

CHAPTER XIV.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

ADMINISTRATIVE
CHARGES
AND
STAFF.

For administrative purposes the district is divided into three subdivisions with headquarters at Chinsura, Serampore and Arambagh. The headquarters (Sadr or Hooghly) subdivision is under the direct supervision of the Collector, who has a regular staff of five Deputy Collectors, with one or two Sub-Deputy Collectors. The Serampore and Arambagh subdivisions are each in charge of a Subdivisional Officer, the former being assisted by a Deputy Collector and a Sub-Deputy Collector and the latter by a Sub-Deputy Collector. The Collector of Hooghly controls the administration of land revenue in Howrah, and also the collection of road and public works cesses for estates lying wholly or partly in that district.

REVENUE.

The land revenue and cess accounts of the Hooghly district still include those for Howrah, and it is only recently that separate accounts of the revenue from other sources have been kept for the two districts. The revenue of the district (including Howrah), under the main heads, increased from Rs. 21,90,000 in 1880-81 (when the income-tax had not been imposed) to Rs. 25,99,000 in 1890-91. During the next decade the accounts for stamps, excise and income-tax in Howrah were separated, and consequently the revenue of Hooghly fell to Rs. 23,78,000 in 1900-01. In 1907-08 it amounted to Rs. 24,83,351, of which Rs. 13,33,813 were derived from land revenue, Rs. 4,50,792 from excise, Rs. 3,95,527 from stamps, Rs. 2,33,222 from cesses, and Rs. 69,998 from income-tax.

Land
REVENUE.

The collections of land revenue increased from Rs. 13,37,000 in 1880-81 to Rs. 14,29,000 in 1890-91, but fell again to Rs. 13,36,000 in 1900-01. In 1907-08 they amounted to Rs. 13,33,813 collected from 4,309 estates. Of the total number of estates, 3,973 with a current demand of Rs. 13,06,756 are permanently settled, 101 estates with a demand of Rs. 25,948 are temporarily settled, and 235 estates with a demand of Rs. 34,221 are held direct by Government. Of the estates borne on the

revenue roll of this district, 871, with an annual demand of about 5½ lakhs, lie wholly or partly in the Howrah district.

Next to land revenue, the most important source of revenue is Excise excise, the receipts from which increased from Rs. 2,90,434 in 1897-98 to Rs. 4,50,795 in 1907-08, when they represented an expenditure of Rs. 4,013 per 10,000 of the population. Nearly half of this sum was obtained from the sale of country spirit, which realized Rs. 2,09,119. The manufacture and sale of country spirit are carried on under what is known as the contract-supply system, which was introduced in 1907-08. Under this system, the local manufacture of country spirit is prohibited, and contracts are made with firms of distillers for its supply. The contractors are forbidden to hold any retail licenses for the sale of the spirit. The spirit is brought by them to the various depôts, and is there blended and reduced to certain fixed strengths, at which alone it may be supplied to retail vendors, and sold by the latter to consumers.

According to the returns for 1907-08, there are 103 shops licensed for the retail sale of contract liquor, i.e., one retail shop to every 11½ square miles and 10,187 persons; the average consumption of the liquor is 24 proof gallons per 1,000 of the population, and the incidence of taxation is annas 3-2 per head of the population. The income from this source would be more, but for the smuggling of illicit liquor from Chandernagore. In spite of this, the receipts from the license fees and duty on country spirit and *tari* are larger than in any other district in the Burdwan Division, except Burdwan, representing Rs. 2,627 per 10,000, as compared with Rs. 1,616 for the Division and Rs. 2,398 for the whole of Bengal. The revenue from *patkasi* in the same year amounted to Rs. 8,663 and the license fees on imported liquors to Rs. 13,074; no other district in the Division had such large receipts from the latter source.

The receipts from opium and hemp drugs account for practically all the remainder of the excise revenue. The greater portion is derived from the duty and license fees on opium, which in 1907-08 brought in Rs. 1,14,493, representing Rs. 1,091 per 10,000 of the population. This proportion was higher than in any district in the Province outside Orissa and may be compared with the average of Rs. 656 per 10,000 returned for the Burdwan Division and Rs. 516 per 10,000 for the whole of Bengal. The consumption of *ganja*, i.e., the unimpregnated dried flowering tops of the cultivated female hemp plant (*Cannabis indica*) is also considerable, the receipts being Rs. 55,197 in 1907-08. The total incidence of the revenue accruing from

hemp drugs was, however, only Rs. 575 for every 10,000 of the population, while the number of shops licensed to sell by retail was one to every 9,626 persons.

Special arrangements are made for the supply of opium to French Chandernagore. All the opium shops there are held by one farmer, who pays his fee to the French Government. Under a convention concluded between the British and the French Governments, the opium farmer is allowed to take his supplies from the Hooghly treasury up to a limit of 12 maunds per annum on payment of duty; the convention is for a period of 6 years with effect from 1st January 1907. The export of opium to French Chandernagore does not materially affect the incidence of duty and license fees, as the quantity actually issued to the farmer is, on an average, only 9 maunds 23 seers per annum. In 1907-08, out of a total clearance of 95 maunds 31 seers, only 9 maunds 36 seers were taken by the French farmer.

Stamps.

The next important source of revenue is the sale of stamps, the receipts from which amounted to Rs. 3,95,527 in 1907-08, as compared with Rs. 4,74,528 in 1897-98. The sale of judicial stamps alone realized Rs. 3,34,091, as compared with Rs. 3,94,729 in 1897-98, while the receipts from non-judicial stamps were Rs. 61,436 and Rs. 79,799, respectively. Court-fee stamps among judicial stamps, and impressed stamps among non-judicial stamps, account for nearly the whole of the revenue under this head.

Cesses.

Road and public works cesses are, as usual, levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee; the figures given below include those for Howrah, as the accounts for the two districts have not been separated. In 1907-08 the collections amounted to Rs. 3,33,222, the current demand being Rs. 2,88,463, of which Rs. 1,86,961 were payable by 7,953 revenue-paying estates, while Rs. 11,789 were due from 536 revenue-free estates, Rs. 38,377 from 12,601 rent-free lands, and Rs. 1,335 from 199 *hats* and fairs. The number of rent-free lands is greater than in any district in Bengal except the 24-Parganas; the amounts due from them are generally small, and have frequently to be realized by certificate procedure. In 1907-08 no less than 10,983 certificates had to be issued; this was the largest number issued in any district in the Province, and exceeded the total number of certificates issued in the other four districts of the Burdwan Division.

The number of estates assessed to cesses is 21,289, and the number of recorded shareholders is 27,685. There are 20,625 tenures assessed to cesses with 20,845 shareholders; and there are thus nearly as many tenures assessed to cesses as there are

estates. The total demand of cesses (Rs. 3,31,111) is equal to nearly a quarter of the demand of land revenue (Rs. 13,96,350).

In 1897-98 the income-tax yielded Rs. 50,417 paid by 1,988 assessors, and in 1901-02 the amount derived from the tax had increased to Rs. 58,852 and the number of assessors to 2,422. At that time the minimum income assessable was Rs. 500, but this was raised to Rs. 1,000 in 1903, thereby affording relief to a number of petty traders, money-lenders and clerks. The number of assessors consequently fell in 1903 to Rs. 1,139. In 1907-08 the tax brought in Rs. 69,998 paid by 1,311 assessors.

There are 11 offices for the registration of assurances under Act III of 1877. At Hooghly (Chinsura) the District Sub-Registrar deals, as usual, with the documents presented there and assists the District Magistrate, who is *ex-officio* District Registrar, in supervising the proceedings of the Sub-Registrars in charge of

NAME.	Documents registered.	Receipts.	
		Rs.	Rs.
Hooghly ...	2,240	7,507	8,924
Arinabigh ...	3,585	3,889	1,900
Dhansikhail ...	1,446	1,614	1,625
Hooghly ...	2,529	2,551	1,461
Dito Jaiet (Shombazar) ...	1,569	1,687	1,604
Harijal ...	2,678	2,729	2,039
Janki ...	3,763	3,700	1,345
Khansikal ...	3,008	2,727	2,006
Kristangar ...	2,109	2,401	1,668
Pandua ...	2,217	2,470	1,947
Serampore ...	3,933	4,888	3,253
Total ...	29,177	36,270	25,379

other registration offices. In the five years 1895-99, the average number of documents registered annually was 26,752, and in the next quinquennium (1900-04) it was 28,418. In 1907 the number rose to 29,177, as shown in the marginal statement, which gives the salient statistics for that year. The increase is attributed chiefly to renewal of settlements which had been held over from previous years on account of heavy floods, and to the settlement of fallow and waste lands to meet the increased demand for jute and paddy cultivation.

This district with Howrah is under the jurisdiction of the District and Sessions Judge of Hooghly. The Additional District and Sessions Judge of the 24-Parganas is also Additional Judge for this district. The subordinate civil judicial officers are:—a Judge of the Small Cause Courts of Hooghly, Serampore and Howrah; a Sub-Judge and two Additional Sub-Judges; two Munsifs of Hooghly, three Munsifs of Serampore, a Munsif of Serampore and Uluberia, and three Munsifs of Arinabigh.



ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.
CIVIL JUSTICE.

Criminal
Justice.

Criminal justice is administered by the District Magistrate and the various Magistrates subordinate to him. The sanctioned staff at the headquarters consists in addition to the District Magistrate, of four Deputy Magistrates of the first class and one Deputy Magistrate of the second or third class. Besides these officers, one or two Sub-Deputy Magistrates with third class powers are generally posted to the head-quarters station. The Subdivisional Officers of Arāmbāgh and Serampore are almost invariably Magistrates of the first class, the former being assisted by a Sub-Deputy Magistrate vested with second or third class powers, and the latter by a Deputy Magistrate with first class powers. In addition to the stipendiary Magistrates, there are Benches of Honorary Magistrates at Chinsura, Hooghly, Serampore, Uttarpara, Baidyabati and Bhadreswar, and two Honorary Magistrates at Arāmbāgh.

Police.

For police purposes the district is divided into 13 thanas with

Subdivision.	Thana.	Outpost.
Hooghly	Hooghly	Panchhat Town.
		Chinsura " "
		Chandernagore " "
		Magra (Ind.) " "
		Baldia (Ind.) " "
Serampore	Serampore	Uttarpara Town.
		Chak " "
		Mafok " "
		Konoupar (Ind.) " "
		Uttarpara (Ind.) " "
Arāmbāgh	Arāmbāgh	Baidyabati.
		Shrotrabali.
		Talindika.
		Bhadreswar (Ind.)
		Varakeswar (Ind.)
Arāmbāgh	Arāmbāgh	Purani (Ind.)
		Madanpur (Ind.)
	
	
	

18 outposts as shown in the margin. The regular police force consisted in 1907 of the Superintendent and a Deputy Superintendent of Police, 8 Inspectors, 53 Sub-Inspectors, one Sergeant, 84 Head-Constables and 712 constables. The total strength of the force was, therefore, 860 men, representing one policeman to every 1.3 square miles and to every 1,220 of the population. The C Company of the Bengal Military Police is posted at Chinsura; it consisted in 1907 of one Subahdār, one Jemadār, 4 Havildārs, 4 *saikhs*, and 86 *sepoys*. The rural police for the watch and ward of villages in the interior consisted of 202 *dafadars* and 2,694 *chaudidars*, representing one *chaudidār* to every 390 inhabitants. The new *panchayat* system has been introduced throughout the district, except in two thanas of the Serampore subdivision, viz., Chanditalā and Kristanagar; under this system presidents of *panchayats* are vested with the powers of a

Magistrate of the third class under certain sections of the Criminal Procedure Code.

There is a district jail at Hooghly and a subsidiary jail at each of the outlying subdivisional head-quarters, viz., Arāmbāgh and Serampore. The sub-jail at Arāmbāgh has accommodation for 15 prisoners, viz., 12 male convicts and 3 female convicts, and that at Serampore for 28 (22 males and 6 females) under-trial prisoners; convicts sentenced to imprisonment of more than two weeks are transferred to Hooghly. The district jail has, according to the returns for 1903, accommodation for 465 prisoners, viz., barracks for 358 male convicts, 23 female convicts, 14 under-trial prisoners, and 8 civil prisoners; there are also cells for 6 male convicts and a hospital with beds for 56 patients. The chief jail industries are oil-pressing and the manufacture of coir mats and *daris*.