

## CHAPTER X.

### REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

#### \*HISTORY OF LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

There are particularly no materials available in Saran to trace out definitely the history of land revenue administration in the pre-Muhammedan period. It may, however, generally be stated that the Mauryas, the Guptas and the Kankubjas followed a comprehensive and uniform land revenue administration based on the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. The king's share or *bhaga* of reaped crops was the most important source of State revenue, and *Shadbhagin*, "a sharer of the sixth part", a standing epithet of the king. The *bhaga* was measured out either by the village authorities or by the royal officials at the barn-doors or by survey of the crops. Among the most important officials was the *Gram-bhojaka* or the village headman.\* Later *Gopa* stood for *Gram-bhojaka*. Throughout the Hindu period subject to slight modifications the system of land revenue administration followed the same pattern.

The early Muslim rulers were conquerors first and administrators next. They did not bring any striking change in the land revenue administration. The system of land revenue underwent a change during the reign of Allauddin Khilji, Ghiyas-uddin Tughlaq, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodi. So far as Saran is concerned we have no definite information. The first two Mughals had no time to bring about any change. It was Akbar who made an attempt to follow a vigorous land revenue policy and as such an effort will be made here to describe the history of the land revenue administration in Saran since Akbar's great settlement at the close of the sixteenth century.

It is proposed to adhere to the division of this period into six parts in the *Final Report of Survey and Settlement Report* (1903), viz. :—

- (i) The Muhammadan period (1582—1765).
- (ii) The early British period closing with the decennial settlement of 1790.
- (iii) The Permanent Settlement of 1793 and its effects.
- (iv) The resumption proceedings in the first half of the nineteenth century.
- (v) The Revenue Survey of 1844.
- (vi) The modern period leading up to the cadastral survey of 1893—1901.

---

\* *An Advanced History of India* by R. C. Mazumdar, H. C. Raychaudhury and K. K. Dutta, page 74.

It is not necessary for our limited purposes to examine the available sources for land revenue history for Saran district. Kerr's *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations* (1893-1901), published in 1903, has been followed by O'Malley and Middleton in their Saran Gazetteers, published in 1908 and 1930, respectively. We will refer to this Settlement Report extensively for the history which was not done by O'Malley or Middleton.

*The Muhammadan Period (1582-1765).*

The present district of Saran generally corresponds to the area of *Sarkar Saran*, which was one of the six *Sarkars* forming the *Subah* of Bihar in the reign of Akbar. The *Sarkar*, however, included one small *pargana* which now forms part of the district of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. The first assessment of this area, of which any authentic record exists is that made by Todar Mall in 1582 A. D. An account of this settlement is given in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. Apparently before Akbar's reform though theoretically as stated before the cultivator had to pay one-sixth of the gross produce to the State, no rules existed as to the manner in which the amount payable was to be ascertained, and in addition to the land revenue numerous other demands were exacted by the way of poll-tax, profession taxes, fees to local officials, and various kinds of *abwabs* or illegal taxations. It is stated that even *corvee* was in practice. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the collection of revenue was burdensome to the tax-payer and unprofitable to the State, the person who mainly benefited being the tax collector. Akbar based his system mainly on the land revenue. He abolished most of the miscellaneous taxes and *abwabs* and while he raised the demand of the State to one-third of the gross produce of the soil (except in certain special cases) he took steps to ensure that the amount payable was ascertained after full and careful enquiry. But in raising the land revenue of the State it cannot be said that he made any striking departure from his predecessors. While no important changes in revenue administration are recorded to have been effected by Iltutmish and only some attempt was made by Balban to make it orderly, Alauddin's revenue policy was comprehensive, affecting all types of land tenures, and Muhammad Bin Tughluq's vigorous but ill-advised revenue policy also deeply influenced the condition of the State. The rate of assessment also varied, being excessively high since the time of Alauddin, who charged 50 per cent on the gross produce of the land. In spite of his general leniency, Ghiyas-uddin Tughluq does not seem to have reduced the scale as fixed by Alauddin, and in time of Muhammad Bin Tughluq it was certainly not lower, if not higher, than this.

Todar Mull's move was a land-mark. The main features of Todar Mall's assessment were as follows :-

- (1) A measurement of all arable and productive land with a standard *bigha*.

- (2) An estimate of the gross outturn per *bigha*, based on an elaborate classification of soils according to their productiveness and natural advantages.
- (3) The commutation of the Government share of the gross produce to money rates based on the average prices for a period of 19 years.

The result of this assessment in Saran was that the arable and productive area was found to cover 2,29,052 *bighas* or, at the accepted standard of conversion about 2,65,600 acres, or 415 square miles. It is noticeable that at this time less than one-fifth of the district had been brought under cultivation, and the revenue assessed by Todar Mall was 1,61,72,004 *dams*, or 4,04,300 rupees at the rate of Rs. 1-8-0 per productive acre.

Curiously enough, this rate of Rs. 1-8-0 seems to have been fairly general throughout Bihar, including the forest-covered backward district of Champaran. This will show that Todar Mall was a very clever administrator and knew that a very minute and detailed land revenue policy differing from district to district may be unsuccessful in the hands of incompetent and careless subordinates.

The actual work of measurement was done by *amins* who were paid at a fixed rate at one *dam* for each *bigha*, and as the standard of outturn was 200 *bighas* a day in the hot weather and 250 *bighas* in the cold, an *amin* should have had no difficulty in earning the very handsome remuneration of Rs. 5 a day. The actual estimate and appraisement of the produce seems to have been done by the village *patwaris*. The supervising staff consisted of a *kanungo* in each *pargana* and an *amalguzar* or collector of revenue at the head of each *Sarkar* or district. This was undoubtedly based on the fiscal division of the great Sur ruler, Sher Shah with slight modification. Both *kanungo* and *amalguzar* were strictly enjoined to carry out the duties of appraisement personally in all cases of disputes and not to leave them to the *patwaris* and village headmen, but the areas entrusted to them were so large as to render this almost a counsel of perfection. Judged from a modern standpoint the supervising staff was in fact lamentably weak, and there can be little doubt that many of the excellent rules in the *Ain-i-Akbari* were honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Nevertheless, Todar Mall's assessment must have been an enormous improvement over the state of affairs that preceded it, and it achieved the highest measure of success so far as its immediate object was concerned. It decreased the total nominal public demand but increased the actual revenue by diminishing the illicit gains of intermediaries between the State and the people. It may be added that the assessment was at first revised every year, but this was found too burdensome a task and was abandoned in favour of decennial settlement based on the average price of the preceding ten years.

*The assessment of 1685.*—The next fresh general revenue assessment was made in 1685 in the reign of Aurangzeb. No details are available as to the method adopted, but there does not appear to have been a new measurement. The result, however, was that the revenue expressed in *dams* was more than doubled, as it was raised from 1,61,72,004 *dams* to 3,71,62,144. Part of this increase was, however, due to the depreciation in the value of the *dam*. According to Mr. Grant as mentioned in the Settlement Report 46½ *dams* were equivalent to a rupee in Aurangzeb's time as against 40 in Akbar's reign. The rise in the revenue was Rs. 4,04,300 to Rs. 8,01,461. But the rise did not actually mean much of increasing pressure to the existing *raiyats*. A large part of this increase was doubtless due to extension of cultivation, but in the absence of all area statistics it is impossible to say the extent of the expansion. The comparative peace must have encouraged expansion of cultivation. A considerable area was appropriated to form *jagirs* or revenue free grants for the purpose of remunerating the civil and military officers of the empire over whom the central authorities had but little control.

*Ali Vardi Khan's assessment of 1750.*—The assessment made in 1685 remained unaltered until 1750, when the great Subahdar of Bihar, Ali Vardi Khan made a fresh settlement. Like its predecessor it was not based on any measurement, and its main object seems to have been to incorporate with the land revenue demand, a number of *abwabs* which though nominally abolished by Akbar, had never actually disappeared. Its result so far as Saran was concerned was to raise the revenue from 3,71,62,144 *dams* to 4,87,77,239 *dams*, or allowing for a further depreciation in the value of the *dam* from Rs. 8,01,401 to Rs. 9,29,856. But this total included a considerable sum which was paid to the revenue collecting officials by way of *jagirs*, etc., and never reached the Government.

*Revision in 1765.*—A further readjustment was undertaken in 1765. The total assessment made by Ali Vardi Khan was left unaltered, but the net demand payable to Government was separated from that appropriated for the purposes of *jagirs* and religious and charitable endowments. The result for the six *Sarkars* forming the province of Bihar is shown in the annexed statement :—

Sarkar.	Area in square miles.	Total assessment.	Net assessment payable to Government.	Rate of total assessment per acre.
		Rs.	Rs.	As. p.
Tirhut ..	5,033	8,20,042	2,45,312	4 1
Hajipur ..	2,782	8,28,100	5,42,240	7 5
Champanan ..	2,546	4,00,217	3,21,000	3 10
Shahabad ..	1,869	8,26,845	6,09,268	11 1
Bihar ..	6,680	38,48,800	22,14,812	14 4
Saran ..	2,560	9,29,856	8,80,233	9 1

The total assessment of course shows the burden on the soil, the balance between it and the net assessment being appropriated by *jagirdars* on account of collection charges. The low net assessment realised by Government in Tirhut was due to the extraordinary large number of *jagirs* which the civil and military officers of the empire had managed to create in that district. It is remarkable that South Bihar was more highly assessed than North Bihar and the only explanation seems to be that as the former area was the more accessible and its land revenue administration was better supervised. But in North Bihar, Saran shows a much higher rate of assessment than any other district.

*The early British Administration.*

With the grant of *diwani* of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in August, 1765 to the East India Company, the collection of revenue at first was entrusted to the native agency, for the Council considered it doubtful whether the European servants generally possessed sufficient knowledge of the civil institutions and the interior state of the country to qualify them for the trust. But after four years of this system it was found necessary to appoint European supervisors to control the native subordinates in the collection of the revenue and the administration of civil justice, and in 1770 a revenue council was formed for Bihar with its headquarters at Patna for the purpose of supervising the supervisors. The latter were instructed to make enquiries and report on every detail concerning the interior economy and the mode of levying the land revenue.

It was soon found that the supervisors left much to be desired, and that the system of leaving the tax collectors uncontrolled had led to very gross abuses. The assessment was nominally based on that of 1765, and though the financial gain to the State coffers in Saran was excellent, over 80 per cent of the demand being realised, it was reported that the *Nazims* or native collectors "exacted what they could from the zamindars and the great farmers of the revenue, whom they left at liberty to plunder all below, reserving to themselves the prerogative of plundering them in turn when they were supposed to have enriched themselves with the spoils of the country". Accordingly, in 1772 the office of the *Naib Diwan* or head native revenue collector was abolished, and the Company's officers themselves took over the collection of the revenue, the supervisors being called collectors for the first time and placed under the control of a Board of Revenue in Calcutta. But the new departure was not a distinguished success. It was decided to settle the revenue by farming out the rent collections of five years to the highest bidder, but the farmers failed to carry out their obligations, and great loss resulted to the Company. Accordingly, in 1774, the European agency was again abolished and the revenue collection entrusted to *amils* working under a Provincial Council at Patna. But the Company had by this time realised that it was necessary to obtain a fuller

knowledge of the state of the country before a satisfactory assessment and a satisfactory method of collecting it could be revised and accordingly *amins* were deputed into every village and instructed to make the minutest enquiries as to "whatever might enable them to procure the most exact information of the real produce or value of the lands".

Annual settlements were made by the Provincial Council in the years 1777, 1778, 1789 and 1790 on the reports of the enquiries made under these somewhat vague instructions, and the collections continued to be made by native agency, but the only result was a gradual and steady diminution in the Company's revenue, and in 1781 the system was again altered, the Provincial Council being abolished. Districts were placed in charge of Collectors, who were subordinates to the Presidents of the abolished Councils and the latter were in turn subordinates to the control of the Committee of Revenue in Calcutta. Thus an arrangement much akin to the present system of administration was introduced.

The first authentic record of the revenue demand under British rule is found in the register of Nawab Hoshiyar Jang, Subhadar of Bihar, from which it appears that in 1773 the district of Saran, then known as *Sarkar Saran*, comprised 1,640 estates, 15 *parganas* and 4,650 villages, of which 297 villages were revenue-free, the revenue demand for the remainder Rs. 9,36,201 being only a slight increase over the last Moghul assessment of 1765. There are no papers from which the fluctuations in the annual demand up to the decennial settlement can be traced, but the collections are given in the following statement compiled from the *sesala* registers, which were based on the Kanungo's returns :—

Fasli	A. D.	Rs.	a.	p.
1168	1761	6,94,507	14	3
1169	1762	6,83,610	14	3
1170	1763	7,74,705	8	0
1171	1764	10,20,670	4	6
1172	1765	8,97,171	15	0
1173	1766	9,82,589	13	6
1174	1767	10,15,013	2	0
1175	1768	7,99,724	15	9
1176	1769	8,34,513	3	6
1177	1770	7,56,208	6	0
1178	1771	7,79,059	6	3
1179	1772	7,71,833	5	9
1180	1773	9,23,519	2	6
1181	1774	7,34,427	7	6
1182	1775	6,91,420	12	6
1183	1776	9,33,564	2	0
1184	1777	9,32,564	3	3

\* See "Sarkar Saran" published by Gazetteers' Revision Section, Revenue, Bihar

Fasli	A. D.	Rs.	a.	p.
1185	1778	8,69,834	7	3
1186	1779	5,37,754	14	0
1187	1780	4,43,798	11	9
1188	1781	6,77,197	7	3
1189	1782	5,98,327	15	9
1190	1783	5,32,044	15	0
1191	1784	5,01,086	10	6
1192	1785	4,34,069	15	0
1193	1786	1,46,852	9	9
1194	1787	5,77,496	3	3
1195	1788	4,17,560	4	0
1196	1789	5,98,226	3	6
1197	1790	9,71,145	15	10

The variations are sufficiently accounted for by the defective and constantly changing system of administration. But in addition, the district suffered severely from natural calamities. The great famine of 1770 in which one-third of the population is said to have perished was followed by serious floods and by another scarcity in 1783. Writing at the end of 1787 Mr. Montgomerie, the Collector, remarked: "Though a richer and better cultivated district than Sarkar Saran is not to be seen in India, the Collector has never been able to realise the revenue of a single year from what should be deemed the resources of the country. In every year from the time Mr. Groeme first took charge of Collectorship (in 1781) one, two, nay sometimes three lakhs (of the collections) were made up by mortgage, conditional sale or by debts contracted with the bankers, of which many were never paid. A remission of the revenue was granted by the Collectors every year". Though the demand from 1780 to 1789 was over nine lakhs, the collections rarely amounted to much more than half of that sum, and were sometimes considerably less. The Gandak embankment had fallen into disrepair, and was not restored till 1796. Meanwhile the northern and eastern parts of the district were swept by floods nearly every year. In the Husepur zamindari, corresponding with the erstwhile Hathwa Raj estate, no one could be got to take up a settlement of the revenue.

To add to the difficulties of the Company's officials it was impossible to collect the revenue in a large portion of the district owing to the attitude of the leading zamindars. Regarding them the Collector writes in 1787: "They have no means whatever of paying their revenue of one year, but by an anticipation of the revenues which ought to be allotted for the ensuing year. The practice has prevailed all over Saran for several and must take some time before it can be entirely removed, but it is so bad with these Narayans that any plan for the realisation of their revenues, which does not immediately remove all anticipations, only serves to render the business more confused and troublesome in the next

year. It must be observed that with these Narayans I conceive when the amount anticipated and the amount of their balances are brought into one sum, that the sale of their whole zamindary will hardly discharge it".

Hathwa Raj was another stumbling block. Due to the recalcitrant attitude of Fateh Sahi, of Hathwa, or as it was then called Husepur practically a state of anarchy ensued in the district. Troops were sent against him and his territory was seized, but the Raja established himself in the large forest between Saran and Gorakhpur, whence he defied all attempts to capture him, and made frequent inroads into British territory. His estate was let out to farmers, but he managed to frustrate their attempts to collect the revenue, and was strongly suspected of having taken part in an affray in which one of them was killed in 1772. The Collector finding it impossible to make collections recommended that the Raja should be pardoned and given an allowance on promising to live quietly at Husepur. This promise the Raja readily gave and as readily broke. He again took the field against the combined forces of the company and the Nawab of Oudh and a series of outrages culminated in 1775 in the murder of his own cousin, Basant Sahi. Government then declared his property forfeit and in 1790 recognised Chatardhari Sahi, the infant grandson of the murdered Basant Sahi, as the owner of the estate. Fateh Sahi himself ended his life as a religious mendicant, a peculiar but not unexpected sequel to a career of a stormy petrel.

*Decennial settlement.*—In order to improve the land revenue administration Mr. Montgomerie, the Collector of Saran, submitted a proposal for settling the district for a period of ten years. The zamindars at first resisted the proposal. They combined among themselves and frustrated the Collector's estate of which settlement could not be effected with its own proprietors. They also, the Collector discovered, "kept two sets of accounts, the true and just one, which in case of dispossession would be immediately destroyed, and the spurious one offered for the guidance of the former". However, eventually the Collector seems to have tackled the difficulties and succeeded in concluding a satisfactory settlement.

Comparatively little information is forthcoming as to the details of the settlement as most of the papers were burnt in a fire at Chapra in 1792. The unit was the estate and not the village. Enquiries were made for each estate to ascertain the gross produce or *paidawar* including both cash and produce rents and *sairats* paid for fisheries, orchards, grazing land and the like. From this was deducted the *kharcha deh* or collection charges consisting of the salaries of local agents, temple charges, etc., and allowance of ten per cent on the collections left to the proprietors or the *malikana* lands granted to them in lieu of the allowance. The balance left after deducting the *kharcha deh* from the *paidawar* was called the



*mofussil jama* and was, as a rule settled as the revenue to be assessed. The settlement finally confirmed for the years by the Board in 1790 was as follows :—

Name of pargana.	Total no. of estates.	Total no. of mauzas and kismats.	Total area.			Total jama.
			B.	C.	D.	
(1) Andar ..	78	278	63,011	11	0	53,463
(2) Bal ..	112	876	2,07,251	16	0	1,77,892
(3) Barai ..	52	294	1,00,864	12	0	69,252
(4) Bara ..	86	349	1,16,598	16	0	97,100
(5) Chirand ..	12	70	23,991	7	0	3,075
(6) Chaubar ..	122	256	47,136	15	0	36,388
(7) Kaliyanpur Khadi	61	872	1,92,479	16	0	95,540
(8) Danghi ..	17	134	38,335	15	0	22,093
(9) Goa ..	223	949	2,37,054	10	9	1,57,073
(10) Manjhi ..	12	52	30,544	18	0	26,530
(11) Makair ..	15	332	71,894	7	0	41,917
(12) Madhal ..	38	202	53,890	5	0	32,651
(13) Narhan ..	29	82	22,017	3	0	20,298
(14) Pachlakh ..	69	240	66,103	5	0	41,526
(15) Sepah ..	33	178	59,854	7	0	45,283
Total ..	959	5,164	13,31,029	3	9	9,20,081

(B—Bigha : C—Catha : D—Dhur.)

Thus the revenue assessed at this settlement was Rs. 9,29,261 payable by 959 estates. The total was almost the same as that of the latest Mughal settlement of 1765 and was more than double that of Todar Mull, but the area assessed had increased nearly six-fold since 1582. The 959 estates in the district were settled with 355 proprietors, of whom the more important was Jag Mohan Mukherji, the farmer of the Hathwa estate, whose revenue amounted to Rs. 1,39,209; the Narayans, the ancestors of the Chainpur family, whose revenue was Rs. 94,098; and the Manjhi Babus, with the revenue of Rs. 75,525.

#### *Permanent Settlement.*

The early British revenue administration had been characterised by excessive fluctuations and uncertainties. Unfortunately the justifiable impression was accompanied by another, which can only be described as unwarranted, viz., that the assets of the country had been sufficiently ascertained in the various settlements made since 1765 to permit of the land revenue being permanently settled.

In spite of Sir John Shore's warning in his celebrated minute of 1789 that further experience should be awaited before final measures were adopted, the Governor-General-in-Council recommended the Court of Directors to render decennial settlement permanent. The sanction of the Court was received in 1793. The interval had been occupied by a revision of the decennial settlement of 1790, as several collectors, among whom Mr. Montgomerie of Saran was one of the most prominent seem to have been doubtful as to the expediency of confirming their decennial settlements in perpetuity without a good deal of further inquiry.

In Saran the method adopted for checking the decennial assessment was to compare it with the actual collections of the settlement-holders for 1791 as shown in the *patwari* papers. It appears that the total revenue permanently settled in 1793 was Rs. 10,27,110 or an increase of nearly a lakh over the decennial settlement of 1790. The number of estates permanently settled was 1,818 as against 959 at the decennial settlement.

The following table compares the revenue in each of the 16 *parganas* of which Saran consisted at the permanent settlement with that of the same *parganas* at Akbar's settlement in 1582, at Nawab-Hushiyar Jang's assessment of 1773 and at the decennial settlement of 1790 :—

Parganas.	Revenue in rupees.					
	1582.	1773.	1790.		1793.	
			No. of estates.	Revenue.	No. of estates.	Revenue.
(1) Andar	13,374	65,910	78	53,463	119	53,955
(2) Bal	1,22,334	1,84,139	112	1,77,872	333	1,97,562
(3) Barrai	13,345	63,481	52	69,252	96	69,315
(4) Bara	9,594	84,810	86	79,100	167	79,250
(5) Chirand	15,831	33,785	12	30,275	21	30,250
(6) Chanbar	10,000	23,199	122	36,388	143	35,441
(7) Kallyanpur						
Kundi	19,362	1,15,505	61	95,540	16	99,959
(8) Dangsi	6,940	15,855	17	22,093	47	22,093
(9) Goa	50,323	1,75,371	223	1,57,073	406	1,56,786
(10) Manjhi	15,295	24,321	12	26,530	39	26,530
(11) Makair	20,277	37,502	15	41,917	27	41,917
(12) Madhal	17,543	36,774	38	32,651	59	32,651
(13) Narhan	16,362	22,648	29	20,298	43	20,497
(14) Pachlakh	10,949	52,901	69	41,526	122	42,370
(15) Sipah	7,264	..	33	45,283	24	40,936
(16) Kasmar	32,683	..	..	..	156	77,598
Total	3,81,476	9,36,201	959	9,29,261	1,818	10,27,110

The decrease in revenue between 1773 and 1793 in *parganas* Andar, Bara, Chirand, Mandhal, Narhan and Pachlak is somewhat remarkable and illustrates the leniency with which the permanent settlement was conducted. So late as 1829 the Collector reported that many villages had escaped assessment altogether and even at the time of the revenue survey the district contained no less than 178 estates, which were returned as *zaid fihrist* or outside any list, as they were not entered in either the register of revenue-paying or revenue-free estates. Without expressing any opinion on the controversy as to the advantages and disadvantages of the permanent settlement, it may be remarked that these facts show the incompleteness of the information on which it was conducted in Saran, and the loss which the Government sustained through disregard of Sir John Shore's warning that the time had not come to make a permanent settlement of the revenue.

In connection with the permanent settlement, the main difficulties were about the regular collection of the stipulated dues. These fell heavily in arrears, with the consequence that lands were frequently sold and the ideals of a stable revenue and a set of loyal contented zamindars were not realised to any considerable extent. Another defect of the settlement was the insufficient protection it gave to the tenants against the oppression of the zamindars. The establishment of the law-courts was expected to give the tenants the needed relief, but in practice it proved futile. In the absence of any survey of land and a definite record about the tenure of lands the law-courts could afford but little relief.

It is needless to describe in detail the various measures taken by the successive Governors-General to cope with these serious evils. It will suffice to indicate the main lines of policy adopted by them.

Regulation VII of 1799 generally known as the *Haftam*, was passed in order to remedy these evils. The Collector was given power to attach the zamindar's property immediately if the demand was not paid on the fixed date, while the zamindar was authorised without reference to any court to distrain the property of the *raiyat* in case of any arrears and where the arrears exceeded Rs. 500 to arrest his person. Thus the zamindar was given greater powers as against the *raiyat* than Government ventured to assume to itself as against the zamindar.

The effect of the Regulation was a great and immediate improvement in the collection of the land revenue, and the Collector in 1801 reported that the total arrears due from both Saran and Champaran for the preceding year were only Rs. 1,517 and that the Regulation was "perfectly well calculated to secure the collection

of the public revenue without in the least degree affecting the security of landed property, and also to enable the zamindars and farmers to realise their rent from the under-farmers and *raiyats* without affording the proprietors and the farmers the means of oppressing their under-farmers and *raiyats*". But the view was too optimistic, and in 1811 the Collector submitted another report in which he mentioned about the oppression of the zamindars.

Regulation V of 1812 modified the stringency of the *Haftam* by rendering only the property and not the person of the *raiyat* liable to seizure for default in payment of rent, but it was soon realised that without a local agency of some kind, it would be impossible to stop oppression. Accordingly Regulation XII of 1817 was passed with the object of reorganising the *patwari* system, but the effect was spoilt by placing the *patwari* under the control of the Collector and the landlord. It is not surprising that the *patwari* practically became the latter's henchman, and instead of being protector of the *raiyats*, he was the instrument through which the zamindar tyrannised the *raiyats*.

Attempts were made to compile records of tenure. Regulation VII of 1819 clearly defined the right of the various classes of tenants. Greater power was given to the zamindars to collect revenue from his tenants but in case of failure to pay the annual *jama* he was liable to be arrested and put in the civil jail. The fact that the permanent settlement was made with the zamindars or hereditary proprietors of the land, and not as elsewhere with middlemen and tax collectors, is evident from a report of the Collector, in which he said: "The only instance in *Sarkar Saran*, where the intermediate zamindars have not been treated with, are *Husepur* and *Chaubara*. The zamindars of these places have long been dispossessed by order of Government". Thus it is said that in *Saran* the permanent settlement did not result in the creation of a new landed class, but was made entirely with the old landed proprietors of the country.

It may be mentioned here that the Permanent Settlement acted adversely on the existing cottage industries. The cottage industrialist had no finance to carry on his trade, not to speak of improving it. Foreign consumer goods and particularly cotton goods from Manchester flooded the market and strangled the cottage industries. The poorer sections turned more to agriculture if not as land-owning cultivators as landless ploughmen. The available capital was land-locked. The European Planters stabilised themselves with their resources of large finance, better methods, more technical knowledge and lastly State patronage. They started buying up or taking in lease consolidated blocks of land, put their energy in trade and commerce. The share

of the residents of the district in their concerns was relegated to that of a wage-earner only.

One of the earlier critics of Permanent Settlement was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the great Reformer who pointed out that under the Permanent Settlement, the zamindars had increased their wealth, but had made the lot of the *raiya*s miserable. He advocated a reduction of the rent by means of a corresponding reduction in the revenue payable by the zamindars. The consequent loss of revenue he suggested, should be met by a tax upon luxuries or by employing low-salaried Indians as Collectors instead of high-salaried Europeans. The Raja favoured the Permanent Settlement but he rightly urged that the Government should fix the maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator. The views of Raja Ram Mohan Roy were applicable to Saran district as well.

#### *The Resumption Proceedings.*

In the *Ain-i-Akbari* there is no mention of any *jagir* or revenue-free property in *Sarkar Saran*. At Alivardi Khan's assessment of 1750 it was reported that revenue-free properties capable of yielding a revenue of Rs. 13,117 existed, but no arrears or details were given. In Nawab Hushiyar Jang's Register of 1773, 297 villages are recorded as revenue-free.\* These were stated to cover an area of 1,13,002 *bighas* and to be capable of yielding a revenue of Rs. 59,703. No steps for their resumptions were, however, taken till many years after the Permanent Settlement.

In 1819 Regulation II was passed to facilitate the resumption of revenue-free lands, by transferring the proceedings from the Civil Courts to the revenue authorities. Regulation VII of 1822 was passed to provide that revenue-free properties should be surveyed before they were settled, but the Collector of Saran represented that as the Permanent Settlement had been made without the specification of any boundaries his main difficulty was to ascertain whether a particular area had been included in the Permanent Settlement or not. But in spite of these preliminary measures resumption proceedings remained suspended. The Collector of Saran submitted a statement on the 14th October 1834 estimating that 1,455 *mahals*, covering an area of about 1,56,063 *bighas* were liable to come under resumption, and that they were capable of yielding a revenue of Rs. 1,22,000. At the same time he reported the existing Government revenue to be Rs. 10,37,509 being an increase of Rs. 10,000 on the revenue permanently settled in 1793. No explanation of the increase is given, but it must have been due to the resumption of petty estates prior to the general resumption proceedings concluded in 1841. No final report of these proceedings, which were concluded about 1841,

\* "Sarkar Saran" published by Gazetteers' Revision Section, Revenue Department.

has been found, but the following statement has been compiled from an old Persian Register purporting to give the results of all the resumption held under Regulation II of 1819 :—

<i>Parganas.</i>	Villages.	Area in <i>bighas</i> resumed.	Revenue Incidence per assessed. • <i>bigha.</i>		
			Rs.	Rs. a.	p.
(1) Andar ..	30	8,432	5,563	0 10	6
(2) Bal ..	38	40,855	33,217	0 13	0
(3) Barai ..	15	4,415	3,609	0 15	4
(4) Barra ..	19	14,514	7,226	0 7	11
(5) Chirand ..	9	2,747	1,546	0 9	0
(6) Chaubar ..	38	14,940	4,859	0 5	2
(7) Dangsi ..	18	22,750	8,805	0 6	2
(8) Goa ..	51	23,867	15,102	0 10	1
(9) Kasmar ..	23	14,958	12,492	0 13	4
(10) Kalyanpur Khadi	80	17,446	4,890	0 4	5
(11) Manjhi ..	11	20,975.	12,620	0 9	7
(12) Makair ..	27	9,673	4,161	0 6	9
(13) Madhal ..	12	6,527	2,276	0 5	6
(14) Narhan ..	9	16,693	7,829	0 7	6
(15) Pachlakh ..	3	861	602	0 11	2
(16) Sepah ..	14	2,671	2,670	0 15	11
Total ..	397	2,22,324	1,27,467	0 8	9

Adding these figures to those returned by the Collector in 1834, we find the total Government revenue in 1841 was Rs. 11,69,976.

#### *Survey and Settlement.*

The resumption proceeding was followed by the great revenue survey of 1843-44, which was necessitated by the constant disputes regarding the boundaries of estates and villages, due to the permanent settlement having been effected without any specification of boundaries.

Unfortunately the Revenue Surveyor started without any clear idea as to the distinction between an estate or parcel of land belonging to one set of proprietors responsible for the payment of Government revenue and the village or geographical unit, which might contain several estates or might form a portion of one estate. It is not surprising, therefore, that while too much value cannot be assigned to the village maps of the Revenue Survey, the results of the *Thakbust* survey were hardly so successful. The village maps effectually put a stop to boundary disputes.

Of course neither the Revenue Survey nor the *Thakbust* survey professed to record any particulars regarding the rights and interests of tenants. It was deliberately resolved to make no attempt to collect any statistics of crops or cultivation. This decision was taken mainly on two grounds, firstly, lest the people should be led to imagine that the object of the proceedings was to upset the permanent settlement, and secondly lest the *amins* employed should make the collection of the information a pretext for extortion.

The Revenue Survey in Saran was mainly carried out in season 1843-44, this district being the second in the Patna Division to be taken up. The results are given in the following table :—

Parganas.	No. of estates.	Area.		Revenue.		Incidence per acre.	
		In acres.	In sq. miles.	Rs.	Rs.	a.	p.
(1) Manjhi	68	30,907	48.29	32,922	1	1	4
(2) Chirand	71	27,052	42.27	33,129	1	3	6
(3) Kasmar	149	74,219	115.95	1,01,650	1	5	11
(4) Shahpur Munir	1	1,248	2.00	3,730	2	14	6
(5) Makair	275	75,761	118.37	49,007	0	10	4
(6) Goa	698	2,41,676	377.62	1,83,190	0	12	1
(7) Bal	676	2,49,201	389.37	2,42,682	0	15	6
(8) Narhan	83	29,909	46.73	29,176	0	15	7
(9) Barai	241	1,05,507	164.86	78,518	0	11	10
(10) Madhal	157	65,110	101.74	36,598	0	8	11
(11) Dangsi	108	59,003	92.19	34,388	0	9	4
(12) Sepah	195	74,471	116.36	46,180	0	9	11
(13) Kallyanpur Khadi	992	2,70,004	421.88	1,17,030	0	6	11
(14) Pachlakh	195	76,637	119.74	45,757	0	9	7
(15) Bara	360	1,33,482	205.6	93,801	0	11	3
(16) Andar	216	74,537	116.46	64,321	0	13	9
(17) Chanbar	177	83,352	130.23	42,231	0	8	1
Total	4,662	16,72,076	2,609.66	12,34,310	0	11	9 7/10

The figures regarding the number of estates are wrong for the reasons given above. There could not have been more than 3,000 estates in Saran in 1845 and it was not till 1892 that the number reached 4,700. But the area figures are, of course, of the utmost importance for now for the first time we have to deal with acres instead of with one ever varying *bigha*.

Some years after this, it was realised that a fresh survey of *diara* areas was necessary owing to rivers having changed their courses since the Revenue Survey; and in 1863 Government gave orders for a minute

survey of the conterminous villages on both banks of the rivers Ganga, Gogra and Gandak to show the changes which had taken place. The survey of the Ganga and Gogra *diara* was carried out in 1863-64, and that of the Gandak *diara* in 1864-65, but the final adjustment of riverain was not completed until 1869. The results so far as North Bihar is concerned are given in the following table :—

Amount added to the rent roll on account of assessment of the alluvial lands.

District.	Settled permanently.			Settled temporarily.			Total.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Champaran	..	..	..	72	14	9	72	14	9
Patna	..	4,496	15 6	3,695	3 6		8,192	3 0	
Saran	..	18	13 0	5,089	0 0		6,007	13 0	
Shahabad	..	1,941	11 6	7,611	6 7		9,553	2 1	
Tirhut	..	3,748	11 6	241	0 0		3,989	11 6	
Total	..	10,206	3 6	16,709	8 10		26,915	12 4	

Amount of riverain remitted on account of diluvian.

District.	Amount of riverain abated on the application of the parties.			Amount of riverain liable to abatement but for which no application has been filed.			Total.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Champaran	..	..	..	401	13 1		401	13 1	
Patna	..	367	3 10	2,418	6 11		2,785	10 9	
Saran	..	17,995	6 7	4,329	13 1		22,325	3 8	
Shahabad	..	48	9 0	2,901	0 0		2,949	9 0	
Tirhut	..	63	0 0	2,648	8 4		2,708	11 4	
Total	..	18,471	6 5	12,699	9 5		31,170	15 10	

In forwarding this table the Commissioner remarked :—“ The results are anything but satisfactory. The total revenue gained by alluvian accretion is Rs. 26,915-12-4, while the revenue lost on account of diluvian is Rs. 31,170-15-0, of which Rs. 18,471-6-5 have been already remitted. The abatement in Saran alone amounts to Rs. 17,995-6-7 ”.

The second *diara* survey was made in 1882-83 when a cadastral survey was in progress in the districts of Ghajipur and Ballia in the



United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) the opportunity was taken to make a fresh survey of the Ganga and Gogra *diaras*. Great changes were discovered in the course of the mid-stream which was supposed to mark the boundary between Saran and Ballia, and it was reported that many estates settled in Saran were found to be on the Ballia side of the deep channel and *vice versa*. It is impossible to trace the exact effect on the land revenue of the 1882-83 *diara* survey, as no systematic settlement was made of the excess of 4,160 acres then discovered. It was gradually brought under assessment on the expiry of the term of settlement of the temporarily settled estates adjoining it. So far as the land revenue administration is concerned the fixation of mid-stream boundary is not convenient. It might be convenient for criminal jurisdiction. This is also endorsed by Mr. Stevenson Moore's contention that "nothing can be worse than that the jurisdiction should end on a line where landed interests are in a continual state of flux".

*The Modern Period.*

This settlement was followed by a settlement of the entire district that started in 1893 and came to a close in 1901. Up to May, 1895, the Saran and Champaran operations were carried on together, but as the work progressed this was found to be unsuitable and Saran Settlement was separated from that of Champaran. The particulars which were required to ascertain the record were as follows:—

- (a) Name of each tenant. (b) The class to which he belongs, that is to say, whether he is a tenure-holder, *raiyyat* holding at fixed rates, settled *raiyyat*, occupancy *raiyyat*, non-occupancy *raiyyat*, or under-*raiyyat*; and if he is a tenure-holder, whether he is a permanent tenure-holder or not, and whether his rent is liable to enhancement during the continuance of his tenure. (c) The situation, quantity and boundaries of the land held by him. (d) The name of his landlord. (e) The money rent payable, or if a produce rent, the fact that a produce rent is paid. (f) The mode in which the rent has been fixed, whether by contract, by order of court or otherwise. (g) If the rent is gradually increasing rent, the time at which, and the steps by which, it increases. (h) The special conditions and incidents, if any, of the tenantry. (i) The name of each proprietor (including rent-free owner) with the character and extent of his interest, and the situation, quantity and boundaries of the proprietor's private lands. (j) The name of each rent-free occupant, the situation, quantity and boundaries of the land held by him, and whether he holds rent-free by the permission of the proprietor of the land or of his predecessor in title or independently of such permission.

As in other districts the cadastral and fiscal survey in Saran was preceded by a traverse or boundary survey. According to the traverse survey the total area of the district was 2,780 square miles. The total area traversed, was considerably in excess of the total area of the district. This was due to the extensive overlap survey in the Muzaffarpur, Ballia, Shahabad and Patna districts.

The total area of the district arrived at by totalling the areas for each village is as follows :—

	Square miles.
Area surveyed and settled under the Tenancy Act	2,479.88
Area surveyed under the Survey Act .. .. .	1.90
Municipal and urban area .. .. .	4.12
Total .. .. .	<u>2,674.00</u>

In 1793 *Sarkars* Saran and Champaran formed a single district with 20 *parganas*. *Pargana* Kasmar was transferred from Tirhut early in the last century, and *pargana* Maner subsequently diluviated, and on its reformation was transferred to Patna. In 1865 one of the four Champaran *parganas* Barla was transferred to Muzaffarpur and in the following year the three *parganas* on the east bank of the Gandak were formed into the separate district of Champaran and the remaining constituted the district of Saran.

The subdivision of Siwan dates from 1848, and that of Gopalganj from 1875. The areas of these and of the Sadar subdivision were as follows :—

	Square miles.
Gopalganj .. .. .	788
Siwan .. .. .	838
Sadar .. .. .	1,048
Total .. .. .	<u>2,674</u>

Gopalganj was divided into two thanas, Siwan into three and the Sadar into five, making ten in all. The following statement will show the area of each thana as then recorded :—

Thana.	Square miles.
(1) Mirganj .. .. .	437
(2) Gopalganj .. .. .	351
Total Gopalganj subdivision .. .. .	<u>788</u>
(3) Siwan .. .. .	331
(4) Darauli .. .. .	261
(5) Basantpur .. .. .	246
Total Siwan subdivision .. .. .	<u>838</u>

Thana.				Square miles.
(6) Manjhi	..	..	..	145
(7) Chapra	..	..	..	354
(8) Mashrakh	..	..	..	174
(9) Parsa	..	..	..	265
(10) Sonepur	..	..	..	110
Total Sadar subdivision				1,048
Total district				2,674

So far as the number of estates and the revenue demand from those estates is concerned it was found that there had been great fluctuations in the number of estates. It was mainly due to partition work. The fluctuations in the number of estates and the total revenue demand during the last twenty-five years are shown in the following statement :—

Year.			No. of estates.	Total revenue demand from those estates.
			Rs.	
1876-77	..	..	3,873	12,32,237
1877-78	..	..	4,015	12,35,035
1878-79	..	..	4,039	12,42,125
1879-80	..	..	4,069	12,43,562
1880-81	..	..	4,099	12,44,880
1881-82	..	..	4,132	12,46,027
1882-83	..	..	4,179	12,34,626
1883-84	..	..	4,207	12,34,002
1884-85	..	..	4,239	12,29,859
1885-86	..	..	4,293	12,22,682
1886-87	..	..	4,374	12,24,141
1887-88	..	..	4,451	12,24,556
1888-89	..	..	4,491	12,23,478
1889-90	..	..	4,559	12,23,266
1890-91	..	..	4,620	12,66,528
1891-92	..	..	4,703	12,66,788
1892-93	..	..	4,854	12,67,723
1893-94	..	..	4,936	12,68,136
1894-95	..	..	5,023	12,64,996
1895-96	..	..	5,091	12,55,055
1896-97	..	..	5,152	12,63,571
1897-98	..	..	5,230	12,63,317
1898-99	..	..	5,311	12,63,861
1899-1900	..	..	5,345	12,64,578
1900-1901	..	..	5,373	12,63,924

The rise and fall in revenue was mainly due to temporarily settled estates in the *diara*. The district in 1900-1901 contained 25 estates, the property of Government; yielding a revenue of Rs. 11,660. There were also 80 temporarily settled estates with a revenue demand amounting to Rs. 15,000.

#### REVISIONAL SETTLEMENT.

The revisional settlement operations were started in 1915 and came to a close in 1921. The Settlement Officer, Mr. P. N. Gupta has mentioned in his report that "the present proceedings are a revision of the record-of-rights framed 20 years ago". Therefore there is very little scope for detailed discussion like the final report of Mr. Kerr. Regarding land revenue, Mr. P. N. Gupta mentions—

"Saran teems with innumerable petty estates jointly held by a large number of co-sharers who are frequently at feud with each other. The difficulties of the administration of land revenue are also aggravated by the existence of extensive *diara* lands (belonging to the Ganges, the Gandak and the Gogra) with a revenue of an uncertain and fluctuating character. In the latter settlement of land revenue has to be revised almost each year on the basis of local enquiries after the floods have receded. The whole district with the exception of some *diaras* and temporarily-settled villages is permanently settled, and the fluctuation in the revenue demand since 1901 is principally due to the settlements of *diara* lands and temporarily-settled estates from time to time.

The total number of revenue-paying estates was 5,444 in 1901, and in 1910 it increased to 6,076 and in 1920 it swelled to 7,021 mainly owing to the operation of the Batwara Act amongst petty landlords."

The statement below will show the gradual development of the estates and the revenue since 1901 :—

Year.	No. of revenue-paying estates.	No. of temporarily-settled estates.	No. of Government estates.	Total revenue demand.
				Rs.
1901	5,444	76	21	12,63,614
1902	5,491	80	25	12,62,745
1903	5,506	78	23	12,63,101
1904	5,533	13	31	12,64,345
1905	5,576	77	36	12,68,500
1906	5,655	77	39	12,67,055
1907	5,708	77	39	12,66,090

Year.	No. of revenue-paying estates.	No. of temporarily-settled estates.	No. of Government estates.	Total revenue demand.
				Rs.
1908	.. 5,744	72	13	12,67,243
1909	.. 5,898	69	15	12,66,851
1910	.. 6,076	64	18	12,68,388
1911	.. 6,139	60	23	12,71,542
1912	.. 6,203	59	22	12,70,570
1913	.. 6,260	56	25	12,70,153
1914	.. 6,364	55	27	12,71,660
1915	.. 6,405	49	32	12,71,404
1916	.. 6,586	48	31	12,68,506
1917	.. 6,703	56	26	12,67,230
1918	.. 6,863	59	28	12,68,861
1919	.. 6,937	63	26	12,69,934
1920	.. 7,021	65	26	12,70,737

The statement below will show the comparative picture of revenue and assets at the time of the Revisional Settlement of Saran of the districts in Bihar :—

District.	Assets.			Revenue.	Ratio of revenue to assets.	Incidence of revenue per acre.
	Cash rent.	Value of produce rent and <i>Khas</i> land.	Total.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.		Rs. a. p.
Patna ..	37,98,950	40,24,080	78,22,930	15,20,728	1 : 5	1 2 0
South Monghyr	19,14,033	20,23,008	47,37,031	5,07,307	1 : 9	0 4 4
North Monghyr	18,28,728	11,08,320	29,37,048	3,74,060	1 : 8	0 6 5
Purnea ..	..	..	44,20,306	11,72,863	1 : 4	0 6 2
Bhagalpur ..	40,44,595	22,01,770	62,46,365	5,54,842	1 : 11	0 3 4
Darbhanga ..	53,71,582	16,56,873	70,28,455	7,88,301	1 : 9	0 5 10
Muzaffarpur ..	45,70,010	18,19,500	63,89,510	9,85,128	1 : 6	0 9 11
Saran ..	48,78,960	10,86,584	59,65,544	12,63,924	1 : 4	0 11 10
Champaran ..	29,28,428	10,76,632	40,05,100	5,15,125	1 : 8	0 3 7
Gaya ..	35,03,187	88,12,517	1,23,75,104	14,83,775	1 : 8	0 7 9
Shahabad ..	50,64,208	48,11,131	99,61,773	17,78,578	1 : 6	0 10 5

Thus from the abovementioned analysis of the revenue and assets of the districts of Bihar, it is seen Saran is only second to Patna in order of assessment, the ratio of revenue to assets being 1 : 4 and

the incidence of revenue per acre being Re. 0-11-10. The total revenue in 1920 was Rs. 12,70,737 and assets according to the revisional settlement are as follows :—

	Rs.
Cash rental .. .. .	51,33,010
Produce-rent and Khasmahal land valued at Rs. 6 per acre.	7,55,562
Miscellaneous collection as <i>sariat</i> , <i>bazar</i> , etc. . .	2,94,428
Total .. .. .	61,83,000

By this process which was adopted by Mr. Sweeney in his Champaran report, the proportion of revenue to assets comes to 1 : 5 rather than 1 : 4.

*Rents.*—Rents generally remained unchanged since the last settlement (1893–1901). During the revisional settlement the incidence of rent was found to be higher than that of the other subdivisions. The highest rate of rent was Rs. 21-7-0 per acre and was the highest in the district. The incidence of rent had reached the highest pitch in the Siwan and Sadar subdivisions of the district. The average incidence of rent in Saran was Rs. 4-7-0 as against Rs. 4-5-0 in the last settlement and the proportion on the average gross outturn was estimated to be less than one-fifth. The following statement will compare the district rental in the last and the revisional settlements :—

	Cash rental (in Rs.).	Produce rental area (in acres).	Valued at Rs. 6 per acre.	Total.  Rs.
Last Settlement ..	48,78,960	49,159	2,94,954	51,73,914
Revisional Settlement	51,38,021	42,758	2,55,468	53,88,489

The break-up figures of the rent rates on the different classes of *raiya* interests at the last and revisional operations as well as the incidence of cash rent per acre in the other districts of North Bihar are given below :—

	Area.	Rent.	Rate.
	Acres.	Rs.	Rs. a. p.
Last Settlement—			
Fixed rates .. .. .	9,340	30,840	3 4 9
Settled and Occupancy	11,02,382	47,76,731	4 5 4
Non-occupancy .. .. .	14,185	71,389	5 0 6
Total .. .. .	11,25,907	48,78,960	4 5 3

	Area.	Rent.	Rate.
	Acres.	Rs.	Rs. a. p.
Revisional Settlement—			
Fixed rates .. .. .	9,398	31,488	3 5 8
Settled and Occupancy	11,43,539	50,86,928	4 7 0
Non-occupancy .. .. .	3,855	14,605	3 12 8
Total .. .. .	11,56,791	51,33,021	4 7 0

*Average incidence of rent.*

Districts.	Average incidence of cash rent per acre.
	Rs. a. p.
Muzaffarpur .. .. .	3 13 5
Saran .. .. .	4 7 0 (as attested).
Darbhanga .. .. .	3 12 4
Champan .. .. .	2 2 5

From the above table it is apparent that the incidence of cash rent in Saran was comparatively higher than the other districts of North Bihar.

The settlement operations during 1915—1921 have not been repeated again. The picture that emerged from the revisional settlement practically remained the same till the Congress Ministry formed the Cabinet in 1937. During this period, however, some changes in land had been made to ameliorate the condition of the *raiyat*. *Abwabs* were particular targets and with the growing consciousness of the tenant there was a gradual growing apathy to pay the *abwabs*. The *kisans* had come to realise that they also had a say in the administration. There were several *kisan* agitations in various parts of Bihar led by people like Sahjanand Saraswati, Swami Bhawani Daya<sup>1</sup>, Ramodar Das (Rahul Sankritayan), Pandit Ramchandra Sharma and others. These agitations focussed the grievances of the tenants in a lucid light and the zamindars tried to counteract the move through the Bihar Land-holders' Association and other aristocratic organisations. It will, however, be a mistake to observe that the zamindars were all engines of oppression. Through State patronage and also voluntarily a few landlords like Hathua had discharged a part of the social obligations by establishing schools, colleges and other charitable institutions.

The next great landmark was the abolition of the zamindari and the vesting of the estates. It is proper that we should briefly

cover the background even at the risk of some repetition before the zamindari abolition is discussed.

The Permanent Settlement of 1793 was the basis of zamindari system in the district of Saran, till the zamindari abolition scheme came into force, as a result of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. At the time of the Permanent Settlement, there were 1,818 estates in the district with the land revenue demand of Rs. 10,27,110. By 1906-07 this number had risen to 5,655 paying a land revenue of Rs. 12,67,055 out of which 5,339 estates with a demand of Rs. 12,33,541 were permanently settled, 77 paying Rs. 14,954 were temporarily settled and 39 paying Rs. 18,560 were held direct by Government. In the year 1928-29 the current demand of land revenue was Rs. 12,90,537 payable by 7,977 estates; Rs. 12,30,472 being due from 7,891 permanent settled estates, Rs. 31,932 from 58 temporarily settled estates and Rs. 28,133 from 28 estates held direct by Government. Against the total current demand of Rs. 12,90,537, collection during the said year, that is, 1928-29 was Rs. 12,85,107.

The problems relating to the land revenue system were for many years past engaging the attention of Government as well as the public men in Bihar. After pointing out the serious defects in the zamindari system under the Permanent Settlement of 1793, the Land Revenue Commission of 1938 came to the conclusion that in order to improve the economic conditions of the cultivators the Permanent Settlement and the zamindari system should be replaced by a system under which the Government would be brought into direct relationship with the actual cultivators by acquisition of all the superior interests in agricultural lands. This formed the basis for the Bihar Land Reforms Act of 1950 which, after overcoming all constitutional hurdles in its way, provided for complete abolition of all forms of intermediary interests. In pursuance of Government's decision to take over the big estates and tenures having a gross annual income exceeding Rs. 50,000, the following five estates of the district were taken over in the first instance under the provisions of the said Act in the year 1952, viz., (1) Hathwa estate, (2) Hathwa Babu Saheb's estate, (3) Manjha Baripatti, (4) Manjha Manjhalipatti and (5) Manjha Chhotipatti. Subsequently, when the State Government decided to take over the entire zamindari and intermediaries under the provisions of section 3(b) of the Bihar Land Revenue Act, 1950, all the estates and tenures in the district of Saran were notified by one notification and they became vested in the State with effect from the 1st January 1956.

#### MANAGEMENT (PRESENT SET-UP).

In order to administer the land revenue the district of Saran consequent upon implementation of the zamindari abolition scheme, has been divided into 40 Anchals, viz., (1) Chapra, (2) Revelganj, (3) Manjhi, (4) Sonapur, (5) Taraiya, (6) Mashrakh, (7) Dighwara, (8) Dariapur, (9) Parsa, (10) Amnaur, (11) Ekma, (12) Baniapur,



(13) Jalalpur, (14) Garkha, (15) Marhawrah, (16) Bijaipur, (17) Bhorey, (18) Barauli, (19) Baikunthpur, (20) Kateya, (21) Kuchai-kote, (22) Gopalganj, (23) Manjha, (24) Mirganj, (25) Hathwa, (26) Guthni, (27) Mairwa, (28) Ander, (29) Pachrukhi, (30) Goreakothi, (31) Basantpur, (32) Bhagwanpur, (33) Sewan, (34) Barharia, (35) Hussaingunj, (36) Darauli, (37) Siswan, (38) Maharajganj, (39) Durauhdha and (40) Raghunathpur.

In each *anchal* there are, on the average, 10 *halkas* and the total number of *halkas* in the district is 400. It was proposed to place one gazetted officer of the rank of Sub-Deputy Collector as Circle Officer in each *anchal* for the revenue administration. Due to paucity of officers, however, it has not so far been possible to post one officer in charge of each *anchal* and some of the officers are in charge of two *anchals* at present but it is hoped that very shortly each *anchal* will have one officer. A Circle Inspector is also posted in each *anchal* to assist the Circle Officer. There are the *Karamcharis* in charge of one *halka* each, for collection of rent and agricultural statistics and other allied work. Rent collection work is also done by *Gram Panchayats* in some areas. At present 210 *Gram Panchayats* have so far been entrusted with rent collection work.

In each subdivision there is a Deputy Collector Incharge Land Reforms and Development who looks after the revenue and development work of the subdivision and assists the Subdivisional Officer in the revenue administration of the subdivision. Similarly an Additional Collector has been posted in the district to assist the Collector in the revenue administration of the district.

#### PRESENT SYSTEM OF SURVEY, ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION OF LAND REVENUE.

The last revisional survey in the district of Saran took place between the years 1915 to 1921. The revenue assessed according to the last survey was Rs. 12,70,737. The *Karamchari* at the *halka* level is the lowest revenue officer who is primarily responsible for collection of revenue and all other similar Government dues. His work is supervised by the Circle Inspector and the Circle Officer of the area, who are also responsible for collection of revenue, accurate maintenance of accounts and deposit of all money collected by the *Karamchari* into Government treasuries. Collection of rent is also done through the local *Gram Panchayats* on commission basis ranging from 5 to 10 per cent according to the percentage of collection. Incidentally it may be mentioned that most of ex-intermediaries have not yet filed their collection papers including *jamabandi* in full, with the result that the management of the vested zamindaris has become an uphill task for the revenue officers.

#### DIARA VILLAGES.

There are about 400 *diara* villages in the district out of which 198 have not yet been surveyed and consequently they have not been

assessed to rent. Administration of the *diara* villages is a serious problem for the district authorities, more so in the case of the villages lying on the border of Ballia and Saran districts. Attempts are, however, being made by the authorities of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar Governments to solve this tangle by fixing a permanent boundary between the two States on the basis of the result of Deep-Stream verifications. A conference for the purpose was held at Varanasi on 4th April 1959 in which the representatives of the two States participated, and it is hoped that this long-standing administrative problem will come to an end very shortly.

INCOME FROM LAND REVENUE AND SPECIAL CESSES  
CONNECTED WITH IT.

After the total abolition of the intermediaries the current annual rental demand of the district in the year 1956 worked up to Rs. 13,27,432 only based on the *jamabandis* filed. This demand, however, went on gradually increasing as and when fresh *jamabandis* were received from the intermediaries and duly accounted for. The demand during the year 1958-59 came up to Rs. 53,01,974.46 nP. as against Rs. 33,86,875 in 1956-57 and Rs. 44,70,548 in 1957-58. The current demand on account of cess during the last three years was as follows :—

				Rs.
1956-57	..	..	..	2,35,302
1957-58	..	..	..	2,87,100
1958-59	..	..	..	3,02,793

The State Government also derived income from settlement of *sairats* of all categories. These *sairats* used to be previously settled by the landlords but have now been vested in the State under the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. The current demand on this account during the year 1958-59 was Rs. 2,61,100 (up to February, 1959), as against Rs. 3,12,207 in 1956-57 and Rs. 2,74,168 in 1957-58. The *sairat* income includes miscellaneous demand realised from vested *hats*, *bazars*, *melas*, *jalkars* and orchards, etc., and is liable to fluctuation.

Against the demands under different heads mentioned above collections during the last three years were as follows :—

Year.		Rent.	Cess.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1956-57	..	28,31,176	1,74,304	3,05,368	33,10,848
1957-58	..	25,16,891	1,51,197	2,57,169	29,25,257
1958-59	..	32,05,758	1,91,466	2,97,403	36,94,628

## LAND REFORMS.

The Government having stepped into the shoes of the ex-landlord it is now question of relation between the Government and the tenant rather than the landlord and the tenant. While all efforts are being made to maintain cordial relation with the tenants, reports are sometimes received that the *Karamcharis* who are in direct touch with the tenants are not always helpful to the tenants. Such reports as and when received promptly dealt with by the superior authorities and any attempt on the part of the *Karamcharis* to resort to malpractices or to harass the tenants are drastically dealt with.

Before abolition of the zamindari system a number of measures were adopted to secure the interest of the tenants. Mention may particularly be made of the Rent Reduction Operation, the Rent Commutation Operation, the Bakasht Dispute Settlement Act, 1947, and insertion of a new section, viz., section 48-E in the Bihar Tenancy Act providing for restoration of lands to under-*raiyats* unlawfully ejected. Emphasis has also been put on settlement of lands with the members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes and all efforts are made to settle vacant lands with such persons in the district. 281.30 acres of land (up to March, 1959) has so far been settled with them.

## COMPENSATION.

The State Government are under obligation to pay compensation to the ex-intermediaries for their zamindari interests that have vested in the State under provisions of the Bihar Land Reforms Act. Section 32 of the Act accordingly provides for payment of compensation to the ex-intermediaries. As it was not possible for various reasons to pay the final compensation within a short period, provision was also made for making *ad interim* payments under section 33 of the Act. According to this provision, the ex-intermediaries are to receive six-monthly payments at the rate of 3 per cent per annum of the approximate amount of compensation payable where such amount does not exceed Rs. 50,000 and at the rate of 2½ per cent (subject to the maximum of Rs. 62,500 per annum) where the approximate amount exceeds Rs. 50,000.

Since the vesting of estates and tenures in the district of Saran, 27,719 intermediaries have filed the required applications for compensation. Total amount of *ad interim* compensation paid up to 31st March, 1959 works up to Rs. 22,49,046.10 nP. It has not been possible to make final payment of compensation in any case so far as necessary verification of particulars furnished by the ex-landlords could not be finalised.

In the administration of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, certain difficulties were experienced particularly with regard to payment of compensation and with a view to obviate these difficulties the Bihar

Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1958, has been passed by the Bihar Legislature which has received the assent of the President recently. In order to meet cases of delay in payment of compensation under section 32 of the Act a new section, viz., section 32 (A) has been added to provide for payment of a sum not exceeding 50 per cent of the approximate amount of compensation. This provision is expected to give much relief to the ex-intermediaries.

#### AGRARIAN MOVEMENT—'BHOODAN'.

The *Bhoodan* movement initiated by Shri Vinoba Bhave has made appreciable progress in the district of Saran, which was due to two successive visits of the said leader to this district in the years 1952 and 1954. The Bihar *Bhoodan Yajna* Committee was formed in the year 1955 at the State level. The District Office of the said committee is functioning in this district since the year 1957. Reports available from the said office indicate that till the end of April, 1959, 1,03,902 acres of land have been donated in this district out of which 4,323 acres of land have been distributed among deserving persons till the said period. Total number of *Danpatras* (documents of gift), filed up to April, 1959, came up to 3,750, out of which 2,591 *Danpatras* have so far been confirmed by the revenue officers who have the statutory powers under the Bihar *Bhoodan Yajna* Act, 1954, to deal with the *Danpatras* according to the prescribed manner.

#### CONSOLIDATION OF HOLDINGS AND PREVENTION OF FRAGMENTATION.

The Bihar Consolidation of Holdings and Prevention of Fragmentation Act, 1956, has been enacted with a view to help consolidation of holdings and prevention of fragmentation thereof. No action in this regard has, however, so far been taken in this district as no areas have yet been selected for the purpose. Government had, however, recently called for recommendation for selection of Blocks in the district where the work of consolidation of holdings can be taken up. Guthni Block in Siwan subdivision of the district has accordingly been recommended as Consolidation Block to be taken up during the year 1959-60.