaree tenures, properly so called, do not exist; some few instances there are where villages are held by members of quite different families, and others, where the shareholders, though belonging to the same family, are unable to agree among themselves; in such cases "butwarra" has been admitted to the following extent: after deducting the seer land held by each shareholder, the land held by the cultivators has been divided so as to give each shareholder his proper share of the village profits; this division exists only on paper, no territorial demarcation taking place, as the lands, the rents of which are assigned to any particular shareholder, are not necessarily all contiguous to each other; this arrangement does not affect the lumberdaree which follows ancient and previous usage; each sharer collects his own rents and pays his quota of the revenue to the Lumberdar, whose responsibility towards Government remains as before. The several shares however, and the quota of revenue payable on each, are entered in the village khewut, and the circumstances are detailed in the administration paper.

118. As far as possible, when several villages are held by members of one and the same family, it has been arranged to assign different villages to each in order to avoid the evils generally attendant upon a coparcenary tenure. Such awards have been made either by mutual arrangement or through the medium of a punchayet.

119. Rights to particular shares have in almost all cases been derived by the law of inheritance, though it does not follow that all the descendants of the first holders are now in possession, as frequently collaterals have preferred to remain in the position of tenants in order to free themselves from responsibility.

120. As regards title to upper and under proprietary right, the only instances where such claims have had to be recognized are in the cases of mouzah Morpanee and Mandekoh, talooka Bordah; these villages though forming ostensibly part and parcel of the Bordah jagheer, were nevertheless shown to have been held on a species of independent

tenure by a Gond Thakoor. Full proprietary right was claimed by the latter; eventually the case went before the Settlement Commissioner, who decided that while upper proprietary right clearly belonged to the heir of the ex-jagheerdar, the claimants were at the same time entitled to under proprietary rights. This arrangement has been carried into effect; the revenue is paid by the upper proprietor, who receives from the under proprietor a malikana of 10 per cent. over the Government demand; puttās have been issued to both parties showing the terms of their tenures.

121. In a few instances claims have been put in by Theekadars, but upon investigation these persons have been generally found to have held upon short terminable leases, renewable or otherwise at the pleasure of the lessor; no record has had to be made of such tenures in the Settlement papers, but the proceedings of the inquiry form part of the miscellaneous records of each village.

#### SECTION V.—AGRICULTURE.

✓ 122. The general agriculture of the district must be pronounced to be inferior. Except in irrigated land the use of manure is unknown, while the rotation of crops is little understood, and less often followed. It is only in the cultivation of sugar-cane and opium, and in some few plots of different kinds of vegetables, that any skill or energy seems to be brought to bear, and even this cultivation, profitable as it undoubtedly is in the main, if persevered in, is apt to be thrown up upon any discouragement arising in the way of temporary failure.

123. Before entering into the methods employed in cultivation, it will be well to mention the different kinds of soils that the district possesses; they are divided by the people into the following classes:—

1 Kharee; 2, Dol; 3, Moorund; 4, Bhabur; 5, Sehar; and Burdee.

The soil termed kharee is only found round village sites, it is not strictly a separate quality of soil, but it owes its fertility to the manure it receives from the village and refuse

thrown upon it. This land generally forms part of the landholders' seer, and is devoted to the growth of sugar-cane or opium and occasionally of wheat.

The dol answers to the black cotton soil, as it is popularly termed, of Berar and Nagpoor. It is a black friable soil, highly retentive of moisture, and possessed of certain chemical elements, which enable it to produce year after year the same crop without manure and without fallow. A theory has been started that this and kindred soil of an inferior quality are the detritus of basalt detached from the parent rock by the alternate action of sun and rain during the progress of centuries. This theory receives support from the fact that the soil in question is found only in basaltic formations, and basalt itself contains the elements of silica, alumina, carbon, and others, which are necessary to the growth of wheat, the staple crop raised in dol land. On the other hand the present action of the rains is to denude the basins wherein this soil is now found, and the theory to hold good must be referred to a past period when the geological situation was very different from that of the present day. This soil is generally devoted to sugar-cane, wheat, and linseed. Occasionally by way of giving the land a rest, it is sown with gram, mahsoor, teora, or lakh, but not for any number of years in succession.

✓124. The soil termed moorund was no doubt originally much the same as the dol, but occupying a sloping surface, the finer particles have been washed away, leaving a soil shallower and less retentive of moisture. In seasons when the rain fall is excessive this soil is even more productive than the dol, as it admits of being easier ploughed and prepared, and does not become so much obstructed with weeds.

125. In ordinary seasons, however, it is much dependent on one or more falls of rain, during the cold weather after the crops have reached a certain height. The crops raised in it are wheat, gram, peas, pulses, and occasionally jowaree or cotton intermixed with toor, and tillee, which are raised during the monsoon months.

126. Bhabur again is an inferior species of moorund, being much intermixed with stony particles and sand; by means



of manure and irrigation it is made to produce sugar-cane and opium. In the absence of these it will not raise wheat, but is sown with gram, teora, or mahsoor alternately, and sometimes with khureef grains.

127. The last sub-division of sehar or burdee comprises generically all the poorer soils capable of raising monsoon crops only. They vary very much from a sort of sandy loam to a red gravelly earth of little or no depth. In the absence of manure these are capable only of temporary cultivation, after which they require long intervals of fallow. The quality of course varies a good deal and the crops raised include jowaree, cotton, rice, kodo, kootkee, rala, oil-seeds, and inferior grains. ✓

128. It is to be regretted that in the Khusras the ~~same~~ terms were not made use of to denominate soils as those current among the people themselves, but the Misl was framed exactly after the model of the one in use at Nagpoor, where the soils are classified as follows :—

1. Kalee awul.
2. Kalee doyum
3. Moorund.
4. Khurdee.
5. Raitaree.
6. Burdee.

129. The two first correspond very much to the dol. Khurdee to a certain extent represents the local bhabur, while the raitaree and burdee answer to the sehar and burdee; the kharee land is however unrepresented, and possibly figures in the khusra as inferior soil, while in reality it pays the highest rent of any.

130. I felt the disadvantages of this classification in assessing, but it was too late to remedy the evil.

✓ 131. The great staple of the Baitool district is the rubbee crop, to which more than three-fourths of the land in the open parts of the district is devoted.

132. In theory the preparation of the soil should be commenced in the hot weather, the land receiving one or two dressings with the bukkur or paring plough before the setting in of the rains. In point of fact, however, this essential item of good husbandry whereby the seeds of grass and other weeds are exposed to die, and the ground open for the reception of the rain is very generally neglected, the reason alledged being the scarcity of bullocks, those cultivators who have irrigated land, not being able to spare their bullocks from the well until after the commencement of the rains.

After that, the land should receive from three to four dressings of the plough from time to time during intervals of rain, until the ground has been properly pulverized and all weeds eradicated; when the rains, however, are heavy and incessant, it often happens that the fields have to lie untouched until the conclusion of the monsoon, when they receive a hasty preparation immediately preparatory to the seed being put in.

133. Early in October the cultivators begin to sow the mahsoor and teora or lakh pulses, which serve as food both for man and bullock; after that gram is sown, and latest of all the wheat, which should not be put down until after the heats of October have passed away.

134. None of these crops receive any manure whatsoever, and it is very seldom that a cultivator, even when possessing a well, ever thinks of saving his crop from drought by irrigation.

135. The general method of sowing and reaping the crops is so similar to that pursued in other parts of India, that it is needless for me to enter into any details on the subject.

✓136. The khureef crop generally is considered of but little importance except in the hill villages where it is the staple crop. The most valuable of the khureef crops at this moment is cotton, but its cultivation is but little understood or practised in this district. ✓ In the more open villages it is said not to succeed, but I am inclined to lay this to the part of want of skill or knowledge in the cultivators, rather than to any inherent quality in the soil. At present its cultivation

is confined to some few villages below the ghats on the frontiers of Berar, where the high prices realised, the ready market, and the force of example, have led even the Gonds to sow cotton in preference to inferior grains. The soil, however, of these villages lying as they do on the edges of the ghats is generally very poor and but light crops are raised. So also in other parts of the district cotton is raised in the poor stony soil termed burdee, the general belief being that it will not grow in any of the superior soils; but the fact is that the latter require careful weeding, and the dhowrah or species of harrow to be run occasionally between the drills to loosen the earth round the roots, and in the absence of this care the crop must necessarily fail.

✓137. Jowaree also is but little sown in the more open part of the district and then chiefly for the sake of the stalks which serve as food for cattle. ✓ In the poorer villages it is grown in low lands near rivers, what would be termed khadir land in Upper India, and also in land newly taken up after a fallow. A very little rice and other inferior grains are also grown occasionally in the better villages, but not to any appreciable extent. The poor burdee soil is generally sown with the oil plant termed "jugnee," which will grow almost anywhere, and is said to improve the soil for any crop that may follow; hence it is often sown in exhausted soil by way of retrieving its quality; very little tillee is grown anywhere. In the hilly parts of the district of course the khurceef is the staple crop, but there are few villages in which there is not some land capable of raising either wheat or gram.

138. The method of cultivation is the same as that above detailed, but from the fact of the cultivators being chiefly Gonds, and possessed of but little capital and few bullocks, the land is not generally so well prepared as it should be; but it has this advantage, that from the habit the Gonds have of frequently emigrating, villages become deserted and the lands attain the benefit of a fallow. ✓ The staple crops in the poor villages are kootkee, a species of inferior rice, kodo, a sort of rye or grass, rala, kungnie, sema, and other poor grains. Kootkee and kodo are the chief staple, and the land so sown gets but little preparation.

139. There are two times for sowing the latter grains, first in June, when the crop ripens in August; the second towards the end of July, the crop ripening in October. Another great crop is the oil plant termed jugnee, which has the merit of growing in any soil; this also is sown at two different times, first in June, second in August. The latter crop produces less stalk and leaf, but more seed, but then it is more precarious, as it depends entirely on a fall of rain late in the season. In all these villages a little rice is grown, but it is not irrigated, and but little labour or skill are expended on its cultivation. It is only in two talookas of the wild pergunnah of Saoligurh where excellent rice is grown by the Koorkoos, a wild tribe peculiar to the hills and described elsewhere.

140. The land intended for rice is begun to be ploughed in June and receives a dressing at intervals throughout the rains, until weeds are thoroughly eradicated and the soil pulverized; it then receives a rest until January, when it is again ploughed off and on at intervals until the rains set in, when it is sown broadcast; during the rains the crop is kept carefully weeded and the earth is raised round the roots of the plants. In this way a fine crop is secured and the produce is almost entirely exported to Boorhanpoor in Nimar, by traders who come yearly for the purpose with pack bullocks.

141. This is the only cultivation of the hill country in which any skill is brought to bear. The favourite cultivation of the Gonds is known by the name of "dhya;" it requires neither capital nor skill, neither bullock nor plough; the felling axe and the strong arm are all that is needed. A new piece of ground, generally on a hill slope or edge of a stream is selected and cleared of all jungle. The surface is then covered over with logs of wood of varying size, and these again with smaller brushwood. This work goes on during the hot weather to let the new cut wood get properly dry; just before the rains the wood is set fire to and thoroughly burned to the ground, and after the first fall of rain the seed is scattered among the ashes; when the ground is steep it is generally thrown in a lump along the top of the plot and is left to be washed to its place by the rains.

142. Heavy crops are sometimes raised this way, when the rains are favourable, rice, kootkee, kodo and jugnee being the crops chiefly grown thus; though but little skill is required, yet a vast deal of manual labour is entailed, but from the force of ancient habit the Gonds much prefer this to regular cultivation. One rupee is the rent usually paid for a dhya irrespective of the amount of land or nature of the crop; sometimes the rent is assessed on the axe. In the main from one to two acres is the extent of a plot so cultivated by one person. This it is which has proved so destructive to our forests, splendid teak trees having been felled year after year for no other purpose than to enrich the soil with their ashes, not to mention saplings which were felled by thousands.

143. The nature of the cultivation and the soil accounts for the migratory habit of the Gonds above alluded to by me. Dhya cultivation can only be carried on for one year in the same spot, after which years of fallow are required; the light soils also cultivated in the ordinary manner yield good crops for two or at most three years in succession; consequently at the end of a few years the cultivators have used up the soil in the immediate neighbourhood of the village, and they then remove to some village that has been waste for some time past and in which the soil is fresh, and thus in regular succession villages are occupied and again deserted. This has naturally rendered the Settlement of these tracts for a lengthened period a work of some nicety, but I shall have to dwell on this subject at greater length when I come to the subject of assessment.

144. Having thus briefly described the mode employed in cultivating the dry crops, I proceed to explain the methods employed in raising irrigated crops.

✓ 145. The great staple throughout the district is the sugar-cane, which in places is raised in great perfection; of the plant there are several varieties; first stands the Otaheite cane introduced many years ago by Colonel Sleeman and commonly termed "vilayutee-sata"; this has a much higher and thicker stalk than the indigenous sorts and produces far more juice, but it requires on the other hand more labour in

preparing the soil and more watering, so the expenses attending on its cultivation are greater than with the ordinary sorts.

146. The common cane of the country is termed "punch-rungie," of which there are sub-varieties; this is the sort most extensively grown; the poorest sort is known by the name "suraree" and is grown chiefly round the edges of a field of better cane in the hopes of its first attracting the attention of stray cattle or other animals. ✓

147. A cultivator who raises sugar generally divides the land devoted to this crop into three portions so as to raise cane on the same ground once in three years only, of the remaining two parts, one enjoys a year's fallow while the other is cultivated with some ordinary grain crop. The land is being prepared for about six months previous to being sown; and is repeatedly ploughed backwards and forwards and as deeply as possible until all weeds are eradicated and the soil well pulverised.

148. Sowing takes place from the middle of January to the end of February. The field is divided into a number of little square or rectangular beds for the convenience of watering, and these are again subdivided into rows; the ground having been well watered, pieces of cane, each containing about three joints or eyes are laid down at short intervals and pressed into the ground with the foot. Manure is afterwards scattered on the top and left to be washed in by the water: of course the best plan is to mix the manure with the soil previous to sowing, but the former is the more common practice, less manure being in that case required; irrigation then continues until the rains, each plant being watered once in about four days. Several weedings have also to be given; by the setting in of the rains the plants have reached a certain height. Irrigation is then discontinued, another weeding given, and the earth heaped up around the roots of the plants. After the rains irrigation to a less extent is again resorted to until December, when the plant should be ripe.

149. The Otaheite cane usually comes to flower; the indigenous sorts rarely do so, and when it does occur superstition

frequently prompts the cultivator to set fire to his crop to avert some unknown calamity. Cases of this sort have come under my own observation.

150. When the crop is ready, the mill is set up in a convenient spot. It consists of two upright cylinders of some hard wood terminating at top in two endless screws fitted into each other. The one is fixed while the other is turned by a bar worked by two pairs of bullocks. The canes are passed through the cylinders as they revolve, the juice falling into a trough which runs into a large pan set in the ground. When full the contents of the pan are put into a large shallow iron pan called a "kurhaee," which is set over a furnace and the juice boiled for some hours until it attains a certain consistency, when it is poured into a wooden trough to cool, after which it is put into cloth bags termed belas, when it is ready for exportation as goor. No sugar is manufactured in the district.

151. Besides the expenses of cultivation, the preparation of the juice entails a considerable outlay; when a cultivator does not possess a mill or boiling pot, he has to hire them at twelve annas and eight annas per diem respectively. The mill is kept going day and night in consequence, and extra bullocks have to be hired, for each of which a seer of goor per day is paid. The men employed in passing the canes through the mill are paid as much as eight annas per day, and other labourers four annas besides half a seer of goor per day; it is calculated that about one-fifth of the yield thus goes in the process of preparation.

152. I subjoin a native estimate of the cost of cultivation and profits derived from a plot of land of from two to four acres in extent.

153. It supposes a man to have no capital of his own to start with beyond his well. When a man has bullocks of his own, and can command the services of members of his own family, of course the expenses would be less.

✓ There are about 7,000 acres under sugar cultivation, producing about 70,000 maunds of goor annually.



I.	Rs.
Seed cuttings .....	28
Wages of 2 men for a year.....	50
Mot, or leathern bag for irrigating .....	5
Ropes .....	2
Oil .....	1
Cartage of seed .....	2
Extra ploughing of land .....	4
Weeding 3 times .....	5
Ditto during monsoon .....	3
Rent of land for 2 years.....	8
Hire of bullocks for well .....	40
Total Rupees....	148

II. Mill Expenses.	Rs.
Hire of mill and boiling pot .....	4½
Hire of labourers .....	4
Cutting canes and carriage from field .....	3
Oil for mill .....	1
Carpenter and blacksmith work .....	3
Ghana or mill poojya .....	3½
Cloth for belas of goor .....	4
Sundries .....	2

Rupees 25

Add total I. Rupees 148

Total expenses....Rupees 173

### Profits.

10 khundies Goor at Rs. 40 = Rs. 400.

154. Opium cultivation is chiefly pursued in the Mooltye pergunnah. It can be grown upon almost any soil by means of manure, but generally the kharee land near the villages is preferred. ✓ The land is prepared in much the same way as sugar-cane, only that less ploughing is required. Similarly the ground is divided into little beds in which the seed is

sown broadcast. The sowing generally begins in November. In about ten days it springs up and soon afterwards is weeded and thinned out. Each part of the field is watered once in about four or five days, and weeding is again required at intervals; in February the plant flowers, and when the pods are fully formed irrigation is stopped for about a fortnight, when the plant is supposed to be ripe. Small incisions are then made in the pods and the juice that exudes is collected the day following. This operation is repeated three times when the whole of the juice is supposed to have been extracted. It is deposited in earthen vessels and is called *chik* by the people; it is exported in this state to Indore, where it is manufactured into opium and mixed with that of Malwa which is a superior article.

155. The whole almost of the "*chik*" produced in the district is bought up by Mahajuns in Mooltye who export it on bullocks.

156. Much opium is grown under the system of *lawanee* as it is termed, by which the cultivator receives an advance of money from the Mahajun and binds himself to deliver his produce to him in payment at a certain rate. The Mahajun of course derives a large profit on this transaction, and I am happy to say that the system is going out owing to the growth of intelligence and capital among the cultivating classes.

157. I append an estimate of the cost of production and profits of an opium field of from two to three acres.

<i>Expenses.</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Seed.....	1
Wages of 2 men for 4 months . . . . .	24
Leathern bag for well . . . . .	5
Repairs, &c. . . . .	1
Weeding four times . . . . .	8
Hire of bullocks for 4 months . . . . .	25
Rent of land . . . . .	4
<hr/>	
Total.... Rupees	68

**PRODUCE.**

20 seers *chik* at Rs.  $7\frac{1}{2}$  = Rs. 82.

Over and above, however, the raw juice there is produced khushkhus oil, manooa, and poppy seed, worth not less than Rupees 10 and in the same field is often sown a little garlic or patches of barley.

There are about 2,500 acres under opium cultivation yielding an average of 180 maunds of chik annually.

158. The chief inducement to grow opium is that it requires so much less labour than sugar-cane, and being only four months in the ground requires but comparatively little water, and many streams which run quite dry during the hot weather are available for the irrigation of it, ripening as it does by the end of February.

✓ 159. The other irrigated crops in the district consist of vegetables raised in a few villages only by Malees. These comprise onions, garlic, turmeric, red pepper, various kinds of spinage, and other sundries. A few landholders have introduced potatoes, but the example has not been followed as yet. The method of cultivating these vegetables is the same as practised in other parts of India, and calls for no particular remark.

160. Irrigation is chiefly carried on from wells by means of a leather bag termed a "mot" which is let down by a rope over a wheel, and drawn up by a pair of bullocks proceeding down an inclined plane until the bag reaches the top and its contents are discharged into a trough leading into the water channel. The bullocks are then walked backwards up the incline until the bag again reaches the water and is filled. The same plan is also adopted in drawing water out of streams dammed up for the purpose.

161. This arrangement is termed a "boorka." Persian wheels are quite unknown.

162. There are but few tanks in the district and none of them are used for irrigation. Round Baitool itself, wells are chiefly shored up with wooden logs laid hexagonally or otherwise round the sides. These will last for twenty years in good condition, if the wood used be teak.

163. In Mooltye where stone is plentiful the wells in places are built up with it, but the majority of wells are kucha, having no support beyond that of the native rock; very few wells are built with brick. The supply of water generally throughout the district is most abundant, and it is no uncommon thing for a single well to irrigate six or even eight acres of land; the "mot" however, must in these cases be kept constantly going, and frequent changes of bullocks are required.

164. I have thus briefly endeavoured to illustrate the nature of the soils and the modes of cultivation prevalent in the district. I have said that the general style of agriculture is decidedly inferior; this is partly to be accounted for by ancient custom and the usual apathy of the native character; again, it is part owing I think to the intrinsically good quality of the soil throughout the open parts of the district generally, whereby crops are so easily raised to a certain point, that the cultivator lacks the stimulus of necessity to exert himself as he should. Of late years, however, there have been several severe epidemics among the cattle, and the number of bullocks in the district has been much diminished; the present prices of animals are so very high that in many cases the cultivators have been unable to replace their losses from disease; in such cases the preparation of the land is necessarily neglected.

165. When a cultivator has more land than he can well plough and does not wish to relinquish it, he usually adopts the plan termed "butaee," he finds a partner who possesses bullocks who will plough and otherwise prepare the land on condition of receiving half the crop, he himself supplying the seed and paying the rent.

166. The profits of agriculture are of course very uncertain, depending on so many various circumstances, and any calculations founded upon estimates of produce can only be approximate and are but of little value in estimating the true value of any particular estate. ✓

167. I will endeavour, however, to put on record my ideas of the present value of land as compared with the past, judged

by the prices existing then and now ; it may be assumed that a plough will cultivate 20 acres of land, wheat being the staple produce of the district, I will base my calculations on that article.

168. To begin then with the expenses of cultivation ; the money expenses of one plough may be laid down at about rupees ten including rupees two wages of ploughman, and rupee one wages of herdsman, rupees three expended for weeding, wear and tear of plough, and other instruments and sundries.

Besides the above there are considerable allowances of grain as follows: 4 khundies to the ploughman ;  $1\frac{1}{2}$  khundies to the herdsman, and say 2 khundies at harvest time to the reapers ; all the village servants moreover receive allowances varying from one kooroo or 8 seers to 5 kooroo or 40 seers. The total amount of grain thus expended cannot fall much short of 10 khundies ; the khundie consists of 20 kooroo of 8 seers each being 160 seers in all. The average price of wheat for the past year was Rs. 10 the khundie. This gives Rs. 100, the value of the grain, which together with the money payments makes a total outlay of Rs. 110. A khundie of wheat will sow about 5 acres ; 20 acres will consequently require 4 khundies, value Rs. 40.

169. Now as regards returns of produce : this varies of course immensely according to the quality of the soil, the labour expended in its preparation and vicissitudes of the season. Only the three best qualities of land known as kalee awul, kalee doyum, and moorund are capable of producing wheat. In former reports on the district I see it assumed that the first quality of soil is capable of producing from 4 to 10 fold, the second from 3 to 6 fold ; everything, however, depends upon the season ; when the rainfall has been incessant and there have been no breaks in the weather to admit of the plough being put into the ground at intervals during the monsoon, then the inferior soil from its very lightness admits of a more rapid preparation at the close of the monsoon just previous to the sowing time ; in my opinion taking one soil and one season with another an average productiveness of 5 fold is the most that can fairly be calcu-

lated on. It must be borne in mind that this is a hill district subject to great inequalities of season and to visitations of frost and hail; even the wheat crops at times suffer severely from frost as I can testify from my own personal experience. Taking then the above estimate of productiveness we have a return for 20 acres of 20 khundies value at present prices Rs. 200.

The account then stands thus:—

Expenses in money .....	Rs.	10
Do. in grain .....	,,	100
4 Khundies of seed .....	,,	40
		<hr/>
Total....		Rs. 150

Produce in grain, value ..... Rs. 200

Net gain ....., 50 or 2-8 per acre.

This is exclusive of the value of the straw and chaff derived from the wheat, and which serves to feed the cattle.

The above calculation certainly does not place the profits of husbandry in a brilliant light, but I make it more with a view to show the futility of all such calculations than for any other purpose. The expenditure in grain may seem high, but is not more than what ought to be expended in accordance with the custom of the country. The practice of paying in kind is one very advantageous to the labourer, and takes away much from the extra profit which the farmer would otherwise have reaped; again, I should remark that the expenditure in grain would not be much greater, supposing several other ploughs to be used by the same cultivator, each additional plough would thus give an increased ratio of profit; in unfavourable seasons again many of the allowances to village servants would be curtailed, so that the loss would be more or less equally distributed, and the reverse would apply to seasons of unusual abundance.

~170. I here append a table showing the great fluctuations that have taken place in the price of wheat during the

present century ; the variation in the price of wheat may be taken as the measure of the variation of that of all other articles of produce.

Years A.D. 1800 to 1826.	Average price per khundie of 160 seers.	
	Rs.	a.
1800 to 1818.....	4	10
1819 to 1820.....	9	6
1821 to 1824.....	3	14
1825 .....	2	8
1826 .....	1	12

Prices rose again little until the late Settlement made in 1837, during which they remained pretty stationary ; I now give the prices of the past ten years.

Years A.D.	Average prices per khundie of 160 seers.	
	Rs.	a.
1854 to 1858.....	4	3
1859 to 1860.....	5	0
1861 .....	6	10
1862 .....	10	0
1863 to 1864.....	12	0

171. There are now many cultivators in the district who have either lost their bullocks from disease or otherwise, or have had to sell them to make up their rent, or to satisfy some pressing creditor ; in such cases when the cultivator



still wishes to retain his land in hopes of better times to come he adopts the system known as "butaee," that is, he enters into partnership with some wealthier cultivator who supplies the bullocks for the preparation of the land, the actual occupant paying the rent; the produce is divided equally between them.

172. On the whole the cultivators of Baitool are a thriftless race. I have before said that in general they are not good cultivators; they are also improvident in the extreme; however, abundant the harvest may be, the close of the year finds nothing in store, no nest egg for the future; this is chiefly owing in my opinion to the custom of depending upon the *Malgoozar* for advances of seed grain, as also of grain for subsistence during the months immediately preceding the harvest; these advances are termed "bij" and "porga" and are payable in kind after the harvest plus 25 per cent interest; the *Malgoozars* make large profits in this way, and it is their interest to encourage their tenants in their habits of improvidence; on the other hand they run the risk of losses by tenants absconding or being utterly unable to pay in unfavourable seasons.

173. The great bulk of the tenants are thus dependant upon the proprietor, but many of them receive merely nominal advances, just for the purpose of keeping up their right as they deem it, in case of a time coming when they might be really in need of it.

174. The poorer cultivators of course follow the plough themselves, assisted in all operations by the members of their family. Those in better circumstances keep ploughmen who are either "bursalees" or "sajjhees." The former are paid regular wages, the latter receive as remuneration one-fifth of the crop. In the same way herdsmen or "churwaees" are kept to look after the cattle, and are paid either in cash or in grain so much for each head of cattle under their charge.

175. The instruments in use in the district are the following: the hul or plough used for breaking up new land, or preparing ground for sugar-cane or opium.

176. The bukkur or paring plough which merely loosens the surface soil and removes weeds; this is the instrument chiefly used for preparing the land for the rubber crop.

The dhowrun is similar but smaller than the bukkur and is used for weeding, being run between the drills when the crop is up.

177. The pas or hor is used chiefly for clearing off the earth adhering to the share of the plough or the blade of the bukkur.

The "teefun" or drill is a hollow bamboo with half a cocoanut shell inserted as a head; this is passed through a hole in the share of the plough and through it the seed is put into the ground; occasionally jowaree is sown broadcast with the hand as are also the poorer crops of kodo, kootkee, jugnee, and such like.

178. The above are the only implements in ordinary use; the threshing is done by means of bullocks; these are never muzzled and consume much of the crop. Winnowing is performed by throwing the grain into the air out of a basket when the wind carries off the chaff leaving the corn to fall in a heap by itself; it is needless for me to enter into any details on these points, as the methods employed are quite similar to those in use in other parts of the country.

179. I append a table showing the supposed cultivation and out-turns of the most valuable staples for the past year.

Crop.	Area under cultivation in acres.	Out-turn in maunds of 40 seers.	Gross value.
			Rupees.
Sugar-cane .....	7,000	70,000 (goor)	5,60,000
Opium .....	2,500	180	50,400
Cotton .....	2,400	1,800	27,000

The following are the different crops raised in the district :—

#### IRRIGATED.

Sugar-cane,	Garlic,
Opium,	Spinage (Bajee),
Ginger,	Coriander,
Turmeric,	Carrots,
Chillies,	Mustard.
Onions,	

#### NON-IRRIGATED.

<i>Rubbee crop.</i>	<i>Khureef crop.</i>
Wheat,	Cotton,
Gram,	Jowaree,
Teora or Lakh,	Moong,
Muhsoor,	Kootkee,
Peas,	Rala,
Linseed,	Kungnie,
Koosum.	Moongnie,
	Toor,
	Oorud,
	Mot,
	Kodo,
	Sema.

Miscellaneous produce grown in garden patches round village sites—

Mukka or Maize,  
 Tabacco,  
 Buliar, a kind of Bean,  
 Poput ditto.  
 Cucumber (kukree).

Water and musk-melons are grown in a few places in river beds.

## SECTION VI.—COMMERCE AND TRADE.

180. I have before stated that the population of the district is almost entirely engaged in agriculture, and more or less dependant on it for subsistence. There are no large towns, and but few branches of manufacture are carried on. Such as there are I will briefly describe: The town of Baitool is noted chiefly for its pottery; there are a great number of koomhars, and large quantities of chatties and other vessels are turned out: these find their way to most parts of the district; here also are manufactured the large pots in which the juice of the sugar-cane is collected as it passes from the crushing mill. Potters are found here and there all over the district, but the Baitool ware has the best name.

181. Manufactories of brass or copper do not exist, neither are there any koshtees or regular professional weavers; in every village there are a certain number of the Kotewar or Dher class; their chief employment is spinning and weaving coarse cotton cloth; this is almost all sold within the district itself.

182. There is also a caste called "Busod," who spin hemp rope and weave it into "tat" or gunny; this is made entirely for pack bags for local use.

183. Ropes required for agricultural purposes are generally manufactured at home by members of the family.

184. Baskets are manufactured by the Gonds out of bamboos split fine, and find a ready sale in all the local markets.

185. Gadrees are a caste who keep sheep and goats; they weave coarse blankets from the wool of the former.

✓ 186. Oil is manufactured throughout the district, but for local use only; very little linseed is grown; tillee and jugnee are the plants from which oil is chiefly extracted; from the fruit of the mhowa tree also an oil is extracted by the Gonds termed "goolee ka tel", they use it for food as well as for burning; it is of a thick consistency, and is frequently used to adulterate ghee.

These are the only branches of industry carried on in the district; they are adapted to supply the immediate wants of a simple population; for articles of luxury such as finer cloth, brass vessels, or small articles of finery, the consumer has to depend upon importation from Nagpoor or Berar; the annual fair held on the banks of the tank at Mooltye furnishes the chief supply for the year. It is only in the Suddur station at Budnoor, and in the town of Mooltye that there is any native shop where imported cloth of any description can be purchased.

187. The district is on the whole a poor one; the people have few wants, and those are easily satisfied; consequently there has been no demand to call the higher branches of manufacture into existence.

188. The trade of the district is more considerable. In the town of Mooltye there are a good many Mahajuns who besides the avocation of money lending, buy up the raw opium produced in the district and export it to Indore, where it is mixed with juice of the Malwa poppy and made into opium for the Bombay market. The produce of opium varies very much according to the season; the average exportation however may be set down at about 180 maunds, valued at Rs. 50,000 or thereabouts.

The other chief traders of the district are Telees and Kulars; they export large quantities of jungle produce to Berar chiefly; it comprises the flowers of the mhowa tree from which the common country spirit is distilled, chironjee the seeds of which are used in cookery, the hurra nut from which a dye is extracted, a small quantity of lac and a few other sundries; ghee is also manufactured largely by the Gowlees, who sell it to the Telees for sale in the district or export.

189. Timber used formerly to be exported in large quantities to Seonee in the Hoshungabad district, from whence it found its way to Mhow and Indore. This trade was carried on chiefly by the Kulars, who got the timber from the Gonds in return for liquor. In so far as this traffic was wasteful, it has been checked by the new forest laws.

✓190. The grain grown within the district is not much more than sufficient to meet the wants of the people themselves; of late years, however, owing to the great displacement of cereals by cotton in Berar and Nagpoor, grain has been exported to the country below the ghats, but this has had to be counterbalanced by importations from Hoshungabad.

191. Goor is the chief article of export; most of it is sent to Hoshungabad in the first instance, being purchased from the cultivators by the Telees or Bunneas. Among the exports I should also mention rice grown by the Koorkoos in Saohgurh, and which is exported on bullocks to Boohranpoor in Nimar. ✓

192. The quantity of cotton is very small, and the produce is used within the district itself, being made into rope or coarse cloth for local use; the thread is generally spun by the women of the cultivator's family.

✓193. The imports consist chiefly of salt, cocoanuts, and other sundries, which are brought from Berar by the Telees in return for the mhowa and other jungle produce they export. Cotton cloth and utensils of brass and iron are also imported, but in limited quantities.

194. There is a considerable trade carried on by Bunjaras, but this is almost entirely a through traffic between Berar and the western coast and the country of the Nerbudda valley and that to the north of it.

195. The internal trade of the district is carried on by means of weekly bazaars or markets, which are held in all the towns and many of the larger villages. In the open part of the country there are several of these markets in each talooka, and they are so arranged as to fall on different days of the week; the people assemble from all the surrounding villages, often from considerable distances, and exchange their produce, consisting of common cloth, oil, grains, vegetables, or tobacco. In a district where there are so few Bunneas or places of trade these markets become an actual necessity. ✓

196. There is one bazaar, that held in the village of Kherla in the Mooltye pergunnah, where cattle are brought

from long distances, and a great deal of business is transacted. As might also be expected numbers of stolen cattle find their way there.

197. The following table gives the supposed value of the chief articles of export and import for the past year.—

Articles.	Export value.	Import value.
	Rs.	Rs.
Cotton .....	1,300	15,000
Sugar and Gour .....	35,000	1,800
Wheat .....	20,000	13,000
Salt.....	49,000	60,000
Rice .....	28,000	13,000
Other Grains.....	12,000	5,000
Raw Opium .....	50,000	....
English Cloth .....	6,000	36,000
Country Cloth .....	35,000	44,000
Sundries .....	70,000	62,000

These figures represent the through traffic as well as that required for the use of the district itself; they are not very reliable, but have been compiled from the best available sources.

#### SECTION VII.—FORMER ASSESSMENT AND PAST FISCAL HISTORY.

198. As far as can be gathered from past records, the total assessment of the district previous to the peace of Deogaon in A.D. 1803 was Rs. 1,64,000 only; at that time the district is represented as being in a tolerably flourishing condition, the people well off and the revenue realized without difficulty; other accounts give the average jumma of the 10 years ending with the above date at Rs. 1,66,490 or Nagpoor Rs. 1,99,791, so that we may assume this to have been about the amount levied; after the dismemberment, however,



of the Mahratta Empire consequent on the fall of Gawulgurh and other victories of our armies, the Mahratta Government of Nagpoor by way of indemnifying itself for its loss of territory commenced an indiscriminate system of rack renting and extortion throughout the dominion that was left to it; the Baitool district fared like other portions of the Empire, and we find the average assessment of the 13 years following the period referred to above, reaching the sum of Rs. 2,46,649 or Nagpoor Rs. 2,95,978, an increase of no less than Rs. 80,000; add to this that besides the effects of misgovernment and oppression on the part of the Government itself, the district during that period was subjected to unceasing raids on the part of Pindarees, Gonds, and other wanderers, who sacked whole villages and laid waste the lands, it may well be imagined that the collections often amounted to but a small portion of the nominal revenue, and had frequently to be levied by actual force.

199. Although therefore the above figures show what the assessment was, we have no means of knowing what was the amount actually collected.

200. The first Settlement under our rule was made for five years in 1228 Fuslee by Captain Wardlow; at that time the great mistake was committed of taking the average assessments of the preceding few years as the basis on which to found a new Settlement.

201. It has been seen that the revenue had been raised immensely, while at the same time from various causes internal and external the population generally had been reduced to great distress, the revenue being levied actually by violence; the returns of collections made under the Mahrattas, and which formed the basis of the first Settlement would be very deceptive. In many cases they would be quite nominal, and in others they would include a number of petty exactions levied on various pretences from all classes of the community, and known by the terms *putee*, *burgun*, *nuzzerana*, or otherwise; these exactions on paper at least would swell the collections to a formidable amount, but they had nothing to do with land revenue properly so called, and should not have been taken into consideration in framing a Settlement;

The collections also fell very far short of the nominal revenue.

202. In this state of affairs, and before there had been time for the circumstances of the district to improve under a settled Government, a Settlement was made for five years for Nagpoor Rs. 3,43,900, or Company's Rs. 2,86,580 in round numbers.

203. It was impossible that such a Settlement should hold good, and accordingly we find that alterations had to be made and large remissions given each succeeding year. I find that the average collections during the period did not exceed Nagpoor Rs. 3,06,800, or Company's Rs. 2,55,600 in round numbers; this high assessment was still further aggravated by the great fall in prices of produce generally, which took place about that period owing generally to the cessation of hostilities, and the feeling of security which was established throughout the country at large.

204. The first Settlement then under our rule must be pronounced to have been a complete failure, and served still further to plunge into distress the agricultural community, simply from want of judgment and a proper basis for assessment.

205. The next Settlement was made in 1233 Fuslee for three years by Captain Low, an officer to whose reports we are chiefly indebted for a knowledge of the past fiscal history of the district. This Settlement was made for Nagpoor Rs. 2,44,166 or Company's Rs. 2,03,471, being a reduction of about a lakh of rupees upon the nominal amount of the previous Settlement, and being even below the actual collections.

206. Even this Settlement, however moderate as it seemed in comparison with the preceding one, could not be carried out without considerable remissions being granted; Captain Low himself writes that the people generally were fully satisfied with this Settlement; that for the first year it was levied with ease, and that it was owing only to failure of crops that any difficulty was experienced in collecting the amount afterwards.

207. To judge of the pressure of the Government demand as compared with the lagwuns or declared rent rolls, I append a table of the actual demand and supposed total rent for the three years of this Settlement ; it must be premised, however, that rents were in many cases nominal and were modified or remitted according as the Government demand was modified or otherwise ; there are discrepancies in the figures in different returns to which I have had access, but they may be accounted for by certain Oobaree or Peshkushee villages being included in some returns and not in others.

Fuslee year.	Government Jumma in Nagpoor.	Lagwun.
	Rs.	Rs.
1233	2,45,156	2,79,014
1234	2,44,875	2,81,735
1235	2,46,810	2,85,365

208. The next Settlement was again made by Captain Low in 1236 Fuslee, and for a period of five years. The assessment gave a slight reduction on that of the preceding Settlement, being for Nagpoor Rs. 2,40,612, or Company's Rs. 2,00,510.

209. Even this Settlement was found too high ; large remissions had to be given each year, and even then the revenue was collected with difficulty. All the reports of that period speak of the general poverty of both Patels and cultivators, the straits to which they were reduced to meet the demands upon them, and the consequent state of debt into which all alike had fallen. This state of things is generally attributed to the great over assessment of the first Settlement, from the effects of which the people had been unable as yet to recover, and also the general deterioration of the soil from long continued cultivation without a fallow.

210. The first of these causes was true enough, the Malgozars and cultivators had been so thoroughly impoverished

and sucked dry of all their resources, that they had not the means or the capital to cultivate their lands properly. But there can be no doubt that both the Settlements of 1233 and of 1236 Fuslee were intrinsically much too high, great as was the reduction upon the first Settlement. The price of wheat during that period I find to have been as low as Rs. 2 and 3 per khundee, or about one-third of the prices now prevailing, and yet a Settlement at the same amount as those concluded by Captain Low would now be to all intents and purposes impracticable.

211. The average collections for the above period I find to have amounted only to Nagpoor Rs. 2,21,878, or Company's Rs. 1,84,898, being very considerably less than the amount of the assessment.

212. As to the other alleged cause of the universal distress, viz., the deterioration of the soil from long continued cropping, I do not place much faith in it. It is undoubtedly true that land taken up after a long fallow does for the first few years bear much heavier crops than it will do afterwards in the absence of manure; but after the first few years the ratio of deterioration becomes very much less. If this theory were to be accepted in its integrity, it would follow that the lands of Baitool should have ceased to bear altogether by this time. From all that I can ascertain on the subject, the land is as productive now as it was twenty years ago, or even further back, and it certainly has enjoyed no rest during that period. We must be content therefore to ascribe the general poverty of the district to what I consider its true causes, viz. high assessment combined with low prices.

213. Captain Low, though a good revenue officer and possessing great experience of the district, maintained that his assessments were moderate as compared with the internal resources and capabilities of the district, and would have been realised with ease but for the abnormal state of things referred to above; viewed, however, by the test of actual experience both these Settlements must be pronounced to have been much too high.

214. Captain Low himself appears to have assumed that a Settlement in the Baitool district must always be of an

annual and fluctuating nature, and that it would be impossible to frame any assessment, however low, that would hold good for a term of years without modification; thus the assessment came to be looked upon merely as a maximum standard, which might under the most favourable circumstances be realised, but which in point of fact never was.

215. The reasons alleged for such a system are the general poverty of the cultivators which led them to throw up their lands under the least discouragement and remove to other villages, thus rendering it impossible for the Malgoozar to reckon upon his rents for more than one year at a time. The necessity seems also to have been recognized of allowing Malgoozars purposely to throw lands out of cultivation for the benefit of a fallow. It seems to have been forgotten that the whole question was simply one of self-interest as regarded Malgoozars and cultivators, and that so long as the Government demand was moderate, cultivation would be maintained at its proper level.

216. In point of fact, however, it had come to be an understood thing that the Government jumma was a nominal assessment which would be modified every year according to circumstances. Captain Low himself states that whatever reduction might be given looking to the lagwun or village rent-roll, next year the revenue would bear the same proportion as before to the gross receipts, the lagwuns having been lowered in equal proportion.

217. The stability of the last quinquennial Settlement was sorely put to the test by three successive seasons of failure of crops terminating in 1240 Fuslee, the last year of the Settlement; so bad was the state of affairs at that time that no less a sum than Rs. 92,000 accumulated in balances of revenue had to be written off as irrecoverable, and under such auspices a new Settlement for three years was brought out in 1241 Fuslee by Lieutenant Smith, the Assistant Agent in charge of the district.

218. At that time a great deal of land had fallen out of cultivation and numbers of cultivators had left the district, especially those of the Atnair pergunnah, who migrated to

the Berar district, which appears to have been in a much better state at that time. Numbers also of the Malgoozars had thrown up their villages, and there was a difficulty in finding any one to take their place.

219. The basis of the new Settlement is said to have been the measurement of the district previously made by Captain Low. This was but a rude survey made by the Putwarees with the aid of a few Mirdhas, and does not seem to have been subjected to any regular test ; moreover, it embraced only the land actually under cultivation. Considering then the way in which the village fortunes fluctuated yearly as above described, such measurements could not be of much value after the lapse even of a few years.

220. Such as it was, however, it was made use of and certain rates on soil and on the number of ploughs were applied. The village lagwun or rent-roll was also compared and a jumma fixed, which was to leave the Malgoozar an inam of 25 per cent. upon the gross collections.

I find that Captain Low assumed that the Government revenue ought to amount to the value of two-fifths of the gross produce, while Lieutenant Smith calculated that it should equal half the gross produce after deducting the *bona fide* expenses of cultivation ; either of these estimates would now be reckoned excessive.

221. The new Settlement was concluded for Nagpoor Rs. 1,93,469, or Company's Rs 1,61,224, being a reduction of no less than Company's Rs. 39,286 upon the preceding Settlement ; new men came forward to take up the villages that had been thrown up by the former Malgoozars ; abandoned lands were given on three years leases free of rent to encourage cultivation, and confidence was once more restored throughout the district ; from that time a new era may be said to have commenced ; hitherto the fiscal history of the district has been an uniform chronicle of high assessment modified annually, revenue realised with difficulty spite of large and constant remissions, and a regular march of retrogression in the fortunes of the people each succeeding year, serving only to plunge them still deeper into difficulties and distress.

At last, however, successive years of failure of crops opened the eyes of our revenue authorities to the fact that a more moderate standard of assessment must be assumed to enable the district to recover and maintain its former prosperity. Still with the history of the past written apparently in such clear characters, as a guide ; it appears to have been considered at the time that the moderate Settlement then made was to be merely a temporary relief to enable the ruined district to recover its former capabilities, as they were supposed to be of paying a much higher revenue. The Settlement worked well ; the seasons were more favourable, and the demand was generally realised without any difficulty.

222. The term expired with the Fuslee year 1243 or A.D. 1837. By that time new counsels had prevailed and it was resolved to grant a twenty years' Settlement on liberal terms throughout the Sangor and Nerbudda territories. The Settlement in Baitool was carried out by Major Ousely.

223. I have been unable to determine any fixed principle or data on which the new assessment was founded, beyond that of a regular reduction by a percentage on the jummas of all villages indiscriminately. The previous Settlement had worked well, and the pressure of the Government demand had been found light, still in fixing an assessment for so long a period as twenty years, it was felt that a large margin must be left for the accidents of seasons and other contingencies, so as to ensure the regular collection of the amount assessed.

224. The best proof of the success of the Settlement is the present flourishing condition of the district. At its commencement the agricultural classes were just emerging from a long night of poverty and struggling against high assessment and low prices. The light had dawned upon them with the Settlement of 1834, and now the full daylight was revealed ; each succeeding year almost has added to the wealth and general resources of the agricultural community ; throughout the open parts of the district the whole of the culturable land has been brought under the plough, and even in the wilder parts of the district great inroads have been made upon the domain of the forest.

225. The amount of the new assessment was about Company's Rs. 1,40,000 in round numbers, being a reduction of

over Rs. 21,000 or more than 12 per cent. upon the preceding light Settlement. It is almost unnecessary to add that this Settlement has continued in force until July last, the date from which the present Settlement commences for the whole district.

226. For thirty years the district has been in the enjoyment of a moderate assessment ; during that time the value of much of the land has been greatly increased by the sinking of wells, and of late years the great rise in the value of agricultural produce of all kinds has still further enhanced the value of lands, so that what was a light burden in 1837, is incalculably lighter at the present time.

227. Even the preceding triennial Settlement of 1834 which was higher by Rs. 21,000, was at that time accepted as a very light Settlement when prices were far lower than they have been for some years past, and than I think, they are ever likely to be again judging by the effect that Railways have hitherto effected on the various produce markets with which they have been brought in contact.

228. Looking then to the past I derived the following conclusions ; injudicious over assessment had brought the district to the verge of ruin, which was only warded off by timely liberality ; moderation should therefore be assumed as the basis of assessment ; on the other hand the Government demand was much below what the real value of the land might warrant judged by the increased value of all agricultural produce, and the rents paid by the tenants were generally lower than what might fairly be demanded for various reasons stated elsewhere.

229. To begin then, I assumed that a considerable rise in rents generally might take place, and coupling this with the increased value of the lands held by the proprietors, I saw clearly that the Government revenue might be considerably increased without departing from that basis of moderation which I felt to be necessary to the future prosperity of the district.

230. How far my anticipations have been realised and the revenue demand modified will be seen elsewhere when I come to the statistics of the present Settlement.



## SECTION VIII.—DATA AND STATISTICS OF PRESENT ASSESSMENT.

231. In determining the principles on which I was to base the coming Settlement, I endeavoured as far as possible to make myself acquainted with all the past phases of the revenue history, as also the principles which had guided my predecessors in the work of assessment; the chief authority was Captain Low, who had concluded the two Settlements of 1233 and 1236 Fuslee, and to whose reports I have alluded elsewhere.

232. The first Settlement under British rule effected in Fuslee 1228 was based solely upon the supposed average collections of the past few years. That of Captain Low in 1233 was founded chiefly on the lagwuns or village rent-rolls modified by the results of personal experience and local knowledge; at his second Settlement in 1236 Fuslee, Captain Low availed himself of measurements made by his orders. I have elsewhere stated that this was but a rough survey made by the Putwarees, subjected to no regular test and embracing only land under cultivation. Such as it was, it was made the foundation of a system of rates and produce estimates, but I have been unable to obtain any record of the actual rates themselves from among the old Settlement papers.

233. Regarding his system of assessment I quote his own words from a memorandum upon the district written in 1832, just prior to the last triennial Settlement; he writes: "It is a mistake, however, to suppose that any of the last Settlements made by me in Baitool, were founded upon the elaborate calculations that they appear to be. The fact was that I assessed each village according to its individual state and circumstances, the only way a Settlement in this country can be made, and the division of the villages into classes was done afterwards to save the trouble of replying to the numerous inquiries that I expected to have addressed to me as they were on the occasion of the preceding Settlement;" and again "this is what gave rise to putting the villages into classes, that all those in which the average rates on the land

nearly corresponded might be put together and one explanation serve for all in the Settlement books. But the classification was entirely nominal. Instead of being altered to fit the class, the village went into whatever class the jumma fixed might happen to bring it."

234. The rates supposed to prevail in the Baitool pergunnah in the best villages of the district in the year 1832 were as follows, for each description of soil :—

	Per acre.
Irrigated land . . . . .	Rs. 5 0 0
Kharee . . . . .	„ 2 1 0
Dol . . . . .	„ 1 10 0
Moorund . . . . .	„ 1 4 0
Bhabur . . . . .	„ 0 12 0
Seharee . . . . .	„ 0 4 0

These rates are said to have been considered high then ; judged by the prices of produce then prevailing, they must have been so ; it will be seen that they are higher than the highest rates now proposed by me in the richest villages of the district.

Measurements were at that time calculated by the "joosee" which for all practical purposes may be assumed to be equivalent to four acres ; the measurements, however, of that time were very vague and uncertain.

235. The productiveness also of the several staple grains of the rubbee crop I find estimated at from four to ten-fold according to the quality of the soil. Assuming then the best quality of soil or dol to bear eight-fold of wheat, an acre takes a quarter khundie of seed ; this would give a gross return of two khundies. The average price of wheat would be then about Rs. 4, certainly not more, thus giving a value of Rs. 8 per acre, or, at one-sixth of the produce, a revenue rate of Rs. 1-5-0 which is much lower than the estimate above given ; but further, in a hilly district with an uncertain climate and exposed to great vicissitudes, I think eight-fold much too high an average rate of productiveness to assume for even the best land.

236. This is the only record of the rates I can find as existing prior to the triennial Settlement of 1241 Fuslee. The assessment books for that Settlement for the Mooltye and Atnair pergunnahs are before me; the villages are divided into five classes according to the classification said to have been introduced by Captain Low, and I have shown above in his own words on what system that classification was based.

The rates themselves are as follows :—

Description of Soil.	1st and 2nd Class, per Beegah.	3rd Class, per Beegah.	4th and 5th Class, per Beegah.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
Irrigated .....	4 8 0	4 8 0	None.  Applied to Gondee and poor jungly Villages.
Kharee .....	1 9 0	1 6 0	
Dol .....	1 2 0	1 0 0	
Moorund .....	1 0 0	0 12 0	
Bhabur .....	0 8 0	0 8 0	
Seharee .....	0 3 6	0 3 6	

237. This then was all I had to guide me in framing an assessment based upon a Khusra survey and assumed rent-rates applied to the different qualities of soil.

238. To begin with general principles: I had the past financial history of the district before me; high assessments combined with low prices of agricultural produce had brought the agricultural population to the verge of ruin; in fact many of the Malgoozars were unable any longer to keep on the villages; things kept on growing worse until the evil was brought to a climax by a succession of bad seasons, ending with the Fuslee year 1240; a large and general reduction of the assessments was made at the ensuing Settlement followed by a still further reduction at the last Settlement

in 1241 Fuslee ; since then during a period of upwards of 25 years, the country has been gradually but steadily advancing in the path of prosperity, and though many of the proprietors and cultivators are more or less in debt and difficulties, this can only be ascribed to the normal habit of the people, to their improvidence and extravagance in regard of marriages and other ceremonies. At present I fancy there are few parts of India where the Government demand upon the land falls so lightly, considering the capabilities of the soil ; again, the great rise in the price of all articles of consumption, or in other words, the fall in the value of money renders a revision of the assessments imperatively necessary in the interests of Government.

239. The great change in circumstances and the greatly improved condition of the agricultural classes, certainly warrant a corresponding increase in the burden laid upon the land, and most justly so as compared with other trades and professions, for while the followers of the latter year by year find their expenses growing greater, and their incomes in similar proportion going less far, the cultivator who raises his own food reaps all the benefit of the enhanced price which he gets for the surplus sent to market, and which more than compensates him for the increased price of clothing of which he requires so little in this country ; nor are we to suppose that the present state of affairs is purely temporary ; the opening out of the lines of Railway which will ere long, it is hoped, traverse these Provinces, not to speak of other means of developing the vast internal resources of the country, must exercise a wonderful influence upon the produce markets generally, and whatever that effect may be, it is sure to be all in favour of the agricultural interest. Seeing then that the last Settlement concluded upwards of 25 years ago was considered a very light one even at that time of low prices, and impaired agricultural resources, I am, I think, justified in assuming that under present circumstances, the Government revenue ought to admit of a decided increase ; I also assumed for reasons to be set forth hereafter that a general and considerable rise in rents might be looked for throughout the district ; this assumption formed the basis of my calculation.

240. As regards the question of rates: in framing these I have been in some degree guided by those existing in neighbouring districts as far as I have been able to ascertain them, and partly by what I have ascertained to be about the value of the different sorts of land from local personal inquiry as well as reference to the old reports on the subject, as also leases given by Maafedars or others.

241. The lagwuns or village rent-rolls have also been consulted, but I am not inclined to place much faith in them. Captain Low maintained that they were no guide towards the proper assessment of a village, not on the grounds of their untruthfulness, on the contrary, the reports of all Officers bear concurrent testimony to the fact of the village lagwuns having always as a rule been drawn up in a straightforward way, owing to the efficiency of the Putwarees and good revenue supervision; where they fail, however, is in the perpetual fluctuation of rents which are said not to have held good for a year at a time; thus certain rents might have been fixed at the commencement of the agricultural year and ratified by the usual distribution of pawn and betel; but before the year was out perhaps more than one modification of the terms of the lease had taken place owing to accidents of season or otherwise; for this reason it was assumed that the lagwun filed at the commencement of the year might be no guide to the actual collections. For myself I do not place such implicit faith in the honesty of these papers. In the face of a new Settlement it is the interest alike of proprietors and tenants to make existing rates appear as low as possible. Further, on occasions of land changing hands, or a new lease being given to a tenant-at-will, it is not an unusual practise for a bonus in the shape of a sum of ready money to be given in consideration of a lower rate of rent being recorded. This transaction of course does not appear in the lagwun and virtually a fraud is committed; but even supposing the entries to be a truthful exposition of rents as they now are, the rates themselves are so unequal and so apparently out of all proportion to the quality of the soil or the nature of the produce, that no regular system can be derived from them. In many villages the best land appears to be the lightest assessed, and this I account for in the following manner:—

242. As before remarked the district was being rapidly depopulated in 1240 Fuslee; a new race of Malgdozars came in with the light Settlements of 1241 and 1244 Fuslee; at that time much good land doubtless was lying waste from want of population. To encourage settlers the new Malgoolars gave out these lands at low rents to new tenants; the descendants of these men are now in possession as "Kudeem Khastkars," and throughout the Saugor and Nerbudda territories the idea appears to have prevailed, that our rules of law forbade the raising of rents upon tenants of more than twelve years standing. Even in the case of tenants-at-will it seems only to have been on occasions of land changing hands or new land being taken up, that the Malgoolar seems to have exercised the right of making his own terms as apart from ancient custom.

243. In framing therefore a system of rates much has perforce been left to private judgment and discretion as with the rates of the particular fields of any one village, so with those of villages taken as a whole; adjacent villages having apparently similar soil and enjoying similar facilities vary exceedingly in point of rates; all my inquiries on the subject have failed to produce any satisfactory explanation of this fact.

244. One reason no doubt is that preceding Settlements have been made not so much with reference to the intrinsic capabilities of each village, but to the personal circumstances of the Malgoolar and his ability or otherwise of managing it properly.

245. Thus then I have used my judgment to a considerable extent in departing from the results of my rates where they would lead to too great an increase in the demand, contrasting the present prosperous condition of the people with what it was prior to the Settlement of 1241 Fuslee; anything seems better to run the risk of reverting to the old state of affairs. In making this Settlement the chief points to be obtained have been in my opinion as far as possible consistently with the existing state of things to equalize and regulate the burden which now weighs unevenly, the poorer being often the heaviest assessed, and after having fixed the

State demand to draw up a true and correct record of existing holdings and actual rents as far as they can be determined. The absence of all such records and data which could be relied on with confidence has been the chief difficulty that I have had to encounter.

246. Suggestions have been made of the probable introduction at no very distant period of a perpetual Settlement into these provinces. I myself am strongly opposed to all such Settlements in general, but it is not my province to enter into the general question. As regards this district in particular, I am convinced that very many years must elapse and circumstances must alter very much before the district will be ripe for such a measure; past experience alone should suffice to show us that fluctuation is the rule, permanency the exception. The great rise in the prices of agricultural produce and all commodities which has taken place of late years, if it goes on at the present rate of increase will ultimately lead to a complete change in the constitution of the village communities. Unless the wages of labour rise more in proportion to the rise in prices than they have hitherto done, labour will have to remove to some head quarters of industry or manufacture to enable it to sustain life merely; at present the population dependent on labour has been reduced to great distress; but until the Railways now in progress are completed, and until some experience has been gained of their effect upon the agricultural interests, all questions of perpetual Settlement must in my opinion be premature.

247. Reverting to the question of rates, I have observed that no fixed system can well be arrived at; hitherto in the majority of cases ancestral custom has regulated the terms of individual holdings, and hitherto this custom has had the force of law in restraining the Malgoozar from exercising his just rights of raising or modifying the rental where required; I have therefore felt great difficulty in framing a set of rates which would be equitable in themselves, adapted to the improved circumstances of the district and increased value of the land, and at the same time make not too violent or sudden alteration in the present state of affairs, as too great a rise would have in my opinion a most injurious effect; how-



ever low even the new assessment may seem, judged by the standard of rate upon cultivation, I should not have been warranted in making any further demand; what I have looked to, to raise the revenue, is the great increase in irrigation; such land has been hitherto treated very much like other land, and frequently in point of fact pays less than dry crop land of inferior quality. This may partly be accounted for by reasons stated above; I have assumed therefore a much higher standard of rent for all irrigated land indiscriminately; of course the question of rents has been as far as possible left to be adjusted by mutual understanding between proprietors and tenants, but the former knowing to a certain extent that certain rates had been assumed, and principles followed in fixing their assessments, have not been slow in following the example in fixing rents; many proprietors assured me that they had been receiving quite nominal rents for years past, but which they deemed themselves unable to rectify under the existing state of the law as they understood it.

248. My rates will be seen to fall very unevenly, but that is owing to the inequality of the existing demand upon the tenants; that they are not excessive is proved by the fact that they would lower the jummas of some villages which certainly call for no reduction: it may then be said that if the rates are just and equitable in themselves, I should be prepared to carry out their results in all cases; but this would have in many cases involved an increase which I am not prepared to recommend.

249. As a fact the cultivators for the last 25 years have been used to exceedingly light rents which they have come to consider as stereotyped, and therefore the raising of rents will be a gradual process according as the circumstances of the people permit, and thus too great and sudden an increase in the State demand even though warranted perhaps by the intrinsic capabilities of the particular village would, I think, prove fatal to the present and future prosperity of it; thus too any system of rates that could be devised could not have been applied to any large group of villages without deviation. To ensure uniformity of practice each village would require a set of rates of its own; I have therefore looked upon my rates more in the light



of a standard by which to estimate the full capabilities of a particular estate under favourable circumstances, local disadvantages, such as want of water, absence of means of communication, proximity to jungles, and other resorts of wild animals, and other causes are faults which detract from the standard, and serve to modify the assessment. I have endeavoured to equalize the demand as far as possible taking rates as a test or standard taken into consideration along with all modifying circumstances, looking also to the present demand and supposed cultivation so as to avoid any sudden fluctuation in the demand, which I have said before would be most prejudicial at present.

250. In framing chuks for assessment purposes, and in assessing, I have looked chiefly to the following points:—

Situation, proximity to markets and means of communication; prevailing quality of the soil, and nature of crops raised; facilities for obtaining water, either by means of wells or from streams; proximity to jungles and haunts of wild animals; nature of the agricultural population.

251. My assessment chuks are generally subdivided into three classes; my third class villages are almost entirely inhabited by Gonds and Koorkoos, wild tribes of whom I shall have more to say elsewhere; suffice it to say that generally speaking they are a miserable class of cultivators, living from hand to mouth, and seldom residing in the same village for any length of time together. In such villages rents bear but little ratio to the quality of the soil or value of the produce. The proprietors are only too happy to retain their tenants on any terms. Under these circumstances I have thought it useless to apply rent rates; none can be deduced from actual rents; and they would be of no use in assessing.

252. I have accordingly looked to past payments and the average rental of the past few years; I looked for no increase in rents, as such a proceeding would probably lead to a universal emigration of the tenants. These villages contribute but a very small item to the total revenue of the district.

253. Having thus stated my data and general principles, I proceed to notice the several assessment chuks in detail.

*Chuk Baitool and Poonee.*

254. Like other chuks this has been divided into three classes, according to topographical situation and general capabilities.

The following table shows the assumed rent-rates:—

Description of Soil.	I. Class per acre.			II. Class, per acre.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Irrigated land . . . . .	3	0	0	2	8	0
Kalee, 1st Class . . . . .	2	0	0	1	8	0
Do. 2nd do. . . . .	1	12	0	1	4	0
Moorund . . . . .	1	8	0	1	0	0
Khurdee . . . . .	0	12	0	0	12	0
Retaree . . . . .	0	8	0	0	8	0
Burdee . . . . .	0	4	0	0	4	0

255. The first class comprises 52 villages; they comprise the best portion of the whole district, a basin of rich soil well supplied with water, immediately surrounding the town of Baitool. This tract is almost entirely under cultivation, little of any ground even being left for grazing. The soil is generally deep and retentive of moisture, there is every facility also for the disposal of produce.

256. The group of villages forming the 2nd class differs widely from the preceding one in all respects; though immediately adjacent it is separated by a line of rocky hills; the tract itself is a rolling plain of alternate good soil all under cultivation and stony downs yielding nothing but grass; the whole is intersected with rocky watercourses and the soil generally is shallow with basalt rock coming near the surface; water here is only obtainable in certain places; the land is less productive, and rents run lower than in the first group.

257. The 3rd group comprises chiefly Gond hamlets in the jungles of the Taptee valley, which bounds the Baitool

talooka on the west; much of the area of these villages is jungle and barren gravelly soil; the cultivators have not the means or the energy to till their lands well, and the unhealthiness of the climate and dread of jungles and wild animals deter a better class of cultivators from settling. No rates have been applied to these villages.

258. The villages of the first class are said to have been much over-assessed prior to the Settlement of 1241 Fuslee, a large reduction was then given, and again at the Settlement of 1244 Fuslee. Since then certainly matters have retrieved themselves as I know no other part of the district where the demand falls more lightly, judged by the value of the produce; the tenants also are almost all well off; rents have been raised to a considerable amount, and I believe still admit of further increase.

259. The villages of the 2nd class are said to have been comparatively lightly assessed prior to 1241 Fuslee; irrigation has been greatly extended since then and the value of the land consequently much increased, so that the revenue fairly admits of a rise.

260. Above I have given the rent rates applied to each quality of soil in the two first classes; the actual assessment gives the following revenue rates on each description of soil:—

Description of Soil.	Rates on Revised Jumma per acre.					
	1st Class.			2nd Class.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Irrigated land .....	1	5	0	1	0	8
Kalee, 1st Class .....	0	14	0	0	10	0
Do. 2nd Class .....	0	12	3	0	8	4
Moorund .....	0	10	6	0	6	8
Khurdee .....	0	5	3	0	5	0
Retaree .....	0	3	6	0	3	4
Burdee .....	0	1	9	0	1	8

261. The revenue rates of each chuk as a whole are as follows :—

Class.	On Malgozaree area.	On Cultivated area.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
I.	0 9 11	0 11 2
II.	0 5 8	0 5 10
III.	0 1 2	0 2 2

The highest rate of any one village is .. Rs. 1 2 0.

The lowest is as little as ..... 0 0 7

262. I am unable to compare the chuk rates with those of the preceding Settlement as no classification other than talookwar and pergunnahwar appears to have been made; my pergunnah rates will be seen from the appended statement in acres; my highest village rate, however, is lower than the highest of the former Settlement which is recorded as being Rupees 1-9-0 on the cultivated area, the result of the Settlement is as follows :—

Total former jumma ..... Rs. 34,005

Revised jumma ..... „ 44,164

*Chuk Sainkhewa and Patun.*

263. This group also was divided into 3 classes for assessment; appended is a table of rates :—

Description of Soil.	Class I. per acre.	Class II. per acre.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Irrigated land .....	3 0 0	3 0 0
Kalee, 1st Class .....	1 8 0	1 4 0
Kalee, 2nd Class .....	1 6 0	1 2 0
Moorund .....	1 2 0	0 14 0
Khurdee .....	0 12 0	0 8 0
Retaree .....	0 6 0	0 6 0
Burdee .....	0 4 0	0 4 0

None were applied to 3rd class.

264. This chuk immediately adjoins the group of villages forming the second class of chuk Baitool, and the general appearance of the country is similar; there is, however, a greater extent of open continuous cultivated land with rather a deeper soil and abundance of water; this forms the Patun talooka of the Mooltye pergunnah; it contains some very fine villages and is noted for the productiveness of its soil.

265. The first class comprises 20 villages; those of the second group are inferior as having a shallower soil, intersected with ravines and lines of hill, and a scantier supply of water; this group comprises 25 villages; the third class is composed of 15 Gond hamlets lying on the slopes of the ghats, which here form the southern portion of the pergunnah.

This chuk comprises the villages said to have suffered most from over-assessment in times past and a proportional reduction was given at the succeeding light Settlement; the villages of the first class were many of them fortunate in being held by two respectable Mahratta families from Berar; one Baboo-rao, and two brothers Bhaosing and Rughoonath; these men had large resources and tided over the evil days; their descendants are now in possession, and their villages are all in a flourishing condition. The villages in the second group were not so fortunate, being much neglected and harrassed by a succession of speculators.

The last Settlements were made chiefly with regard to the individual circumstances of the Malgoozars, and are no true guide to the intrinsic value of the several estates.

266. The results of the assessment gives the following rates on each particular description of soil:—

Description of Soil.	Rates of Revised Jumma per acre.					
	Class I.			Class II.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Irrigated land .....	1	8	0	1	3	3
Kalee, 1st Class .....	0	12	0	0	8	0
Kalee, 2nd Class .....	0	9	0	0	7	3
Moorund .....	0	7	0	0	5	7
Khurdee .....	0	4	0	0	3	3
Retarce .....	0	3	0	0	2	5
Burdee .....	0	2	0	0	1	7

267. The chuk rates are as follows :—

Class.	On Malgoozaree land	On cultivation.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
I.	0 8 0	0 10 7
II.	0 3 3	0 5 1
III.	0 1 1	0 2 4

The total average rates are :—

On Cultivation .....	Rs. 0 7 4
On Malgoozaree .....	„ 0 5 9
The highest rate of any one village is ..	„ 1 0 7
The lowest is .....	„ 0 1 5
The highest rate of the last Settlement of any of these villages I find to be on cultivation .....	„ 1 4 0

The result of the Settlement is as follows :—

Total former jumma .....	Rs.	19,044
Revised jumma .....	„	24,898

*Chuk Mooltye and Dunawa.*

268. This chuk also comprises three classes; I append a table of rates applied :—

Description of Soil.	Class I. per acre.	Class II per acre.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Irrigated land .....	3 0 0	3 0 0
Kalee, 1st Class . . . . .	1 8 0	1 4 0
Kalee, 2nd Class .....	1 6 0	1 2 0
Moorund .....	1 2 0	0 14 0
Khurdee .....	0 12 0	0 8 0
Retaree .....	0 6 0	0 6 0
Burdee .....	0 4 0	0 4 0

269. In dividing the villages into classes, it was not practicable to follow a purely topographical classification as regards the two first groups; the third one is sufficiently marked; it comprises 39 poor hamlets lying amid the jungles on the eastern frontier of the district.

270. The rest of this tract comprises a rolling country formed by a succession of high downs of basaltic formation and quite unculturable, with intervening hollows of good land under cultivation. The quality of the soil, its depth and facilities for obtaining water vary exceedingly, even in villages lying immediately adjacent, just according as the rock comes near the surface or otherwise. Thus some of the best and poorest estates may be in immediate juxtaposition. In classifying, therefore, I have used my judgment to a considerable extent in selecting what I considered the most favoured villages, and I have also to some extent followed the classification of Major Low.