

**REPORT**  
ON THE  
**LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT**  
OF THE  
**DUMOH DISTRICT,**  
JUBBULPOOR DIVISION, CENTRAL PROVINCES,  
EFFECTED BY  
A. M. RUSSELL, Esq.  
**1866.**



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No.  $\frac{1213}{112}$

FROM THE SECRETARY TO CHIEF COMMISSIONER,

Central Provinces,

TO SETTLEMENT COMMISSIONER,

Central Provinces.

*Dated Nagpore, the 1st April 1867.*

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1008, dated 28th March 1867, forwarding Mr. Russell's final Settlement report, and asking sanction to the revised assessments of the Dumoh district.

2. In reply, I am directed hereby to convey the Chief Commissioner's confirmation to the Dumoh Settlement, with effect from the dates on which the new assessments came into effect in the several tehseels.

3. The Chief Commissioner considers Mr. Russell's report to be plain, succinct, and practical. It has been carefully reviewed by yourself.

4. The Chief Commissioner does not perceive any points in the Report calling for special remark. He has, since the completion of the Settlement, marched right through the district, and met all the principal landholders, and consulted the civil authorities. The result of his inquiries was quite satisfactory. He has every reason to believe that the work has on the whole been well and efficiently done. The assessments certainly gave general satisfaction to the people. As observed by the Settlement Commissioner, the reduction of the regular assessment will be nearly made up for by the increased income from forests and other uncultivated lands.

5. Dumoh is one of the districts of which the past fiscal history, and in which the character of the agricultural classes had for various reasons become depressed. That it will become, indeed is already fast becoming, much raised, there are many signs to indicate. The increased cultivation already setting in will doubtless be progressive. It may be hoped that some of the improvements required to the old cultivation, such as the embanking of the fields, the eradicating of the kans grass, and the like may be carried out. The northern or flat portion of the district is rich in natural capabilities, and the southern or wilder portion is studded with fertile localities.

6. The Chief Commissioner would observe that in the Dumoh Settlement Lieut. Colonel Maclean showed the same care and attention which has since led to such good results in the Saugor district, and which have been separately acknowledged.

7. The main burden of the work has necessarily fallen upon Mr. Russell, who has discharged his important duties with entire efficiency, and has by capacity and aptitude for business of a high character proved himself worthy of the very first rank in the Uncovenanted Service of these Provinces.

8. The Chief Commissioner entirely concurs in the encomium passed by yourself on Deputy Collector Oulad Hussein, who is certainly one of the best, perhaps even the very best, Native official in the Settlement department, where there have been many excellent officials of this class.

I have, &c.

C. BERNARD,

Secretary.



No. 1008 OF 1867.

From J. H. MORRIS, Esq.,

Settlement Commissioner,

Central Provinces,

TO THE SECRETARY TO CHIEF COMMISSIONER,

Central Provinces.

*Dated Jubbulpoor, the 28th March 1867.*

SIR,—I have the honour to report the completion of  
 General Statement in the revised Settlement of the Dumoh  
 acres. district, and to submit for final sanc-  
 Annual Jumma State- tion the Report and Statements noted in  
 ment. the margin, furnished by the Settlement  
 Statement of Judicial Officer, Mr. A. M. Russell. The report is dated 31st October  
 work, &c 1866, but it only reached me at the latter end of January last ;  
 whilst the several Appendices, which will be found to contain  
 much interesting information, and without which the report  
 would not have been complete, were submitted at a considerably  
 later date, and this has prevented me from disposing of  
 the subject earlier.

2. Settlement operations were started in this district, as  
 in Saugor, immediately on the expiry of the 20 years' Settlement  
 in 1855 ; but they were entirely suspended during the  
 mutiny, when all the previously compiled records and papers  
 were destroyed. In 1860 measurements were recommenced,  
 and since then the Settlement has steadily progressed until  
 it was brought to a final conclusion about the end of 1865-66.

3. Mr. Russell's report, though perhaps not quite so full  
 or lengthy as some of the other Settlement reports lately  
 submitted, will yet, I think, be found to be ably and clearly  
 drawn up. No important subjects have been omitted, and

as it will hardly be necessary for me to follow him through all the points he has explained, I shall merely confine myself to such as appear to require notice.

4. Chapter I. of the report contains a general description of the district, and gives many interesting particulars of the physical character of the country and its internal resources. It is worthy of note that notwithstanding that the district is naturally favoured with a most perfect river system, still none of the streams are utilized for purposes of irrigation; also that the roads, of which there are several, connecting this with other parts of the country, are none of them raised or metalled, and consequently the district remains in a great measure closed during the rains.

5. With respect to the remarks in paragraph 3, I would observe that the question of the rectification of the eastern and western boundaries, not having been raised until after the completion of the professional survey in the Jubbulpoor and Saugor districts, no action could well be taken on it; whilst the existence of independent Native States on the north is the chief cause of the irregularity of boundary which exists in that direction.

6. Chapter II. is chiefly historical. The description which is given of the various dynasties which have flourished in this district is not without interest, and will amply repay perusal. Towards the close of the Chapter, Mr. Russell adverts to the Mahratta revenue system, and there is much truth in his remark that "under such a system of revenue administration, landed property quite lost its value, the people were demoralized, and the cultivating classes reduced to a hopeless state of poverty."

7. In paragraphs 56 to 60 the several summary Settlements made since the cession and their working, are noticed, and Mr. Russell is at considerable pains to show how all the

assessments were too high, and constant remissions and reductions the order of the day. The information afforded on this portion of the subject is valuable, though it might perhaps have been more appropriately given in the Chapter on assessment.

8. Chapter III. contains a full account of the various castes to be found in the district, the general character of the people as agriculturalists, and their various manners and customs. As the Chief Commissioner will now probably be in possession of the results of the late census, he will be in a better position than I am to judge of the correctness of the population statistics given by Mr. Russell; but there can, I think, be no doubt of the fact "that the great want of the district is population," and I fear with Mr. Russell that the present condition of this district is a clear illustration of the truth of the saying that "over assessment checks population."

9. Chapter IV. is devoted to a description of the actual operations of the Settlement.

In Section I. demarcation of boundaries, preparation of boundary maps, field measurements, comparison of areas with revenue survey, and demarcation of waste lands are adverted to; and it is very satisfactory to note that notwithstanding the many difficulties encountered at the outset in teaching the Putwarees, and setting operations agoing, still that very accurate results have been attained, and the Revenue Surveyor has been enabled to report so favourably of the quality of the work. The exclusion of excess wastes has also been very successfully completed in this district, and the excluded tracts amounting to 466,255 acres, have long since been made over, together with the Registers in the prescribed form, to the Deputy Commissioner, who has thus been placed in a position to administer them, which he has done most successfully.

10. In Section II. of this Chapter Mr. Russell describes his data for assessment, and gives an account of the method of assessment, and the results finally arrived at. Before however proceeding to notice these in detail, I would mention that the assessment of tehseelee Dumoh, made by Colonel Maclean, was sanctioned by the Divisional Commissioner prior to my arrival, whilst that of tehseelee Huttah, made by Mr. Russell, was sanctioned by myself.

11. The inspection of villages, preliminary to assessment, I believe to have been well and carefully done by both Colonel Maclean and Mr. Russell, a matter of considerable importance, especially in a district like that of Dumoh, where contiguous villages are by no means necessarily similar, and many important facts, which would otherwise remain unnoticed, are brought to light by a careful personal inspection.

12. The formation of chuks or circles of villages, grouped together for assessment purposes, is adverted to in paragraphs 100 to 103; and although there can be no doubt but that the nature of the country assessed by Colonel Maclean and the fact of its being much interspersed with hill and jungle, rendered a large number of chuks necessary, still I think Mr Russell exercised a wise discretion in considerably reducing this number, and also in avoiding any classification of villages other than a topographical one, on the ground that all such is apt to become arbitrary and produce inequalities of assessment.

13. In paragraphs 104 to 115 a general description is given of the various pergunnahs or tracts of country separately assessed, and much interesting information afforded regarding the varieties of crops raised, the nature of the produce, the quality of the soil, the condition of the people, and all those other matters of interest which affect more or less the well-being of a country, and require to be carefully studied

before correct conclusions can be arrived at regarding its revenue yielding capabilities.

14. In paragraphs 120 to 125 the subject of the determination of fair average rent rates, as guides to assessment, is dwelt on; and the Settlement Officer is at considerable pains to show how his results were arrived at, how his plough and produce jummas were derived, and how the various other tests employed for steadying the judgment were made use of and utilized. It does not appear necessary for me to follow him in detail through this portion of the report, though, at the same time I would wish to place on record that I have every reason to consider the data to have been correct, and the conclusions arrived at sound and accurate.

15. The total revised assessment of the district as proposed by the Settlement Officer, stands at Rs. 2,52,974, and the fiscal result as regards the present Settlement is reduction of Rs. 13,586, or about 5 per cent. It must however be borne in mind that this is the reduction granted on the Government demand as it stood immediately preceding the revision, and not on that of the 20 years' Settlement which, as stated in paragraph 60 of the report, was originally fixed at Rs. 3,05,142, but which had to be continually reduced until it was brought down to Rs. 2,66,460. On the other hand, I would draw attention to the fact that the proposed assessment has been fixed after the exclusion of the excess wastes, which already yield a separate income very nearly if not quite equal to the reduction granted, and from which much larger returns may be looked for in future.

16. The rate of the revised Settlement on the cultivated area is Rs. 0-11-6 per acre; this is very fair, and very nearly agrees with that which obtains in the neighbouring districts of Jubbulpoor, Saugor and Nursingpoor; and although a reduction of 17 per cent. on the jumma of the preceding Settlement may at first sight appear very high, still when the working of

the former Settlements, and all the facts mentioned in the report regarding the miserably impoverished condition of the people and district, are taken into consideration, I cannot arrive at any other conclusion than that the reduction proposed is not too great, and the relief granted not more than was fully needed.

17. In Chapter V. proprietary right inquiries, rent-free and quit-rent tenures, attestation of holdings, adjustment of rents, and compilation of the record of rights are adverted to and described; and I have every reason to conclude that all these important operations have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion in this district.

18. In paragraph 134 to 149 Mr. Russell dwells on the subject of proprietary rights, and gives some interesting particulars regarding the nature of the claims preferred, and the manner in which they have been dealt with. The principles observed by the Settlement Officer in dealing with these proprietary right claims, as specially adverted to in paragraphs 137 and 138, are in my opinion, correct in the main; and I note with satisfaction that out of 396 villages from which the former Malgoozars and original holders had been ousted, in consequence of the accumulation of arrears brought about by the severity of the former assessment, as many as 254 have been restored to their former holders, whilst, the remainder, 142, have been conferred on the present holders, on the ground of their being able to show good management and the expenditure of capital on improvements, in addition to fairly long present possession. It is also worthy of note that no present holder has been dispossessed in favour of some one having a better right, without his having first obtained a refund of outlay expended on material improvements not yet realized from the profits; and that in all cases where proprietary right in a village has been conferred on a holder of recent standing, all old occupant cultivators have been declared proprietors of their

holdings in that village in conformity with the instructions laid down in the Settlement Code. The manner in which the talookdaree claims referred to in paragraphs 144 to 148 have been dealt with appears satisfactory and the fact mentioned in paragraph 148 regarding the creation of bhyachara tenures in certain villages, is highly interesting and worthy of notice.

19. The number of persons declared malik muqboozas, or proprietors of their holdings, appears large at first sight, as many as 2,887 having been so declared; but this is not more than might have been expected, when in addition to those referred to in the succeeding paragraph all rent-free plot-holders, ex-maafeedars, relatives of village proprietors and such like are included in the above.

20. The information given in paragraph 151 regarding the number of occupancy-tenants is also interesting; and it is worthy of note that out of 17,451 persons found entitled under the 12 years' rule to the right of occupancy, as many as 12,192 have had the right declared permanent under the rules laid down in Circular G. and G I. of the Settlement Code.

21. Revenue-free and quit-rent tenures are noticed in paragraphs 152 to 154. The total amount of revenue thus alienated is Rs. 18,342; but as the majority of these tenures have been recommended for release for the lives only of the present holders, it is more than probable that the bulk of the alienations will lapse during the currency of the present Settlement.

22. The preparation of the record of rights adverted to in paragraph 155, was effected in a satisfactory manner, and although the Settlement Officer does not particularly allude to the adjustment of rents, still I have reason to know that this important operation was well and thoroughly done, the parties being left to settle the matter amongst themselves

or through the intervention of arbitrators; whilst the attention of the Settlement Department was confined to carefully recording the rents thus adjusted.

23. The instructions contained in the Settlement Code regarding Putwarees and Kotewars have been carefully carried out; and the arrangements reported in paragraphs 157 and 158 as to the manner in which the rights, position and perquisites of these village servants have been ascertained and recorded, are, I consider, satisfactory. I also note with satisfaction that in the original adjustment of Putwarees' circles in this district, no particular changes were made; and I think the Settlement Officer has acted wisely in interfering as little as possible in arrangements which have so long worked well and successfully here.

24. The get-up of the Settlement Misls is reported to be respectable. They are neatly bound in red country leather, covered, and as no pains were spared to render their contents complete and accurate records of existing rights and liabilities, it is highly satisfactory to know that they have "been tested in numerous judicial proceedings, and the quality of the work has been found very good."

25. The total cost of the Settlement amounts to Rs. 1,58,000, or 62 per cent. on one year's revenue. This is certainly a high percentage; but then it must be remembered that this district is not a rich one; also that the total cost is very much below that of the neighbouring districts of Jubbulpoor and Saugor, and that in consequence of the total destruction of the records during the mutiny many of the papers had to be prepared over again.

26. Chapter VI. contains some interesting information regarding the resources of the District, to which I would beg to draw attention, though it will hardly be necessary for me



to follow the Settlement Officer in detail through this portion of his report.

27. In paragraphs 172 to 174 Mr. Russell notices the services of his subordinates, viz. Deputy Collector Oulad Hussein, Superintendent Takhut Sing, and Sudder Moonserim Abdool Hafeez. Among these I desire to add my testimony to the great merits and services of Oulad Hussein, on whom the main burden of this Settlement devolved, and who performed the work in a highly satisfactory manner. He bears a very high character in the district, where he is beloved by the people, and he is an excellent servant of Government in every respect, perhaps the best Native official serving in the Settlement Department of these Provinces.

Colonel Maclean held charge of this Settlement up to October 1863, and had a share in much of the early work; he also assessed one of the two tehseelees, of which the district is comprised. He supervised the work with the same care and judgment which he displayed in the Saugor district, to which he was subsequently transferred; and it gives me much pleasure to be able to acknowledge his services and merits.

Lastly, I commend to the favourable notice of the Chief Commissioner the merits and services of Mr. Russell himself. Although the Settlement had fairly progressed when he assumed charge in October 1863, still it is mainly due to his exertions and services that it was so early brought to a final and successful completion. Throughout the period he has held charge he has evinced much practical ability. He has spared no pains to render the work accurate and sound, and has carried out the instructions and orders laid down in the Settlement Code with great care and judgment. The result of his labours will, I think, be found in the good and successful working of the Settlement.

28. In conclusion, I recommend that this Settlement be

confirmed for 30 years from the dates borne on the several engagements made with the people. The Settlement has now been working very successfully for several years, and I have reason for believing it to be a really good one in all essential respects. A moderate and even assessment has now been imposed, all existing rights have been carefully ascertained and recorded, and the district is now fast recovering from the severe over-taxation under which it formerly suffered. I have no hesitation therefore in recommending the measure for ultimate confirmation and sanction.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

G. H. MORRIS,

Settlement Commissioner,

Central Provinces.

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**REPORT.**

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

The district of Dumoh lies between  $23^{\circ}$  and  $25^{\circ}$  of North Latitude; and  $79^{\circ}$  and  $80^{\circ}$  East Longitude. It is situated in the table-lands of the Vindhya range of hills, and in the extreme length measures about 120 miles north to south; with an average breadth, from east to west, of some 56 miles, being broadest about the centre, and narrowest towards the southern extremity. The district covers an area of  $2,478\frac{1}{2}$  square miles, and contains a population of 233,278 souls, giving an average of 95 souls to the square mile.

2. In the north the district is bounded by the Native States of Punnah and Chutturpoor in Bundelcund; in the south by the dis-

Its boundaries.

... not ac-  
nite or regular throughout, as portions of the Jubbulpoor district and the Punnah State, in several places, run quite into the Dumoh boundary; and a strip of the latter lies surrounded by Jubbulpoor villages, almost cut off from Dumoh, by a spur of the Bhandere range. The western boundary is

A rectification of the eastern boundary with Jubbulpoor was proposed in 1864, but owing to the completion of the Settlement of that district, no change was considered advisable.

4. There are some outlying villages also attached to the districts situated in the heart of Native States. These villages were received by transfer along with the confiscated portion of Shahgurh attached to Dumoh, and with the pergunnah of Murheca-Doh, received by exchange from Chirkharee in 1858-59, and there are several Punnah villages situated within the Dumoh boundary, regarding which negotiations for mutual exchanges have failed. The Government of India do not now however wish to part with the outlying villages, but desire to purchase those of Punnah situated within the Dumoh district, a proposition which the Punnah Raja will not entertain.

In the criminal department the Tushsceldars exercise the powers of a Subordinate Magistrate; in the civil department those of a Moonsiff; and in the revenue department, those of a Sub-Collector and Deputy Collector for the trial of rent cases.

7. By the Khusrāh survey the total area of the district is shown to be 1,572,172 acres, of which  
 Area and cultivation. 1,150,917 acres consist of proprietary lands, and 466,255 acres of waste land, the property of the State. Fifty-five per cent. of the culturable area of the former is at present under cultivation, which has increased considerably since the measurements were made.

8. There are five principal and several minor streams in the district. The names of the former  
 Rivers and Streams. in the order of their importance are (1) the Sonar, (2) the Bearmee, (3) the Beos, (4) the Gorya, and (5) the Kopra. They all take their rise beyond the limits of the district and flow northwards, the fall of the country being in that direction. Among the minor streams may be mentioned the Soon in Mangurh, the Bukraee and the Byuk in Buttiagurh, the Baranet in Murheea-Doh, and the Sajlee in Puthureea, besides several others of lesser note.

9. The Sonar river is a broad stream, with a deep channel in many parts, and a stony bed nearly  
 The Sonar River. throughout its course through the district; there are one or two pretty water-falls on this river, particularly one near Hutta, below the village of Harut.

10. The Bearmee is essentially a hill stream with a strong and rapid current and stony bed throughout. It is joined by the Gorya at  
 The Bearmee River. Notah on the high road between Dumoh and Jubbulpoor, and the combined streams present a formidable appearance during the monsoons. when it is both difficult and dangerous to cross them.

rivers.

out the year, but the Gorya dries up in many places during the hot weather.

13. The river system of the district is most perfect. The two principal streams (the Sonar and the Bearmce) traverse its entire length

River system. from south to north, receiving in their progress the waters of the Beos, Kopra, Gorya and other minor streams. At the extreme northern boundary, the Sonar takes a bend eastwards and joins the Bearmce, which alone emerges out of the district, and a little further on, is met by the Kyne of Bunde-cund, and the united streams then flow into the Jumna.

14. None of the streams in the district are utilized for the purposes of irrigation to any extent although well situated for the purpose in many places.

15. The hills of the district may be described in a few words. To the south there are the offshoots of the *Vindhya* range, which however are not remarkable here for height or scenery. The *Bhandere* range of hills run along the eastern boundary for some distance, and attain to a considerable and almost perpendicular height in several places. The *Bindachull* hills run along the western boundary for a considerable distance and in several places open out into broad plains of table-land, thickly wooded with low jungle. Towards the north-east of the Dumoh pergunnah rise the *Bhondla* hills, a low range, which follows an easterly course, until it is lost in the offshoots of the *Bhandere* range.

16. Of natural lakes or jheels there are none in the district, nor are tanks even at all numerous. At Dumoh itself there are

Lakes and Tanks.

a few tanks, and some are to be seen at Runneh. They are only used for planting "singharas" or water-nuts in. There is a vulgar tradition that Runneh was an important place in former times, and that as many as 84 tanks existed there, besides 52 wells, but only a few now remain.

17. The district does not at present possess any metalled roads, consequently wheeled conveyances cease to run between July and October, owing to the prevailing nature of the soil being black loam which becomes quite adhesive after the first fall of rain.

18. The principal road of the district is the one which connects the military station of Saugor with the important town of Jubbulpoor, and passing through the station of Dumoh, runs some 40 miles in the district, out of a total length of 110 miles. It is partly bridged, except the larger streams, which however are all fordable during the open season, when much traffic passes over this road. Its importance will be greatly increased on the completion of the railway from Allahabad to Jubbulpoor.

19. The next important line is the one which connects Saugor with Jokye on the Mirzapoor road, and traverses some 30 miles of the Dumoh district, commencing from the town of Dumoh itself. By this route there is a considerable saving in distance for the Mirzapoor and Saugor traffic, compared to that via Jubbulpoor, and when this road is put in better order, it will become an important railway feeder.

20. The only other line deserving of separate notice, is the road from Dumoh towards Nagode via Hutta, the largest town in the district. By this route all foreign goods from Mirzapoor and the Upper Provinces, are imported, and large numbers of carts pass over it during the open season, conveying the traffic to Saugor, Bhilsa, &c., and it is by this route that the surplus cotton produce of the district is exported.

21. The rest of the communications in the district, are simply primitive roads, of which the most frequented are two lines leading into Bundelcund from the north-west and north-east of the

district. Over these roads a large number of Bunjaras carrying grain and other traders who employ pack bullocks pass over during eight months of the year. Another line of the same kind extends southwards, traversing the entire length of the jungly pergunnah of Tejgurrh, and runs down to the Nerbudda valley. By this route a great deal of grain finds its way into Bundelcund. The only other line which may be mentioned, is a direct road from Rehlee in Saugor to Patun in Jubbulpoor, which is a much shorter route than viâ Dumoh; but it is very little used, owing to the jungly nature of the country.

22. The principal towns in the district are Dumoh, Hutta, and Hindoreea. Those of lesser note are Nursinghur, Puthureea, Putera, and Murheea-Doh. Of these Hutta is the richest and contains the wealthiest population: it is in fact the emporium of the district for all foreign goods. Hindoreea and Putera are manufacturing towns in brass and metals. Murheea-Doh is noted for its cloth and woollen manufactures; and Puthureea and Nursinghur for wealthy grain-dealers.

23. Two, or more properly speaking three, annual fairs are held in the district, viz. one at Koondulpoor and two at Bandukpoor with an interval of one month. They all have their origin from religious gatherings, but have now in course of time commenced to attract large numbers of visitors and traders from all parts of the country, and occupy a respectable place in the list of principal fairs of the Nerbudda country.

24. The fairs at Bandukpoor are held in the latter end of January and February, at the Bussunt-punchmee, and Sheoratrete festivals respectively, when thousands of devotees, both men and women, visit the place, for the purpose of pouring Ganges or Nerbudda water on the image of Jageshur Mahadeo, in fulfilment of vows made for wishes gratified or favours solicited. Large offerings are made on these occasions to the idol, which are said to amount to nearly Rs. 12,000 in the year, three-fourths of which are claimed by the proprietor of the temple in which the idol is placed, and one-fourth is given to the priests. The building of this temple was brought about in a singular manner,



and a brief account of it may not be out of place here. The father of Nagojee Bullar, a respectable Mahratta Pundit of Dumoh, it is said, in Sumbut 1838 dreamed a dream, that at a certain spot in the village of Bandukpoor, lay buried under the earth, an image of Jageshur Mahadeo, and that if he built a suitable temple over the spot indicated, the image would make its appearance. On the strength of this dream, the Pundit built the temple, and in due course it is asserted, the image developed itself without the help of man; hence its great fame in the surrounding country, which is annually on the increase. The share of the offerings appropriated by the proprietor of the temple is said to be expended on religious objects.

25. The Koondulpoor fair commenced with an annual gathering of Jains, immediately after the Holee festival. A Jain temple had been erected there by the Powar Bunneas, and all of that sect in the neighbourhood, used to visit the place for the purpose of worshipping their idol—a nude one called Nemnath or Parisnath, and for settling all caste disputes. These disputes used frequently to be settled by the imposition of fines on the delinquents, and the sums thus realised were thrown into a fund for the repairs of the temple, and for embellishing the vicinity of it with tanks, groves, &c. In this manner, and from special endowments, the number of Jain temples has greatly increased, and now attract a large concourse of people, of which traders in the surrounding country take advantage.

26. The daily domestic wants of the people however are met by the weekly markets held in different central parts of the district, of which there are 22. To these markets people who have agricultural produce or manufactures to dispose of, resort, and in return take back the necessaries of life, from the petty traders and Bunneas who frequent them. The weekly markets are distributed thus:—

Sunday . . . . .	6	Thursday . . . . .	4
Monday . . . . .	3	Friday . . . . .	2
Tuesday . . . . .	3	Saturday . . . . .	3
Wednesday . . . . .	3		—
		Total . . . . .	24

A list of the places at which they are held will be found in the Appendix.

27 In former times this district would appear to have been rich in forts, and the remains of several still exist. A short notice of each will not be out of place here. At *Nursingurh* there existed an extensive fort, constructed during the Mahommedan reign. In 1857 the rebels took possession of it, but were soon expelled and the fort made indefensible, the labourers employed on the work being compensated by the plunder of the town, which had harboured the rebels. There is a second fort here also, built by the Mahrattas, but it is now in complete ruins. In the hills south-west of Dumoh there is the fort of *Balakote*, built by the Lodhis, which also gave some trouble during the mutinies, but has since been partially destroyed, and could not now be held unless by a large garrison. The fort at *Hutta* is also an old one, and was built by the Boondelas; but it is now almost in ruins. At *Murheea-Doh* there is an excellent little fort, which is kept in good order, and is occupied by a Police outpost. This fort commands our frontier with Bundelcund. Not far from the Murheea-Doh fort is the Mahratta fort of *Juttashunker*, in excellent preservation, but unoccupied. During the rebellion of 1857 it was constantly infested by mutineers and rebels. In the vicinity of this fort, during Mahratta times, it is said a large village existed, which has now completely disappeared, and the fort alone stands out as a prominent landmark, visible from a considerable distance. The only other fort worthy of notice is the one at *Ramnugger*, owned by a Lodhi Thakoor, situated in the north-west corner of the district. This fort was attacked and taken by Mr. Thornton, Superintendent of Shahgurh, in 1858, when the Thakoor was suspected of harbouring rebels. It was afterwards restored and is now fast crumbling to ruins owing to the poverty of the owner.

28. The leading families in the district are those of Raja Herbunse Rac, Lodhi of Hutree; Principal families in the district. Thakoor Zorawur Sing, Lodhi of Hindoreea; the Balakote Lodhis, and the Ramgurh Lodhis. They all have the reputation of being turbulent characters and are always foremost to join in any

disturbance. The first named however was neutral during the late mutinies, the rest were deeply implicated, and it was Zorawur Sing of Hindoreca who destroyed the district Court-house and records. Even the Hutree man is not to be trusted altogether. Besides these Lodhis, there is Nagojee Bullar, a Mahratta pundit and descendant of the former Kumaishdar of Dumoh, and Thakoor Sheolall of Dhurru-poor, near Dumoh—a Dangee Rajpoot and extensive landholder, both good men in their way.

29. The climate of the district is on the whole salubrious. Cholera, as in other parts of the country, sometimes does sweep over the district; and small-pox carries off a number of children annually. Fevers too are prevalent about the conclusion of the monsoons, but not to so great an extent as in the adjoining district of Jubbulpoor. But a decrease in small-pox cases and in fevers may now be confidently looked forward to, the one from the introduction of vaccination operations, and the other from an improved system of conservancy, which is gradually being extended even to villages in the interior, which formerly used to be choked up with filth and manure. The disease most common to the district however is the guinea-worm. This disease was supposed to be engendered from the unwholesome water of the tanks in and around Dumoh; but as people in the interior of the district are equally subject to it as the inhabitants of Dumoh itself, the hypothesis must be incorrect. Europeans are seldom or ever attacked by it; and it generally attacks people at the commencement of the rainy season. The first attack is severe, but with careful treatment the patient generally recovers in a couple of months.

30. The temperature throughout the year is lower than in the Nerbudda Valley districts generally, and the hot winds are milder and of shorter duration than in Upper India. The nights especially are cool throughout the year. In the winter it generally rains, and then the weather becomes really cold; heavy frosts too sometimes occur. The atmosphere is not nearly so damp in the rainy season as it is at Jubbulpoor or Saugor. The

following tables give the temperature and rain-fall for a twelve month :—

<i>Temperature. In the shade.</i>		<i>Rain Fall average of 2 years.</i>	
Maximum.....	105°	Inches .....	44·80
Minimum.....	60°	During 1865....	55·70
Medium.....	75·50°	During 1866....	37·80
<i>Exposed to the Sun's rays at 4 p.m.</i>			
Highest.....	130°		
Average..	115 to 120°		

The temperature also varies somewhat annually.

31. The public institutions of the district at present consist of a dispensary at Dumoh with Public Institutions. branch dispensaries at Hutta and Puthureea. Four town schools (in only one of which there is an English class) and 27 village schools; also 8 female schools and 26 indigenous schools have been established. The civil administration of the district is carried on by a Deputy Commissioner, an Assistant and an Extra Assistant Commissioner; a District Superintendent of Police, two Tehseeldars and a Medical Officer, who also has Magisterial charge of the Jail. The Police force, besides the pay of the District Superintendent of Police, costs Rs. 3,800 per mensem, and consists of—

- 3 Inspectors,
- 14 Chief Constables,
- 50 Head do.
- 316 Constables,
- 10 Mounted Constables,

distributed over 8 station-houses and 12 outposts, besides leaving a good reserve at head quarters. The immediate supervision of the educational institutions is under a Zillah Inspector of Schools, acting under the general control of the Deputy Commissioner, who in fact is the head of all Departments in the district, except the Imperial Postal Department, which is under its own head. Ecclesiastically the district is subordinate to Saugor, the Chaplain of which station visits Dumoh quarterly. The Imperial public buildings are under charge of the Executive Engineer at Saugor, who occasionally inspects them personally or through a departmental subordinate.

## CHAPTER II.

### HISTORY.

#### SECTION I.—ANCIENT HISTORY.

32. The early history of an isolated and unimportant district like Dumoh, is necessarily involved in a good deal of obscurity, especially as no remarkable events would appear to have transpired within the district limits, or in its immediate vicinity, so as to connect it in any way, with the general history of the country. The only sources from which information can now be drawn, regarding the former history of the district, are local inquiries, based on popular tradition; and from such fragments of documents as our predecessors—who enjoyed greater facilities of acquiring historical facts—may have left us. In the latter respect, however, Dumoh is particularly unfortunate, having lost all its earlier records during the mutinies of 1857. Fragments of these records have now been gathered from places where duplicate copies were known to have existed, and with their assistance I am enabled to present a tolerably connected although an imperfect sketch of the dynasties which preceded the British Government in the occupation of the district.

33. According to the universally accepted tradition, the first known Government in these parts, was that of the “Chundail Rajpoots, commonly called the “Chundailee Raj,” whose seat of government was at Mahoba in Bundelcund, with a local governor stationed at Belharee in Jubbulpoor, to whom the territory now comprised in the Saugor and Dumoh districts was subordinate. At what period the Chundailee government ceased to exist, cannot now be discovered, nor have the Chundails left any monuments behind them, to denote the period when they flourished, except in the shape of a few rudely con-

structed temples, called 'Murhs,' which are attributed to them ; but they are all devoid of any sort of inscriptions. Nothing is known either of their form of government.

34. Passing over the dark ages we come upon a period over which but a glimmering light is thrown. The antiquity of the Gond dynasty is undisputed, but at what exact period it took root in this locality is uncertain. All that is known is that, in Sumbut 1600 A.D. 1543, there existed two separate Gond dynasties, the seat of one being at Mundla, with possessions extending east and south as far as the Nerbudda ; and that of the other at Khuttoula in Bundelcund, reigning over the country lying north of the Nerbudda including Dumoh.

35. The founder of the Khuttoula dynasty is said to have been Raja Soorut Sing, the chronology of whose reign is obscure. In course of time however the Mundla Gonds extended their possessions beyond the Nerbudda ; while those of Khuttoula progressed westwards, for in later years we find several pergunnahs of Dumoh being owned by the " Chouraghur Raj" in Nursingpoor, which again was a dependency of Mundla.

36. No particulars are known of the Gond system of government, but it is believed to have been entirely based on the feudal system, the country being parcelled out into so many petty Chiefships, each being held by one of the head men of the clan, who enjoyed the entire revenue and rendered military service to the government whenever called upon to do so. In addition to this occasional service these feudal Chiefs had to pay an annual tribute of a jar of butter, or one or two bamboo walking sticks, and the like.

37. The earliest indications of the territory surrounding Dumoh having come under the Mogul dynasty are to be found in Dumoh itself, in the shape of a well-carved Persian inscription on stone, which was formerly affixed to the principal gateway of the town parapet ; and in the remains of other Mahommedan structures. This inscription purports to have been put up

during the reign of King Ghyassooden, and bears date Hijree 775, A.D. 1373 ; but the actual occupation of the district by the Mahommedans does not appear to have taken place until nearly two centuries later.

38. The Mahommedan invasion of the district commenced in Sumbut 1642 A.D. 1586, when the Mahommedan Invasion. Mogul forces, acting under the orders of the Amil of Dhanionee in Saugor, occupied the pergunnah of Buttiagurh after driving out a band of Lodhi emigrants from Bundelcund, who had established themselves there a few years previously. The occupation of pergunnah Buttiagurh was soon followed by that of Nursingurh, Dumoh, &c. At Nursingurh the Gonds made some show of resistance, but after being defeated, they fled to the south-eastern parts of the district, where they were allowed to remain unmolested. The name of the commander of the Imperial forces who conquered Nursinghur, was Shah Tyub, who changed the name of that place to Nusrutgurh, and constructed an extensive fort there, which exists to this day.

39. During the Mahommedan occupation, Dumoh, Nursinghur and Lukbrounce were the principal places at which Amils resided, and those are the only places at which any evidences of their rule are to be found in the existence of forts, old tombs and mosques. Their occupation of the district. It is however a singular fact that no Mahommedan families of any rank exist in the district. The present Quazees of Nursinghur claim to have descended from Shah Tyub already alluded to, but they are now reduced to abject poverty and several members of the family were glad to be employed as peons in the Settlement office.

40. The Amils in the Saugor and Dumoh district would appear to have been subordinate to the Dumoh subordinate to Soobah of Malwa, as in several old Malwa. Sunnuds which were produced during the investigation of rent-free tenures, and particularly in the one held by the Quazees of Nursinghur, the word "Sirkar Chouraghur (a castle of that name in Nursingpoor) Soobah Malwa" occur.

41. Altogether the Mahommedans do not appear to have held this part of the country for more than about 80 or 90 years, and to have left it about the year 1662 A.D., at least their exodus commenced in that year.

Duration of Mogul rule.

42. The dawning of the Mahratta power in the Deccan, about the year 1663 A.D., during the reign of the Emperor Aurungzebe, necessitated the withdrawal of the bulk of the Imperial troops from these parts. Raja Chuttersal of Punnah, whose possessions lay contiguous, seeing the state of affairs, lost no time in making good the opportunity of driving out the remnants of the Mahommedan garrisons, and taking possession of the Saugor and Dumoh districts, which he then added to his already extensive territory of Punnah.

The Boondela occupation.

43. Thus commenced the Boondela occupation of the district ; but it does not appear to have extended over all parts of it, as in the south, the Lodhis who had been expelled by the Mahommedans from the north-west of the district, continued to hold independently under their own Chiefs ; and in the eastern portion, the Gonds did not acknowledge Raju Chuttersal's supremacy. This may have arisen from his not having pushed his conquests so far, considering there would be little honour or advantage in doing so, those being the poorest parts of the district.

Their occupation not complete.

44. The Boondela occupation of the district hardly exceeded sixty years, was in no way remarkable, and they have left no evidences of their rule behind them, except the Fort of Hutta, now in ruins, which was built during Raja Chuttersal's time.

Duration of Boondela rule.

45. In the year 1726 A.D. Raja Chuttersal's possessions being threatened by an invasion from the north, by the Nawab of Furrukabad, he had to solicit assistance from Bajee Rao Peishwa. This assistance was rendered in good time and the invader was repulsed. To mark his sense of the debt of deep gratitude which Raja Chuttersal owed to his deliverer

Cession of Dumoh to the Peshwa.



and that of his country, he ceded a third of his possessions to the Peishwa. This memorable cession was called the Tehra, all the territory held by Raja Chuttersal being divided into three equal parts, one given to each of his two sons named Hirdey Shah and Juggut Raj, and one-third to Bajee Rao Peishwa, whom also he formally adopted. By this division the districts of Saugor and Jaloun, and part of Dumoh fell to the share of Bajee Rao Peishwa; Shahgurrh, Gurha Kota and part of Dumoh to that of Hirdey Shah; Chirkharee, Bijwur and Jeytpoor, also part of Dumoh, to that of Juggut Raj. In course of time, however, the Mahrattas wrested the whole of Dumoh from the Boondelas.

## SECTION II.—MODERN HISTORY.

46. The Mahratta rule as shown in the preceding Section commenced with the year 1726 A.D., but  
 Mahratta government. it was some time before the petty Chiefs and relatives who held the different purgunnahs during Raja Chuttersal's reign, could be induced to vacate and hand them over to the Peishwa's officials, and some had to be ejected by force. The Mahratta government therefore did not actually commence until some ten years later. Dumoh was always subordinate to the governor at Saugor, the first of whom was Gobind Pundit, who is said to have ruled up to A.D. 1760, when his son Balajee succeeded, and he in his turn was succeeded by his son Rughnath Rao *alias* Abba Sahib in A.D. 1800. After his death in 1802, his widow Rookma Baee conducted the government until the cession of these territories to the British Government in 1817-18.

47. During the Mahratta rule, the district was administered by two principal and seven subordinate Amils or Mamlutdars. The former were stationed at Dumoh and Hutta; and the latter at Nursinghur, Puthureca, Putera, Buttiagurrh, Tejgurrh, Joojhar, and Kota; and there were as many pergunnahs in the district. The Amils were all Mahratta Pundits, and to each was attached a Furnuvees or Accountant of the same class; also a Kayet Kancongoc, who kept the fiscal accounts in Hindee.

48. The authority of the Amils was supported by a military garrison at each place of the strength given below; but this force was also employed in the realization of the revenue demand:—

*Detail of Military Force.*

Dumoh.....	500 Foot, 100 Cavalry, 4 Guns.
Hutta .....	500 Foot, 100 Cavalry, 4 Guns.
Nursinghur .....	200 Foot, 100 Cavalry, 2 Guns.
Puthureea ...	100 Foot, 50 Cavalry.
Putera .....	100 Foot, 50 Cavalry.
Buttiagurh ....	}...each 50 Foot, 10 Cavalry.
Kota .....	
Tejgurh .....	
Joojhar .....	25 Foot, 10 Cavalry.

Of course the full complement was seldom kept up, although regularly charged for in the annual accounts submitted to Saugor.

46. For the administration of civil and criminal justice no paid agency was kept up. There were however several men styled Choudhrees who assisted the Government officials in "Dand mamla;" that is to say, in regulating the amount of fine to be divided and then negotiating for its realization. These men were paid by fees on the amount thus realized. The only punishment recognized by the Code of Criminal Procedure were (1) fines for the wealthy, (2) banishment and confiscation of household property for the middle classes, and (3) banishment for the poorer classes. Civil suits were neither brought for hearing or entertained.

50. The revenue system of the Mahrattas was to keep as many villages as possible under khalsa management, collecting direct from the cultivators. Leases or ijaras were however frequently given for short terms, from one to three years. The terms on which these leases were given left but a very small margin of profits to the lessees, seldom more than one-tenth of the rental assets, and very often the demand exceed-

ed the estimated assets of the village. The profits left to village lessees was called Doopsee, which would appear to be a conception of the words do-biswee or two biswasin the beegah, twenty biswas making a beegah, thus one-tenth of the whole income constituted the lessee's profits, and nine tenths were appropriated by the State. Village lessees however had the option of making what they could out of the cultivators, who had no redress at all, as cultivating rights were not recognized. Another method of realizing the revenue was to tell off a certain number of troops in arrears of pay, to recover the amount of their wages from khalsa villages, or from village lessees in the best manner they could.

51. Frequently however leases regularly given under formal puttass used to be ignored if a higher bid were made, even after the first lessee had made his arrangements for the year. Indeed in some instances higher bids were accepted nearly at the close of the agricultural season with standing crops, to the utter ruin of the old lessee.

52. The revenue instalments were so regulated, that arrears of revenue unrealizable, was a heading Revenue Instalments. unknown in the Mahratta accounts. The plan adopted was to fix all the kists, of which there were three—and hence the term “tihacee” for revenue instalments in this district—before the spring harvest came on, so that if any of the instalments were not made good at the appointed time, there were the standing crops which could at once be seized. Thus the first instalment was taken in “Sawun” or July, the second in Katik or October, and the third in February.

53. Under such a system of revenue administration, landed property quite lost its value, the people were demoralized, and the cultivating classes reduced to a hopeless state of poverty.

54. Such was the state of the country under notice, when Lord Hastings in 1817 determined to erase the name of the Peishwa from the list of Indian Princes, to deprive him

Bad faith with Lessees.  
 Hopeless poverty of cultivating classes.  
 Cession of district to the British Government.

of all his possessions, and make him a political pensioner. Thus were ceded to the British Government the districts of Saugor and Dumoh along with the Peishwa's other possessions.

55. Mr. E. H. Maddock was the first Civil officer placed in charge of the newly ceded districts. His first step was to make a Summary Settlement of the district for one year, which he did from a small village called Kootree, where the ruins of his kucherry are still in existence; no record however exists of this primary Settlement.

56. A separate officer for the charge of the Dumoh district, or more properly speaking the Hutta district, as Hutta was the first place selected for the head quarters of the district officer in the person of Mr. Moodie of the Civil Service, was soon after appointed, and he at once made the first quinquennial Settlement from 1819 to 1823, or Fusly 1227 to 1231, at an annual jumma of Rs. 3,53,520, of which Rs. 56,051 had to be remitted within the term of the Settlement. Of this Settlement, Mr. D. F. MacLeod, writing in 1836, states that "the Government demand extended even to the baras or enclosures adjoining the houses of the villagers. Mr. Moodie himself previous to his departure from the district applied for and obtained permission to make reductions; but his successor had not become fully aware of the real extent of over-assessment, and shortly after leaving the district, without having completed the requisite inquiries, the desired relief was too long delayed, and very great evils and impoverishments were the result. Mr. Gordon, his successor, set about the task with great vigor, being much alarmed by the indications of progressive ruin which were everywhere apparent, and after having completed a measurement of the pergunnah, obtaining estimates from punchayets carefully selected by himself, and completing in fact every inquiry which it was possible to make, he made, with the Commissioner's consent, a refund to the Malgoozars who were otherwise entirely unable to carry on of nearly Rs. 6,000, and suspended the demand of the current and preceding year to a large amount. In fact the demand of this Settlement had been realized only in the first year 1227

Fusly. In the second year, the amount of balance was small and in fact merely nominal ; but after that, it yearly increased to the close of the Settlement in Fusly 1231."

57. The second quinquennial Settlement was commenced by Mr. Gordon, who made a measurement of the district through the Mahratta officials of the late Government, but before he could complete the Settlement he left the district, and was succeeded by Major Hardy. The latter gentleman then made the Settlement from 1824 to 1828, or Fusly 1232 to 1236, at a jumma of Rs. 3,03,967, which worked in a satisfactory manner.

58. The third quinquennial Settlement was made by Captain Johnston. By this time the size of the district was somewhat increased by transfers from Jubbulpoor, and the Settlement from 1829 to 1833 or Fusly 1237 to 1241, was concluded at a jumma of Rs. 3,24,442, which was a rise of some Rs 12,000 on the second quinquennial Settlement, after allowing for the villages added from Jubbulpoor. Regarding this Settlement Mr. D. F. McLeod in 1836 remarked as follows :—" The materials for the succeeding Settlement were in a great measure prepared by the same officer, and largely made use of by his successor Captain Johnston, who took charge in February 1829, and to whom its completion was entrusted. A minute scrutiny was made by the latter into the state of cultivation in each village, and the result was an increase on the preceding Settlement, which appears to have been unfortunate. The people are described by him as having begun to thrive after recovering from the over-assessment of the former Settlement, but severe losses from blight and hail had already been experienced, and a nearly total failure of the khureef crops had begun to operate before it was found practicable to completed the engagements for the new one. The jumma proposed by Captain Johnston was in consequence in several instances refused and ejectments in others were found necessary, leaving a considerable number of villages khalsa. Captain Crawford succeeded to the charge of the district ; bad seasons ensued and the result of this Settlement towards its close became most disastrous."

59. In November 1833 Mr. Loughnan received charge of the district, and the time for commencing upon another Settlement was drawing close. Mr. Loughnan however was appalled by the disorganized state of the district, and at once set about granting such relief to the Malgoozars as was practicable. He obtained sanction to a remission of two annas in the rupee, which he carried into effect by making a Summary Settlement for the year 1241 Fusly, of such villages as had avowedly or virtually come under khalsa management during the term of the 3rd quinquennial Settlement. A further general reduction being found necessary a Summary Settlement of the whole district was concluded for the year 1833-34 or Fusly 1242, based upon the average collections of the preceding Settlement. A more liberal scale of remuneration was at the same time allowed to the Malgoozars, which was urgently called for. This Summary Settlement constituted the basis for the next or 20 years' Settlement, and was made at a reduction of nearly 25 per cent. on the third quinquennial Settlement.

60. The 20 years' Settlement—the first Settlement for a long term of years—was made in 1835, extending to the close of 1854. It was concluded by Captain M. Smith, based, as already remarked, on the Summary Settlement, of 1834, slightly modified wherever it was found necessary. The result was an increase on Mr. Loughnan's arrangements, and the Settlement was eventually concluded at a jumma of Rupees 3,05,142. Several of the Malgoozars at this Settlement threw up their leases, and it was “only by the adoption of very determined measures that the difficulty was got over.” All the district records having been lost in 1857, no detailed history of the disastrous effects of this Settlement can now be given; but the ruin which it entailed upon the mass of the people, and the district generally, are too well known to need any elaborate description here. Suffice it to say that the full jumma was collected in no one year of the Settlement. Landed property quite lost its value. Scores of villages remained under khaph management year after year, and immediately on the conclusion of the Settlement in 1854-55 more than half the district

would have been thrown on the hands of the District Officer had not a general remission been granted in 1855-56, which was followed by another remission in over assessed villages during 1859, to enable the Malgoozars to carry on until the new Settlement could be made. Even these measures were not sufficient to satisfy the people, and the Government had to pledge itself to refund all amounts which might be collected in excess, for the intermediate period, should the demand of the new Settlement fall short of that of the old one. The new Settlement was unavoidably delayed much beyond the period anticipated, but the remedial measures of 1856 and 1859 enabled the old one to work on with fair satisfaction.

## CHAPTER III.

### POPULATION.

61. A general census of the district is about to be taken under orders of the Chief Commissioner, and inquiries are now being made, I understand, through the local pergunnah Officers, regarding the customs, religious ceremonies, &c. of all the castes inhabiting these territories, measures which will no doubt give a more full and satisfactory result than it is possible for a Settlement Officer to furnish from the means at his disposal; any detailed notice of such matters, therefore, would now be out of place. I may, however, make a few brief remarks on the subject of population generally, so far as it affects the Settlement.

62. The mass of the population, which by an approximate census taken by the measurement parties was shown to be 233,278 souls, is <sup>Mass of the population</sup> Hindoo. Hindoo; the Mahommedan element, composed mainly of the lower orders, such as cotton carders, weavers, and the like, being barely equal to three per cent. of the entire population. This is a somewhat singular fact, seeing the length of time the district was occupied by and was under Mahommedan rule, especially when it is considered that there is not a single representative of Islamism amongst the landholding classes.

63. Among Hindoos, comprising upwards of 60 different castes or sects, those considered to belong to the higher or superior castes appear to predominate, both amongst agricultural and non-agricultural classes; but the castes which prevail amongst the agricultural classes of the Nerbudda Valley districts, such for instance as the Goojur, the Jat, the Kowra, the Kirrar, are hardly represented in Dumoh. The Lodhi population numbers the most of all other castes, then the Koormee (both



agricultural classes), then Brahmin, Gond, Aheer, &c. They may be roughly classified thus :—

Lodhis .....	28,552 souls.
Koormees .....	22,036 „
Brahmins (including Mahratta and Goozerat).....	21,382 „
Gonds .....	20,228 „
Aheers .....	10,235 „
Chumars .....	24,733 „
Rajpoots .....	5,944 „
Bunneas .....	8,011 „
Kachees .....	9,929 „
	<hr/>
	1,51,050 souls.
Other castes .....	82,228 „
	<hr/>
	2,33,278 souls.

A compiled statement of all castes inhabiting the district will be found in the Appendix.

64. In the absence of any data it is difficult to draw deductions by comparison whether the population of the district has decreased or increased since British occupation; but I am inclined to the former opinion, from the fact of several, I may say most, of the larger villages, which must formerly have ranked as kusbas, being now more than half deserted, while at the same time there are no indications of any new ones having sprung up, or any sensible additions having been made to existing ones. There is Nursinghur, with hundreds of excellent stone-built houses, lying deserted. It is the same case in Punchumnugger, Harut, Ruteru, Kota, Tejgurh, and several others. It has been said that over-assessment checks population, and here I think is to be found an illustration of it. I have not unfrequently in my wanderings when inspecting villages, been struck with the large number of grown-up girls and young men, who, it was pointed out to me, could not be married from the poverty of their parents, ruined owing to over-assessment, or still struggling against an excessive jumma.

65. The average population of the district has been shown to be 95 souls to the square mile.

Scantiness of population.

Were this population evenly distributed throughout the district it would still be insufficient, but when the rate diminishes to 18 per square mile in some localities, and nowhere exceeds 161, it will be apparent that the great want of the district is population, and until that increases, no material improvement in the resources of it can be hoped for. It is superfluous to add that the higher the rate of population, the more prosperous the condition of the pergunnah. The maximum rate mentioned above occurs in pergunnah Buttiagurh, which is about the best cultivated and most flourishing tract in the district, while the minimum rate occurs in pergunnah Kunoura, which is the most backward, and probably always will be.

66. Some of the castes inhabiting the district are indigenous, and some have immigrated in

Indigenous and foreign castes Lodhis and Koormees.\*

large bodies from Bundelcund and the upper provinces at remote periods. Thus the Lodhis are from Bundelcund, and have now been established here for nearly three centuries. The principal talookdars and landholders are of the Lodhi caste, the Mehdela sect predominating over all others, and they consider themselves superior to the Lodhis of the Nerbudda Valley, who are mostly Maha Lodhis. The Koormees too are foreigners and immigrated here from the Doab about two and a half centuries ago. The Oosrehte sect predominates among them in Dumoh, where they differ from those of Nursingpoor and Hoshungabad, who are mostly "Gahoes."

67. The Brahmins likewise are principally from Upper India and comprise the Missur, Doobay,

Brahmins.

Tewaree, Puterree and Sunoureea sects. Deccanee Brahmins or Mahratta Pundits are also to be found; but they hardly exceed 500 in number, being the remnants of the government employes and their families, who settled here during the Mahratta rule. They are confined to Dumoh, Puthureea, and Hutta, some finding employment in Government offices, some holding rent-free grants, and a few are Malgoozars. Besides the Mahratta Pundits, there are Goojratee Brahmins called Kherewals, who came in the trail of the Mah-

ratta army from Southern India and have settled at Hutta, where they follow the profession of cloth merchants, bankers, &c. They are a fine looking set of men, more polished in their manners than the indigenous classes, very intelligent and intellectual. They however hardly exceed 300 members, including men and women.

68. Then there are the Gonds and Aheers, who may be considered aboriginal classes. Possibly some of the latter might originally have come from the "Brij" or the country around Muttra and Bhurtpore as in other parts of India, but they appear to have quite lost their nationality, even their peculiar patois, which many castes in the Nerbudda Valley have retained almost unaltered, particularly the Kirrars, who to this day speak the broad sort of Hindoostanee peculiar to the Furukabad people.

69. The best agriculturists are decidedly the Koormees, but they seldom occupy the jungly portions of the district, and are found mostly in rich black-soil tracts. It is a common saying that no Koormee can exist where he is unable to raise rubbee crops. They are a most peaceable set of men and have always been remarkable for their loyalty to the ruling power. They are very tenacious of their ancestral holdings and seldom alienate rights in land unless under the greatest pressure of circumstances. A Koormee is rarely known to follow any other profession but that of agriculture, whether as cultivator or farmer; and the real secret of their unfailing success in agricultural pursuits generally, does not appear to lie so much in their reputed superior skill, as in the fact of the women as well as men engaging equally in field work, while the women of several other agricultural classes are precluded from prejudice or custom from assisting the male population in their labours.

70. Scarcely inferior to the Koormee as an agriculturist is the Lodhi, and somewhat better looking, both men and women, the former with a martial swagger, noticeable even amongst the purely agricultural members. They are

however the opposite of the Koormee in natural temperament, being short-tempered, hot-blooded, revengeful, and ever ready to join in any disturbance. The word "loyalty" would not appear to be known in their language. They make good soldiers and are generally excellent sportsmen.

71. Both among Koormees and Lodhis there is no distinction between a kept mistress and married wife, provided always that the former is of the same caste as the husband, or better still if the widow of an elder brother or cousin, however far removed. The children born from such connexions are on an equal footing as regards inheritance of property, whether personal, real, or ancestral, as those born from regularly married wives.

72. Large numbers of the Gonds and Aheers too are agriculturists. They are the only tribes which inhabit the wooded and hilly portions of the district, are generally poor, of unsettled habits, and indifferent agriculturists. In the plains they are principally employed as farm servants.

73. The Kachees are also good cultivators of their class, and are the principal growers of those staples which require to be irrigated, such as sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, chillies, vegetables, &c., and are always able to pay a higher rent for their lands than any other class of cultivators; several villages are inhabited solely by Kachees.

74. The Chumars too are an important class, although not as agriculturists. They are employed as farm servants, and are the only class in the district who remove the carcasses of dead cattle which they always eat, without regard to the disease from which the animal might have died, curing the hides with which they make shoes, leather-fastenings for plough, cattle, &c. It is their duty also to prepare the threshing floors, and in return for their labour they are allowed to take the sweepings, and droppings of cattle, containing undigested grain which the cattle had devoured while treading out the corn. This grain the Chumars

wash out of the dung and make use of it as food. This is called "goobree,"—a disgusting practice which might well be put down by authority.

75. The other castes do not require separate notice.

Other castes.

These are Korees, Mehra, and Kosh-tas, who weave coarse cotton cloths, the Bunneas who sell grain and other articles of food, the Kaeths mostly employed as accountants and scribes; the Sonars who work in silver and gold; Lohars in iron; Burhys in wood; Barbers who follow their vocation and are employed as personal servants by the wealthy; Burries who grow and sell beetle or pan; Koomhars or potters and brickmakers; Telees or oilmen; Tameras or braziers; Bussorees or basketmakers; Khungars and Chundals usually employed as village watchmen; Dheemars or palkee-bearers, boatmen and water-carriers; Guderees or shepherds. There are some Rajpoots also, principally of the Bys sect, who are mostly agriculturists of peaceful habits.

76. Among village proprietors, as among cultivators and

Castes of village proprietors.

the population generally, Lodhees occupy the first place, holding as they do 316 villages out of 1,220, or more than a fourth. The Koormees come next in order, and hold 154 villages or nearly an eighth; then the Brahmins, who hold 145; then Bunneas who hold 116, and the Gonds who hold 75. Musselmans hold 71 villages, but of this number 63 are in the possession of one family, to whom a whole talook was awarded in proprietary right as a reward for loyal services rendered during the mutinies elsewhere, 6 by stipendiaries of the late Shahgurrh State, a recent addition to the district, one by a Hurkara or messenger, who did good service during the mutinies, for which he was rewarded with the farming lease of a village which he has since bought up from the old proprietors, and one, a small hamlet or parcel of land held rent-free by a foreigner. The remaining 343 are held by various castes.

77. The Lodhis abound in pergunnahs Tejgurrh, Du-

The pergunnah in which principal castes abound.

moh, Mangurrh, Buttiagurrh, and Koomharee; Koormees in Nursinghur, Dumoh, Hutta, Buttiagurrh and Futtehpoor; Brahmins in Hutta, Dumoh and Nursinghur; Gonds in Tejgurrh and Futtehpoor. A compiled statement of villages held by different castes will be found in the Appendix.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SETTLEMENT OF THE LAND TAX.

#### SECTION I.—MEASUREMENT AND SURVEY.

78. Saugor and Dumoh were the two districts of the late Saugor and Nerbudda territories, first selected for re-settlement. Early in 1854 regular operations for a correct measurement of the district, on what was then called the Punjab system, were commenced, and a Deputy Collector was specially appointed for the supervision of the work, which was to be effected mainly through the village Putwarees, instructed and guided by a small staff of Ameens and Peshkars well trained in the new system.

79. Moonshee Azeez-ood-deen, Deputy Collector, who had gained experience in measurement work in the Jaloun district under Captain Erskine, was the Officer first selected for the immediate control of the work, acting under the general guidance of the Deputy Commissioner of the district.

80. The first step was to form compact and manageable Putwaree circles; to procure efficient teachers, and to instruct the Putwarees in plane-table surveying. This was an undertaking of no ordinary difficulty, and those only who have experienced the difficulty attending the preliminary stages of Settlement operations can have any idea of the amount of trouble and annoyance which they entail. The Putwarees, to whom the new system was an innovation, exhibited great reluctance to take to harness, and stringent measures had to be resorted to before they could be made to do any work at all.

81. As a body the Putwarees of the Dumoh district are an intelligent and efficient class of men, but there were a good many inefficient

who passed under the old régime, but were found to be totally useless under the new system. Some of the causes which disqualified Putwarees for the Settlement Department were ridiculous in themselves, but insurmountable for the time. Among these causes may be mentioned the inability to shut one eye and look through the sight with the other. Many men could only do so while they held one hand over the eye to be closed, and were therefore useless as surveyors. The moment they removed the hand, the other eye also became closed. Then some could not see the flags through the sight; some could not draw a straight line by reason of their hand shaking, and some had such heavy fists that their pencil lines became as indelible as ink. All such incompetent men had to be weeded and efficient substitutes appointed in the persons of their relatives, if they had any qualified, or hired agents had to be appointed, who made their own arrangements with the permanent incumbents.

82. In September 1856 Moonshee Azeez-ood-deen having been removed to the regular Revenue Department, his place was taken by Syud Oulad Hussein, Deputy Collector, under whose supervision the measurements were brought to a close.

83. Measurement operations continued in full force until June 1857, when they were brought to an abrupt conclusion by the breaking out of the rebellion and subsequent abandonment of the district. The rebels having destroyed all the records, the work done up to this date was consequently all lost, and the entire establishment was dismissed.

84. In October 1860 measurements were recommenced, and the work continued to be prosecuted annually during the open season until its completion in June 1864.

85. The measurement comprised a boundary survey of each village, as well as an interior survey, field by field, and the preparation of a register of fields, showing the name of

the occupant, the area of the field in acres; whether cultivated, fallow or uncultivated; the kind of soil and description of crops if any. The cost of this survey amounted to about ten pies per acre for proprietary lands, and three pie per acre for waste lands.

86. As these measurements in the absence of a professional Revenue survey were to form the basis of the new Settlement, the greatest care was taken to ensure their correctness, and several checks were devised for the attainment of this object. Not only were the areas of fields frequently checked before being finally entered in the Register or Khusrah, but equal attention was paid to the classification of soils. The result has been very satisfactory.

87. The Revenue Surveyor entered the district from the southern extremity, during the cold weather of 1863-64, and completed the Dumoh tehseelee by the end of April 1865. In November 1865 the survey of tehseelee Hutta was commenced and ended in April 1866. The entire cost of the professional survey has been nearly a lakh and ten thousand rupees.

88. The measurement boundary survey or Thakbust maps were found on comparison to tally very well with the professional Survey maps, and the Revenue Surveyor has recorded the following testimony regarding the quality of these maps: "The comparison of boundaries with the Thakbust maps has proved very satisfactory; the few discrepancies met with, occurred in the wilder portions of the district, and were rectified immediately they were discovered."

89. Permanent boundary marks have been laid down throughout the district, so that boundary disputes will be of rare occurrence in future. Regarding these boundary marks the Revenue Surveyor states: "The pillars demarcating the boundaries are



in most places excellent; and the masonry platforms at trijunctions of villages in the Dumoh district are the best of their kind that I have ever seen."

90. During the past year the Revenue Surveyor gave in the area statistics of the villages of tehseelee Dumoh, and a comparison of the areas derived by Khusrah measurement was made village by village. The result has been a difference on the whole of only one acre and a small fraction per cent. below the professional survey area, which is very satisfactory. The areas of the villages in tehseelee Hutta have yet to be compared, but I have every reason to believe that they will come out equally as well as those of tehseelee Dumoh.

91. Not only are the Putwarees' maps essentially correct as regards area and the physical features of the country, but they exhibit a degree of skill and neatness in their execution, which attracted the notice of the Surveyor General, when he inspected a few specimens in 1864, and expressed himself much pleased with what he saw.

92. The Revenue Survey village plans and pergunnah maps of tehseelee Dumoh have already been lodged in the Deputy Commissioner's Office, and those of tehseelee Hutta will in all probability be delivered by the end of the current month, October 1866.

93. A large quantity, exceeding four hundred thousand acres of waste land, has been declared the property of the State, to which no claim for occupancy could be substantiated. All these lands have been properly demarcated with permanent pillars and have also been marked on the village field maps. A statement of waste lands will be found in the Appendix. The District Officer, as well as the Conservator of Forests, have been furnished with complete Registers of waste lands, the property of the State.

## SECTION II.—ASSESSMENT.

94. The assessment of the district has been made by two Officers. The larger sub-division, or tehseelee Dumoh, was settled by Major J. N. H. Maclean, Deputy Commissioner, with the powers of Settlement Officer, while the smaller sub-division or tehseelee Hutta was assessed by me.

Assessment made by two Officers.  
 95. Tehseelee Dumoh, comprising in all 684 villages, being the most advanced for Settlement, was taken up by Major Maclean, and the inspection of villages completed during the cold season of 1862-3. During the recess, the assessments were worked out and reported for the sanction of the Commissioner Saugor Division, by the end of October 1863.

Assessment of tehseelee Dumoh by Major Maclean.  
 96. Major Maclean having then been removed to another and more important district, I was appointed to the separate charge of the Dumoh Settlement, and joined my appointment in the latter end of November 1863.

Major Maclean's removal and Mr. Russell's appointment.  
 97. As the field season had already far advanced, I lost no time in commencing with the inspection of the remaining tehseelee Hutta, comprising 566 villages. These I inspected in a thorough manner by the end of February 1864, returning to head quarters early in March, with a well-filled note book of my observations.

Inspection of villages in tehseelee Hutta.  
 98. I then set about working out my assessments, and was enabled to send in the first chuk of 110 villages to the Settlement Commissioner by the 15th May, following; the rest were submitted by the 15th October 1864, thus completing the assessment of the entire district.

Assessment of tehseelee Hutta by Mr. Russell.  
 99. As no preliminary pergunnah or chuk reports, detailing the principles upon which the proposed assessment was made were required from Settlement Officers at the time,

Meagre chuk reports of tehseelee Dumoh.

Major Maclean reported his assessments, the letter which accompanied his Assessment Statement was frequently little more than a docket, mentioning in general terms whether the chuk was composed of fertile or jungly villages, and the financial result of the new assessment. Consequently I labour under some disadvantage in reporting upon the portion of the district assessed by my predecessor.

100. Major Maclean I found had grouped the villages of tehseelee Dumoh into 18 separate chuks or circles of various sizes, for assessment purposes, and in each chuk again the villages were divided into three classes. The reasons for the chuks being so numerous are not on record; but I believe it was principally owing to the peculiar nature of the country, which is much interspersed with hill and jungle, consequently any thing like continuous tracts of an uniform description could not be brought together within a ring fence.

101. In tehseelee Hutta, however, I formed only six chuks, four of which consisted of open tracts of varying degrees of fertility, and two of hilly tracts situated at two extremes of the sub-division. ' In three of the former I followed my predecessor's plan of classifying villages, but in the latter and in one open country chuk no classification was found to be necessary. Moreover the Settlement Commissioner had communicated his disapproval of the classification of villages other than topographical, as apt to become arbitrary and produce inequalities of assessment.

102. The eighteen chuks formed in tehseelee Dumoh consisted of (1) the entire pergunnah of Puthureea comprising 57 mahals. Situated at the extreme north-west corner of the tehseelee, bounded on three sides by the Sajlee, Beos, and Sonar rivers, and on the fourth by the Saugor frontier; (2) the entire pergunnah of Nursinghur 92 villages lying east of Puthureea, and comprising a tract of country situated between the Sonar, Beos, and Kopra rivers; (3) the pergunnah of Dumoh grouped into five chuks, viz. Abhana 32 villages in the south, Hindoreea sixteen villages in the north, Joojhar in the east 30 villages, Dumoh in the west

97 villages, and Bandukpoor in the centre 28 villages. Then come pergunnah Mangurh of 64 villages divided into two chuks below and above the ghats, and lastly, the hilly pergunnah of Tejgurh with open tracts here and there divided into nine chuks, comprising 260 villages.

103. As already stated, the chuks in tehseelee Hutta were only six in number and consisted (1) of the entire pergunnah of Hutta 172 mahals, (2) of the portion of pergunnah Buttiagurh free from hill and jungle, or more correctly speaking of the valley of the Sonar river, comprising 110 villages the best in the tehseelee; (3) of the best portion of pergunnah Putera 69 villages; (4) of the best villages of pergunnah Futtehpoor, late of Shahgurh, and the same of Murheea-Doh, a near accession by exchange from the Chirkhavee State including 75 villages which was named chuk Futtehpoor, (5) of the hilly portions of Buttiagurh, Futtehpoor, and Murheea-Doh, a sub-montane tract, comprising 62 villages, besides several waste villages, which I called chuk Kunoura, that being the name of one of the largest villages in the chuk and most centrally situated; and lastly (6) chuk Koomharee, comprising the easternmost block of hill and jungle in the vicinity of the Bhandere range, containing 59 villages.

104. In a general description of the district it has not been possible to describe the different portions of it in a technical manner, that is to say, from a Settlement point of view. This will now be done, commencing with the pergunnahs in the order of their Settlement.

105. The first chuk or pergunnah assessed by my predecessor was Puthureea, comprising 57 mahals and covering an area of 112½ square miles, situated between the Sonar, Beas, and Sajlee rivers. It is inhabited principally by Lodhis and Koormees, the most skillful and industrious class of cultivators in the district. The prevailing description of soil in the pergunnah is moond of the best sort, and suited for every kind of produce. The principal crop grown in the pergunnah is rubbee, wheat and gram being the staple

produce. The superior descriptions of khureef crops, such as cotton, jowar, and oil seeds, are also raised. The system of irrigating lands is confined to sugar-cane fields and vegetable-gardens, consequently only 400 acres are irrigated from wells. The high road from Dumoh to Saugor runs through the pergunnah, and there is a Brinjara track towards Bundelcund, by which the surplus produce of the pergunnah finds an outlet.

106. Nursinghur was the next pergunnah reported for sanction of assessment. Regarding it  
 Description of chuk Nursinghur. Major Maclean only stated that the general remarks made with regard to pergunnah Puthureea, are applicable to pergunnah Nursinghur to which it is contiguous; lies to the east and is divided from it by the river Sonar. The pergunnah is well watered by the Sonar, the Beos and the Kopra rivers, and comprises with some exceptions, particularly Nursinghur itself which is situated on a high stony barren tract, a level well cultivated extent of excellent soil, comparatively free from hills and jungle. The cultivation consists chiefly of wheat and gram, and the principal cultivators are Koormees and Lodhis. Less sugar-cane and vegetables are produced in this pergunnah than in Puthureea.

107. The pergunnah which next came under assessment was Dumoh, which was reported in five separate chuks; viz. (1) Dumoh, and (2) Bandukpoor, comprising the pergunnah of Dumoh as originally constituted, and (3) Abhana, which was formerly a separate pergunnah but now absorbed in Dumoh; (4) Joojhar, which also was a separate pergunnah during the 20 years' settlement, and (5) Hindoreea, a small oobaree or quit-rent tuppa, held by a Lodhi family. Regarding chuk Dumoh, Major Maclean remarked when submitting his assessment statement for sanction, that "the general remarks made with regard to chuk Nursinghur and Puthureea, apply to this chuk also, so it is not necessary to reiterate them here. This chuk is contiguous to Nursinghur chuk, and lies east of it, and to the west of chuk Bandukpoor, and to the north of chuk Abhana." To this may be added that the tract under notice is a level plain, interspersed with a few tanks, and the cultivation is

chiefly rubbee, with some embanked land for rice cultivation. As chuk Bandukpoo is but the eastern half of Dumoh, the same remarks are applicable to it. Chuk Abhana, however, is of a different description. To quote from Major Maclean's report, "the part of the district now sent for sanction to assessment, is situated to the south, and is altogether of a different character to the pergunnahs of Puthureea and Nursinghur formerly submitted, being hilly and jungly. In most villages the land fit for cultivation is surrounded by hills, and forms, as it were, the bottom of a cup, of which the surrounding hills constitute the sides. This part of the district goes by the name of pergunnah Abhana. In the 1st and 2nd class villages, the principal and valuable crops consist of wheat and rice, and are generally very good, from the fact of embankments having been formed to retain the rain water, and in many instances in which first the rice crops are grown, and afterwards wheat, by which two crops are obtained in one year from the same land. The assessment of this part of the district appears to have been made very much lighter than in the plain, and the people are much more prosperous and contented, although they are mostly wild and uncivilized; they consist principally of Gonds, Lodhis, and Aheers, who in many instances depend more for their support by breeding and selling cattle than by cultivating the land, more particularly those of the Aheer caste. In the third class villages, where the land is poor, the principal crops grown are kodoo and kootkee." Chuk Joojhar, again, is a poor tract of country, the soil resembling in many places the red gravelly soils of Bundelcund; but as several of the villages possess embanked fields, some good rice and average rubbee crops are produced. The last chuk of this pergunnah, Hindoreea, as already stated, is a small quit-rent tuppah of 16 villages, situated all in a cluster, and surrounded by the Bhondla range of hills. Hindoreea khas, and one or two other villages produce rubbee crops, the rest are poor hill villages yielding only inferior khureef crops.

108. Pergunnah Mangurh, the next in order, was reported in two chuks, one containing the villages situated above the ghats, and the other containing those lying below the

Description of per-  
gunnah Mangurh, two  
chuks.

ghats, adjoining the Jubbulpoor district ; the former tract contains some good villages, with embanked fields, in which excellent wheat and rice crops are raised ; but they are very much exposed to the ravages of wild animals, and require much watching. In the second chuk mostly khureef crops are raised, and a little inferior rubbee crops. The country is hilly and jungly throughout, and inhabited principally by Gonds.

109. The last pergunnah assessed by Major Maclean was Tejgurh, divided into nine chuks. Pergunnah Tejgurh, In general terms pergunnah Tejgurh nine chuks. may be described as a hilly tract of country, but it contains several valuable and fertile groups of villages, situated in the heart of the jungle, yielding excellent rubbee crops and rice in embanked fields. The best chuk in the whole pergunnah is Hutree, comprising the bulk of the quit-rent estate of the Lodhi Thakoor of that place. Major Maclean remarks about chuk Hutree, that "the villages in this chuk are the best in this part of the district, which is hilly and jungly to a degree, and it appears as if they have been selected and picked out, which is most probably the case, as the family holding them is one of the oldest in this part of the country, and were formerly very powerful and influential. The cultivators are mostly Lodhis, well off, and numbers of them are followers and relations of the Oobareedar." The chuks next in importance are \*Chowbeesa of 58 villages and \*Dinaree of 28 villages, being the upper and lower parts respectively of a compact slip of the richest portion of the pergunnah, which may be described as the valley of the Bearmee river, which runs to the west, the hills dividing Dumoh from the Jubbulpoor district lying to the east. The two chuks are only divided by a low range of hills lying east and west, but are much alike in character, possessing several villages with embanked fields, in which good rubbee crops and excellent rice crops are produced. The cultivators are mostly Lodhis and in easy circumstances. The only other chuk of importance is Ramgurh, composed

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\* Since writing this report I learn that in the new distribution of pergunnah boundaries, the villages of these two chuks have been transferred to pergunnah Mangurh.



of a small tuppā of that name, situated in the centre of the pergunnah, and held by a petty Lodhi Thakoor. A few other villages which adjoin the tuppā, are also included in Ramgurh. In this chuk rubbee crops are limited to a few villages; embanked fields are scarce, and a good deal of khureef crops are produced, but rice is grown to a limited extent only. The remaining chuks Balakote, Tejgurh, Goobra, Taradehee and Kharee Devree are wild tracts covered with hill and jungle, inhabited chiefly by Gonds and Aheers, and a few Lodhis. They yield principally poor khureef crops. Balakote especially is a network of hills; the same may be said of Goobra, with the exception of a few villages in which scanty rubbee crops are produced with much difficulty. The same may also be said of Tejgurh. Taradehee and Kharee Devree are simply a wilderness with extensive tracts of prairie land.

110. Chuk or pergunnah Buttiagurh was the first assessed by me. It contains 110 mahals, is situated at a distance of 20 miles from Dumoh in a north-westerly direction, being bounded on the north by the Bukraee river, on the south by the Beos, on the east by the Sonar, and on the west by the Bindachull hills. The tract is what I should call the valley of the Sonar river, 20 miles long, and of an average breadth of 10 miles, covering an area of 129 square miles. The face of the country is flat and level slightly undulating in some parts. It is a well cultivated tract studded with numerous groves, and has a population of 161 souls to the square mile. The cultivators are principally Lodhis, Brahmins, Koormees and Kachees. Half of the cultivated area consists of first class soil, thirty per cent. of second class, and only twenty per cent. of third and fourth class soils. The produce is principally rubbee, and the staple wheat. The khureef crops consist of cotton, jowar, tillee, but no rice to speak of is grown, as the soil is said to be unfavorable for it. The soil generally is very rich and productive, and therefore the people do not care to embank the fields. Hardly any sugar is produced, as the people, especially Koormees, have a prejudice against it. Buttiagurh is about the best pergunnah in the district, certainly the best

Description of chuk  
Buttiagurh, tehseelee  
Hutta.



in-tehseelee Hutta, but as it is situated far from every high road, is seldom seen by the ordinary traveller passing through the district. Very little uncultivated land exists here except in small patches, and that often becomes overgrown with kans grass.

. 111. The next chuk I reported upon was Hutta, comprising 172 mahals or the entire pergunnah of Hutta, situated between the Sonar and Bearmee rivers, which mark its western and eastern boundaries respectively, and also enclose in the northern face of the pergunnah by forming a junction at the north-east corner of it. In general terms, Hutta is a flat tract of country, somewhat cut up by ravines near the river banks. It is remarkable that there is not a hill of any kind in the whole pergunnah, and but one or two small patches of brushwood. It is about 30 miles long and of an average breadth of 10 miles, covering an area of 250 square miles, with an average population of 90 souls to the square mile. The chuk is fairly cultivated; but as the soil is principally moond or second class, much of it is at present overgrown with kans grass, as this soil is more prone than any other to be overrun by it. In this tract also, the principal crop is rubbee, and wheat has the first place. Very little cotton is produced, and hardly any sugar or paddy. The cultivators are of a mixed class, but Koormees predominate over all other castes, then Lodhis, then Brahmins, then Rajpoots and Kachees. The high road from Dumoh to Nagode and on towards Mirzapoor traverses the entire length of the pergunnah from south to north, besides several minor tracks which lead into Bundelcund.

112. Next in importance in tehseelee Hutta is pergunnah Putera, comprising 69 villages, situated at a distance of 10 miles north-east of Dumoh. The only stream which waters this pergunnah is the Bearmee, running on its eastern boundary. The tract has a basin-like appearance, being low in the centre and high towards the outer margin. The soil, especially in the centre of the chuk is rich and moist, but the villages occupying a higher elevation are somewhat inferior; and some of the land near the Bearmee is cut up by ravines. There is a good deal of jungle too around the outer margin of the chuk, al-

though the central portion is free from it. The area of the chuk is 69 square miles, with a population of 154 souls to the mile. The cultivators are principally Koormees, Brahmins, Rajpoots, and Kachees. The prevailing soil is moond or second class of average quality, and the produce two-thirds rubbee and one-third khureef. In the former wheat has the first place, and with the latter kadoo and kootkee; but a fair quantity of cotton and paddy is also produced. No high road passes through the pergunnah, but it is connected by a good road with Hutta, over which its surplus produce finds its way into Bundelcund.

113. Futtehpoor was the last chuk assessed and reported upon, but as it is a superior tract to the two chuks which preceded it, I will describe it before the others. The tract now under notice is situated at a distance of 24 miles north-east of Dumoh, between the Bindachull range of hills, the Sonar and the Bearmeer rivers. It is in fact the upper portion of the valley of the Sonar river, and therefore resembles the Buttiagurh pergunnah; but some portions of it, which lie near the hill, are not so productive. The chuk measures about 25 miles in length and only 6 in mean breadth, covering an area of about 130 square miles. The bulk of it is composed of recent transfers to the district from the states of Shaligurh and Chirkharee, and considering this circumstance, it is very fairly cultivated, seeing that more than 50 per cent. of the malgoozaree is at present under cultivation. The population rate, too, is pretty good, being 126 souls to the square mile. The cultivators are of a mixed class, but Lodhys, Koormees, Kachees, Brahmins, and Rajpoots predominate over other castes. The soil is half second class or moond, and the rest third and fourth class soils; also a little superior soil confined to a few villages. The produce is rubbee and khureef nearly in equal proportions. There are no made roads running through the pergunnah, but there are a couple of much frequented Bunjara tracks leading into Bundelcund.

114. The next chuk to be described is Koomharee, comprising 59 villages, surrounded with hills, and having a very rugged and jungly surface. It is in fact a net work of hills

Description of chuk  
Koomharee.

and jungle, isolated from all other civilized parts of the district, and adjoining the wilder portions of pergunnah Bilehra in Jubbulpoor. The soil is inferior and stony, yielding only the poorer sorts of khureef crops. The cultivators are all Gonds or Aheers; and wild beasts abound to such an extent that no rubbee crops can be raised without much watching and protection. The Dyah system of cultivation, the favorite system of the Gonds, so well known, is much in vogue. The high road from Dumoh to Jokye passes through this chuk, and a good deal of traffic is imported by this road from Mirzapoor, &c. There are no exports from this pergunnah however, and it has very little communication with the outside world.

115. Much resembling chuk Koomharee is chuk Kunoura, comprising 62 villages lying on the Bindachull hill table-lands, situated towards the north-western and northern boundary of the district, covering an area of 274 square miles, with a population of only 18 souls to the mile. It is a perfect wilderness, except a small portion towards the north, which is a sort of dell or valley, in which the soil is good, and rubbee crops have commenced to be raised here within the last few years. In the rest of the tract, only poor khureef crops are grown, and the population consists entirely of Gonds and Aheers.

116. Having described the nature of the country brought under Settlement, and the topographical divisions made of it for assessment purposes, it now remains to state the manner in which the assessment itself was carried out, and the data upon which it was fixed.

117. The preliminary step was for the assessing Officer to inspect every village in the plains, and to carry out the inspection of the hilly tracts as far as practicable, recording his observations daily on the spot. The inquiries extended to the general nature of the country, the description of crops raised, the quality of the soil, the condition of the people, and to all other points likely to be of use in determining the value of an estate, coupled with other data furnished

by the measurement papers and the deductions to be drawn therefrom.

118. The names of the soils were recorded in accordance with the popular nomenclature, and consisted of six well-known varieties, viz. :—

Name and description  
of soils.

- 1, Kabur or the true black soil, free from sand or grit.
- 2, Moond or inferior black soil, with a mixture of sand.
- 3, Ruttecan or brown kabur of the hilly country, possessing a larger proportion of sand.
- 4, Ryan or an ashy colored kabur, also abounding in hilly tracts, mixed with sand like ruttecan.
- 5, Puturooa or light brown soil devoid of richness.
- 6, Bhuttooa or sandy soil.

And these varieties are to be found in all parts of the district, the superior kinds predominating in the open tracts and the inferior kinds in the hilly pergunnahs. The first four kinds are essentially rubbee yielding soils, but they can be made to produce khureef crops also, and frequently do; the two latter are purely khureef yielding soils. A statement showing the proportion of different kinds of soils in this district will be found in the Appendix.

119. It has been stated in a former part of this report that all the records of the district were destroyed during the rebellion of 1857, so that neither my predecessor nor I had access to any documents bearing upon the preceding Settlement, and had to strike out a course for ourselves. During the tour made by Captain Hector Mackenzie, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner on special Settlement duty, through the Saugor and Nerbudda territories in the cold weather of 1862, an excellent form of general assessment statement was adopted for this district, which in addition to the information generally embodied in such statements, possessed several columns with data calculated to steady the judgment of the assessing Officer. This statement now somewhat altered under instructions from the Settlement Commissioner, was found to be very useful in fixing equitable jummas, aided by the Settlement Officer's personal knowledge. It showed

Comprehensive general  
assessment statement.

the cultivated and culturable area, the descriptions of soil, the recorded and assumed assets or rental of the village, the percentage of profits enjoyed by the proprietors, the rental by average pergunnah or chuk rates on soils, a plough and a produce jumma, &c.

120. Any body who has made Settlements knows that

Data how utilized.

there is no golden rule for working out assessments, and that simple averages, unaided by a thorough knowledge of the locality in every respect and the exercise of sound judgment in dealing with that knowledge, are not sufficient to enable a satisfactory result being attained. I have mentioned several averages or tests for steadying the judgment; but they were not all useful or necessary in every locality. In some parts average rent rates on soils, in others produce estimates, or a rate on ploughs, were found useful and were taken advantage of in their turn.

121. The measurement papers furnished the bulk of the in-

How average rents on soils and produce jumma were derived in Dumoh.

formation necessary for the compilation of the general assessment statement, except average rent rates on soils, and produce estimates on which were founded the produce jumma. I am not aware of the plan adopted by my predecessor for working out average rent rates, as the only thing I find on record is the chuk report on Puthureea, in which the following passage occurs:—

“In this part of the country rent is not fixed per beegha or acre by the Malgoozars: they either let land by the manee, which means as much land as requires 1 manee or 5 maunds of seed grain to sow, or they take a patch or parcel of land, and let it out for a certain sum without any measurement. When land has been let by the manee, it may be estimated that one manee of land is equal to 4 acres. Calculated on the above I find the following results

as shown in the table as per margin, which I consider satisfactory and a fair average.” And with regard to the produce jumma it was stated

*Average rate per Acre.*

	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
Kabur	2 4 0	2 0 0	1 12 0
Moond ..	2 0 0	1 12 0	1 8 0
Rutteean .	1 8 0	1 4 0	1 0 0
Ryan ..	1 4 0	1 0 0	0 12 0
Puturooa .	1 0 0	0 12 0	0 12 0
Bhuttoo .	0 8 0	0 6 0	0 4 0