

ending

Revenue (1898) Department.

PRESS SERIES

G.O., Nos 93-94

Dated 16th February 1898.

[Despatch Abstract.]

According with remarks P.P. Subm.
to Govt report as to how far the system
of paying agricultural labourers in kind
is being superseded in the Madras Pres.
by the system of money payments.

BACK PAPERS.

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REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1897.

Board of Revenue

(Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture),

MADRAS.

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Proceedings, No. 690, 29th October 1897.

OCTOBER.

Wages.—Submitting to Government, report as to how far the system of paying agricultural labourers in kind is being superseded by the system of money payments, in the Madras Presidency.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE
(REVENUE SETTLEMENT, LAND RECORDS AND AGRICULTURE).

RESOLUTION—No. 690, dated 29th October 1897.

In continuation of paragraph 3 of B.P., No. 378, dated 1st December 1896, and with reference to paragraph 5 of G.O., No. 612, Revenue, dated 23rd July 1897, the Board begs to submit the following report regarding the question "whether the custom of paying field labourers in grain is being superseded by money payments, and whether the labourers suffer by this change."

2. As remarked by Government in the paragraph quoted above, a report on the above question was first called for in 1892. All the information rendered by the Collectors up to May in the following year on the subject of agricultural wages in general, was placed at the disposal of Dewan Bahadur S. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar, C.I.E., who was then preparing his "Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years," and was made full use of by him—*vide* pages 138 to 156 of his book, second edition.

3. As explained by the Board it was erroneously supposed that G.O., Mis. No. 787, dated 22nd February 1896 (which accepted Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar's section on agricultural wages as embodying sufficient information on that subject) applied also to the special question as to whether money wages were taking the place of wages paid in grain.

Although Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar does not explicitly answer this question in the negative (probably feeling, as the Board now does, that sufficient information had not been accumulated to warrant any general conclusions being drawn), the section above quoted nevertheless teems with information tending to show that there were no visible symptoms of any rapid decay of the old local customs regulating the payment of wages. "Wages," he says, "are generally stated to be paid in grain, and the rates of wages are believed not to have varied materially since the beginning of the century."

He then quotes instances in which recent rises in grain wages had been reported from several districts. Into the next few pages he compresses nearly all the information which the Board has at its disposal at the present date. He mentions that over 7,000 registered service agreements had been examined, and enquiries made as to the changes which have occurred in grain wages. It was found that there has been nowhere any reduction in the customary wages paid for agricultural labour. "The tendency," he observes, "everywhere appears to be for an increase in grain wages, and the complaints often made are that it is difficult to obtain labourers for the due customary rates of wages. . . . The grain wages given for casual labour, *e.g.*, additional labour employed during harvest, appear to have generally increased, and in some cases doubled."

"The tendency," he concludes, "on the whole is towards an increase in the earnings of labourers as estimated in food-grains."

4. The Board has made the above quotations because they contain the gist of the Collectors' reports of five years' ago, abstracted by an able hand; and also in explanation of its impression that no further discussion of the subject was called for.

Many of the Collectors devoted a paragraph to the subject in their settlement reports for fasli 1302 (1892-93), but the Board does not find therein any very novel or definite information.

5. The Board has received no recent reports on the subject and has for the most part to gather its information from the very sources which Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar has so excellently drained.

6. There is, as might be supposed, a great diversity in the customs regulating agricultural wages, not only in different districts of the Presidency, but in different taluks in the same district, and in different parts of one and the same taluk.

For so vast an area as the Madras Presidency, it is well nigh impossible to make any safe generalization, or to affirm that one old practice still prevails, or that another is falling into desuetude.

7. A précis of the Collectors' reports is printed as an appendix to these Proceedings. The rates of wages reported from several districts are very surprising, and the Board would deprecate their being accepted as correct without further enquiry.

To quote one instance, it is reported that in some parts of Ganjam, the casual labourer, paid by results, is allowed at harvest one-fourth of the crop he gathers! It is appalling to think what allowance the Settlement Department should make for cultivation expenses if the one operation of cutting the crop swallows up 25 per cent. of the gross outturn! In other parts of the same district, he is said to be paid a harvest wage of 18 lbs. of paddy a day, which, in the current season, would be equivalent to about As. 11.

8. In Gódvári delta, it is stated that the custom of paying wages in money is rapidly taking the place of the old plan of paying in grain. A like change is reported to be in progress in the Kistna delta. In the Eastern delta the average daily wage of the casual labourer is stated to be As. 5, and in the Western delta As. 3. Where the labourers are paid in grain, the current price is taken into account and the labourer receives as much grain as is the equivalent of the current money wage, which itself varies according to the season and the nature of the work.

This information agrees with that gathered by the Settlement Commissioner in a recent tour through the district, and furnishes an instance of one locality in which old customs are being changed to the disadvantage of the day labourer.

The Sub-Collector of Coimbatore reported in 1893 that grain payments are being fast superseded by money payments in the Karúr and Dhárápura taluks; but the Collector quotes with approval Mr. Nicholson's conclusion at page 272 of the District Manual, that "money wages have kept pace with prices, and that grain wages are the same as of old."

9. With the exceptions above noted there appears a unanimity of opinion that there was up to 1893 no general indication of a supersession of grain wages in favour of money wages.

10. Permanent farm labourers, who are kept on all the year round, still usually get their wages in grain, cloths and perquisites; or, if their caste permits their doing house work for their employers, they get cooked food and clothing, and a lump payment in grain or in money. The remuneration of the permanent labourer follows the old lines, and his condition, if it does not improve, certainly shows no tendency to deteriorate.

11. It is too soon to predict what will be the effect on wages of such an extraordinary season of scarcity as now seems happily drawing to a close. The tremendous and general rise in the price of food-grains (in many places to double or treble the normal rate) must, it would be thought, create a strong tendency to the payment of wages in cash. In many localities all stores of grain were being carefully hoarded; while the demand for labour was so slack that the subsistence paid to relief-workers formed the standard of wage which the labourer was fain to accept.

During the drought the supply of labour has so vastly exceeded the demand as to prevent any rise in money wages at all commensurate with the rise in prices. Even in the City of Madras, labour has been easily procurable at the ordinary money rates. Elsewhere tens of thousands of permanent farm labourers, and hundreds of thousands

of day labourers, have been thrown out of employ, and only by the intervention of Government have been saved from starvation. Such an upheaval of all usual arrangements between employers and employed must have a profound effect in shaking old customs, and it would appear not improbable that great numbers of the labourers who have heretofore been accustomed to be paid in grain will be driven to accept employment for a money wage which will not yield them their old grain wage except in normal seasons.

(True Extract.)

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to all Collectors.

Secretary.

APPENDIX.

Ganjām—(C. J. WEIR, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 8th February 1895).—The wages of farm-servants and casual agricultural labourers are, as a rule, paid in kind, as has been the custom from time immemorial. The wages have remained stationary almost throughout the district, save in the neighbourhood of the Railway and Rushikulya project works. The system of payment in kind finds favour both with the labourer and the landholder alike. During the harvest season, the casual labourer, whether male or female, is allowed $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the quantity gathered, or 4 to 8 Madras measures of paddy per day. In Goomsur, farm-servants (adults) get 32 kunchams of grain per mensem, besides perquisites. As the system of payment in kind has

A Kuncham or Toom = 3 seers.

not been superseded to any appreciable extent by cash payments, there has been apparently little material change in the condition of the bulk of the agricultural labourers. It can hardly be said that there has been any general tendency on the part of the agricultural labourer to take to casual labour paid for in cash; but there have of course been large gangs of coolies constantly employed on the great engineering works which have been in progress in the district during the past few years. These coolies are paid in cash, and at rates higher than those ordinarily prevailing in the district.

Visagapatam—(W. A. Willock, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Regular agricultural labourers are almost always paid in grain, with the addition of presents of cloths, &c., at certain seasons. In some places they are given two or three meals; the wages are then reduced proportionately.

Their wages (the Collector means, apparently, the money value of their wages) do consequently vary with the prices of grain. The customary grain payments, however, seem to have remained unaltered as a general rule, for a very long series of years. There is no desire on the part of farm-servants to have grain payments converted into cash, but rather the reverse.

Casual labourers are generally paid in cash, except at harvest time, when they are paid in grain. The latter would almost always be preferred and cash would not be accepted by regular farm-servants. In the vicinity of large towns, however, cash is more readily taken than in rural tracts. The rates of these labourers, when paid in cash, do not appear to be fixed by custom, but vary with the demand. In the slack season, *i.e.*, prior to transplantation, male labour is procurable at 1 anna, and female, at 8 pies per diem. During paddy transplantation, males get up to 2 annas 4 pies, and females up to 2 annas. For other minor operations, such as weeding, males get $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas and females 1 anna though not always. These rates are said not to have altered for the last thirty years. The Collector believes there has been a considerable alteration, but that it has taken the form of a reduction in the quality and quantity of the work done for the same money.

Gōdāvari—(S. H. Wynne, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Farm-servants are still paid their wages in kind; and the rates have increased as hereunder in Rāmachandrapuram, Bhimavaram and Rajahmundry, and are stationary in the rest of the district.

One Kuncham = 4 seers.

Rāmachandrapuram.—Kunchams 400, worth Rs. 35, in fasli 1283, to kunchams 600, worth Rs. 75, in fasli 1302, per annum.

Bhimavaram and Rajahmundry.—Kunchams 240, worth Rs. 18, to kunchams 400, worth Rs. 56, per annum. Farm-servants receive in addition to fixed grain wages certain perquisites and loans, with or without interest, on occasions of births and marriages, &c. They show, generally speaking, no tendency either to give up farm labour or to exchange grain for money wages. The Sub-Collector brings to notice that in one or two villages of his division on the line of the East Coast Railway, a few farm-servants have been induced by the high wages of 5 annas per diem to prefer casual labour in connection with Railway works. Casual labourers were paid till a few years back in grain throughout the district, at rates varying with reference to

sex of labourers and kind of work. In recent years money wages have been largely substituted in almost all the plain taluks and in about 25 per cent cases in the villages of Rāmachandrapuram and Rajahmundry taluks. The payment in the Chintalpudi division (a portion of the Ellore taluk), Bhadrāchalam, Chōdāvaram and Yellavaram is altogether in grain without exception. Wages in money have risen in proportion to prices and the system of grain payments is rapidly giving place to cash payments, except in the Agency and a few backward localities.

Kistna—(J. N. Atkinson, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 11th May 1893).—Farm-labourers are generally paid in kind. They get a certain quantity of grain daily at all times, and in addition, 3 out of 40 shares of grain, which their masters' lands may yield every year. The actual daily wages of these labourers differ slightly in different places. It comes to about 2½ local seers of paddy ($1\frac{1}{2}$ Madras measures) per day in the Nuzvid estate and in the Bandar and Gudivāda taluks. Instead of the share referred to above, they are sometimes paid annually a certain quantity of grain as a present. In all cases they receive a present of a cloth, a blanket, and a pair of sandals annually, and they generally have house-room provided free. In the Vinukonda taluk, and in the upland taluks of Palnad and Narasaraopet, the annual salary of a farm-servant is Rs. 16 to 24, in addition to which he is given three meals a day. There seems to be a tendency everywhere, dating from the time of the great famine, to substitute money for grain wages. Hitherto, this tendency has only partially affected the farm-servants. The casual labourer generally gets comparatively higher wages especially in the delta taluks. In the Eastern delta, payment is sometimes in money varying from 3 to 6 annas a day with an average of about 5 annas and sometimes in kind. In the latter case, the current prices of grain are taken into account, the grain wage being in fact the equivalent of a fixed money wage.

In the Western delta, payment of these labourers is almost always in money, the rate being 3 annas for a man. In Bāpatla taluk alone, transplantation coolies are paid in kind at 2 manikas, or 4 seers, of grain per diem. In the upland taluks, the wages of these labourers are paid as a rule in kind at 2 measures of cholam or cumbu per day for a male. One prominent feature in the general position of the labourers in the district is the gradual supersession of the grain wage, which no doubt was formerly universal, by remuneration in money. The wages of farm-servants are fixed by custom. These wages are independent of supply and demand. The rate of wage of the casual labourer is determined immediately by the state of the labour market. Prices have no immediate effect on wages. Prices can only indirectly affect wages, that is, when the disturbance in prices is so great or so long continued, as to affect the supply of labour.

Kurnool—(C. M. Mullaly, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 20th November 1893).—The Collector divides labourers into four classes: (1) daily labourer, (2) permanent farm-labourer, (3) sharing labourer, (4) joint cultivator.

The *sharing labourer* contributes manual labour and takes one-fourth outturn in return. He does not bear any portion of the cultivation expenses or assessment nor supplies cattle.

The *joint cultivator* takes half the crops and pays some of the cultivation expenses and kist and supplies cattle also according to the terms of the agreement, which is renewed every year.

The *permanent farm-servants* are paid either in cash or grain and the rates vary from Rs. 4 to 50 per annum with reference to their age, sex, skill, and capacity or with reference to the condition as to their being fed at their master's house or otherwise. In addition to food they get sundry perquisites, such as a pair of cloths, &c., worth in all Rs. 4 or 5. In Pattikonda taluk, the cash payment which was from Rs. 10 to 16 twenty years ago, is now reported to range from Rs. 16 to 24 per annum. In times of distress, owing to rise in prices, the rate of grain wages is reduced by quarter to half in some villages while it remains unaffected in others. This reduction is but temporary, and the old customary rate is reverted to after the distress is over. Money wages are also slightly raised by the rise in prices consequent on scarcity, but the increase is not proportionate to the rise in prices.

Casual labourers.—Wages are generally paid in cash for ploughing, weeding and transplanting, and in kind for harvesting. The daily grain wages range from 2 to 3 seers of cholam for a man and $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 seers for a woman. For indigo, however, money is given. Money wages are not popular to any extent. Thus farm-servants demand grain wages and there is no tendency on their part to exchange it for money payments. Their condition is not therefore affected to any appreciable extent by the change in the prices of the food-grains.

Belāry—(R. Sewell, Esq., Collector—Report, dated 6th February 1894).—Farm-servants and casual labourers in rural tracts are still very generally paid in kind, and although the rates vary in different parts of the district, they are not usually affected by fluctuations in the market prices, except in seasons of distress. The farm-servant is remunerated either by a fixed salary or by food and clothing in addition to fixed salary. The practice of allowing perquisites to labourers does not obtain in this district except in the case of those employed to boil sugar. The tendency to supersede grain wages by money payments, is prominent only in the case of small landholders who have to supplement their produce (*sic*) by other earnings.

The rates of wages are reported to show a perceptible increase from 12 to 20 per cent. in the Head-quarter Deputy Collector's Division and to be stationary in other parts of the district. Higher wages are paid for casual and skilled labour in towns containing manufactories or adjoining important railway stations.

Anantapur.—(K. C. Manavedan Raja, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Agricultural labourers when employed for long periods, say for a year or so, are generally fed and clothed at the cost of the employers. Besides this, they receive ready-money payments of from Rs. 8 to 20 per annum. Day labourers employed for transplanting, weeding, reaping, &c., are paid in kind in villages. The practice, however, is different in towns. When sowing, ploughing and weeding and other preliminary operations are carried on cash payment is resorted to. At the season of harvest, however, payment in kind is the general practice and the labourers prefer grain to cash at that time. It will thus be seen that the payment to daily labourers in cash is confined to towns. In towns money seems to be preferred except in harvest time, probably because service is gauged in cash, as all skilled labourers, merchants and private servants, &c., are paid in cash. The wages of labourers paid in kind have been stationary and have not changed with prices of grain.

Cuddapah.—(C. H. Mounsey, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Agricultural labourers are generally paid in grain according to the nature of the work they are engaged in. Male labourers engaged in ploughing, &c., in dry lands are paid a uniform rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ local measures (= $1\frac{1}{2}$ Madras measure) of grain with two meals a day in some places. For hard work, such as reaping, &c., they are paid two measures in addition to meals. "In case of wet lands the rates for ploughing, &c., are the same as in dry lands, but for reaping and thrashing they are paid higher rates of 4 and 5 measures, respectively, when the grain is with chaff and half the rates when it is without it." For picking cotton, generally done by females, the wages are regulated according to the quantity collected. They are allowed $\frac{1}{10}$, $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ the quantity picked up for the first, second and third pickings, respectively. In the case of farm-servants there has been no tendency either on the part of the labourers or landlords to exchange grain wages for money payments. Payment of wages in cash in addition to food and raiment provided by landlord has also obtained from time immemorial in most places. These servants are invariably provided with meals, and are allowed a pair of slippers, cumblis and a turban. In former days they used to get, in addition to the above, a yearly payment, ranging from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 for persons below 16 years, and from Rs. 12 to Rs. 16 for adults. Payment of wages in kind has remained almost unchanged. Money wages have not superseded grain wages to any appreciable extent except in the case of indigo manufacture and cotton ginning. The indigo labourers are paid 4 annas a day and for ginning cotton, which is generally undertaken by females, payment is made at 8 pies for every 14 seers of 20 tolas of seed extracted. The labourers are reported to be better off than before.

Nellore.—(C. D. Maclean, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Agricultural labourers are generally paid in kind. In the case of permanent farm-servants, the rate varies from $1\frac{1}{2}$ tooms (183.6 lb.) to $2\frac{1}{2}$ tooms (305.10 lb.) per month. These labourers are, as an alternative, allowed one meal a day, a corresponding diminution being made in the grain allowance; some of them are also paid partly in kind and partly in cash. They are also allowed petty perquisites, such as betel-nut, tobacco, &c., daily, and occasional presents of cloth or some silver on festivals, &c., and are allowed at the harvest to scrape the residue of the thrashing floor, which amounts to one putty (candy) occasionally. Casual labourers are not allowed anything beyond the daily wages. Even here the grain wage is the commonest, the money wage being only resorted to in large towns or their vicinity. The ordinary rate is $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers (7.7 lb.) of grain, per day, or 2 to 4 annas if paid in cash. These rates have been stationary for a very long time and there is no likelihood of cash payments being substituted for grain wages. As regards the effect of high prices on these wages, there is practically no change in any case. The substitution of money wages depends upon whether the rise in prices is due to local scarcity or other causes. In the latter case the substitution does not take place, though the case is different in the former.

Madras.—(W. Austin, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Madras is essentially a non-agricultural district and there is no special class of agricultural labourers. Enquiries go to show that the practice of paying field labourers in grain has not obtained in this district during the last twenty years, but they have all along been paid in cash. Within the last twenty years, the rate of wages appears to have risen from Rs. 4 to Rs. 6 a month or by 50 per cent., due evidently to the general rise in prices, the increase of population and the increasing demand for labour consequent on the development of trade and other business concerns in the city.

Chingleput.—(J. Thomson, Esq., Collector—Report, dated 12th June 1894).—It cannot be said that the enquiries made on the subject were either satisfactory or complete owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining reliable statistics of wages obtaining twenty years ago. Wages are so varied in the several taluks, in the several villages in the same taluk, and sometimes in the same village at different times with reference to the demand for labour, that it is found impossible to exhibit in the form of a consistent statement the changes which wages have undergone during the past twenty years.

The wages of farm-servants are still paid in most taluks in grain and there has been no change for the past twenty years and there is no tendency on the part of these labourers to exchange grain for money payments.

Casual labourers are paid either in grain or cash. Payments in grain are general at harvest times. In, and in the vicinity of, towns they are generally paid in cash and they vary in different parts of the district; but it comes to $2\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 measures of paddy. In some parts of Saidapet and in the vicinity of Madras and in parts of Conjeevaram as much as 4 measures of paddy are paid. Cash payments also vary from 2 to 3 annas. On the whole, it may be said that grain wage for casual field labour has declined by about 25 per cent. and the money wage has advanced from 20 to 33 per cent. on the rates of twenty years ago. Although it cannot be said that there is a general tendency everywhere to change grain into money payment, it is certain that it exists in some parts, chiefly in large villages and in the vicinity of towns. "The tendency is natural, where wants are various and can be easily supplied."

As regards the effect of the change on the condition of the labourers, the Sub-Collector is led to believe that the condition of the labourer is worse now than it was twenty years ago, although it is not so bad as to call for any special consideration. Mr. Pinto, Deputy Collector, Tiruvallūr Division, thinks that there has been no change in their general condition and the Collector does not believe in the alleged deterioration of the agricultural labourers.

South Arcot.—(M. Hammick, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The old custom of paying the farm-servants in grain is still popular and extant even in municipal towns. The commuted value of grain payments and perquisites of a farm-servant comes to Rs. 60 per annum. The grain wage is very accurately fixed and varies very little from year to year. The money presents, however, no doubt vary considerably according to the master's will. Casual labourers are generally paid in money. The usual rate is $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 annas for an adult male and between $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas for women and boys. These rates are half as much again as they were before the famine of 1877. For baling by picottas, adult males are paid 4 annas per day. The agent of a firm employing a very large amount of labour in the district reported to the Collector that while money wages have undoubtedly risen in the last decade they have not risen at anything like a proportionate rate to the cost of food.

North Arcot.—(G. F. T. Power, Esq., Collector—Report, dated 27th September 1894).—Permanent farm-servants are reported to be still paid only in grain and it is believed that they generally prefer to receive their wages in grain and there seems to be no tendency on their part to exchange grain payments for money wages. In Chandragiri taluk, money wages are reported to have superseded grain payments to the extent of 20 per cent.

Casual labourers are paid both in kind and in money. The Sub-Collector and the Head-quarter Deputy Collector report that grain wages have remained stationary, while there has been an increase in money wages due to the rise in prices of food-grains. In Wallajah taluk, there has been no increase in wages, whether paid in kind or in money, while in Chandragiri, money wages are said to have increased. The general duty Deputy Collector remarks that no perceptible change has occurred in the rates of wages of casual labourers in his division except in some places on the Villupuram-Guntakal Railway, where, owing to increased demand for labour, rates are said to have slightly increased.

Salem.—(G. Stokes, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The wages of farm-servants are generally paid in grain though there are some rare cases in which money wages are paid. The wages of these farm-servants remain stationary. Except very rarely they do not care to exchange their grain wages for money wages. In addition to their wages, they receive perquisites in the shape of food, cloths on feast days, &c.

Casual labourers are paid both in money and in kind. The increase in their wages when paid in cash is generally by about 50 per cent. as compared with the wages twenty years ago. Where wages are paid in grain, there has not been any material increase. "In villages situated near towns, commercial centres, large railway stations, &c., this labour is dearer and the tendency on the part of labourers to go away to such kinds of work, which, while it is more easy to do, brings equally good or higher wages (perhaps a trifle over 50 per cent.) does exist to some extent." But in villages remote from towns, &c., and in the interior of the country, the increase is less and may be put down at 35 or 40 per cent. In these parts the labourers stick to agricultural work more steadily.

Coimbatore.—(J. Sturrock, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Farm-servants are generally paid in grain. They are also paid a few rupees every year to meet the expenses of clothing, &c. Their wages amount to 30 to 40 Madras measures of grain per mensem; and money payments are rare, but in a few villages in Coimbatore taluk 4 annas are paid. The wages paid to this class of servants have not undergone any material change during the last twenty years as the labourers are content with the old rates, which are, owing to high prices, favourable to them.

In the case of casual labourers wages are paid both in money and grain. The money wages range from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 annas. The Sub-Collector reports as follows as regards Kārūr and Dhārāpuram taluks. "Grain payments are being fast superseded by money payments in most of the cases as the prices of grains have, during the last twenty years, gone up very high. During the last twenty years the rates of wages paid in money may be said to have increased by, say,

one-third or a little less, but those of wages paid in grain have gone down perhaps a little more than proportionately. The change, coupled with the constant failures in the monsoons, which much reduce the demand for labour, affects not a little the well-being of the ryot population, which increases out of proportion to the increasing means of providing labour and which generally prefers sticking to its own huts, to leaving them to foreign places in quest of wages. The ultimate result is that people are getting thinner and weaker." The Collector quotes with approval Mr. Nicholson's remarks in page 272 of the District Manual, viz., "there are no data for a complete comparison of present with former rates of wages, but from isolated statements it may be gathered that money wages have kept pace with prices and that grain wages are the same as of old."

Trichinopoly—(L. C. Miller, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The wages of the regular farm-servants employed all the year round are still paid in grain and the customary rate is maintained.

The wages of casual labourers, paid in kind or money, have not increased during the last twenty years. Payment is made in money or kind according to the kind of work done. The employers have a tendency to substitute money as far as possible in the case of casual labourers employed at particular seasons for weeding, harvesting, &c. And further, when grain is scarce, prices high, and labour plentiful, as in a bad season, employers are apt to take advantage of the competition for work and reduce both grain and money wages to some extent.

Tanjore—(J. Sturrock, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The bulk of the labouring population is divided into Porakudis (varam or metayer tenants) and pannials (farm-servants). The former do not receive actual wages but obtain a share of the produce of their masters' land which they cultivate with his capital. "The amount of the share or 'varam' varies with different villages and different conditions and it is not ascertainable if there has been any rise or fall in it of late." As regards pannials, they are paid in kind only; it is doubtful if they ever receive money at all. The condition of Panchaua pannials is very little removed from that of slaves, as they get only so much as is required for their maintenance, whereas the Sudra pannials receive "besides the payment in kind a number of advantages from their masters as well as gifts of money on certain occasions." Their material condition shows a distinct tendency to improve.

Madura—(L. C. Miller, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 18th December 1894).—As a rule, labourers are paid in grain when grain is available. Farm-labourers are sometimes given a sum of money or money and cloths and a daily meal. The position of these labourers who always get their meal will not be difficult in years of scarcity. There is no marked change in the system.

Casual labourers are paid in money or grain for pre-harvest operations and in grain for harvest operations, when, grain is usually available. For collecting tamarind produce or for picking cotton, they are generally paid a proportion of the produce gathered. The Deputy Collector of Madura reports that grain wages except for "pannaigars" (farm-labourers) are giving way to money wages, and that the labourers prefer the money. Possibly the improvement of communications and opening of markets may have tended to prevent farmers from maintaining stocks of grain sufficient to pay labourers all the year round and so to cause a substitution of money wages, but the change is taking place slowly if at all.

Tinnevely—(G. S. Forbes, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The wages of resident farm-labourers are generally paid in kind and seem to have remained practically stationary during the past twenty years. For labourers resident on the land in the paddy tracts, the grain wage is usually paid in lump at the end of harvest and varies from 14 marakals (136 Government seers) to 2 kottas (407 seers) of paddy for a man, and half that quantity for a woman. In addition to this the labourer receives for every day on which he is actually employed during harvest, three measures (3.63 seers) a day and at other times 1½ measures (1.81 seers). These rates vary slightly in different places. Besides this he also receives as presents, on occasions of marriage, &c., a certain quantity of paddy with a rupee or two in cash, and annually a cloth worth from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-8-0.

Casual labourers are paid in kind as well as in money according to the nature of the work. Those employed at harvest being generally paid in kind, while those employed for ploughing, manuring, &c., are paid in kind as well as in money. These receive only a daily wage of 6 to 4 measures of paddy for a man and 4 to 3 measures for a woman for harvest labour. For other labour when paid in kind, men get about 3 measures and women 2 measures. When paid in money men earn 2½ to 3 annas a day and women about 2 of that wage. For more severe forms of labour, such as digging wells, baling water and the like, the wage seems to be usually a cash wage and may be taken on the average at 4 annas a day for an able-bodied man. In the sea-port and municipal towns, much higher wages may be earned and consequently the strongest of the casual labourers resort thither.

In the dry and cotton taluks, ragi or cumbu takes the place of paddy in the grain wage, but in those tracts where cotton is ousting other cultivation, a pure money wage is to a large extent replacing the grain wage. The inclination of the employer is more and more to abolish

the grain wage, while the labourer's contention is the other way and the conflict is sharper in seasons of scarcity. Without some grain wage, ryots could not secure harvest labour. On the whole the results of the inquiries show that where the grain wage has continued, the labourer has not really suffered by the rise in prices, while as regards the money wage, there has been a general increase roughly proportionate to the increase in prices.

Nilgiris—(O. Wolfe-Murray, Esq., Acting Collector—Report dated 13th December 1893).—Wages are mostly paid in money except in cases where the Badagas work, during the harvest time for grain wage. In the Gōdalūr taluk, farm-servants composed chiefly of Paniars and Kurumbers are paid in grain daily and are given a meal daily in addition and cloths during festivals and are further allowed every year the paddy crop on two of the best plots in the occupation of their masters.

Malabar—(H. Bradley, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Farm-servants who form the bulk of the agricultural labourers are still paid in kind. They are paid in paddy at a fixed rate all the year round which amounts, on an average, to 2½ seers per man and 1½ seers for a woman. At harvest, fixed wages cease and the reapers are paid a share of the grain generally from one-sixth to one-tenth. In addition to the annual payments special grants are made on occasions of births, &c., and subsistence allowance during illness and old age. There has been no marked change in the wages of these labourers and the system of paying them in grain is not being superseded by payments in money and there is no tendency on their part to exchange grain wages for money payments. Farm-servants also take to such casual labour as they can obtain after completing the usual farm work for their masters.

Casual labourers are paid either in grain or money. Both kinds of wages have increased during the last twenty years. In the rural tracts there is no likelihood of payments in kind being superseded by money wages. The system of payment in kind suits both parties. The landlord has no difficulty in disposing of his grain and has not to convert it into cash in order to meet sudden demands. The labourer can obtain his food without placing himself at the mercy of the village shopkeepers.

South Canara—(G. F. T. Power, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The rates for farm-servants have been slightly but steadily increasing, but no general tendency to exchange grain payments for money wages has yet been observed. Labourers do take to casual labour such as work in coffee plantations or at coffee works or on roads, &c., but not because agricultural wages are insufficient, but rather because they can in this way earn an addition to their income at seasons when agricultural work is slack. As regards the increase, slight though it is, it may be said that it is chiefly caused by increased demand for labour. In the environs of towns or the coast, the coffee-curing or tile-works draw away labourers, and in the interior the construction of either the local roads or bridges or the plantations of sorts above the ghauts are the chief attractions.

Read Cus 9859/87.

note

The current read
about embodies the Board's
report as to how far the system
~~of paying the system~~ of paying agri-
cultural labourers in kind is being
superseded by the system of money
payments in the Madras Presidency.
The report was called for in
1892 in the reviewing of
report for fasli 1300 a
review for each subse-
quent fasli, the Board goes on
being asked to expedite a
submission.

2. Much of the
information now furnished
by the Board of Revenue was
collected in 1893 and has
been ~~extended~~ ^{revised} and embodied
by Dewan Bahadur Sri-
nivas Raghava Ayyangar in his
Memorandum in the Fort
Progress of the Madras Presi-
dency. The report cannot be accepted
as any description of the existing
state of things. Its forward
is by

(1) H. Y.
(2) R. E.

fo. 1075 of 20.10.92. Para 5

Page A

pp. 138 to 160.

of Registry
now be

importance so far as the agricultural labourer is concerned, and it would it is submitted, be well to direct the Board of Revenue to instruct Collectors to devote a special para to ^{once every three or five years} the subject in their ~~annual~~ jamabandi reports. The Govt would then be in a position to watch the course of any change that may from time to time take place in the system.

3. The annexed draft accordingly submitted.

of Revenue
H.H.

I see Mr Nicholson spoke to the same general effect as I did in Teninivelly & I made very careful personal inquiries on tour & on jamabandi that ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~white~~ ^{white} ~~prices~~ ^{prices} had remained stationary money wages had risen in roughly proportion to the rise in prices.

The subject shd. as the office ~~be~~ ^{be} noticed periodically ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ reports

Print
18/2/98

of agricultural wages

10/2/98

18.2.98

18.2.98

Order (Press) N.
Rec

2. The ~~information~~ by the Board of out of date and regarded as ~~existing state of~~ ~~existing~~ ~~of the question~~ of opinion that a para shd. be a the subject ⁱⁿ in the Collectors' reports; & the Board ~~should have as~~ ~~instructions~~

8/2/98

The Board of Rev. Sd. Secy. 1.
Letter N. 94

The Secy to the Govt of India
Rev. and Agr. Dept
Sir.

As requested in para 1 of your letter 18/2/98 of 27 March 1900 I am directed to forward

importance so, the Govt. of
altural rather marginally
and it wants of this Govt
well to report from the
Revenue the as to how far
to devote a paying agricultural
the subject is being
jamabany the system of
in the Madras
watch. ~~available in~~
large ~~remuneration in the~~
to the Board of Revenue
memorandum on the progress of the Mad P. during the
3 years
as 1892 by Dewan!

Reside
then Inspector-General
Station in Madras and
war of Baroda, in his
report on the progress of
Madras Presidency during
of last 20 years, ~~that~~ ^{he} expressed the opinion
the payment of agricultural
wages in kind ^{was} still generally
the rule; ~~but~~ ^{that} the rate of wages had not
materially ^{increased} in many
years. The Govt. is not disposed
to differ from that conclusion
as a general statement; it
also believes on the information
available that where a money
wage takes the place of a grain
wage, the laborer ^{afforded only a delay}
will ^{not} ~~lose~~ ^{lose} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~whole~~ ^{whole} ~~rise~~ ^{rise}
in the price of grain

G.O. No. 93 of 16-2-98

Government 1898 of Madras.
REVENUE.

Recd.

Enclosures

1898.

Regd.

Spare copies

G.O., No. 93, 16th February 1898.

FEBRUARY.

Agricultural Wages.

Recording, with remarks, Board's Proceedings submitting to Government report as to how far the system of paying agricultural labourers in kind is being superseded in the Madras Presidency by the system of money payments.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 690, dated 29th October 1897 :—

Resolution—No. 690, dated 29th October 1897.

In continuation of paragraph 3 of B.P., No. 378, dated 1st December 1896, and with reference to paragraph 5 of G.O., No. 612, Revenue, dated 23rd July 1897, the Board begs to submit the following report regarding the question “whether the custom of paying field labourers in grain is being superseded by money payments, and whether the labourers suffer by this change.”

2. As remarked by Government in the paragraph quoted above, a report on the above question was first called for in 1892. All the information rendered by the Collectors up to May in the following year on the subject of agricultural wages in general, was placed at the disposal of Dewan Bahadur S. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar, C.I.E., who was then preparing his “Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years,” and was made full use of by him—*vide* pages 138 to 156 of his book, second edition.

3. As explained by the Board it was erroneously supposed that G.O., Mis. No. 787, dated 22nd February 1896 (which accepted Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar's section on agricultural wages as embodying sufficient information on that subject) applied also to the special question as to whether money wages were taking the place of wages paid in grain.

Although Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar does not explicitly answer this question in the negative (probably feeling, as the Board now does, that sufficient information had not been accumulated to warrant any general conclusions being drawn), the section above quoted nevertheless teems with information tending to show that there were no visible symptoms of any rapid decay of the old local customs regulating the payment of wages. “Wages,” he says, “are generally stated to be paid in grain, and the rates of wages are believed not to have varied materially since the beginning of the century.”

He then quotes instances in which recent rises in grain wages had been reported from several districts. Into the next few pages he compresses nearly all the information which the Board has at its disposal at the present date. He mentions that over 7,000 registered service agreements had been examined, and enquiries made as to the changes which have occurred in grain wages. It was found that there has been nowhere any reduction in the customary wages paid for agricultural labour. “The tendency,” he observes, “everywhere appears to be for an increase in grain wages, and the complaints often made are that it is difficult to obtain labourers for the due customary rates of wages The grain wages given for casual labour, *e.g.*, additional labour employed during harvest, appear to have generally increased, and in some cases doubled.”

“The tendency,” he concludes, “on the whole is towards an increase in the earnings of labourers as estimated in food-grains.”

4. The Board has made the above quotations because they contain the gist of the Collectors' reports of five years' ago, abstracted by an able hand; and also in explanation of its impression that no further discussion of the subject was called for.

Many of the Collectors devoted a paragraph to the subject in their settlement reports for fasli 1302 (1892-93), but the Board does not find therein any very novel or definite information.

5. The Board has received no recent reports on the subject and has for the most part to gather its information from the very sources which Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyengar has so excellently drained.

6. There is, as might be supposed, a great diversity in the customs regulating agricultural wages, not only in different districts of the Presidency, but in different taluks in the same district, and in different parts of one and the same taluk.

For so vast an area as the Madras Presidency, it is well nigh impossible to make any safe generalization, or to affirm that one old practice still prevails, or that another is falling into desuetude.

7. A précis of the Collectors' reports is printed as an appendix to these Proceedings. The rates of wages reported from several districts are very surprising, and the Board would deprecate their being accepted as correct without further enquiry.

To quote one instance, it is reported that in some parts of Ganjam, the casual labourer, paid by results, is allowed at harvest one-fourth of the crop he gathers! It is appalling to think what allowance the Settlement Department should make for cultivation expenses if the one operation of cutting the crop swallows up 25 per cent. of the gross outturn! In other parts of the same district, he is said to be paid a harvest wage of 18 lbs. of paddy a day, which, in the current season, would be equivalent to about As. 11.

8. In Gôdâvari delta, it is stated that the custom of paying wages in money is rapidly taking the place of the old plan of paying in grain. A like change is reported to be in progress in the Kistna delta. In the Eastern delta the average daily wage of the casual labourer is stated to be As. 5, and in the Western delta As. 3. Where the labourers are paid in grain, the current price is taken into account and the labourer receives enough grain as is the equivalent of the current money wage, which itself

varies according to the season and the nature of the work.

This information agrees with that gathered by the Settlement Commissioner in a recent tour through the district, and furnishes an instance of one locality in which old customs are being changed to the disadvantage of the day labourer.

The Sub-Collector of Coimbatore reported in 1893 that grain payments are being fast superseded by money payments in the Karûr and Dhârâpuram taluks; but the Collector quotes with approval Mr. Nicholson's conclusion at page 272 of the District Manual, that “money wages have kept pace with prices, and that grain wages are the same as of old.”

9. With the exceptions above noted there appears a unanimity of opinion that there was up to 1893 no general indication of a supersession of grain wages in favour of money wages.

10. Permanent farm labourers, who are kept on all the year round, still usually get their wages in grain, cloths and perquisites; or, if their caste permits their doing house work for their employers, they get cooked food and clothing, and a lump payment in grain or in money. The remuneration of the permanent labourer follows the old lines, and his condition, if it does not improve, certainly shows no tendency to deteriorate.

11. It is too soon to predict what will be the effect on wages of such an extraordinary season of scarcity as now seems happily drawing to a close. The tremendous and general rise in the price of food-grains (in many places to double or treble the normal rate) must, it would be thought, create a strong tendency to the payment of wages in cash. In many localities all stores of grain were being carefully hoarded; while the demand for labour was so slack that the subsistence paid to relief-workers formed the standard of wage which the labourer was fain to accept.

During the drought the supply of labour has so vastly exceeded the demand as to prevent any rise in money wages at all commensurate with the rise in prices. Even in the City of Madras, labour has been easily procurable at the ordinary money rates. Elsewhere tens of thousands of permanent farm labourers, and hundreds of thousands

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No. 93, REVENUE, 16TH FEBRUARY 1898.

of day labourers, have been thrown out of employ, and only by the intervention of Government have been saved from starvation. Such an upheaval of all usual arrangements between employers and employed must have a profound effect in shaking old customs, and it would appear not improbable that great numbers of the labourers who have heretofore been accustomed to be paid in grain will be driven to accept employment for a money wage which will not yield them their old grain wage except in normal seasons.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAH,
Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to all Collectors.

APPENDIX.

Ganjām—(C. J. Weir, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 8th February 1895).—The wages of farm-servants and casual agricultural labourers are, as a rule, paid in kind, as has been the custom from time immemorial. The wages have remained stationary almost throughout the district, save in the neighbourhood of the Railway and Rushikulya project works. The system of payment in kind finds favour both with the labourer and the landholder alike. During the harvest season, the casual labourer, whether male or female, is allowed $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the quantity gathered, or 4 to 8 Madras measures of paddy per day. In Goomsur, farm-servants (adults) get 32 kunchams of grain per mensem, besides perquisites. As the system of payment in kind has

A Kuncham or Toom = 3 seers.

not been superseded to any appreciable extent by cash payments, there has been apparently little material change in the condition of the bulk of the agricultural labourers. It can hardly be said that there has been any general tendency on the part of the agricultural labourer to take to casual labour paid for in cash; but there have of course been large gangs of coolies constantly employed on the great engineering works which have been in progress in the district during the past few years. These coolies are paid in cash, and at rates higher than those ordinarily prevalent in the district.

Vizagapatam—(W. A. Willock, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Regular agricultural labourers are almost always paid in grain, with the addition of presents of cloths, &c., at certain seasons. In some places they are given two or three meals; the wages are then reduced proportionately.

Their wages (the Collector means, apparently, the money value of their wages) do consequently vary with the prices of grain. The customary grain payments, however, seem to have remained unaltered as a general rule, for a very long series of years. There is no desire on the part of farm-servants to have grain payments converted into cash, but rather the reverse.

Casual labourers are generally paid in cash, except at harvest time, when they are paid in grain. The latter would almost always be preferred and cash would not be accepted by regular farm-servants. In the vicinity of large towns, however, cash is more readily taken than in rural tracts. The rates of these labourers, when paid in cash, do not appear to be fixed by custom, but vary with the demand. In the slack season, i.e., prior to transplantation, male labour is procurable at 1 anna, and female, at 8 pies per diem. During paddy transplantation, males get up to 2 annas 4 pies, and females up to 2 annas. For other minor operations, such as weeding, males get $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas and females 1 anna though not always. These rates are said not to have altered for the last thirty years. The Collector believes there has been a considerable alteration, but that it has taken the form of a reduction in the quality and quantity of the work done for the same money.

Gōdāvari—(S. H. Wynne, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Farm-servants are still paid their wages in kind; and the rates have increased as hereunder in Rāmachandrapuram, Bhimavaram and Rajahmundry, and are stationary in the rest of the district.

One Kuncham = 4 seers.

Rāmachandrapuram.—Kunchams 400, worth Rs. 35, in fasli 1283, to kunchams 600, worth Rs. 75, in fasli 1302, per annum.

Bhimavaram and Rajahmundry.—Kunchams 240, worth Rs. 18, to kunchams 400, worth Rs. 56, per annum. Farm-servants receive in addition to fixed grain wages certain perquisites and loans, with or without interest, on occasions of births and marriages, &c. They show, generally speaking, no tendency either to give up farm labour or to exchange grain for money wages. The Sub-Collector brings to notice that in one or two villages of his division on the line of the East Coast Railway, a few farm-servants have been induced by the high wages of 5 annas per diem to prefer casual labour in connection with Railway works. Casual labourers were paid till a few years back in grain throughout the district, at rates varying with reference to

sex of labourers and kind of work. In recent years money wages have been largely substituted in almost all the plain taluks and in about 25 per cent. cases in the villages of Rāmachandrapuram and Rajahmundry taluks. The payment in the Chintalpudi division (a portion of the Ellore taluk), Bhadrāchalam, Chōdāvaram and Yellavaram is altogether in grain without exception. Wages in money have risen in proportion to prices and the system of grain payments is rapidly giving place to cash payments, except in the Agency and a few backward localities.

Kistna—(J. N. Atkinson, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 11th May 1893).—Farm-labourers are generally paid in kind. They get a certain quantity of grain daily at all times, and in addition, 3 out of 40 shares of grain, which their masters' lands may yield every year. The actual daily wages of these labourers differ slightly in different places. It comes to about $2\frac{1}{2}$ local seers of paddy ($1\frac{1}{2}$ Madras measures) per day in the Nuzvid estate and in the Bandar and Gudivāda taluks. Instead of the share referred to above, they are sometimes paid annually a certain quantity of grain as a present. In all cases they receive a present of a cloth, a blanket, and a pair of sandals annually, and they generally have house-room provided free. In the Vinukonda taluk, and in the upland taluks of Palnad and Narasaraopet, the annual salary of a farm-servant is Rs. 16 to 24, in addition to which he is given three meals a day. There seems to be a tendency everywhere, dating from the time of the great famine, to substitute money for grain wages. Hitherto, this tendency has only partially affected the farm-servants. The casual labourer generally gets comparatively higher wages especially in the delta taluks. In the Eastern delta, payment is sometimes in money varying from 3 to 6 annas a day with an average of about 5 annas and sometimes in kind. In the latter case, the current prices of grain are taken into account, the grain wage being in fact the equivalent of a fixed money wage.

In the Western delta, payment of these labourers is almost always in money, the rate being 3 annas for a man. In Bāpatla taluk alone, transplantation coolies are paid in kind at 2 manikas, or 4 seers, of grain per diem. In the upland taluks, the wages of these labourers are paid as a rule in kind at 2 measures of cholam or cumbu per day for a male. One prominent feature in the general position of the labourers in the district is the gradual supersession of the grain wage, which no doubt was formerly universal, by remuneration in money. The wages of farm-servants are fixed by custom. These wages are independent of supply and demand. The rate of wage of the casual labourer is determined immediately by the state of the labour market. Prices have no immediate effect on wages. Prices can only indirectly affect wages, that is, when the disturbance in prices is so great or so long continued, as to affect the supply of labour.

Collector—(C. M. Mallab, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 20th November 1893).—The Collector divides labourers into four classes: (1) daily labourer, (2) permanent farm-labourer, (3) sharing labourer, (4) joint cultivator.

The sharing labourer contributes manual labour and takes one-fourth outturn in return. He does not bear any portion of the cultivation expenses or assessment nor supplies cattle.

The joint cultivator takes half the crops and pays some of the cultivation expenses and kist and supplies cattle also according to the terms of the agreement, which is renewed every year.

The permanent farm-servants are paid either in cash or grain and the rates vary from Rs. 4 to 50 per annum with reference to their age, sex, skill, and capacity or with reference to the condition as to their being fed at their master's house or otherwise. In addition to food they get sundry perquisites, such as a pair of cloths, &c., worth in all Rs. 4 or 5. In Pattikonda taluk, the cash payment which was from Rs. 10 to 16 twenty years ago, is now reported to range from Rs. 16 to 24 per annum. In times of distress, owing to rise in prices, the rate of grain wages is reduced by quarter to half in some villages while it remains unaffected in others. This reduction is but temporary, and the old customary rate is reverted to after the distress is over. Money wages are also slightly raised by the rise in prices consequent on scarcity, but the increase is not proportionate to the rise in prices.

Casual labourers.—Wages are generally paid in cash for ploughing, weeding and transplanting, and in kind for harvesting. The daily grain wages range from 2 to 3 seers of cholam for a man and $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 seers for a woman. For indigo, however, money is given. Money wages are not popular to any extent. Thus farm-servants demand grain wages and there is no tendency on their part to exchange it for money payments. Their condition is not therefore affected to any appreciable extent by the change in the prices of the food-grains.

Bellary—(R. Sewell, Esq., Collector—Report, dated 6th February 1894).—Farm-servants and casual labourers in rural tracts are still very generally paid in kind, and although the rates vary in different parts of the district, they are not usually affected by fluctuations in the market prices, except in seasons of distress. The farm-servant is remunerated either by a fixed salary or by food and clothing in addition to fixed salary. The practice of allowing perquisites to labourers does not obtain in this district except in the case of those employed to boil sugar. The tendency to supersede grain wages by money payments, is prominent only in the case of small landholders who have to supplement their produce (*sic*) by other earnings.

The rates of wages are reported to show a perceptible increase from 12 to 20 per cent. in the Head-quarter Deputy Collector's Division and to be stationary in other parts of the district. Higher wages are paid for casual and skilled labour in towns containing manufactories or adjoining important railway stations.

Anantapur—(K. C. Manavedan Raja, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Agricultural labourers when employed for long periods, say for a year or so, are generally fed and clothed at the cost of the employers. Besides this, they receive ready-money payments of from Rs 8 to 20 per annum. Day labourers employed for transplanting, weeding, reaping, &c., are paid in kind in villages. The practice, however, is different in towns. When sowing, ploughing and weeding and other preliminary operations are carried on cash payment is resorted to. At the season of harvest, however, payment in kind is the general practice and the labourers prefer grain to cash at that time. It will thus be seen that the payment to daily labourers in cash is confined to towns. In towns money seems to be preferred except in harvest time, probably because service is gauged in cash, as all skilled labourers, merchants and private servants, &c., are paid in cash. The wages of labourers paid in kind have been stationary and have not changed with prices of grain.

Cuddapah—(C. H. Mounsey, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Agricultural labourers are generally paid in grain according to the nature of the work they are engaged in. Male labourers engaged in ploughing, &c., in dry lands are paid a uniform rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ local measures (= $1\frac{1}{2}$ Madras measure) of grain with two meals a day in some places. For hard work, such as reaping, &c., they are paid two measures in addition to meals. "In case of wet lands the rates for ploughing, &c., are the same as in dry lands, but for reaping and thrashing they are paid higher rates of 4 and 5 measures, respectively, when the grain is with chaff and half the rates when it is without it." For picking cotton, generally done by females, the wages are regulated according to the quantity collected. They are allowed $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ the quantity picked up for the first, second and third pickings, respectively. In the case of farm-servants there has been no tendency either on the part of the labourers or landlords to exchange grain wages for money payments. Payment of wages in cash in addition to food and raiment provided by landlord has also obtained from time immemorial in most places. These servants are invariably provided with meals, and are allowed a pair of slippers, cumbli and a turban. In former days they used to get, in addition to the above, a yearly payment, ranging from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 for persons below 16 years, and from Rs. 12 to Rs. 16 for adults. Payment of wages in kind has remained almost unchanged. Money wages have not superseded grain wages to any appreciable extent except in the case of indigo manufacture and cotton ginning. The indigo labourers are paid 4 annas a day and for ginning cotton, which is generally undertaken by females, payment is made at 8 pies for every 14 seers of 20 tolas of seed extracted. The labourers are reported to be better off than before.

Nellore—(C. D. Maclean, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—In the case of permanent farm-servants, the rate varies from labourers are generally paid in kind. In the case of permanent farm-servants, the rate varies from $1\frac{1}{2}$ tooms (183-6 lb.) to $2\frac{1}{2}$ tooms (305-10 lb.) per month. These labourers are, as an alternative, allowed one meal a day, a corresponding diminution being made in the grain allowance; some of them are also paid partly in kind and partly in cash. They are also allowed petty perquisites, such as betel-nut, tobacco, &c., daily, and occasional presents of cloth or some silver on festivals, &c., and are allowed at the harvest to scrape the residue of the thrashing floor, which amounts to one putty (candy) occasionally. Casual labourers are not allowed anything beyond the daily wages. Even here the grain wage is the commonest, the money wage being only resorted to in large towns or their vicinity. The ordinary rate is $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers (7-7 lb.) of grain, per day, or 2 to 4 annas if paid in cash. These rates have been stationary for a very long time and there is no likelihood of cash payments being substituted for grain wages. As regards the effect of high prices on these wages, there is practically no change in any case. The substitution of money wages depends upon whether the rise in prices is due to local scarcity or other causes. In the latter case the substitution does not take place, though the case is different in the former.

Madras—(W. Austin, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Madras is essentially a non-agricultural district and there is no special class of agricultural labourers. Enquiries go to show that the practice of paying field labourers in grain has not obtained in this district during the last twenty years, but they have all along been paid in cash. Within the last twenty years, the rate of wages appears to have risen from Rs. 4 to Rs. 6 a month or by 50 per cent., due evidently to the general rise in prices, the increase of population and the increasing demand for labour consequent on the development of trade and other business concerns in the city.

Chingleput—(J. Thomson, Esq., Collector—Report, dated 12th June 1894).—It cannot be said that the enquiries made on the subject were either satisfactory or complete owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining reliable statistics of wages obtaining twenty years ago. Wages are so varied in the several taluks, in the several villages in the same taluk, and sometimes in the same village at different times with reference to the demand for labour, that it is found impossible to exhibit in the form of a consistent statement the changes which wages have undergone during the past twenty years.

The wages of farm-servants are still paid in most taluks in grain and there has been no change for the past twenty years and there is no tendency on the part of these labourers to exchange grain for money payments.

Casual labourers are paid either in grain or cash. Payments in grain are general at harvest times. In, and in the vicinity of, towns they are generally paid in cash and they vary in different parts of the district; but it comes to $2\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 measures of paddy. In some parts of Saidapet and in the vicinity of Madras and in parts of Conjeeveram as much as 4 measures of paddy are paid. Cash payments also vary from 2 to 3 annas. On the whole, it may be said that grain wage for casual field labour has declined by about 25 per cent. and the money wage has advanced from 20 to 33 per cent. on the rates of twenty years ago. Although it cannot be said that there is a general tendency everywhere to change grain into money payment, it is certain that it exists in some parts, chiefly in large villages and in the vicinity of towns. "The tendency is natural, where wants are various and can be easily supplied."

As regards the effect of the change on the condition of the labourers, the Sub-Collector is led to believe that the condition of the labourer is worse now than it was twenty years ago, although it is not so bad as to call for any special consideration. Mr. Pinto, Deputy Collector, Tiruvallur Division, thinks that there has been no change in their general condition and the Collector does not believe in the alleged deterioration of the agricultural labourers.

South Arcot—(M. Hammick, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The old custom of paying the farm-servants in grain is still popular and extant even in municipal towns. The commuted value of grain payments and perquisites of a farm-servant comes to Rs. 60 per annum. The grain wage is very accurately fixed and varies very little from year to year. The money presents, however, no doubt vary considerably according to the master's will. Casual labourers are generally paid in money. The usual rate is $2\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 annas for an adult male and between $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas for women and boys. These rates are half as much again as they were before the famine of 1877. For baling by picottas, adult males are paid 4 annas per day. The agent of a firm employing a very large amount of labour in the district reported to the Collector that while money wages have undoubtedly risen in the last decade they have not risen at anything like a proportionate rate to the cost of food.

North Arcot—(G. F. T. Power, Esq., Collector—Report, dated 27th September 1894).—Permanent farm-servants are reported to be still paid only in grain and it is believed that they generally prefer their wages in grain and there seems to be no tendency on their part to exchange grain payments for money wages. In Chandragiri taluk, money wages are reported to have superseded grain payments to the extent of 20 per cent.

Casual labourers—The Sub-Collector and the Head-Quarter Deputy Collector report that grain wages have remained stationary, while there has been an increase in money wages due to the rise in prices of food-grains. In Wallajah taluk, there has been no increase in wages, whether paid in kind or in money, while in Chandragiri, money wages are said to have increased. The general duty Deputy Collector remarks that no perceptible change has occurred in the rates of wages of casual labourers in his division except in some places on the Villupuram-Guntakal Railway, where, owing to increased demand for labour, rates are said to have slightly increased.

Salem—(G. Stokes, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The wages of farm-servants are generally paid in grain though there are some rare cases in which money wages are paid. The wages of these farm-servants remain stationary. Except very rarely they do not care to exchange their grain wages for money wages. In addition to their wages, they receive perquisites in the shape of food, cloths on feast days, &c.

Casual labourers are paid both in money and in kind. The increase in their wages when paid in cash is generally by about 50 per cent. as compared with the wages twenty years ago. Where wages are paid in grain, there has not been any material increase. "In villages situated near towns, commercial centres, large railway stations, &c., this labour is dearer and the tendency on the part of labourers to go away to such kinds of work, which, while it is more easy to do, brings equally good or higher wages (perhaps a trifle over 50 per cent.) does exist to some extent." But in villages remote from towns, &c., and in the interior of the country, the increase is less and may be put down at 35 or 40 per cent. In these parts the labourers stick to agricultural work more steadily.

Coimbatore—(J. Sturrock, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Farm-servants are generally paid in grain. They are also paid a few rupees every year to meet the expenses of clothing, &c. Their wages amount to 30 to 40 Madras measures of grain per mensem; and money payments are rare; but in a few villages in Coimbatore taluk 4 annas are paid. The wages paid to this class of servants have not undergone any material change during the last twenty years as the labourers are content with the old rates, which are, owing to high prices, favourable to them.

In the case of casual labourers wages are paid both in money and grain. The money wages range from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to 4 annas. The Sub-Collector reports as follows as regards Kárúr and Dhárápura taluks. "Grain payments are being fast superseded by money payments in most of the cases as the prices of grains have, during the last twenty years, gone up very high. During the last twenty years the rates of wages paid in money may be said to have increased by, say,

one-third or a little less, but those of wages paid in grain have gone down perhaps a little more than proportionately. The change, coupled with the constant failures in the monsoons, which much reduce the demand for labour, affects not a little the well-being of the ryot population, which increases out of proportion to the increasing means of providing labour and which generally prefers sticking to its own huts, to leaving them to foreign places in quest of wages. The ultimate result is that people are getting thinner and weaker." The Collector quotes with approval Mr. Nicholson's remarks in page 272 of the District Manual, viz., "there are no data for a complete comparison of present with former rates of wages, but from isolated statements it may be gathered that money wages have kept pace with prices and that grain wages are the same as of old."

Trichinopoly—(L. C. Miller, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The wages of the regular farm-servants employed all the year round are still paid in grain and the customary rate is maintained.

The wages of casual labourers, paid in kind or money, have not increased during the last twenty years. Payment is made in money or kind according to the kind of work done. The employers have a tendency to substitute money as far as possible in the case of casual labourers employed at particular seasons for weeding, harvesting, &c. And further, when grain is scarce, prices high, and labour plentiful, as in a bad season, employers are apt to take advantage of the competition for work and reduce both grain and money wages to some extent.

Tanjore—(J. Sturrock, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The bulk of the labouring population is divided into Porakudis (varam or metayer tenants) and pannials (farm-servants). The former do not receive actual wages but obtain a share of the produce of their masters' land which they cultivate with his capital. "The amount of the share or 'varam' varies with different villages and different conditions and it is not ascertainable if there has been any rise or fall in it of late." As regards pannials, they are paid in kind only; it is doubtful if they ever receive money at all. The condition of Panchama pannials is very little removed from that of slaves, as they get only so much as is required for their maintenance, whereas the Sudra pannials receive "besides the payment in kind a number of advantages from their masters as well as gifts of money on certain occasions." Their material condition shows a distinct tendency to improve.

Madura—(L. C. Miller, Esq., Acting Collector—Report, dated 18th December 1894).—As a rule, labourers are paid in grain when grain is available. Farm-labourers are sometimes given a sum of money and sometimes, and a daily wage. The market value of grain is always get their meal will not be difficult in years of scarcity. In years of scarcity, the market value of grain is always get their meal will not be difficult in years of scarcity.

Casual labourers are paid in money or grain for pre-harvest operations and in grain for harvest operations, when, grain is usually available. For collecting tamarind produce or for picking cotton, they are generally paid a proportion of the produce gathered. The Deputy Collector of Madura reports that grain wages except for "pannaigars" (farm-labourers) are giving way to money wages, and that the labourers prefer the money. Possibly the improvement of communications and opening of markets may have tended to prevent farmers from maintaining stocks of grain sufficient to pay labourers all the year round and so to cause a substitution of money wages, but the change is taking place slowly if at all.

Tinnevely—(G. S. Forbes, Esq., Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The wages of resident farm-labourers are generally paid in kind and seem to have remained practically stationary during the past twenty years. For labourers resident on the land in the paddy tracts, the grain wage is usually paid in lump at the end of harvest and varies from 14 marakals (136 Government seers) to 2 kottas (407 seers) of paddy for a man, and half that quantity for a woman. In addition to this the labourer receives for every day on which he is actually employed during harvest, three measures (3.63 seers) a day and at other times 1½ measures (1.81 seers). These rates vary slightly in different places. Besides this he also receives as presents, on occasions of marriage, &c., a certain quantity of paddy with a rupee or two in cash, and annually a cloth worth from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-8-0.

Casual labourers are paid in kind as well as in money according to the nature of the work. Those employed at harvest being generally paid in kind, while those employed for ploughing, manuring, &c., are paid in kind as well as in money. These receive only a daily wage of 6 to 4 measures of paddy for a man and 4 to 3 measures for a woman for harvest labour. For other labour when paid in kind, men get about 3 measures and women 2 measures. When paid in money men earn 2½ to 3 annas a day and women about 2 of that wage. For more severe forms of labour, such as digging wells, baling water and the like, the wage seems to be usually a cash wage and may be taken on the average at 4 annas a day for an able-bodied man. In the sea-port and municipal towns, much higher wages may be earned and consequently the strongest of the casual labourers resort thither.

In the dry and cotton taluks, ragi or cumbu takes the place of paddy in the grain wage, but in those tracts where cotton is ousting other cultivation, a pure money wage is to a large extent replacing the grain wage. The inclination of the employer is more and more to abolish

the grain wage, while the labourer's contention is the other way and the conflict is sharper in seasons of scarcity. Without some grain wage, ryots could not secure harvest labour. On the whole the results of the inquiries show that where the grain wage has continued, the labourer has not really suffered by the rise in prices, while as regards the money wage, there has been a general increase roughly proportionate to the increase in prices.

Nilgiris—(O. Wolfe-Murray, Esq., Acting Collector—Report dated 13th December 1893).—Wages are mostly paid in money except in cases where the Badagas work, during the harvest time for grain wage. In the Gúdalur taluk, farm-servants composed chiefly of Panians and Kurumbers are paid in grain daily and are given a meal daily in addition and cloths during festivals and are further allowed every year the paddy crop on two of the best plots in the occupation of their masters.

Malabar—(H. Bradley, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—Farm-servants who form the bulk of the agricultural labourers are still paid in kind. They are paid in paddy at a fixed rate all the year round, which amounts, on an average, to 2½ seers per man and 1½ seers for a woman. At harvest, fixed wages cease and the reapers are paid a share of the grain generally from one-sixth to one-tenth. In addition to the annual payments special grants are made on occasions of births, &c., and subsistence allowance during illness and old age. There has been no marked change in the wages of these labourers and the system of paying them in grain is not being superseded by payments in money and there is no tendency on their part to exchange grain wages for money payments. Farm-servants also take to such casual labour as they can obtain after completing the usual farm work for their masters.

Casual labourers are paid either in grain or money. Both kinds of wages have increased during the last twenty years. In the rural tracts there is no likelihood of payments in kind being superseded by money wages. The system of payment in kind suits both parties. The landlord has no difficulty in disposing of his grain and has not to convert it into cash in order to meet sudden demands. The labourer can obtain his food without placing himself at the mercy of the village shopkeepers.

South Canara—(G. F. T. Power, Esq., Acting Collector—Jamabandi report for fasli 1302).—The rates for farm-servants have been slightly but steadily increasing, but no general tendency to exchange grain payments for money wages has yet been observed. Labourers do take to casual labour such as work in coffee plantations or at coffee works or on roads, &c., but not in addition to their income. The reason is not that agricultural work is slack. As regards the increase, the environs of towns or the coast, the coffee-curing or tile-works draw away labourers, and in the interior the construction of either the local roads or bridges or the plantations of sorts above the ghauts are the chief attractions.

ORDR—No. 93, Revenue, dated 16th February 1898.

Miscellaneous.

Recorded.

2. The Government is of opinion that a special paragraph should be devoted to the subject of agricultural wages once in three years in the Collector's jamabandi reports; and the Board should issue instructions accordingly.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. S. FORBES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement,
Land Records and Agriculture).

Exd. Shaik Karim.

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1898.

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

From

The Government of Fort St. George.

Recd.

Regd.

} 1898.

Enclosures

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Letter, No. 94, 16th February 1898.

FEBRUARY.

FORWARDING, with remarks, Proceedings of the Madras Government embodying a report as to how far the system of paying agricultural labourers in kind is being superseded in the Madras Presidency by the system of money payments.

1898.

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

From

The Government of Fort St. George.

Recd.

Regd.

1898.

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Letter, No. 94, 16th February 1898.

Forty years" Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, then Inspector-General of Registration in Madras and now Dewan of Baroda, expressed the opinion that the payment of agricultural wages in kind was still generally the rule and that the rate of such wages had not materially varied for many years. The Government is not disposed to differ from that conclusion as a general statement; and it also believes on the information available that, where a money wage takes the place of a grain wage, the latter, after some delay, follows the rise in the price of grain. Having regard to the importance of the question, His Excellency in Council has directed that the subject should receive special notice in the Collector's annual settlement reports once in three years.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) G. S. FORBES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

Erd. Shaik Karim.

50 Copies.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

From

THE HON'BLE MR. G. S. FORBES, I.C.S.,
Ag. Secretary to the Government of Madras,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT,

Dated Fort St. George, 16th February 1898.

SIR,

As requested in paragraph 1 of your letter, No. 926—76, dated 27th March 1895,
I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copy of the marginally-noted Proceedings of this Government embodying a report from the Board of Revenue as to how far the system of paying agricultural labourers in kind is being superseded in the Madras Presidency by the system of money payments. In his memorandum "on the progress of the Madras Presidency during the last

Miscellaneous.

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