1857 in Bihar

(CHOTANAGPUR AND
SANTHAL PARGANAS)

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FOREWORD.

The history of the Freedom Movement of 1857, in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas, has received very little publicity. Some of the original records available in National Archives in New Delhi and in the Record Rooms of the district Collectorates as also at some other places clearly reveal that the history of the movement here is somewhat different from what some of the British chronicles have tried to make out. They have made strenuous efforts to show that the movement did not receive any support here and that it was put down very easily. Some of the original and authentic documents quoted in the present volume will, however, clearly show that the movement in these parts of Bihar was, by no means, an isolated land-mark. It was in every way a more pronounced conflagration spread all over these parts along with the rest of the country. Records go to show that even prior to this Movement of 1857, there was a formidable Freedom Movement by the Kol population of Singhbhum as far back as 1831—33 and another widespread Freedom Movement by the Santhals during 1853—56. Both these movements by the Kols and the Santhals were, however, put down ruthlessly.

The Freedom Movement of 1857 here, as in other parts of the country, was a mass movement receiving widespread and popular support from all sections of the people (both Hindus and Muhammadans), the Santhals, Manjhis, Cheros, Bhogtas, Kherwar, Jagirdars, Landlords, Tikaits, Dewans, Sepoys, Jamadars, Subedars, men from Bhojpur and Bihar and one of them the Lal of Sulgee, Jagatpal Singh in particular, described to be a son-in-law of the great hero Babu Kunwar Singh himself.

According to some accounts " during the whole period of the outbreak the division of Chotanagpur had been a source of anxiety and uneasiness and from time to time of embarrassment and difficulty and even of actual danger. In fact no division in the whole of Bengal had been subject to such continued disturbance as this province." (Frederick Halliday.)

There is a vivid description of a regular battle at Chatra (Hazaribagh), the success in which was described by the then British authorities, as follows, " and although it (the success) has been achieved at considerable loss, yet the object gained has been great, and I trust, will ensure the speedy tranquillity

of the whole of the province of Bihar, if not add considerably to the security of the country from Son to Calcutta" (letter dated the 4th October, 1857 from the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Hazaribagh to the officiating Commissioner of Chotanagpur). There are also accounts of the ruthless and terribly cruel manner in which retaliatory punishments were inflicted. Speaking of this battle the same letter further mentions:—"These two principal mutineers, Jaimangal Pandey and Nadir Ali (wounded), were tried and sentence of death passed upon them in my capacity of Commissioner..... was duly carried into effect this morning on the very ground where they had made such an obstinate resistance to the British troops two days previously."

At Rohini, a village near Deoghar in Santhal Parganas some of the fighters of freedom, who were suspected, were hanged with the utmost cruelty. Even a Major in spite of an injury on his head, saw everything done personally, even to the adjusting of ropes and saw them looped to run easy and dared to hang some martyrs even without an order from Government. The extent of the terribleness of the cruelty would better be judged by the Major's own words "So I seized a pistol, clapped it to the man's (prisoner's) ear and said with a look there was no mistake about, 'Another word out of your mouth and your brains shall be scattered on the ground'. He trembled and held his tongue. The elephant came up, he was put on his back, the rope adjusted, the elephant moved, and he was left dangling. I then had the others up and off in the same way". Cruelty could not go further, and such was the price the martyrs had to pay for trying to obtain Freedom for the motherland!

Thakoor Biswanath Sahi of Barkagarh and Pandey Ganpat Rai of Bhaunro, an ex-Dewan of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur, the two leaders of Ranchi were summarily tried and brutally hanged on one of the trees to the north of the old Commissioner's compound at Ranchi on the 6th April, 1858 and the 21st April, 1858 respectively on the same day that the sentence of death was passed in each case. All the 97 villages of the Thakoor had already been confiscated in December 1857 along with 11 villages of Pandey Ganpat Rai. Similar capital sentences on Tikait Omrao Singh and others were passed on the 6th January, 1858 and executed just two days later.

The leaders of the Movement from Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau, were wending their way to join Kunwar Singh who

had proceeded to Uttar Pradesh. The Chero zamindars of Palamau almost to man took up arms against the British and the Bhogtas did the same and practically all the countryside, nearly whole of the district of Palamau was up in arms. Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi, two of the leaders after putting up a heroic fight, were eventually captured, tried and hanged. Among the others who met the same fate were Raja Singh of Hamir, Tikait Unaras Singh and his Dewan Sheikh Bhikhari.

Having gone through these original source materials, I had a mind to prepare a short account of the Freedom Movement in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas, with a view to help the future historians and research scholars to prepare a more detailed and authentic history. I put this proposal before our Chief Minister, Dr. S. K. Sinha, who with his natural love for research, study and scholarship and in his usual magnanimity readily approved of my proposal. In the course of his official assignment as the Special Officer for the revision of our District Gazetteers, Shri P. C. Roy Choudhury has been collecting large volume of materials by studying the old records. A perusal of this book will speak of his commendable endeavour in bringing out this volume and that also in a very short time, as we were anxious to publish it on the 15th of August, 1957, while commemorating the centenary of the Freedom Movement.

The background of the 1857 Movement has its roots in the past and naturally Shri P. C. Roy Choudhury has covered it at some length. I hope and trust that this volume will prove of great interest not only at the present moment but also to the future historians and research scholars. Although one may not agree with the author's interpretations in all cases, it should prove of great help for further research in the history of the Freedom Movement of 1857.

I have great pleasure in commending this volume to the readers.

RADHA GOVIND PRASAD,
M.A., B.L., M.L.C.,
Deputy Minister (Incharge Revenue, Forest, Religious Endowments and Trusts)
Government of Bihar.

PATNA:
The 15th August, 1957.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The Movement of 1857 in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas was somewhat different in character than the phases of the movement in other parts of Bihar. The divorce between the English administrator and the common man was much more absolute in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. In their inherent passion and zeal for expansion and standardisation of the administrative set up the British Government knocked down many of the pillars in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas which might have supported them. In the dealings with the aboriginals whether in Chotanagpur or in Santhal Parganas it was almost forgotten that they have an aristocracy and culture of their own and were not specimens of museum to be bandied about. There was an astonishing disregard for the institutions, traditions and customs that were the very moorings of the society in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. The primary duty of the State was taken to be to maintain itself and in furtherance of that cause an administrative system was thrust and not allowed to grow from within. This was the tragedy that brought about the movement of 1857 in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. The aboriginal society was reduced to a dead level and it was almost taken to be the dispensation of a benign Providence that the interest of the aboriginals was placed in the hands of the administrators.

The development of 1857 Movement in the districts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas has been sought to be pictured in the following pages on a study of the original documents and other literature and with reference to the background of previous history. The Movement was popular and had touched the masses very widely. It was a revolt from within and not for any selfish end. It was a revolt with full knowledge that bows and arrows could not stand before guns and cannon balls. That adds poignancy to the story.

PATNA:
The 31*st July*, 1957.

P. C. ROY CHOUDHURY.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

As the copies of this book printed last year have been exhausted I was directed by the Revenue Department to bring out a second edition. This has given me an opportunity to thoroughly revise the book. As mentioned in the foreword of the Deputy Minister I had a very short time at my disposal to prepare the text for the first edition.

In order to get more materials I had visited the National Archives, New Delhi and the Archives of the West Bengal Government, Education Department. Through the kind help of the Director and the Assistant Director of the National Archives (Dr. T. Roy Chaudhury and Shri S. Roy) a number of fresh documents were traced. Shri G. N. Chandra, Keeper of Old Records, West Bengal Government, was also very helpful and I could get some more documents on Santhal Parganas from there. I am much indebted to them for their help.

The present edition has a large addition. Digests of old English correspondence volumes in Hazaribagh and Singhbhum published separately by the Gazetteers' Revision Section as Hazaribagh Old Records and Singhbhum Old Records have been very useful. The records in the other Record Rooms were also consulted. I have taken help from some contemporary writers which has been acknowledged in the text.

I am grateful to Pandit Binodanand Jha (Minister, Revenue) and Shri Radha Govind Prasad (Deputy Minister, Revenue) for their many valuable suggestions. Both of them were very keen that an authentic documentary book on 1857 in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas be published. They gave me full latitude to tap the resources both within and outside the State of Bihar and to write the text according to my conclusions. A Hindi edition is published separately.

Thanks are also due to the Superintendent, Secretariat Press, Gulzarbagh and his staff for their efficient service in printing the book within a short time.

GAZETTEERS' REVISION BRANCH,
REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
BIHAR, PATNA:

P. C. ROY CHOUDHURY.

The 15*th July*, 1958.

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CHAPTER I.

SANTHAL PARGANAS.

THE BACKGROUND.

The history of the district of Santhal Parganas as a separate and recognised administrative unit begins in 1855 when by Act XXXVII of that year, the district was carved out of portions of Bhagalpur and Birbhum districts. The creation of a separate district as the Santhal Parganas was a direct sequel to the great Santhal Rebellion of 1854-55. The basic causes of the Santhal Rebellion are described separately. Prior to this the tract now comprising this district along with adjoining areas now grouped in the districts of Hazaribagh, Monghyr and Bhagalpur was loosely described as "Jungle-terry district" which had come under British rule when the East India Company had assumed the *Dewani* in 1765.

It is difficult to reconstruct an authentic history of this area up to the Muhammadan period. There are finds of stone implements and cromlechs which indicate an advanced stage of civilization at a very early time. The Maler (Sauria Paharia) are taken to be the earliest inhabitants of whom there is any record. They have been identified with the Malli mentioned by Megasthenes (302 B. C.). There is a reference to this area in the account of Hiuen Tsiang (645 A. D.).

The strategic and economic importance of the area round about Rajmahal and some other portions of Santhal Parganas early attracted the attention of the Portuguese writers, Muslim historians and records of other European companies. The area became coveted particularly because of the river-front. After many vicissitudes, ultimately, the Imperialists had recovered Bihar in 1580-81. Khan-i-Azam was sent as Governor of Bengal by Akbar. Khan-i-Azam was confronted by the rebels in alliance with the Afghans, on the 27th March, 1582 after he had reached Katiganj, a navigation canal near Rajmahal after recovering Teliagarhi. The Imperialists gained victory.

Rajmahal was made the capital of Bengal in 1592. Akbar sent Man Singh as Governor of Bengal in May, 1594. In 1595 Man Singh laid the foundation of a new capital at Rajmahal. But in 1612 Islam Khan had shifted the capital to Dacca owing to military and political exigencies.

Rajmahal as the capital of Shah Shuja had an unofficial representative of the English in Dr. Gabriel Boughton who had a considerable influence on the Prince. With the fall of Shah Shuja

the English traders were faced with difficulties and their boats used to be stopped at Rajmahal by the new Governor Mirjumla. By 1676 the English traders had a small agency at Rajmahal.

The later vicissitudes need not be described in detail. Rajmahal was taken in 1742 by the Marhatas. In 1757 Siraj-ud-dąula was captured by Mir Daud, the Governor of Rajmahal. With the victory of Major Adams over Mirkasim Ali at Udhua Nallah in 1763 the British relationship with Santhal Parganas actually started. It has been rightly observed by O'Malley that the early history of British administration is mainly a record of their attempts to pacify the Paharias of the Rajmahal hills.

Early British Rulers.

Captain Brooke, Captain Browne, Augusta Cleveland are some of the early administrators that tried to consolidate the British rule in this area through the execution of a calculated policy. It was left to Cleveland who died at the early age of 29 on the 13th January, 1784 to gain a certain amount of confidence among the Paharias who fondly called him the Chilimili Saheb. Some of the rules introduced by Cleveland for the trial of criminal cases were incorporated in Regulation I of 1796. Cleveland was followed by other administrators one of whom was Mr. Sutherland A few recommendations of Sutherland made in 1819 were (1) that Government should declare that the hill tract occupied by the hill people was the property of Government alone, (2) that the level country skirting the external ranges of hills was distinct from the adjoining Zamindari estates and was also its property, (3) that measures should be taken for defining the extent of the skirt of the hills and the hilly tract, (4) that the defects of the administration of justice among the hill peoples under Regulation I of 1796 was to be removed by the application of the jurisdiction of the criminal court and subject to the ordinary system of police and by investing the Magistrate of Bhagalpur with summary powers for the adjustment of certain civil claims and (5) that the payment of stipends to the *Sardars*, *Naibs* and the inferior *Manjhis* be put on a more sound basis.

Early Nineteenth Century.

These recommendations were accepted by the Government in 1823 and in 1837 Mr. Pontet was placed in charge of the revenue administration. The Santhals started pouring in and encouragement was given to them for clearing jungle. Apparently there was an idea that all was well in the administration and that the Santhals were happy.

But it was a very deceptive appearance. The inner set up of the administrative system did not ensure proper justice to the

common man and there was a deep underlying discontent among the simple-minded but excitable Santhals which found an effective expression in a movement of the Santhals known as *Hul* in 1855.

Background of Santhal Revolt.

The immediate background of the movement has to be appreciated in spite of some of the measures that were being taken to stop the oppression on the Santhals. In a letter addressed to Mr. H. J. James, Acting Collector of Bhagalpur, Mr. Pontet thus enumerated his duties :—

" I trust it will not be considered presumptuous on my part in bringing further to notice what I have been led to consider my duties to consist of as recommended by Mr. Collector Dunbar to the Sudder Board of Revenue on 25th January, 1857 viz;—

1. To obtain possession peaceably of that extensive wild tract the Damin-i-Koh lands in this district as under orders of Government (dated 17th July, 1823, paras. 31-32) which having been held by the mountaineers for so many years past considered it hereditary property.

2. To introduce among the Hill people a taste for agriculture.

3. To parcel off Jageers to Sardars. Naibs and Manjees agreeable to orders of Government dated 6th December 1827.

4. To protect the industrious race of new settlers called Santhals who have been driven by oppressive Zamindars from their native countries Birbhum and Singhbhum.

5. To resume all lands within the Damin clandestinely retained by the Zamindars.

6. To encourage more settlers for clearing away the immense forests and thereby to make the country healthy to enable any class of people to resort to the resources of the Damin.

7. To bring to the notice of Government all productions this unexplored tract is supposed to abound in.

8. Finally by accomplishing the proceeding, a handsome revenue will be yielded to Government, the race civilized and the tract made healthy."

Mr. Pontet acted according to his light for the good of the Santhals. The following 3 letters from the Archives will throw a flood of light on Mr. Pontet's work. The letters are of 1850, 1851 and 1853, respectively.

LETTER NO. 1.

No. 30.

FROM

THE COLLECTOR OF BHAUGULPORE.

To

G. F. BROWN, ESQ.,

Commissioner of Revenue,
Bhaugulpore.

Dated Bhagulpore, 18th September, 1850.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 20th Ultimo no. 2151, and in reply have the honor to submit the following report on the Revenue administration of the Damun-i-koh accompanied by Statements and an Abstract of Mr. Pontet's annual report for 1849-50.

2nd. In the margin I have given a Memo. of the Demand Collection and.....Balance for the two years 1848-49 and 1849-50 which shews an increase of....Jummah for the past year of nearly Rs. 3,000 and the outstanding balance smaller than at the close of the year previous. The number of Mehals upon which this Jummah is assessed amounts to Rs. 1,179. They are registered according to the Thannahs in which they are situated, and of these there are four in the Damun-i-koh, the margin shows the names of the Thannahs, the number of the Mehals in and the Jummah assessed on each. The Jummah for 1848-49 was assessed on 1,134 Mehals.

—	1848-49.	1849-50.
Demand	40,947 1 3	43,724 5 5½
Collection	39,250 11 9	42,080 7 3
Balance	1,696 5 6	1,643 14 2½

Thannahs.	No. of Mehals.	Amount of Jummah.
Rajmehals	400	15,818 2 5½
Dighee ..	294	10,195 10 0
Kurhuriah	181	8,094 9 0
Doomkah	304	9,616 0 0
Total ..	1,179	43,724 5 5½

3rd. Of the balance outstanding at the close of the year Rs. 486-7-9 have been collected and the remainder will be paid in when Mr. Pontet visits the Tract next cold season. It may be asked why there is any balance. Mr. Pontet can only visit the Damun-i-koh at one period of the year, and to prevent the Ryots being harassed, he only permits collections to be made once a year while he is in the neighbourhood. Circumstances may prevent all the Ryots attending though the generality of them come forward without hesitation, some may be absent from home, or detained at the neighbouring courts, or kept at home by sickness, or perhaps a failure of the crop may have occurred, and the

Superintendent finds it advisable to be lenient, but on the whole I think the small balance compared with the demand and collections is highly creditable to Mr. Pontet.

Cultivators.

4th. The cultivation through the Damun is carried on by Hill men, Sonthals, Boonyas and some few Dhangurs. The principal class of cultivators appear to be the Sonthals who are scattered over the Rajmehal, Kurhurriah and Dighee Divisions and now appear to be again locating near the high road from Bhaugulpore to Calcutta. The Ryots in the neighbourhood of this road from Gunga-pershaud to Suckree are liable to be pressed by troops and other passers-by for coolies and Mr. Pontet has found much difficulty in getting—parties to settle there; but of late years a colony of Dhangurs has sprung up, and their example is now being followed by the—Sonthals—Mr. Pontet considers that 3/4 of the Hills are under cultivation by the Hill men, and he adds that to the South of Kurhurriah and in Ambar 2 to 300 hill men cultivate lands in the plains. He considers the example set by the Sonthals has induced the Hill men to be more industrious; as also the check that is kept over them to prevent their letting their lands to Sonthals. It is common for the hill men to apply for grants of land on condition of cultivating it themselves, but they frequently give it up to the Sonthals in hope of collecting rents from them. Mr. Pontet watches these proceedings and wherever he finds the Hill men have not acted up to their engagements, he enters the villages in the list of Mehals paying revenue, and gives it, over to the cultivating Sonthals. The Sonthals are such eager cultivators they soon clear the Jungle, and would, if allowed, as Mr. Pontet observes, cultivate to the very doors of the Hill men—So that necessity and example conduce to make the Hill people industrious. The crops in vogue are Rice, Maize and Oil seed. There has been improvement in the cultivation of cotton and the Sugar Cane. The potatoe and brinjal have been and are gradually being appreciated by the Sonthals, but the former crop requires irrigation and this causes more trouble than they approve of; however the produce of the quantity sown in the 4 Thannahs this season was 125 maunds from 27 maunds of seed. Mr. Pontet proposes this year again to make an endeavour to—introluce the turnip.

Hillmen.

Crops.

Bazars and Bussowry.

5th. When Mr. Pontet took charge of the Damun-i-koh he found that various Bunyahs had located themselves in different parts of the tract and monopolized all the trade. The Ryots were eaten up by their exactions and they were so scattered, that little or no check could be put upon their proceedings. Mr. Pontet's great object was to make Buzars in different parts of the Tract, especially near the high roads, and to induce these men to settle there every year his measures have been attended with success—18 Bazars are now established in the Damun of which 2 were brought into existence during the course of the past year. These

Bazars eligibly situated on the roads which traverse the Damun will, it is hoped, increase in importance, for even now people coming from Moorshedabad to Bhaugulpore prefer the.....straight and safe road through the Damin to the circuitous and unsafe way by Rajmehal and Suckree. Mr. Pontet at first met with great opposition to the Establishment of Bazars. The Bunyahs considered, and truly, that their power over the Ryots, their unlimited gain and monopoly would be ruined, and shewed a disposition to resist. They were allowed the option either of going to the Bazars or retaining their dokans in the jungle paying a high ground rent, which was credited in the accounts under the head of " Bussowry ". They found opposition useless, and have gradually one after another taken up their abode in the Bazars—one or two still adhere to their old " haunts ". The Bussowry collections have now dwindled into a mere trifle, but a substitute has been found in the rents paid by the farmers of the....Bazars.

6th. Two very desirable objects, which have attracted Mr. Pontet's attention must be here noticed—Roads and Tanks. He has induced the Ryots to make roads from one village to another so that from Budlogunge to the South East of Colgong a person may visit all 4 divisions and returning to the same place will have gone over 350 miles of roads. There is another road of.....similar character on the other side of the Damun from Oodhoah Nullah and these have been made and kept in repair by the Ryots without expense to Government. These roads are useful so far as the Damun itself is concerned but were the tracks, for they can scarcely by termed roads outside the Damun improved the traffic of the Damun might be advantaged. Mr. Pontet mentions 3 roads in particular—1st from Budloogunge to Colgong on the Ganges, 2nd from Dhumsarri towards Bhaugulpore, and the 3rd from Ambar east of the Damun towards Jungypoor. It is hopeless to look for any assistance from the Ferry Funds Committee. That Committee is blessed with poverty and cannot help but Government might come....forward with a donation, and the neighbouring zamindars might be induced to follow the example. A great want of water is experienced by the Ryots and they cannot afford to dig Tanks. Here and there a Tank is to be found but much neglected. One I saw at Mudoopareh in the cold weather and it required to be cleaned. Were Government to sanction a small yearly expenditure for cleaning old and digging new Tanks, the Estate would be much benefited.

Tanks.

Abkarree.

7th. In the hope of breaking up the Abkarree Monopoly which existed throughout this District I directed Mr. Pontet to take....charge of the Abkaree Mehal in addition to his other duties. He has formed the Mehals in the 4 Thannahs at a Jummah of Rs. 4,216 for the year 1850-51, so that the revenue derivable from the.....Damin-i-koh for the current year will exceed Rs. 47,940,

and there scarcely exists a doubt but that the Abkaree Revenue will yearly increase for some time.

8th. Attempts have been made by two parties during the year to bore for coal. Mr. Duncan took a pottah for some lands at Hurrah, and Mr. Sweedland was allowed to bore at Mooteejumah as an experiment. Coal was found in both localities, but the seams were very thin, and the parties do not appear to have been at all satisfied with the result of their proceedings. Mr. Pontet is.....inclined to attribute their want of success to inexperience, and from not going to sufficient outlay for efficient machinery. I believe the coal burns well. Other coal but at a great distance from the river is found on the South West of the Damun. This is of superior quality.

9th. *Boundaries.*—In Mr. Pontet's report for the past year he mentions certain disputes regarding the boundary between the Government and the zamindars for portions of land lately brought into cultivation. The boundary is supposed to run in a straight line from pillar to pillar as proposed by Mr. Commissioner Ward, but these pillars are at such a distance apart, that either.... party may pass the boundary without being aware of it. While the land was jungle of course there was no dispute, but now the cultivation is increasing it becomes a matter of necessity and importance to lay down the boundary, and so prevent further disputes. I visited one or two places where these disputes existed. The remedy is to have a straight line from pillar to pillar laid down by a professional Surveyor and either converted into a road or a ditch—there would be little expense attendant. In many places the Ryots would do it willingly without remuneration. Boundaries.

10th. It only remains for me to give an Abstract of Mr. Pontet's proceeding during his tour in 1849-50 and I have to apologise for not having sent an earlier reply to your letter of the 20th Ultimo, but I required some information from the Deputy Collector which was only supplied a few days ago.

Mr. Pontet went to Rajmehal on 19th October and remained there till 15th November, where he was engaged settling 30 villages which give an increase of Rs. 900. He then returned to the....Station till the 14th December and continued out in the District with the exception of a few days in March and April, till the 30th of April. He twice made the Circuit of the Damun-i-koh during the cold season. He settled 26 boundary disputes, heard and.....disposed of 24 cases received from the Hill men through the.....Magistrate as also other petitions of various kinds. He decided 12 cases under Regulation 1 of 1827, accompanied the Collector to visit disputed boundaries, marked out and accompanied the....Revenue Surveyor while inspecting the boundary—established two new hauts—resettled 228 villages and.....assessed Abstract.

45 new ones,* besides settling...various disputes on the spot. He raised the revenue by Rs. 2,777 and has collected Rs. 42,080 out of a demand of Rs. 43,724, had it packed, transported to the Collector's Office, counted and receipts taken before the end of April, enquired into the state of the Abkaree Mehal, and former the 4 Thannahs under his charge at a Jumma of Rs. 4.216. Mr. Pontet was constantly on the move. I have been carefully over his annual report, and find he was seldom encamped more than 2 or 3 days in one place, and always employed. His duties are of so miscellaneous a character, and he does so much by personal enquiry that it is difficult to enumerate, in a manner fair to him, the quantity and the quality of the work he gets through. It must be judged of by its fruits viz. by the increase of revenue—the increase of cultivation, arising as his does from a sense of security and freedom from harassment which the Ryots in the Damun enjoy. His proceedings appear always to have met with the approbation of his superiors, and for the last two or three years application has been made for an addition to his salary. I would again respectfully bring the subject to the favourable consideration of.....Government.

* *N. B.*—All the Cuboolyuts were submitted for the Collector's—approval before the middle of—April.

I have &ca., ,

Sd. G. LOCH,

Collector.

Board of Revenue—Lower Provinces.

FORT WILLIAM,

The 28th February, 1851.

Rev. (Rev) Deptt.
O.C. No. 14.
Dt. 26th March
1851.

LETTER NO. 2.

No. 124.

FROM :

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF REVENUE, LOWER PROVINCES.

To :

J. P. GRANT, ESQR.,

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Dated Fort William, the 28th February, 1851.

SIR,

With reference to the final para of my letter of the 21st Instant, no. 114, I am directed by the Board of Revenue to

submit herewith, a copy of a letter from the Commissioner of Bhaugulpore, dated the 7th October last, no. 2579, with its annexure; reporting on the revenue management of the Hill Tract in the District of Bhaugulpore called the Damun-i-koh, for the year 1849-50.

2nd. The cultivation in this tract is carried on by hill men, of wrom the Sonthals are described as enterprising and industrious, and as affording an example in this respect to the Dhangars and....Boonyas, on whom the example has had a beneficial effect. The...crops are rice, maize and oil-seed, and to some extent, cotton and sugarcane.

3rd. The number of Mehals or parcels for which Pottahs had been granted to ryots to the close of the year of report, was 1179, of which 1167 had been settled ryotwarree and 12 were either under khas management or summarily settled. The demand for the year was Rs. 45,421 (the amount of the current demand being Rs. 43,724) of which Rs. 43,777 had been collected within the year, being 96¼ per cent, and leaving a balance of Rs. 1,644 on account of current—revenue outstanding at its close. Of this sum again Rs. 486 had been realized to the date of report, and only Rs. 1,157 remained outstanding, to be realized at the next visit of Mr. Pontet, the Deputy Collector in charge of the Tract. Mr. Pontet, the Commissioner observes, realizes all that he can to the end of May of each year, and further collections are suspended, to prevent.....harassment to the Royts, till the next season of Mofussil operations, when the new harvest furnishes the cultivators with the means of discharging their arrears.

4th. During the year, Mr. Pontet granted 45 fresh Pottahs, and resettled 247 Mehals the leases of which had expired, at an aggregate jumma of Rs. 9,387. The actual net increase of revenue obtained in these cases is Rs. 2,777. All the settlements, except one belonging to the year of report, had been confirmed by the Collector.

5th. The Abkaree Mehal has been made over by the Collector to Mr. Pontet to be settled by him, and he has made a settlement for the ensuing year 1850-51 at a Jumma of Rs. 4,216.

6th. For several years the Damun-i-koh has been under the direct management of Mr. Pontet, whose measures for bringing the tract under cultivation would appear to have been eminently successful. This is sufficiently evinced by the gradual improvement in the revenue, which from Rs. 6,682 in 1837-38 has been augmented to Rs. 43,724 in the year of report exclusive of the Abkaree. He has also established Bazars eligibly situated on the roads which traverse the tract, and these roads from the facilities for obtaining supplies which now exist, are becoming a thoroughfare to travellers from Moorshedabad to Bhaugulpore. Mr. Pontet

has also induced the ryots to construct path ways connecting the.....different villages, without expense to the Government. Were the roads outside of the Damun-i-koh improved, it would, the Collector observes, give an impulse to the traffic of the Country; and he thinks that if the Government assisted with a donation, the neighbouring zamindars might be induced to follow the example. A great scarcity of water prevails in the Damun-i-koh and the ryots are unable to afford to dig Tanks. The Collector is of opinion that a small yearly expenditure, if sanctioned by the Government, for cleaning old, and digging new Tanks, would greatly benefit the Estate. The Board have called for a statement of the sum.....which Mr. Pontet would recommend to be expended this year for tanks and roads.

7th. The local reports close with a summary of Mr. Pontet's successful exertions in superintending the Damun-i-koh. These the Collector Mr. Loch, observes, " must be judged of by their fruits, viz., by the increase of revenue, and the increase of cultivation, arising as this does from a sense of security and freedom from harassment which the ryots enjoy," and he recommends and the recommendation is supported by the Commissioner—that Mr. Pontet's salary be increased as a reward for his meritorious exertions—The Board submitted a recommendation on this subject on the 31st January/49 but they were informed in Under-Secretary Mr. Seton Karr's letter of the 21st November last no. 1117, that the Court of Directors had declined to comply with the application.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
Sd/-
Secretary.

Rev. (Rev) Dept.
O. C. No. 35,
dt. 20th Jany.,
1853.

LETTER NO. 3.

No. 76.

To :

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

SIR,

Govt. of Bengal
Revenue,
The 20th Jan.
1853.

I have the honor by direction of the Most Noble the Governor of Bengal to acknowledge the receipt of your letter no. 371, dated the 8th of October last, being the Board's report on the Revenue Management of the Damun-i-koh under Mr. Deputy Collector

Pontet's superintendence, for 1851-52, and to communicate the following observations and orders.

2nd. The number of Government Estates at the close of the year was 1,256, or 48 more than in the preceding year. Of these 1,250 Estates had been settled, and 6 were under Khass management. The demand for the current year was Rs. 50,160 (that of the previous year having been Rs. 47,665) shewing an actual increase of Rs. 2,495. The outstanding balance of the previous year, Rs. 1,737, added to the Jumma of the current year makes the total demand Rs. 51,897, of which sum Rs. 49,351—or about 95 per cent was collected. The balance outstanding at close of the year Rs. 2,546—belongs entirely to the year of report, and will soon, it is said, be realised. The expenses of collection were under 1 per cent. These results are very favorable.

3rd. The state of the Abkarree collections is satisfactory. They amounted to Rs. 6,090 and the Jumma of the new year has been fixed at Rs. 6,639—shewing an increase of Rs. 549 over that of 1851-52.

4th. The Commissioner recommends that in addition to the sum of Rs. 300, which was sanctioned on the 28th October last, for the construction of Tanks and Wells in the Damun-i-koh, a further expenditure of Rs. 200 more for the same object and Rs. 100 for the encouragement of agricultural productions may be incurred. This His Lordship has been pleased to sanction.

5th. It is stated that the suspension bridge over the Morelle Nuddee has been completed—by which a saving in distance of 10 miles between Rajmehal and Bhaugulpore has been accomplished and the Post Office spared the cost of boats for transporting the mails by the old route—to render the road however available for wheeled carriages and Palkee Daks, it is necessary to overcome the impediment presented by the steep ascent of the "Choonee" hill to the South West of Rajmehal, and Mr. Pontet proposes to cut two or 3 zigzag sections in order to render the ascent gradual. For this purpose he asks for the services of two men of the Darjeeling Sappers and Miners from November to February, as well as a grant of Rs. 200. This also meets the approval of the Governor, and application has accordingly been made to the Government of India in the Military Department.

6th. It is proposed to allow the Naib Sezawals (who are partly Police and partly Revenue officers) at each of the 4 Thannahs 8 annas a month or 6 Rs. per annum to compensate for the expense to which they are sent for stationery in their correspondence on....Revenue matters. His Lordship is not disposed to sanction any increase of the fixed establishment allowance on this account, but if more stationery be required the Superintendent may be authorised to charge....for it, to the extent

above mentioned, in a contingent bill, to be passed by the Superintendent of Stationery.

7th. It is also proposed to increase the salaries of the Mohurrirs and Peons at each of the 4 hill Thannahs—the former from 7 to 10 Rs. and the latter from 3 to 4 Rs. in consequence of the difficulty experienced in obtaining the services of competent persons—and it is remarked that the same descriptions of officers elsewhere receive the higher allowances. His Lordship is not satisfied that this increase is necessary.

8th. It is stated that the medicines supplied to Mr. Pontet on his last tour, were deficient in quantity on this subject a communication has been made to the Medical Board requesting them to cause such arrangements to be made as will obviate any like inconvenience in future.

9th. His Lordship desires me, in conclusion, to express his concurrence with the Board in their opinion that Mr. Pontet's management during the year has been as energetic and successful as heretofore.

I have & ca.,
Sd/- ILLEGIBLE. 24/1.

But all these ideas and consequent measures could not pacify the Santhals. It has been held that " the cases of the rebellion were several, the Santhals themselves declaring that their chief grievances were the prevalence of falsehood, the negligence of the sahibs, the extortion of the mahajans, the corruption of the amlas, and the oppression of the police. All these grievances were due very largely to the absence of European officers and the presence of Bengali and other Dikku, i.e., non-Santhal immigrants, who had flocked in to carry on trade and money-lending among the Santhals. The district as now constituted was divided between Bhagalpur and Birbhum, and the only resident Magistrate was at Deoghar. The revenue administration of the Damin-i-koh was under the Superintendent, assisted by four *naib sazawals*, who used to visit it in order to collect rent and settle disputes about lands. The Superintendent was the only European official who visited the Damin, and he had no authority to deal with civil and criminal cases. The Santhal had therefore to make his way to the courts at Deoghar and Bhagalpur. Justice was thus far off; the Bengali mahajan was at his door. The Santhal, thriftless and improvident, easily got into debt; exorbitant interest was charged, and once he had contracted a debt he had little chance of escape.

If his creditor sued him, all the evidence the Santhal could produce was a knotted string, in which the knots represented the number of rupees he had received and the spaces between them the years which had elapsed since he took the loan. The usurer,

on the other hand, had his ledgers and day-book ready, all carefully written up, and a bond or a deed of sale, or a mortgage, perhaps, forged for the occasion. Often he did not trouble to refer to the courts to realise his capital and interest. He simply sent his agents and swept off his debtor's cattle. The Santal, ignorant and timid, felt that it was a hopeless task for him to obtain redress against a wealthy oppressor. He seldom lodged a complaint, for his sole wealth consisting of his cattle, he could not fee mukhtars and *amla*. Should he overcome these difficulties and venture to complain, he probably would only get an order on the police to enquire and report, and the police played into the hands of the money-lender. In the Damin-i-koh, therefore, Government asserted its position neither through the courts nor through the executive. The courts were remote and practically inaccessible; their processes were served by corrupt *amla* and peons. The executive was represented by the *naib sazawals* or darogas, also corrupt and oppressive, who were ready instruments in the hands of the mahajan, besides making exactions on their own account. Not only did the Santals find themselves neglected, but they saw very different treatment given to their neighbours, the Paharias, who had special police rules and were exempt from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts." (*District Gazetteer of Santhal Parganas, O'Malley, revised by S. C. Mukherji*, 1938).

The extent of Santhal immigration at that time in the area known as the Damin-i-koh was very considerable. There was a steady flow of the Santhals for at least five or six decades before that time from Orissa, Dhalbhum, Manbhum, Palamau, Hazaribagh, Midnapur, Bankura and Birbhum. Buchanan Hamilton in his account of Bhagalpur district in 1810-11 had noticed them. By the year 1836 according to Dunbar, Collector of Bhagalpur about 427 villages had been established in the Damin-i-koh. In 1951 Captain Sherwill had observed that the area was studded with Santhal villages. In his book " Tour through a portion of the districts of Murshidabad, Birbhum and Rajmahal hills " in 1851 Captain Sherwill had observed that the area was studded bustle of a complex society, the Santhals led their simple and unsophisticated lives in the valleys of the hills amidst nature's profuse bounties. 'They were in general an orderly race of people, their rulers have little more to do than bear their honours and collect the rent."

THE ADMINISTRATION'S FEET OF CLAY.

But unfortunately the rulers could not fulfil this requirement. They could not identify themselves with the interests of the Santhals by assimilating their culture and set up and giving them something of an administrative system of their own. The rulers had ceased to participate in Stnthal Parganas and they only worked there. They did not work with the Santhals at their

level; they worked above their heads, imposing their decisions upon them. The idea was far too much of an obsession that the Santhals must be brought within the pale of civilization and one of the aids was thought to be a free flow of outsiders or *Dikkus* into the area. The average British ruler in the Santhal Parganas from the very beginning was a leveller, almost indifferent to what the aboriginals thought, felt or did. To him their religious beliefs were more of superstitions and their social organization something that has to be improved upon. The radical and self-conscious British ruler thought himself in-vulnerable and even the best of them was patronising if not contemptuous. If the administrator could have been a part and parcel of the great Santhal race, breathing their thoughts and dreaming their ideas, they would not have started the crusade that they did, may be with a very honest idea of improving their status. As a matter of fact the more one goes through the stories of the various bids for freedom or insurrections of the aboriginals in the different parts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas, the more one is convinced that the same pattern of a set of causes brought about the upheavals.

UNSUITABLE AND CORRUPT ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM.

The administrttive system that was sought to be imposed suited a different section of men, was of a higher level and required a responsive tenantry. The administrative system was peculiarly unsuitable to the genius of the people. The set up was clearly not according to the *zeit geisi* (time spirit) either. The socio-economic conditions of the area were extremely fluid. The Santhals looked aghast at the influx of the speculators like *mahajans* or traders, often unscrupulous and the Santhals were intelligent enough to appreciate that they were being exploited.

The administrative system in the Damin-i-koh area was full of abuses. The Superintendent was vested with enormous authority and influence. But the Superintendent was almost over-shadowed in actual revenue collection work by his four *Naib Sazawals*. The four myrmidians of authority were extremely oppressive on the *Parganaits*, *Manjhis* and the common Santhal peasant. In an article in *Calcutta Review* in 1856 it was mentioned " Where authorised to receive some six rupees on behalf of the Sircar (Government) they will lay some six other rupees for their private benefit; or where a rent of 4 annas for a plot and all it contained was fixed in the settlement, they take a rupee more for a sapling bamboo clump, or a solitary fruit tree thereon ".

The solitary Magistrate at Deoghar and a few Police Stations hardly gave any relief to the oppressed Santhals. The Police were described as " base and corrupt " and with a few honourable exceptions preying upon the people and making unlawful

gains. The judiciary were far too much in the hands of the *Amlas* (subordinate staff). The "Bengal Spectator" of 1842 quoted from a contemporary Bengal journal that the *Amlas* were extremely corrupt and lowered the reputation of their superior officers.

JUDICIARY.

The simple Santhal was used to get a ready decision for his trouble and practically at no cost. He did not have to trudge miles for it nor did he have to spend any money. But the system that was given or rather super-imposed on him meant that the trials of important civil and criminal cases were to be held at Deoghar and Bhagalpur. That meant trekking a long distance and spending a lot of money. At Deoghar or Bhagalpur he was naturally a prey to the *Amlas*, *Muktiars*, touts and peons of the courts. The result was that even if he got justice it was at a tremendous cost and in disgusting environments. There was hardly a case of feeling that justice was being done.

MAHAJANS.

The Mahajans who had spread themselves in the area cannot always be blamed for what they did. Their mission was not to raise the Santhals economically and they could not be blamed so much if the thriftless Santhals borrowed more and more and got into an involved state from where it was difficult to extricate themselves. By nature the Santhals are improvident. If they have enough to eat they will take up the flute and play on it or they will indulge in joyful dances. They do not, as a class lay by for the rainy day. They also love strong decoctions. With their habits the mahajan was almost a blessing to start with but the end was disastrous. It was a vicious circle in which the mahajan thrived while the Santhal declined.

The result was that the Santhal was a perpetual debtor. They raised the crops and most of them went to the mahajan for a debt which had probably been paid many times over and it was still a halter round the neck. In the law courts the mahajans produced documentary evidence in the shape of entries in their books and it was easy to get the Santhal admit that he did borrow some money. He would not remember the amount he had borrowed and naturally the court decreed in favour of the mahajans.

KAMIAUTI SYSTEM.

Another evil that cropped up was the system of *Kamiauti* by which a Santhal sold himself to his creditor for a debt. The idea was that he would work off the debt by his labour and personal service. In practice he was working only to pay the interest and the principal sum always remained unremitted. This *Kamiauti* system made the Santhal ultimately a bondsman for his life-time

and his descendent also was a debtor. There was a case where for a loan for Rs. 25 a man had worked his life-time and his son also. For over 30 years the father and the son were giving their services and yet the principal amount of Rs. 25 remained unpaid. Sir William LeFleming Robinson, I.C.S., mentions the case and he released the grand-son from any further work. The discontent of the Santhal was all the more acute because the free labourers got ample work on good wages as the jungles were being cleared and the railway lines were being laid.

Sense of insecurity.

The Santhals felt very insecure about their lands. The mortgages they executed were frittering away a good quantity of their lands. The rents were very flexible and the illiterate Santhals hardly knew how much they had to pay for arrears of rents. He was in the midst of a psychosis. He felt he had no one to turn to. Not even the *bongas* (spirits) he worshipped could help him. As a matter of fact he had already started propitiating a Chuprasi-*bonga*. When on the earth a chuprasi of a court could be so powerful and oppressive naturally there must be a spirit equally oppressive and powerful who has to be appeased, hence the chuprasi-*bonga* was created.

Mr. W. G. Tayler, Assistant Commissioner at Sreecond (near Tinpahar) wrote to Mr. A. R. Thompson, Deputy Commissioner at Dumka on the 16th February, 1856 that the zamindars of Sultanabad (Maheshpur) and Ambar (Pakur) were disliked by the Santhals because they had granted leases of Santhal villages to the non-Santhals. He further described, " Zamindars or more properly speaking Zamindari retainers, as *gomasta*, *surbarkar*, peons and other mahajans and their ' *mustajirs* ' or agents, the police, revenue and court *amlas* have exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding Santhals. Usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 per cent, false measures at the *haut* and market, wilful and uncharitable trespass by the rich by means of their untethered cattle, *tattoos*, ponies and even elephants on the growing crops of the poorer race; and such like illegalities have been prevalent. Even a demand by individuals from the Santhals of security for good conduct is a thing not unknown, embarrassing pledges for debt also formed another move of oppression."

Economic basis.

The Santhal insurrection of 1855 was really the result of the economic emasculation of the Santhals. It cannot be said that the writing on the wall was not known to the men of intelligence.

In an article in the contemporary *Calcutta Review* it was mentioned that there were inflammable materials within the iniquitous socio-economic system in Damin-i-koh which might burst into flames at any moment. The burst-up was also not as sudden as it appeared to many. The *Parganaits* and the *Manjhis* of the different villages frequently met, secret messages were being passed and silent meetings were held at the *hats* and bazars. In early 1855 thousands of Santhals from Birbhum, Bankura and Hazaribagh came over and added to the discontented section. The materials were all ready for the burst-up and the spark was supplied by the four Santhal brothers, Sidhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairab, inhabitants of village Bhagnadihi, situated at a short distance south of Barhait.

THE FOUR BROTHERS.

These brothers were very ordinary landless men who, however, gave out that they had witnessed a divine apparition and been charged with a message from God. A shrine was quickly erected consisting of a mound of mud crowned by a cart-wheel and the villagers started pouring in offerings. The branches of the Sal tree (*Sorea robusta*) were quickly circulated which was a signal to the people to gather together.

30TH JUNE, 1855.

On the 30th June, 1855, at full-moon, it is said that about ten thousand Santhals had assembled at Bhagnadihi. "The Santhals, it is said, disclaimed any intentions of opposing the Government, and declared that their new God had directed them to collect and pay revenue to the State, at the rate of two annas on every buffalo-plough, one anna on each bullock-plough and half-an-anna on each cow-plough per annum. The rate of interest upon loans was to be one pice in the rupee yearly." (*The Revised District Gazetteer of Santhal Parganas.*)

It will be seen that the demands were all meant for improving their economic condition. There does not appear to be any basis in the commonly accepted version that the Santhals were also enjoined to slaughter the *mahajans* and *darogas* and to turn out the traders and zamindars. There is also hardly any basis of written letters being broadcast and which were supposed to have been sent to the authorities. But this much is clear that the Santhals wanted to bring the Damin area under their own authority and that Sidhu and Kanhu had proclaimed themselves as *Subhas* or Governors.

THE OUTBURST.

There was a certain amount of bloodshed on the part of the Santhals. They killed Pratapnarain, *daroga* of Kurhurea thana in the Godda subdivision. This was due to an attempt to arrest the highly excitable Santhals. Mr. H. E. Richardson, Magistrate

of Bhagalpur and Mr. Pontet were then at Rajmahal where they took shelter in the old palace of Shah Shuja, then the house of the Railway Engineer, Mr. Vigors. The house was fortified and held till the troops arrived to relieve the men. Mr. C. F. Brown, the Commissioner of Bhagalpur was informed of the outbreak on the 8th of July and immediately took steps for the defence of Bhagalpur and the security of postal communication. The Hill *Sardars* and the neighbouring Zamindars were immediately ordered to pool their strength for crushing the movement. The executive authorities in the neighbouring places in Bengal and Bihar were also asked to give their help. A body of troops, chiefly Hill Rangers left Bhagalpur on the 10th of July under the command of Major F. W. Burroughs. The Santhals with their bows and arrows and battle axes were able to defeat the Hill Rangers in an engagement near Pripainti.

WIDE-SPREAD INSURRECTION.

The insurrection broke out at different places. Pakur and the neighbouring villages were plundered. The mahajans and oppressive landlords were singled out for the fury of the Santhals. There were a number of engagements and quite a large number of Santhals were killed, arrested and punished.

The detachment of the 7th Native Infantry advanced from Berhampur on the 11th July under Mr. Togood, the Magistrate of Berhampur. This detachment chased the Santhals from place to place. The Santhals evaded some engagements and had proceeded to Maheshpur to storm the local Raja's palace. On the morning of the 15th July about 3,000 insurgents were surprised by the troops of the 7th Regiment Native Infantry. Sidhu, Kanhu and Bhairab " were themselves shot, though not mortally and 200 other Santhals killed and wounded". Another section of the 7th Regiment Native Infantry defeated a large number of Santhals near Tarai river west of Pakur. The detachment under Mr. Togood inflicted a defeat on the Santhals at Raghunathpur on Barharwa-Barhait road. They stormed Barhait, the stronghold of the insurgents on the 24th July and burnt Bhagnadihi from where the troubles had started. Shortly afterwards Sidhu was treacherously handed over to the Bhagalpur troops by some of followers.

SANTHAL REVOLT ELSEWHERE.

The Santhal troubles do not appear to have been confined to its limits of the present Santhal Parganas. Birbhum, Bankura and Hazaribagh were equally affected. The old English Correspondence clearly shows that the district authorities of these districts were very much alive to the situation and wanted to seal off their districts from the contagion. There were a number of risings in Hazaribagh district and the district authorities were enjoined to see that the Santhals of Hazaribagh district did not

The Santhal rebellion in Hazaribagh district had as a matter of fact started earlier. Ruthlessness in suppressing the Santhals in Hazaribagh district had gone to the extent that Mr. Tweedie, Deputy Magistrate at Burhee wrote "I have arrested some Santhals who were concerned in the late illegal assembly and plunder. Although I have no evidence legal to convict still I consider it my duty as a policy of the State to put restraint on these men by confining them at Burhee until such time as it may be deemed expedient to act otherwise." (Hazaribagh Old Records, 1957.) Ample rewards were offered for the apprehension of the suspect and a number of Santhal women were also imprisoned for their association with the rebellion. This ruthlessness and the helplessness of the Santhals contributed to the suppression of the movement in Hazaribagh district as elsewhere.

SECOND WAVE OF REVOLT, RUTHLESS SUPPRESSION.

By September 1855 it was thought that the backbone of the insurrection had been broken. A proclamation was issued by the Government offering a free pardon to all who would come and submit within 10 days excepting the ring-leaders and persons who had committed murders. But there was a miscalculation that the Santhals had been sufficiently mowed down. By the end of September again there was a second wave of revolt and the whole country from Deoghar to the south-western border of the district fell into the hands of the Santhals. The Santhals started marching in strength of thousands. The last District Gazetteer of Santhal Parganas mentions "By the end of that month the whole country from Deoghar to the south-western border of the district was in their hands. In one direction an army of Santhals moved through the district three thousand strong, and in another their number amounted to seven thousand. The beginning of cold weather however, enabled the troops to take the field with greater effect, and on the 10th of November martial law was proclaimed, that is, it was directed that any one taken in arms in open hostility to Government, or opposing its authority by force of arms, or committing any overt act of rebellion, should be tried by Court Martial and, if convicted, immediately executed. A large force now swept through the country, to which little resistance was offered by the Santhals, who, unable to break through the cordon of troops, in some places 12,000 to 14,000 strong, were weakened by hunger and disease. The combined effect of the proclamation and of the activity of the troops was soon apparent. Driven out of the open country, the Santhals were forced back to the jungles, and a number of their leaders were captured, including Kanhu, who was taken prisoner near Uparbanda, north-east of Jamtara, by the Sardar Ghatwal of Kunjra. Eventually, on the 3rd January, 1856, quiet had been so far restored, that the Government of India were able to suspend the further operation of martial law. There were a few outbreaks after this, but the rebels were thoroughly broken

and cowed; and by the end of the cold weather the rising was at an end."

Atrocities.

The last District Gazetteer of Santhal Parganas, however, mentions some atrocious cruelties and murders done by the Santhals. The picture is apparently rather overdrawn and a few instances of atrocities had been taken to be the general rule.

It may be mentioned here that since the end of July the relations between the Bengal Government and Mr. Brown, the Commissioner of Bhagalpur, became rather strained. The Lt. Governor Mr. (afterwards Sir) Fredrick James Halliday formed an unfavourable opinion about Mr. Brown and soon Mr. A. C. Bidwell, Commissioner of the Nadia Division, was appointed a Special Commissioner for the thorough suppression of the Santhal Insurrection. It was Mr. Bidwell who had issued the proclamation on the 17th August which was set at defiance and led to oppression.

If there were cases of atrocities there were also instances of rare chivalry shown by the Santhals. The Santhals as a class moved and acted on excitement and sentiment. There were also cases of rare abandon and reckless courage. With bows and arrows they would try to meet volleys of gun fire.

Passion ran so high in certain administrative quarters that most drastic measures were suggested for the suppression of the movement. A writer in " The Friend of India " suggested that the entire Santhal population of the infected district be transported to distant Pegu (Burma). He called for a complete retribution. It would have been an act of sheer folly on the part of the Government to take recourse to such ruthless and the mad policy of an eye for an eye. A very large number of Santhals were imprisoned, put in fetters and marched on the streets. Santhal women were also not spared and there were cases of burning of entire villages. But, nevertheless, it was realised that the administrative set-up must be changed and that the economic squeeze that was oppressing the Santhals must be liquidated.

The Santhal-hul—a review.

The Court of Directors reviewed the background and the developments of the Santhal-hul in their Judicial no. 42 of 1856. It was an excellent summary and the Court of Directors were under no misapprehension that the administrators and particularly Mr. Brown, the Commissioner had failed in their work. The Court referred to a petition that was presented on the 29th August to the Commissioner Mr. Brown by two of the Santhal Manjhees. The Santhals bitterly complained against the mahajans and concluded by making an appeal that they have no other protection but the Government and that the mahajans should be removed from the Damin and the Santhals be saved from their claws.

This petition received the attention of the Commissioner on the 19th April, 1855 or nearly 8 months after its presentation. The Commissioner then sent it to the Collector and the Collector on his turn sent it to the Magistrate. When the Magistrate was making preparations for an enquiry, the Santhals had revolted.

This document is of very great importance and is quoted *in extenso* :—

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.
No. 42 OF 1856.

OUR GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

Para. 1. We now reply to the letters and special narrations noted in the margin on matters connection with Sonthal Insurrection.

2. Your previous letters informed us of the suppression of the insurrection on the proclamation of martial law and the employment of a sufficient military force when the season permitted. The paper now under consideration contains a very able and elaborate report by the Special Commissioner Mr. Bidwell on the causes which lead to the outbreak with the minutes of the late Governor-General and the members of the Council and of the Lieut. Governor of Bengal therein and they supply us with the necessary information as to the progress of event among the Sonthals and the measures which have been taken for the pacification and future administration of the disturbed districts.

Letter dt. 8th Feby. No. 10/1856.
Letter dt. 7th Feby. No. 9/1856.
Letter dt. 21st Feby. No. 14/1856.
Bengal Narr. dt. 21st Feby. No. 11/1856.
Letter dt. 7th March No. 22/1856.
Bengal Narr. dt. 7th March No. 19/1856.
Letter dt. 25th March No. 25/1856.
Bengal Narr. dt. 25th March No. 21/1856.
Letter dt. 5th April No. 27/1856.
Bengal Narr. dt. 5th April No. 28/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 21st Dec. No. 21/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 12th Jany. No. 4/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 4th Feby. No. 17/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 6th Feby. No. 20/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 28th Feby. No. 27/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 12th March No. 41/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 19th March No. 42/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 25th March No. 45/1856.
Military dt. 8th Feby. No. 50/1856.
Military dt. 22nd March No. 106/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 16th May No. 63/1856.
Public L. C. dt. 17th May No. 64/1856.

3. The immediate occasion of the first overt act of insurrection whether resulting from the misconduct of a Police officer or of a Railway official is now comparatively of little moment and we are glad to observe that it has been the object of Mr. Bidwell's enquiries to trace the events and to ascertain the causes which engendered of the past on these people such feelings of hostility to the Government under which they lived as to lead them into acts of open defiance of its authority.

4. The district called the Damin-i-Koh was declared in 1823 to be the property of Government and the cultivable lands were for sometime reserved for the aborigines of the hills. The Sonthal, however, gradually settled in the district and in 1830 the Government indirectly sanctioned their settlement there by issuing orders to protect them against undue exactions by the Government grantees of the hill lands.

5. In the year 1827 the Government of Bengal passed a Regulation for providing a special form of trial for the mountaineers of Bhagalpore, also, for investing the Magistrate of Bhagalpore with summary powers for the adjustment of certain civil claims. By Section 3 of the Regulation the Magistrate of Bhagalpore was empowered to try summarily all claims not exceeding Rs. 100, made by, or against any of the hill people. The Sudder Court held that the provisions of this enactment were applicable only to the hill tribes and not to the immigrant settlers in the hills.

6. Experience having shewn that it would be hopeless to look for the clearing of the jungle and the cultivation of the lands by the hill people, the Government resolved upon the repeated recommendations of the local authorities to give direct encouragement to the Sonthals to settle in the hill country and the adjacent lands. In November, 1836, Mr. Pontet was appointed to the management of the revenue administration of the Damin-i-Koh and placed under the orders of the Collector of Bhagalpore by whom he was instructed to afford protection to the Sonthals already settled and to give every encouragement to fresh settlers upon the yet unoccupied lands.

7. The results very speedily justified the Regulation. The Sonthals flocked to take possession of the lands and the jungles disappeared under their labours with astonishing rapidity. The number of Sonthal villages in the Damin-i-Koh increased from 427 in 1836 to 1,218 in 1855. The Government revenue also increased every year and from 6,682 Rs. in 1837/38 reached the sum of Rs. 58,033 in 1854/55.

8. That the increase of revenue was not in any degree owing to over-assessment but entirely to increased cultivation is

clearly shewn in the following extract from Mr. Bidwell's report. "In the year 1851 Captain Sherwell ascertained by survey that the quantity of land under cultivation by Sonthals in the Damin was 1,62,560 acres equal to 4,91,744 Beegahs and as the Government rent for the following year did not exceed Rs. 47,555 we find the average rate of assessment imposed on lands held by Sonthals in the Damin to be about one and a half anna for Beegah which considering the fine quality of much of the land in the Damin must be considered moderate in the extreme, "Indeed", observes Mr. Bidwell, "Mr. Pontet's demands seem to be limited to what the Sonthal community decided was just and proper and they have always been paid without difficulty — Had no more been levied from the Sonthal than found its way to the Government Treasury, they would have had no cause of complaint against the officers employed by the State in the collection of its dues. It is to be feared, however, that the illegal cesses levied by the Naib Sizwals, Mr. Pontet's subordinates added considerably to the payment made annually by the people and against these exactions they were not protected by Mr. Pontet, who expressed himself to be satisfied that the Naib Sizwals did not extract money from the Sonthals. The Special Commissioner was of a different opinion and states that the names of several of the Naib Sizwals of the Damin had been mentioned to him as having amassed large sums of money in the office".

9. We see no evidence in the papers before us in support of the opinions of those who consider that the origin of the outbreak is to be traced to religious fanaticism alone. That the leaders in the movement should have sought to impart a religious sanction to the cause they were about to take in order to rouse the general body of their tribe and to inspire their followers with confidence is not surprising. It is clear to us that the fanatical spirit was not the originating cause but when once the sense of injury unredressed, was followed by a resolution to resort to violence, that spirit was then appealed to with a view to give increased life and energy to the movement.

10. Nor is the origin of the insurrection to be traced to the misconduct of the Railway servants. It is very probable that in some instances the Railway officials and contractors had been guilty of acts of ill treatment and oppression towards the Sonthals which tended to quicken their sense of wrong to aggravate their feelings of resentment and to hasten the outbreak. The murder of the wife and sister of one of the Railway officers at the beginning of the insurrection seemed to countenance such a supposition but the grievances of which the Sonthals made bitterly complain are to be traced back to a period long antecedent even to the commencement of the Railway.

11. The Sonthals are described as industrious and hard working, frank and manly, peaceable and inoffensive, simple and unlettered people who can appreciate none but the simplest mode of adjusting a disputed demand and are utterly unable to contend for their rights with any hope of success under a complicated legal system like that of our Regulation Code. It was under such a system however, that the Sonthal was placed under the construction put upon the Regulation of 1827 in respect to immigrants while the native of the hills had access to the Magistrate for the summary adjustment of his case to an amount *..... the form of which he could not comprehend.

12. It is no matter of surprise that under these circumstances the mahajan of the plains soon found his way to the thriving peasantry of the hills. The establishment of a ready market for the produce of the hill tract would have been of great advantage to the Sonthal had transaction between him and the mahajan been fairly conducted. But it was far otherwise. The papers before us lead to the conclusion that the history of the dealings between these parties is one of unmitigated dishonesty and extortion on the part of the mahajan and unsuccessful appeals to the Government authorities for protection and redress on the part of the Sonthal.

13. Mr. Pontet's reports give early intimation of the oppressive conduct of the mahajans. The transactions between the mahajan and the Sonthal appear to have usually commenced with a small advance of money made by the former to the latter. Accounts were kept in a way unintelligible to him, he made payments but his debt was never diminished and when he resisted further demands, the Moonsiff's Court was resorted to. The Sonthal was no match for the Bengalee in a law suit, judgement was given against the Sonthal and he was a ruined man.

14. In 1848 the inhabitants of 3 Sonthal villages absconded in consequence of the oppression of the mahajans. In the following years to the year 1845 there were constant complaints of demands of exorbitant interest, of injury to crops by the cattle of the mahajans, of a change to the detriment of the Sonthals in the size of measures and of other illegal exaction. These complaints were carried to the various authorities of the district, but without any other palpable effect than to lead the Sonthal to conclude that there was no redress for the wrongs he had suffered and no remedy for the evils from which he sought protection.

15. Mr. Pontet did indeed make some ineffectual attempts to check the state of things. He was fully aware of the exaction of the mahajans, having ascertained from their own books that

* Illegible (P. C. R. C.).

they charged 50 per cent for the loan of money. He generally sent for the mahajans when complained against and warned them against oppressing the Sonthals *.....

16. Complaints were occasionally preferred against the Naib Sizwals. One of them was against a man named Mohesh Dutt for various acts of extortions and was *..... with a request that the Collector would conduct the enquiry himself. He sent the case to Mr. Pontet, who instead of proceeding with it immediately directed it to be brought before him in the mufusil when there the complainant denied all knowledge of the charge. The matter had been hushed up in the meanwhile. It is a striking commentary upon these proceedings that the insurrection commenced with the murder of this same Mohesh Dutt, when employed in his capacity of Police Darogah.

17. Many of the complaints by the Sonthals were made to the Magistrate of Bhagalpore but it is stated that most of these were struck off the file because the peon's fees and the subsistence money for witnesses were not deposited.

18. In the months of May and June, 1854 six dacoities were committed by the Sonthals on the houses of mahajans residing in the Damin. The parties concerned in these outrages were apprehended and confessed their guilt adding that the Bengalee mahajans had reduced them to beggary. In reporting these cases to the Commissioner of the Division is June, 1854 the Magistrate Mr. Heywood remarked that it was matter of grave consideration that these dacoities were committed by men of the Sonthal caste, who generally speaking are remarkable for their quiet mode of life. "I would earnestly recommend" he proceeds that "measures be at once taken to stop this spirit of angry discontent among the Sonthals, and the easiest mode of doing so it appears to me would be to place them under the same law as the hill men, viz., that they be subjected to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate and not of the civil court for sums not exceeding Rs. 100. It may be that the capture of this gang will stop further outrage but I think it right thus to place on record my opinions as to the probable result of the dealings of a wily and unscrupulous set of Bengalees and a wild simple race like that of the Sonthals. Again on the 30th August, 1854, the same Magistrate writes "the number of persons ready and willing to commit these dacoities or as they prefer *..... to *loot* the mahajans may I fear be reckoned by thousands". From what has since transpired there is every reason to conclude that the dacoities were not the unaided work of a mere gang, but were committed with the counsel, consent or connivance of the Sonthal population generally.

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* Illegible (P. C. R. C.).

19. The Commissioner Mr. Brown *..... in the opinion that further protection should be afforded to the inhabitants of the hilly tract and he remarked that this might be done by extending the provision of Regulation I of 1827 — so as to make them applicable to the Sonthals in common with the hill tribes as suggested by the Magistrate or by appointing Mr. Pontet to be munsiff as well as Deputy Collector within the limits of the Damin-i-Koh.

20. We are of opinion that either of these measures*.....the Regulation cited was not adopted and that the alternative was preferred by the Lieutenant-Governor.

21. The appointment of Mr. Pontet to be munsiff of the Damin-i-Koh was so far judicious that it gave the jurisdiction in cases not exceeding Rs. 300 to an officer whom the Sonthals knew and in whom they appeared to have placed confidence. The accent in the administration of justice was changed; but the court of Mr. Pontet would still be the court of the Moonsiff, bound by the same rules and compelled to follow the same complicated procedure as the court of any other Moonsiff while Mr. Pontet's decisions were liable to appeal to a distant tribunal, a tedious and expensive process which the wealthy mahajan would not fail to put in operation against the indigent Sonthal. We believe that a very short experience would have shewn the necessity of setting the Sonthal superintendents free from the trammels of the Regulation system and of empowering them to administer justice in a manner more in accordance with the habits and notions of a simple people like the Sonthal.

22. Mr. Pontet was, however, appointed Moonsiff on the 3rd November, 1854 but did not take charge of his office until the 20th March, 1855, a circumstance of which we find no satisfactory explanation in the papers before us. It is stated indeed that Mr. Pontet wilfully neglected to take charge of the office but we find no evidence in the collections that his appointment was intimated to him before he left the station for his annual tour among the hills.

23. In the beginning of 1855 the increasing number of complaints against the mahajans forced itself upon the attention of the Collector who required those persons to leave the villages, an arbitrary act adopted in the emergency but of questionable legality in a Regulation District and to locate themselves in the *Hauts* and *Bazrs*.

24. We now come to the last act of the Proceedings of the local authorities prior to the breaking out of the insurrection.

25. On the 29th August, 1854 a petition was presented to the Commissioner Mr. Brown by two of the Sonthal manjhees. It

* Illegible (P. C. R. C.).

purports to speak on behalf of the tribe settled in the hills. It sets forth their grievances at the hands of the Mahajans, it reminds the Commissioner of the repeated but ineffectual applications they have made for redress; it states that the condition of the Sonthals is such as to compel them to leave the country unless they obtain the protection which they seek. It puts the question—if one gets no protection from Government, what resource is left to us? And it concludes with the simple but pregnant appeal "We have no protection but Government and pray that enquiry be made and the mahajans removed from the Damin and that we be saved from their claws".

26. The petition was presented ten months before the insurrection broke out. Its tone and language seem to indicate that the petitioners still hoped for redress and protection at the hands of the Government and that the crisis might have been prevented by proper attention to their complaints. The Commissioner's order on this petition is dated the 19th April, 1855 or nearly eight months after the date of its presentation. He then sent it for suitable orders to the Collector, the Collector sent it to the Magistrate, and the Magistrate was making preparations for an enquiry which was cut short by the announcement that the Sonthals were in open insurrection. It is thus clear that whatever amount of provocation may have subsisted the actual insurrection was mainly to be ascribed to the circumstance that neither the Commissioner nor his subordinate covenanted officers were habitually out and about among the people entrusted to their charge.

Mr. E.F. Lantour
Mr. H. Richardson.

27. The removal of Mr. Brown from the office of Commissioner of the Bhagalpore Division seems an inadequate reason for the omission on the part of the local Government to call upon him for an explanation of the extraordinary neglect of duty and renders it unnecessary for us to do more, on the present occasion than to express our opinion on the general character of Mr. Brown's proceedings as they have been brought to our notice in the papers now under our consideration. That opinion is unfavourable in respect to Mr. Brown's superintendence and management of affairs in connection with the Sonthal population of the Hills. As the Commissioner and controlling authority of the Division and as a resident for nearly 20 years in the district of Bhagalpore, it was the duty of Mr. Brown to have made himself better acquainted than he appears to have been with the state of things at no great distance from the headquarters of his Division and to have put the Government in possession of full information upon the subject. The complaints of the Sonthals were brought to his notice but were not regarded with the attention they deserved. It seems very probable that the insurrection would never have occurred had those complaints been properly investigated and had prompt and vigorous

measures been taken to redress the wrongs they set forth, but there is unquestionably too much room for the remark that nothing was done calculated to allay the feeling of the disaffected and to prevent the crisis that ensued.

28. Mr. Pontet's management as remarked by Mr. Bidwell has received the undeviating approbation of Collector, Commissioner and Board. He was well acquainted with the Sonthals, interested in their welfare and as testified by Captain Sherwell and Mr. Taylor respected and esteemed by them but he was wanting in the capacity and energy needed to meet and overcome the difficulties of his position.

29. We have observed with great satisfaction the zeal and ability of Mr. Bidwell in conducting the enquiries.

30. We now proceed to advert very briefly to the movements among the Sonthals since the date of the communication to which we replied in our despatches of 13th February and 12th March last.

31. The simultaneoos advance in the months of November and December last under the orders of Major General Lloyd, of several detachments of troops from the Ganges to the More resulted in the complete discomfiture of the Sonthals there in arms, most of whom fled across the latter river. The parties of the insurgents were broken up and some of the leaders captured. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal then expressed his conviction that the insurrection was repressed, and on the 5th January last revoked the proclamation of martial law. There have been, however, from time to time symptoms of a restless spirit among the tribe.

32. Reports of fresh disturbances have been circulated at different times, and in various quarters, but were found in most cases to have been greatly exaggerated and in one instance that of the disturbance in the limits of thanah Bousee, in the heart of the Bhagalpore district in the month of January last was shown to have been quite unfounded.

33. The plunder of the village of Jyepore, the burning of the factory at Sugrampore, the murder of five mahajans in the neighbourhood of Sreekoond, the plunder of the village of Pindaree, all within the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of the Sonthal Parganah and the outrages committed in the district of Hazaribagh were severely followed by proper measures attended with various degrees of success for the repression of such crimes and the punishment of the perpetrators.

34. The sudden attack by Gooman Sing, Naib Ressaldar of the 2nd Irregular Cavalry with one Duffadar and 10 Sowars on a band of men engaged in plundering a hamlet near the village of

Kubnee in consequence of which 290 of the party surrendered many of whom were engaged in the affair to Jyepore was highly creditable to that officer.

35. The number of the party which burnt the Indigo Factory at Sugrampore was at the outset, variously stated at from 2,000 to 6,000. Captain Fagan, however, who with a detachment of Hill Rangers encountered and dispersed them with a loss in killed of 31 on the part of the insurgents states his belief that they never amounted to more than 200. It is satisfactory to observe that some of the leading resident instigators of these disturbances were apprehended and convicted.

36. Two instances of outrages are reported to have occurred in the month of March. The Sonthals were reported as evincing a manifest disposition to settle down peaceably and were seeking employment on the Road and other Public Works.

37. We observe .....* bordering on the Darnoodah river.

38. The measures adopted by the Local Government in regard to the disarming of the Sonthal population and employing them, as far as practicable upon Public Works and also the proclamation of the Commissioner to the effect that the rent of the current year would not be immediately demanded but would be taken by instalments in the four succeeding years, have our entire approval.

39. We have already informed you that we approved the organisation of a military Police force for employment in the Rajmehal hills and their vicinity. The command of this force has been conferred on Captain T. Rattray, who under your instructions proceeded to the Punjab for the purpose of enlisting recruits.

40—44. * * * *

45. We deeply regret to observe from the first of these communications that an attack made by Mr. Tweedie, the Deputy Magistrate of Burhee with the assistance of Lieutt. Ryan and 15 Sowars of the Ramgarh Irregular Cavalry on a party of about 150 Sonthals near Khuruckdee proved unsuccessful. We trust that an early report will apprise us of the entire success of the measures taken by the Lieutenant Governor for the dispersion of any bodies of Sonthals still in arms in the Hazaribaugh Division. You have of course instituted a rigid enquiry into the causes of the failure on the occasion referred to.

46. Your letter of the 17th May is in reply to our despatches nos. 7 and 13 of 1856 dated respectively 13th February and 12th March and has for its object the correction of certain misapprehensions with respect to questions of fact on which we had founded

* Illegible (P. C. R. C.).

our conclusions in regard to the inadequacy of the Force employed on the first occurrence of the outbreak and to the delay in commencing active operations. Your present communication together with the minute of the Marquis of Dalhousie of 12th February last satisfy us that the delay was attributed not so much to the immediate want of means as to the inability to make full use of them.

We are etc.,

W. H. TYKES.

SD/- ROSS D. MANGLES AND OTHER DIRECTORS.

LONDON :

The 1st October, 1856.

CHANGES IN ADMINISTRATION.

In order to implement the idea that the Santhali area must be brought under an effective administrative control the area was separated and special laws were passed.

The Santhali area was separated from the districts of Bhagalpur and Birbhum and formed into a separate district of Santhal Parganas with four sub-districts of Dumka, Godda, Deoghar and Rajmahal under a Deputy Commissioner and 4 Assistant Commissioners with civil and criminal jurisdiction over the area. This was followed by Police Rules of 1856 which recognised the Headman system in villages and gave Police powers to village officials. Act XXXVII was passed and the area was taken away from the operation of the general laws and regulations.*

The Police Rules were drafted by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ashley Eden, the first Deputy Commissioner of the district. They were known as " Yule's Rules " after the name of Mr. (afterwards Sir) George Yule the then Commissioner of Bhagalpur. The core of the rules was that the *Manjhi* of the village Headman in a Santhali village was vested with Police powers to be exercised in his own village assisted by the village Choukidar. The chief police powers and the power of supervision were vested in the *Parganait* assisted by the *Deshmanjhi*, Choukidar and Gorait. Similar powers were given to the *Manjhis* in the hills under the

* The Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division was specially enjoined to look after the newly created district of Santhal Parganas. To make his previous work lighter the district of Tirhut was taken away from his charge and put on to the Patna Division in 1856.

supervision of the Sardars assisted by their Naibs. In the non-Santhali villages a *Sarkari Mandal* appointed by election was vested with the police powers of the village Headman.

The main feature of the non-regulation system that was introduced was that the ruler and the ruled should have direct access to each other. The complaints were to be made verbally even in the absence of *Amla*. All criminal work was to be carried on with the help of the Santhals themselves who were to bring in the accused with the witnesses, to the Courts.

1857 MOVEMENT AND THE SANTHALS.

It is difficult to say that the system had been given a sufficient trial before the insurrections broke out in 1857. A view has been taken in the last District Gazetteer of Santhal Parganas that because the Santhals as a class had not taken part in the disturbance of 1857 it should be held that the system had worked very successfully under the first Deputy Commissioner, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ashley Eden and the Commissioner Mr. George Yule. If the Santhals did not join up it was because they had just been crushed down after a considerable loss of life and destruction of property. Situated as they were with the memory of hundreds of them being put in fetters and many executed, villages burnt down, it was difficult for them to rise *en masse* within only a year or two in the conflagration of 1857 movement. But it cannot be said that the Santhals were satisfied with the system that was set up and so they kept themselves aloof from 1857 disturbances. Inspite of the administrative changes that were made following the Santhal rebellion of 1855 and special directives issued to the administrators it cannot be said that the Santhals were fully satisfied or pacified. This was so because the administrative set-up inspite of the many changes was mainly on the lines of the system in force elsewhere with certain local variations. The chief principles of this system were that (1) no advocates, pleaders or mukhtears and no middle-men between the Government officers and the people were permitted, (2) the contact with the people was direct, (3) there was no regular police and (4) the spirit of the local laws was recognised but no technical forms were allowed. These rules in regard to administration of criminal justice remained in operation till 1862 when the Indian Penal Code was introduced. In 1863 Sir Cecil Beadon, the then Lt. Governor of Bengal, expressed his opinion that Santhal Parganas should, as soon as practicable, be administered on the system in force in the rest of Bengal. In the same year the then Advocate-General held section 1, Clause 1 of Act XXXVII of 1858 to the effect that " no law which shall hereafter be passed by the Governor-General of India in Council shall be deemed to extend to any part of the said district unless the same shall be

specially named therein ", to be *ultra vires*. The Government accepted this view and directed the local officers to enforce the provisions of all General Acts passed after 1855 unless the Santhal Parganas was specially exempted from their operation. Amongst others Act X of 1859 was also enforced in this district. The result was that the Rent Law, the Civil Procedure Code, the Stamp Act and other Acts were considered to be in force here which brought great injustice to the simple inhabitants of this district. Their rents were enhanced, their headmen were evicted from office and turned out of their lands in favour of more advanced races and they were crushed by extortionate interest allowed on debts under the provisions of Civil Procedure Code (Act VIII of 1859).

SANTHAL DISAFFECTION CONTINUES.

Before we pass on to a description of the 1857 movement it may be mentioned that the dissatisfaction caused by the change of system had actually culminated in the disturbances of 1871. In Mr. Bolten's words, " In 1871 signs of unusual agitation were observed among the Santhals of Dumka and Godda Damins of Santhal Parganas. Large meetings were held and officials were interviewed by the crowds loud in the complaints against the zamindars of certain parganas. The excitement prevailing among the Santhals naturally alarmed the Bengali inhabitants of the district who still retained a vivid recollection of the atrocities committed on them during the rebellion of 1855 and a general stampede seemed imminent. In the Dumka bazar prices rose 50 per cent in a few days ". An enquiry was held which showed that the Santhals had real and substantial grievances and the Government of India came to the conclusion that the indiscriminate extension of some of the Acts of Legislature to the Santhal Parganas had worked this mischief, that the district still required a simpler form of administration than the rest of Bengal and that it should be again removed from the operation of General Laws. The Lt. Governor of Bengal accordingly recommended that the best mode of effecting this object was to bring it within the scope of Act 33 passed in British Parliament in March, 1870 which would enable the Government to make regulation for the peace and good Government of territories to which the said Act might be applied by the Secretary of State for India. This measure followed by a suitable regulation would, it was believed, place the action of the Government on a legal basis which would be wholly unassailable and which would best enable the Government to apply from time to time the exact remedies required for evils which had been or might be shown to exist without violently or unnecessarily disturbing the law or general administration of the district. The Government of India accepted this view and the Secretary of State for India issued a Notification announcing the extension of the provision of Section 1 of Act 33 Vic. Cap. 3 to the Santhal Parganas. This enabled the

Government of India to issue Regulation III of 1872 empowering the Lt. Governor of Bengal to appoint officers to make a settlement of landed rights, to restore dispossessed manjhis and others, to settle rents, and to record the customs and usages of the people. It also introduced a usury law limiting the accumulation of interest on debts and it laid down the list of laws in force in the Santhal Parganas and gave powers to the local Government to introduce or withdraw the operation of any law as might be found desirable in this district from time to time. In 1872 the Santhal Parganas was formed into a Revenue non-regulation district with head-quarters at Dumka.

THE 1857 MOVEMENT; 12TH JUNE.

The 1857 insurrection broke out in Bihar from Rohini, a village near Deoghar. On the 12th of June just after a month of the outbreak at Meerut the 5th Irregular Cavalry stationed at Rohini turned recalcitrant. The three British Officers posted there were the Commandant Major Macdonald, the Adjutant Sir Norman Leslie and Dr. Grant. The three officers were having tea outside Major Macdonald's bungalow when three men of Irregular Cavalry rushed at them and Sir Norman Leslie was cut down at once. The two others were wounded but the assailants fled away without killing them. The men who were suspected were at once seized, court martialled and sentenced to be hanged. This hanging was carried out with a degree of firmness verging on cruelty. Major Macdonald in spite of the injury he had received on the head saw to everything himself, even to the adjusting of the ropes.

This mutiny was due to a good deal of dissatisfaction in the rank and file of the soldiers. At this time there was hardly any direct touch or popular sentiment between the British Officers and the Indian soldiers. The men of the 5th Irregular Cavalry came from the villages and the villages were by this time seething with discontent. Bihar was an important centre of the movement and the name of Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur had later become a legend. The first open manifestation of the movement came on the evening of the 12th June 1857.

Major Macdonald wreaked vengeance with terrible cruelty and to quote his own words " One of the prisoners was of a very high caste and influence, and this man I determined to treat with the greatest ignominy by getting a low caste man to hang him. To tell the truth, I never for a moment expected to leave the hanging scene alive, but I determined to do my duty, and well knew the effect that pluck and decision had on the natives. The regiment was drawn out : wounded cruelly as I was, I had to see everything done myself, even to the adjusting of the ropes, and saw them looped to run easy. Two of the culprits were paralysed

with fear and astonishment, never dreaming that I should dare to hang them without an order from Government. The third said that he would not be hanged, and called on the Prophet and on his comrades to rescue him. This was an awful moment; an instant's hesitation on my part, and probably I should have had a dozen balls through me: so I seized a pistol, clapped it to the man's ear, and said with a look there was no mistake about— 'Another word out of your mouth, and your brains shall be scattered on the ground'. He trembled and held his tongue. The elephant came up, he was put on his back, the rope adjusted, the elephant moved, and he was left dangling. I then had the others up and off in the same way. And after some time, when I dismissed the men of the regiment to their lines, and still found my head on my shoulders, I really could scarcely believe it."

There was no fresh outbreak in the Santhal Parganas till the middle of August when the 5th Irregulars at Bhagalpur rose against the British Government and moved on to Rohini where they were joined by the detachment of their regiment. The whole body then marched to Baunsi, the headquarters of the 32nd Native Infantry on the 16th August, but got no co-operation from the latter. Colonel Burney, the Commandant at Baunsi, had been informed of their movement by a messenger half an hour before the arrival of the troopers there. Officers of the British Government at Deoghar also received warning through a messenger who ran there so quickly as to cover 80 miles in 30 hours. At Dumka itself where there was a party of the *sowars* of the 5th Irregulars. One Shyamalananda Mukherjee assisted the Government and "managed to send the treasure (Rs. 4,000) and the prisoners to Suri."

Political Dispatch no. 40, 11th November, 1857 from the Court of Directors to the Governor-General in Council mentions about the grant of title and Khillat to Jaimangal Singh, Zamindar of the Monghyr district for services rendered during the Santhal insurrection. It appears that the title of Raja Bahadur was conferred on Jaimangal Singh.

The later events have been described in the last Gazetteer for Santhal Parganas as follows :—

"After this nothing worthy of record occurred till the 9th October, when a detachment of the 32nd Native Infantry at Deoghar suddenly broke out into mutiny, murdered their commanding officer, Lt. Cooper, and Mr. Roland, the Assistant Commissioner, and having plundered the bazar, marched off to Rohini, and thence to the west, following the same route as that taken by the 5th Irregulars." "Some of the circumstances attending this outbreak, wrote the Lt. Governor, Sir Frederick

Halliday, " are worth recording as illustrating the unaccountable conduct which has on many occasions been displayed by the sepoys during the outbreak. Lts. Cooper and Rannie and Mr. Roland, the Assistant Commissioner, were all surprised in the same bungalow, which the sepoys completely surrounded. Lt. Cooper was an officer who implicitly trusted his men, was constantly with them in familiar intercourse, and appeared to be an object of sincere attachment. Mr. Roland was an utter stranger to them : whilst Lt. Rannie, though of course well known to the men, took no particular pains to please them. Yet him they specially spared, calling out to him by name to come out of the bungalow and allowing him to leave the place unmolested, whilst they ruthlessly murdered their friend Lt. Cooper and the stranger Mr. Roland, of whom they could know nothing bad or good."

This short description does not bring out the entire picture. There are a number of original documents in the National Archives which give us a clearer picture. From Military Consultation, 16th October, 1857, no. 439 it is seen that on the 12th October, 1857 Col. Campbell wired from Burhee that the Santhals were reported to be in the neighbourhood of Trunk Road. Col. Berkley wired on the 4th October, 1857 from Doomrie that Santhals had been plundering several villages close to the Grand Trunk Road and had stopped the *dawk*. Col. Berkley reported that he had surprised them at a village near a mile from the road (he does not mention the name of the village) and that he got 20 prisoners into the camp and made them over to civil power.

Other districts in the neighbourhood were quickly alerted. Military Consultation, 11th September, 1857, no. 360 is a letter from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Secretary to the Government of India dated the 19th August, 1857 mentioning that the District Magistrate of Midnapore had been warned as to the measures he had to take, in case there is a rise of the Santhals and Chowars. The District Magistrate's letter, dated the 18th August, 1857 which is an enclosure shows that the Ranee of Raipur (Purulia) had reported tn assembly of the Chowars and a rising amongst them was imminent. Mr. Terry had reported from Salbunee that there was a rising of the Santhals in the north-west of Bagri Pargana and that there was plundering on all sides. Gurbetta subdivision was particularly affected by the rise of the Santhals and the hill tribes of the Chotanagpur Agency. It was decided that, if necessary, a Detachment of the Shekhawattee Battalion might be marched to Gurbetta.

In Military Consultation, 23rd October, 1857, no. 133 there is a letter from Camp Doomrie dated the 4th October, 1857 from Col. Berkley that the villages of Ponah and Nuggee had been looted and *dawk* had been interfered on the 2nd inst. and that the

many villages along with the Grand Trunk Road had been plundered. Barkley reported that he thought it was his duty to provide as far as possible for the security of the road and he took the troops marching into the villages. 35 men were pointed out to him as Santhals, dacoits or *budmashes*. He arrested them and made them over to the Darogha at Bagoda. One man was shot in endeavouring to effect his escape.

Although the insurrection in 1857 in Santhal Parganas was, more or less, confined to the rank and file of the military it will be a mistake to think that the villages were not affected. There was deep sentiment against the authorities and wishful thinking that the rise be successful. Because of the immediately preceding ruthless suppression of Santhal rebellion there was no general rise. It was the calm of the grave.

Foreign (Secret) Department, 29th May 1858, no. 59 is a letter dated the 23rd April, 1858 from the Magistrate of Azamgarh (Uttar Pradesh) to F. B. Gubbins, Commander, 5th Division, Benares in which he covers the progress of events from the arrival of Sir E. Lugard's force at Azamgarh to Kunwar Singh flight across the Ganges. In the last but one paragraph of this letter he mentions that he was not definite but there was a rumour that Ummar Singh was negotiating with the Santhals who had agreed to rise. He mentions " I have no means to testing the truth of this story but that disturbance of some sort will arise has to be expected ".

Prof. Hara Prasad Chatterji in " Bengal Past and Present " No. 140, 1956 mentions—

" The lately tranquillised Sonthal Parganas were not also free from unrest and excitement at the commencement of the mutiny. In July 1855 the Sonthals had risen in arms in protest against the extension in their district of the Railway system, they distrusted, against the extortion of ' mahajans ', the corruption of the ' amlas ' and the oppression of the Police. Some offence was also alleged to have been offered to one of their women. It was due to the negligence of the ' Sahibs ' (ie., the Europeans), it was held by the Sonthals, that they were subjected to such unjust treatment at the hands of tax-gatherers, money lenders and Bengalee zamindars. Fanaticism mixed itself up with these feelings; one of their leaders announced to a great concourse that he had seen the Godhead descend in the shape of a cartwheel; after which two pieces of paper had fallen on his head, ordering the extermination of the offending classes. The insurrection that began came to be quelled by General Lloyd by the end of 1855. Closely following to the heels of the Santhal insurrection came the sepoy mutiny casting its shadow on the Sonthal Parganas. But the Sonthals of the Sonthal

Parganas did not appear to have been aggressive at this stage. In a letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on the affairs of Sonthal Parganas wrote thus : '..... as far as the Sonthals are concerned there are not in my opinion any grounds for apprehensions..... I am constantly conversing with the Sonthals themselves and I do not believe that they have any other wish than a good season for their crops. In what state the Sonthals about Raneegunj and towards Pachete and Hazaribagh are, I cannot state, as I know nothing of them but at present I do not see any cause to fear a disturbance either in the Damin-i-koh (Dumka) or any other portion of the Sonthal Parganas.....'. But it was not all quiet on the Sonthal Parganas front. The activities of the 5th Irregular Cavalry caused a great disturbance in the district. Reporting on the intriguing activities of the 5th Irregular Cavalry the Commissioner of the Sonthal Parganas wrote to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on 16th July 1857 that about half past eight on the night of the 12th ultimo while Major Macdonald, Sir Normal Leslie and Dr. Grant of the 5th Irregular Cavalry, stationed at Rohini in the Sonthal Parganas were sitting together in front of the mess bungalow, a sudden rush was made at them by three men with naked swords. Sir Leslie was disabled at the first blow and he died very shortly. Major Macdonald and Dr. Grant escaped with serious wounds on their person. These three men were definitely ascertained to have belonged to the 5th Irregular Cavalry, were caught hold of and sentenced to be hanged. The incident was indicative of an organised conspiracy in the regiment. There was a temporary lull which came to be broken when the 5th Irregular Cavalry mutinied at Bhagalpur in August 1857. The mutineers marched on to Rohini where they were joined by their comrades of the regiment and after having extorted 12,000 rupees from the rich inhabitants of the place marched in a body towards Deoghar and Bausi, the Headquarters of the 32nd Native Infantry. From both of these places the mutineers were kept off by the loyalty of the 32nd Native Infantry. This Regiment rejecting all advances and promises of increased pay and promotion in the service of the King of Delhi stood firm and was much appreciated by Government. Moreover the military authorities of Bausi as also of Deoghar could learn of the approach of the mutineers beforehand and kept themselves in readiness to meet them. The inevitable happened. The mutiny of the 5th Irregulars came to be arrested. The Deoghar mutineers after advancing as far as Wazeerganj in the direction of Gaya suddenly turned to the north, entered Thannah Atta Serai in the district of Patna, thence moved rapidly to the west, crossed the Trunk Road to the south of Jahanabad and the Sone at Mahatullupore near Urwul. Thence they proceeded by the neighbourhood of Puroo, by Rupsagar and Dhunsolee, towards the Karumnassa. Their destination was known to

have been Rewah. This body of mutineers was led across the country by Goodhar Singh who had formerly acted as a guide to the 5th Irregular Cavalry in their passage through Behar. As in other cases the rising of the Deoghar mutineers, away from their station, came to be finally crushed. A Cavalry-troop of the 5th Irregulars was posted at Dumka but the precautionary measures of Mr. Shyamalananda Mookerji, Sub-assistant Commissioner at Nya Doomka saved the area from any mutinous outbreak. Having good reasons to suspect the fidelity of the troopers of the 5th Irregular Cavalry at that station the officer sent the treasure amounting to Rs. 4,000 and the few prisoners in the Jail to Suri. The judgment, coolness and discretion exhibited by him in somewhat trying circumstances were much appreciated by Government. The Sonthal Parganas came to be freed from mutineers in course of time. The departure of the 5th Irregular Cavalry from the Sonthal Parganas left the district all quiet and peaceful. In consideration of the honesty, courage and fidelity of the Sonthals, Government made a plan of raising a corps for police work in their own district from that tribe. Their hardihood, activity capability of withstanding the influence of climate, simplicity of habits and other qualities rendered them, in the opinion of Government, excellent materials for such an experiment. But their caprices and impatience of control made it necessary in the considered judgment of Government to commence the experiment with caution and to conduct it through the agency of an officer known to, and confided in by the Sonthals. Their pay was decided to be not less than five rupees a month and no deductions were to be made from it on any account. They were to be enlisted for short periods in the beginning and were to be armed with a light rifle and their own battle axe. It was proposed at first to raise a small force of about three companies from among the Sonthals of the 'Damin-i-Koh' (Dumka) and to ascertain which of the same tribe in the Chota Nagpur Agency promised to be most eligible for enlistment.' Two hundred Sonthals were initially enlisted for military service, as authorised and sanctioned by the Government of India".

A good deal of importance was attached to the Santhal Field Force. Major A. Saunders, Dy. Quarter Master-General of the Army mentions in his letter to Col. Birch, Secretary to the Government of India in the Military Department, No. 226 dated the 19th February, 1857 that Col. Burney, Commandant, Santhal Field Force, had reported that the Police Battalion was sufficiently organised to undertake the military duties required at Sooree.

It appears that the question of utilising the Santhals for the army had been engaging the attention of the authorities even before the burst up in the Santhal Parganas took place in 1857. Apparently the revolt of the Santhals in 1855 had impressed

certain sections of the authorities as to the military qualities of the Santhals. Lt.-Col. Hannyngton, Commandant, 63rd Native Infantry and late Deputy Commissioner of Chotanagpur had referred to the Santhals as follows :—

" That a Regiment of Santhals could be raised in short time. These men are small but more hardy and brave. Lightly equipped they would frustrate skirmishes and could be manned very quickly. I will vouch for their fidelity, honesty and many other good qualities. I think the experiment is worth-trial ". This opinion was referred to the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in his No. 210 dated the 5th August, 1857 (Military Consultation, 7th August, 1857, No. 390).

The Secretary to the Government of Bengal in his No. 1549 dated the 31st August, 1857 to the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department (Military Consultation 11th September, 1857 No. 362) mentions that the Lt. Governor proposed with the sanction of the Governor-General in Council, to take immediate measures for raising a small body of men, say, three companies from the people inhabiting the Damin-i-Koh in the Santhal territories."

The Commissioner of Santhal Parganas, G. U. Yule in his letter No. 449 dated the 25th August, 1857 reported to the Secretary to Government of Bengal that he entirely agreed as to the fidelity, honesty and courage of the Santhals. He mentions that " it would be a body of men who could stand a deadly climate, who could penetrate the endless jungles as no other troops could do.....I believe it will be found that the whole of the military duties in and around the Santhal district might be safely entrusted to Santhals ".

In No. 986 the Deputy Adjutant-General of the Army informed the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department that the Commander-in-Chief, however, thought that the companies when raised might meet the expectation of the Government but he entertained considerable doubts as to the value of the Santhals as soldiers and he had little hope of converting them into effective troops. The Commander-in-Chief thought that for local police purposes they would prove useful.

It appears that the Lt. Governor was in communication with Dalton, Officiating Commissioner of Chotanagpur regarding the Santhals in his jurisdiction and ultimately 300 men were immediately enlisted and put to drill under the Assistant Commissioner Braddon at Deoghar. The enlisted men were reported to be exceedingly regular and attentive to their duties.

AFTER 1857.

But the quelling of the disturbances of 1857 did not restore peace nor was administration stabilised quickly. Home Department Proceeding, 10th May, 1861, Nos. 12/13 is an important document from J. D. Gordon, Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Secretary to the Government of India dated Parasnath, 7th May, 1861 and is a communication from the Government of Bengal reporting intelligence recently received regarding the state of a portion of the Santhal district and recommended that 2 Regiments of Native Infantry be stationed at certain points in order to secure the country against a possible rising of the Santhals. It is important to note that as late as May 1861 the authorities were not very sure of their position regarding the Santhals. The Assistant Commissioner of Naya Dumka Division had sent several letters that there were signs of approaching disturbance among the Santhals in his part of the country. It was mentioned that large bodies of armed Santhals were on the move with branches of *sal* trees which is a signal for war when the branches are circulated and that Santhal women were accompanying the armed bands with large empty baskets. On a hunting expedition it was not customary for women to attend the men and in the previous Santhal insurrection the women had accompanied the plundering band with large empty baskets. Similar signs of insecurity were reported from Rajmahal. This letter mentions that the following might be the possible causes for the renewal of disturbance at Naya Dumka :—

(1) The enhancement of rent of late by the Zamindars.

(2) The institution of suits by Mahajans in fear of Act XIV of 1859.

(3) A possible partial cause was a prophecy by Kanoo who just before his execution had predicted a rising about this time, at which he might reappear as a leader.

As a result of these apprehensions the police and military arrangements were intensified. The Officiating Commissioner of Bhagalpur was instructed to call Captain Baker with 200 military police (Siekhs and Gurkhas) to Bhagalpur or to send them to Rajmahal.

The Lieutenant Governor was of the opinion that immediate measures should be taken to secure the country against a possible rise of the Santhals and he ordered that the Wing of the Native Infantry Regiment should be sent to Rajmahal; a similar force at Sooree from where they could penetrate into the Santhal country by the new road *via* Bowsee and a Wing to be stationed at Bhagalpur on the other extremity of the line and another Wing on the Rail Road at or near Rajmahal.

In this Military Consultation there are a few letters of G.E.O. Plowden to Seton Cerr throwing a considerable light on the situation. Plowden was also convinced of a general unrest among the Santhals and thought that the stationing of military police at Sooree, Rampur hat, Pakur, Rajmahal, Pirpaintl, Bowsee, Godda, Deoghar, Dumka and Raniganj was necessary. Another letter of Plowden to Seton Cerr dated 9th May, 1861 which is also an enclosure to this Military Consultation continues in the same strain. He had by authority examined some of the *Parganites* of Handwa Estate and thought that whatever excitement existed among the Santhals, it was due to Mr. Barnes's Settlement Operations in the Handwa Estate. Plowden, however, thought that no rising was contemplated or was intended and that what had been going on was the organisation of a combination after the manner of the agricultural population in the indigo districts to resist the enhancement of rent and the payment of enhanced rents. He suggested that there should be a searching enquiry made regarding the Settlement Operations of Mr. Barnes.

There was no actual rise but it is abundantly clear that the administrators were still not quite sure of themselves. All this indicated that Santhal Parganas needed a special handling and that a wooden system of rule was not suited.

A Review.

An objective study of the facts of the 1857 movement in the districts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas shows that there were diversities in the trends due to circumstances peculiar to the district.

In Santhal Parganas the 1857 movement followed absolutely on the wake of the Santhal revolt of 1855. It is the previous Santhal revolt that acted as a cushion in 1857 so. far as the indigenous population of the district was concerned and a part of the shock that came from the military by the outburst was absorbed by the cushion. This was possibly because the Santhal revolt had taught a very good lesson and the British administrator read the writing on the wall and had been trying to change the set-up of the administration. If the British administrator had been blind and had not taken the precaution to take steps to appease the Santhals after the out-burst by taking certain ameliorative measures, the military revolt that started on the 12th June, 1857 at Rohini would have spread far and wide.

It has been mentioned that the Santhal Corps had been organised and the Santhals were encouraged to join it. An espionage system in which Santhals were widely employed was organised. A. R. Thompson was so convinced of the efficacy of the changed set-up that on the 7th April. 1856 he wrote " I for

myself can entertain no fears of any repetition of the outrages which the last year has witnessed; anything approaching an organised movement among the Santhals for evil purpose would be known to us before it could be put into successful execution and I believe, we have quite sufficient troops to crush the rising before it get any dangerous proportions". Another particular feature was that the galling police system was practically abolished. On the 20th February, 1856, A. R. Thompson, Officiating Deputy Commissioner, wrote to the Commissioner, " the general object in my opinion which we should keep in view is the willing co-operation of the people themselves; and if we succeed in that we shall in time be the greater gainers, than under a police which work by compulsion and in the degraded state of inferiors ".

In his letter No. 161 dated the 1st June, 1856 to the Commissioner of Santhal Parganas, Mr. Braddon, Assistant Commissioner observed " it is my firm belief that the dread of responsibility done away with, the people generally look on the abolition of the police as a great boon. The chicanery of injustice of police officials is patent to them. The bribery which purchases suppression of the report of crime, the torture which elicits confession from an innocent man, the false report which involves a whole village in trouble only to be avoided by money or some sacrifice more irksome than money; all this is well known to the people, though a barrier of *Amlahs* and court creatures effectually prevents the ingress of a whisper of it to the Hakim's ear " At another place of the same letter he writes " the police being abolished the people will band together for their mutual safety and finding their interest at stake in suppressing crime they will soon in a great measure succeed in doing so ".

Abwabs charged by the *Ghatwals* were quite a few and the *Ghatwals* could almost be compared with the indigo planters of North Bihar. There were *Abwabs* even for the purchase of horses and elephants by the *Ghatwals.*

But in spite of the changed set up the movement did break out in 1857.

The authorities were extremely alert and took prompt measures to nip the trouble which started from the military. A Eden, Deputy Commissioner, ordered small parties of military from the field force to be rushed to stop the outbreak. For this Eden had to explain his conduct to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal. In his explanation Eden had mentioned that he did so in consultation with Major Dalliel, the Officer Commanding in 42 N. L. I. and there was no time to await instructions from the Brigadier who was at Barrackpore and an answer could not have been received in ten days. In his opinion

"A crisis occurred, bands of men commenced plundering, Jeypore was plundered, Deoghar threatened, the Bengalis commenced leaving the country, if they had done so the whole country would have been laid waste." Quick movement of the troops was helpful in crushing the movement.

Another reason why the movement was quickly suppressed was that due to the inaccessibility of the area, news from northern India could not reach the area quickly. There was also a want of leadership among the Santhals themselves.

But a study of the original correspondence shows that a certain amount of nervousness leading to hasty and extra-firm decisions had caught the military authority. The first outbreak was at Rohini on the 12th June, 1857. Ronald who was the Asstt. Commissioner at Deoghar was informed about it by three Sowars and the Dafadar at Rohini at 9 P.M. on the 12th June. This party did not mention that the persons who had attacked the three European military officers killing one of them came from the 32nd Regiment or the 5th Irregular Cavalry. Ronald had informed the Officer Commanding the Sikhs at Suri and his Commissioner that Major MacDonald thought that the attacking party of five persons were disbanded sepoys and there was absolutely no apprehension of the loyalty of the men of the 5th Irregulars. On the 14th June, 1857, Ronald had reported as the old correspondence in Dumka Record Room shows that there was no clue to trace the offenders who were disbanded sepoys from somewhere else. But on the 16th June, 1857, the three Sowars of the 5th Irregular Cavalry, namely, Salamat Ali, Amanat Ali and Sheikh Haro were arrested, tried by Major MacDonald and hanged. It appears that one of them attended the Doctor for a sore on him and he was suspected of receiving the injury in the scuffle that had followed the attack on Major MacDonald and others. The quick execution of the three men under most brutal circumstances had already been described. On the 22nd June, 1857 Ronald wrote to the Officiating Deputy Commissioner "I believe the men did not admit their guilt, but I cannot speak precisely on this point as their trial which was a military one, took place before Major MacDonald and native officers only, no one else being admitted and I am therefore, not acquainted with the particulars." Another significant fact is that Major Mac Donald did not distribute the reward to any one when he left for Bhagalpur.

All this would rather indicate that the trial was a hasty one and the civil administrator was not fully convinced of their guilt. Whatever might have been the legal evidence there is no doubt that the circumstances raise a certain amount of misgiving as to the actual complicity of these three men with the attack. But,

nevertheless, the quick decision and the hanging of the three men did act as a brake on the movement. The hanging had an administrative effect though so cruel.

As mentioned before there was a second wave in the course of which Ronald, the Assistant Commissioner at Deoghar and Lt. H. C. Cooper were killed by the insurgents on the 9th October, 1857. Ronald had interred the mortal remains of Sir N. R. Leslie, Adjutant, who was killed on the 12th June, 1857. The mortal remains of Ronald and Lt. Cooper were laid by the side of Leslie and the graves are still to be seen in the bungalow of the Subdivisional Magistrate of Deoghar.

It has been said that fear and a sense of power are the two main causes of violence or a rebellion at all times in the world. But on a cold analysis the movement in Santhal Parganas cannot be said to have been due to either of these two causes by themselves. The movement of 1857 there was essentially the result of the back water of gossip and vague generalisations which crossed the frontiers of the Santhal Parganas. The wave of unrest that was going about in Northern India was carried by some of the Sowars and the other men of that area who were in the army. This movement, however, could not percolate into the masses that had very recently been emasculated by the Santhal *Hul*.

CHAPTER II.

HAZARIBAGH.

The year 1765 A. D. opens a fresh chapter in the history of Chotanagpur. On 12th August, 1765, Emperor Shah Alam II granted the *Dewani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the British East India Company. As Chotanagpur formed a part of Bihar, the company now got the right to receive the tribute of Ramgarh, the land revenue of Kharagdiha and Kendi and the services of Kunda.

NAME OF THE DISTRICT.

The district of Hazaribagh has been named after the town of Hazaribagh, its present headquarters, which has in turn derived its name from the mango grove at Hazari, one of the villages which make up the town. This village is still on the western edge of the town. In the earliest maps of the district published in 1779 by Major James Rennell, the first Surveyor General of India, the present town appears as Ocunhazari. It owes its existence to the raising of the Ramgarh Battalion about 1780, and the decision to station it permanently near the villages of Okni and Hazaribagh, on the road from Chapra to Ichak, which had become an important place after the Raja of Ramgarh had made it his capital in 1772.

EARLY HISTORY.

The district forms the north-eastern portion of the present Chotanagpur Division which, it is generally believed, was in very early times covered with inaccessible hills and forests to which many non-Aryan tribes who refused to surrender to the steadily advancing Aryans, retired at different times. We do not know the name by which the tract was known to the ancient Aryans. All through the long centuries of Hindu rule in India Chotanagpur appears to have remained unmolested, though foreign invaders on rare occasions might have succeeded in exercising nominal overlordship over it. It might have acknowledged for the first time the suzerainty of the great Asura Maharaja, Jarasandha, who is described by the Epic writers as a highly powerful effulgent and preserving Lord Paramount, like the sun, he robbed all other kings of their splendour and obtained the suzerainty of the whole world. It is just possible that Mahapadma Nand Ugrasena of Magadha, who waged several wars against the Kshattriyas, ultimately conquered the whole of Eastern India including Kalinga and proclaimed himself *Ekrat* or sole monarch. It is stated that during Asoka (C 273-C 232 B. C.) the Atavi or Forest States too acknowledged Magadha supremacy, and this may justify the conclusion that Chota Nagpur was included in the Mauryan empire at least in his reign.

There is evidence that this tract was in touch with many parts of India. There was frequent intercourse between Kashi and Hazaribagh. Parsvanath the 23rd Jaina Tirthankara, attained *Nirvana* at the summit of the Parsvanath Hill in the Hazaribagh district probably in the 8th century B. C. After the downfall of the Imperial Mauryas in 185 B. C. King Kharavela of Kalinga led his army across Chotanagpur and sacked Rajgir and Pataliputra. Samudra Gupta (C335-C380 A. D.) also must have passed through Chotanagpur when he led his expedition to the Eastern Deccan. The invader (Samudra Gupta) "marching due south from the capital through Chutia Nagpur, directed the first attack against the kingdom of South Kosala in the valley of the Mahanadi." Itsing, the Chinese traveller, who reached Tamluk in 673 A. D. traversed the uplands of Chutia Nagpur to reach Nalanda and Bodh Gaya.

Non-Aryan Tribes.

The various Non-Aryan tribes that had settled in Chota-Nagpur had no kings in the beginning. They were under patriarchs. In course of time as their number increased and as there were regular wars, against foreigners, they decided to elect one of their chiefs as king. Most scholars think that kingship in Chotanagpur began after the fall of the Imperial Guptas in the 5th century A. D. The family chronicle of the Chotanagpur Raj published in Hindi verse and the tradition of the Mundas agree in stating that the latter voluntarily superseded the son of their own patriarch Madra Munda of Sutiambe (in Ranchi district), in favour of Madra's fosterson, Phani Mukut, in consideration of his superior intelligence and elected him as their king. Phani Mukut, just after his birth, had been found by the side of a tank under the protection of a huge Nag or serpent. For this reason, his descendants later on called themselves as Nagbanshi or members of the Naga dynasty.

The Name of Chota Nagpur.

The name of 'Nagpur' is probably taken from the Nagbanshis who ruled the country, 'Chota' is a corruption of Chutia, a village on the outskirts of Ranchi where the remains of the old fort of the Nagbanshi Rajas can still be seen. It was one of their earliest capitals. Even in the beginning of the present century this tract was known as Chutia Nagpur. The name 'Chutia' has now been changed into 'Chota' probably for sake of convenience. According to the late Mr. S. C. Roy, "the name Chotanagpur is one of comparatively recent origin and appears to have been first coined by the early British administrators of the country to distinguish it from the other Nagpur possessed by the Marhathas".

Under Muslim Rule.

To the Muhammadan historians the whole of Chotanagpur was in the tract which they knew as Jharkhand or forest country. It appears to have remained practically independent throughout the Turko-Afghan Rule (1206-1526 A. D.) in India. The Delhi Sultans generally attempted to conquer the accessible parts and stationed their governors and garrisons in cities and strategic centres. The fortress of Rohtas was the farthest limit of actual penetration made by them, towards it. Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi of Shams-i-Siraj Afif tells us that Sultan Firuz Shah Tuglaq, after his second campaign against Bengal (1359-1360 A. D.), marched from Jaunpur against the Rai of Jajnagar (modern Orissa) and after making peace with him, returned by some route through Jharkhand. From the seventeenth Canto of Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita we learn that the great Shri Chaitanya, Vaisnav reformer and devotee of Nadia in Bengal (1485 A. D.) on his way to Mathura in the second decade of the 16th century A. D. passed through Jharkhand and made conversions among the aboriginal populations. It is also said that Sher Shah passed through Jharkhand while returning from his second attack on Gaur in Bengal in 1538 A. D. Professor Quanungo mentions that " Sher Shah threaded his way to Rohtas through the jungles of Jharkhand as best he could ".

Sixteenth Century.

The accession of Akbar to the throne of Delhi in 1556 A. D. opens a new chapter in the history of Chotanagpur or Jharkhand. To the Mughals it was also known as Kukrah. It excited the cupidity of the Mughal Emperors by reasons of the report of the diamonds to be found in its rivers. The late Professor Blochmann gave extracts from two Persian works, the ' Akbar Namah ' and the ' Tusuk-i-Jahangiri ' in an article in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for 1871 as quoted by Mr. S. C. Roy, in his ' Mundas and their country ' p. 151, show that Kukrah remained independent of Muslim suzerainty till about the thirtieth year of the reign of Emperor Akbar. In 1585 A. D. Akbar sent an expedition commanded by Shahabaz Khan Turbati who reduced the Raja of Chotanagpur to the position of a tributary. In 1591 A. D. this Raja took part in the Mughal expedition to Orissa. During this second campaign against the rebellious Afghan chiefs of Orissa in 1501-92 A. D. Man Singh, then Akbar's Viceroy of Bengal and Bihar, set out from Rohtasgarh and ordered all the Bihar troops to proceed " by the western road called the Jarcund route, to Midnapore," while he himself went by the usual way down the Ganges. It is mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari that Chotanagpur or Kukrah was included in the Subah of Bihar.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In 1616 A. D. Ibrahim Khan Fateh Jang, the brother of Queen Noorjahan and the then Governor of Bihar, under Jahangir, invaded Kukrah which had, it seems, regained independence during the disturbances that followed the death of Akbar in 1605 A. D., defeated and captured Durjan Sal, the 46th Raja of Chotanagpur who was deprived of all his riches and later on, imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior for twelve years, at the end of which his success in distinguishing a real from a false diamond was rewarded with his release and restoration to his former dignity. The annual tribute to be paid by him was fixed at Rs. 6,000. In 1632 A. D. Chotanagpur was given out as a *jagir* to the Governor at Patna in return for an annual payment of Rs. 1,36,000. This was raised to Rs. 1,61,000 in 1636 A. D.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

In the reign of Muhammad Sah (1719-1748.), in 1724 A. D., Sarbuland Khan, the Governor of Bihar, marched against the Raja of Chotanagpur and without a struggle, obtained his submission and he returned with a huge amount in cash and diamonds. Tribute was afterward withheld, and in 1731 A. D. Fakhrud Dowlah, the then Governor of Bihar came with a large army. He met with a considerable resistance, and was glad to compromise his claims by receiving Rs. 12,000 from the Raja of Ramgarh who owed allegiance to the Raja of Chotanagpur. In 1735 A. D., Alivardi Khan with some difficulty enforced this payment and it was continued afterwards till the British occupied the country.

RAMGARH RAJ.

During the Muhammadan Period, Ramgarh, Kunda, Kendi, Chai and Kharagdiha were the chief states in the area now known as the Hazaribagh district. The founder of the Ramgarh Raj was one Bagdeo Singh who along with his elder brother, Singdeo Singh, were in the service of the Raja of Chotanagpur. In course of time, they quarrelled with their lord and with a body of adventurers came to pargana Karanpura (i.e., thana Barkagaon), defeated the local Raja, one Kapper Deo and took possession of the said pargana. They gradually conquered over twentyone other parganas. Bagdeo Singh became their Raja at about 1368 A. D. with Sisia as capital. It was later on transferred to Urda, then to Badam and then to Ramgarh. Hemant Singh, the sixth Raja of the dynasty, invited a mason from Patna to build a fortified residence at Badam. His residence still stands in partial ruin at Badam. The door-way has an inscription that it was built for him in 1642 A. D. by a Patna builder. In the neighbourhood is Mahudi Hill which contains some sandstone caves

which were excavated for Hindu ascetics. One of them was made at about 1660 A. D. It was probably due to the inconvenient proximity of Badam to the route by which the Muhammadans reached Chotanagpur, that the capital was transferred from there to Ramgarh, thirty miles east in 1670 A. D.

The Kunda estate was founded by one Ram Singh, a personal servant of the Emperor Aurangzeb. In 1669 A. D. he was granted a *thanadari Jagir* by Daud Khan and Mangal Khan, subordinates of a subordinate of that emperor, " for the care and guarding of the roads." He was compelled to take a sanad from them ' to guard the four passes of Babaltar, Pinjri, Banwadih and Nagdarra from the inroads of the Marathas, Bargis and Pindaris.'

The early history of Kendi and Chai is not well known. At about 1770 A. D. the former was reduced by the Muhammadans to the position of a zamindari. Chai was subjugated by Kakund Singh of Ramgarh about 1770 A. D. and was partitioned among five chieftains of whom apparently four paid tribute to the fifth, Raja Lal Khan of Jagidih.

It is said that Kharagdiha was founded in the 15th century A. D. by one Hansraj Bhut Deo who came from Southern India, expelled a Raja of the Bandawat caste, and conquered for himself a kingdom in Gaya and Hazaribagh, 600 miles long. The family intermarried with the Babhan zamindars of North Bihar. Direct interference by the Muhammadans in its internal affairs is not heard of prior to 1765 A. D. in which year Akbar Ali Khan, a son of Kamgar Khan, zamindar of Narhat Samai in eastern Gaya, carried the attack on Raja Mod Narayan Deo into his last possessions in Hazaribagh district and expelled him from Kharagdiha. Mod Narayan Deo, and his son died in exile at Ramgarh, but in 1774 A. D. his grandson, Girwar Narayan Deo, assisted the British in expelling Akbar Ali Khan.

The Raja of Ramgarh proved hostile to Alivardi Khan, Subedar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. In 1740 A. D., the latter sent a special expedition under the command of Hidayat Ali Khan, the father of Gulam Hussain, the Patna historian and author of Siyar-ul-mutakherin to bring the refractory Raja of the jungly district of Ramgarh under control. Hidayat Ali Khan, with the co-operation of Raja Sundar Singh and Raja Jaikisan Singh, both zamindars of Palamau, and the zamindars of Seres, Cotomba and Sherghati, brought under subjection the powerful Hindu Raja of Ramgarh.

Captain Camac.

The actual exercise of the authority by the British, however, began sometime later. The Rajas of Chotanagpur were for quite a long period left to themselves although they were creating

disturbance in matters of revenue collection. It was only in 1769 A. D. that a British Officer, Captain Camac tried to establish some sort of order in the Junglebury or Jungleterry district which was the name of Hazaribagh. The Marhathas were making inroads into Chotanagpur and Ramgarh and that is the reason why it was thought necessary by the British to bring the Rajas of Chotanagpur under control.

Captain Camac first subdued the Rajas of Kharagdiha and Kendi. In 1771 he was made a sort of Military Collector of Ramgarh district with his headquarters at Chatra. This district of Ramgarh then included Nagpur, Palamau portions of Chakia and almost the present district of Hazaribagh. The town of Hazaribagh practically did not exist at that time and Chatra was more important. In 1772 he made an expedition to Palamau with the same object with which he had been trying to put some control on Ramgarh.

Raja Mukund Singh of Ramgarh was an eye sore to Captain Camac. He was taken to be a difficult problem and was suspected to be giving protection to a Frenchman. In his campaign against Palamau Raja Mukund Singh did not give any help. The British supported Tej Singh in his quarrel with Mukund Singh over succession. Lt. Goddard attacked Ramgarh and Tej Singh was installed, not at first as Raja but as *Mustajir*. Ichak was made the capital by Tej Singh.

In 1780 Captain Camac was succeeded by Mr. Chapman who was practically the first civilian administrator of Chotanagpur. The "conquered provinces" as they were called were formed into a British district which included Ramgarh, Kendi, Kunda and Kharagdiha (which together constitute the present Hazaribagh), the whole of Palamau, Chakai on the east of Kharagdiha and Pachet on the east of Ramgarh, and the area round Sherghati. The present district of Ranchi was added under the designation of the Tributary Mahal of Chota Nagpur. Mr. Chapman who combined in himself the functions of a Judge, a Magistrate and a Collector of Revenue, held his court alternately at Sherghati (now in the Gaya district) and Chatra (now in the Hazaribagh district) and his authority was enforced by a newly formed native infantry called the Ramgarh Battalion under an European Commander and stationed at Hazaribagh.

First Phase of British Rule.

This first phase of British rule was almost a failure. All the energy of the British administrator was spent in keeping up a show and military control on the area. Here also the people and their customs were forgotten while the administrative set-up was organised. The officials did not care to have a first-hand

knowledge of the people with whom they were dealing. With foreigners from Bengal and Bihar, unacquainted with the customs and dialects of the people in all the subordinate Government posts, the British rule was particularly distasteful to the aboriginal races. There were several insurrections in Tamar which were put down ruthlessly. In 1811 there was a rising of the Mundas and Uraons in Chotanagpur and ultimately this area was brought under the direct administration of the East India Company as part of the Ramgarh district. In 1831 A. D. there was a Kol rising in Singhbhum. Although it did not seriously affect Hazaribagh the administrators at Hazaribagh were warned to be careful. The suppression of the Kol rising ushered in a changed administrative system. By Regulation XIII of 1833 A. D. the Parganas of Ramgarh, Kharagdiha, Kendi and Kunda, which comprise the present area of the district, became part of the South-West Frontier Agency and were formed into a division under the name of Hazaribagh. Hazaribagh was made the administrative headquarters. The Chief Executive Officer at Hazaribagh was now styled the Principal Assistant to the Governor-General's Agent who was in charge of the districts of Ramgarh and the Jungle Mahals with the estates of Dhalbhum till then included in Midnapore. Mr. Ricketts, a member of the Board of Revenue made an inspection tour in the district and as a result of his report a further change was introduced in the administrative set-up. By Act XX of 1854, the designation of the South-West Frontier Agency was changed to Chutia (Chota) Nagpur and it began to be administered as a non-regulation province under the Lt. Governor of Bengal.

Santhal Revolt in Hazaribagh.

In 1855-56 there was a fierce rising of the Santhals. Their leaders were Lubia Manjhi, Bairu Manjhi and Arjun Manjhi. The discontent of the Santhals was suspected much earlier. In a letter dated the 15th January 1855 the Commissioner of Chotanagpur informed the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Hazaribagh that he had approved of the measures adopted towards the Santhals who were reported to be manufacturing arms and showing indications of disaffection. He further ordered that a proclamation should be issued prohibiting all black-smiths from manufacturing arrows and other weapons of war without the express permission of the authorities and that any wilful disobedience of the proclamation should be promptly and severely punished. This letter will show that the movement had gone deep otherwise the Santhal blacksmiths would not be manufacturing arrows and other weapons of war.

Martial Law; Terrorism.

Martial law was declared in the area which ultimately became Santhal Parganas and this was widely proclaimed throughout

Hazaribagh. In April 1856 the rising of the Santhal in Hazaribagh district was widely spread. The Jail at Hazaribagh was stormed and set on fire. The Bullock-Cart trains were frequently interfered with. On 16th March, 1856 Simpson informed the Magistrate of Burhi that there must not be any contact of the Santhals of Hazaribagh district with the Santhals of Bhagalpur and Birbhum. He practically ordered a sealing of the Santhal area in Hazaribagh district by the posting of troops. Different sections of a company of infantry were posted at different places. The European Deputy Commissioner at Burhi had the particular duty to look to the Santhal insurrection. Wide arrests were made of the Santhals without even any evidence and a terrorising campaign was set afoot.

The zamindars seemed to have been secretly sympathising with the Santhals. The Raja of Ramgarh and other smaller zamindars were severely warned and asked to help in suppressing the Santhals. Parwanas were issued to the Rajas and zamindars. The Raja of Ramgarh threw his weight in suppressing the Santhal rise. There are documents showing this and the Raja was commended in later despatches for his loyal services.

As mentioned before cruel measures were taken to put down the Santhals. They were chased, wounded and killed. They were arrested, imprisoned, at times put in fetters, not even the women being spared. The Santhal villages were burnt. The houses of the Santhal leaders like Rupu Manjhi were burnt down. The old correspondence shows the severity of the sentences. One Lattaie Manjhi was imprisoned with labour and iron for 14 years.

BACKGROUND.

This Santhal rebellion in Hazaribagh was also due to almost the same pattern of reasons which led to the Santhal *Hul* in Santhal Parganas. It almost appears that there was a concerted move among the Santhals in the different districts. The difference in the attitude of the administrator when the Santhal revolt was suppressed in Santhal Parganas and Hazaribagh is quite apparent. The Santhals in Hazaribagh were neglected inasmuch as the administrator did not think it worthwhile adopting any particular measure to conciliate them. While a separate district of Santhal Parganas was created no such move was taken for the Santhals of Hazaribagh district. The result was seen in the fact that while the Santhals of Santhal Parganas did not join openly the revolt of 1857 the Santhals of Hazaribagh district did give vent to their feelings. In the last District Gazetteer of Hazaribagh (Lister, 1917) it is mentioned :—" The Santhals not unnaturally became excited by the weakening of authority and thought the occasion opportune for squaring accounts with

oppressive money-lenders and others. Several bands of Santhals collected for marauding purposes and were joined by the local bad characters, and a certain amount of plundering occurred between Gola and Chas (i.e. thana Petarbar) in Kharagdiha, at Kuju on the Ramgarh road and at Jharpo near Bagodar. At Mandu they were instigated by three local landholders to commit murder as well as plunder the village. The landholders instigating the murder were subsequently caught and hanged. A small punitive expedition of Sikhs was sent to Gola, and the excitement died out immediately. The disturbances were only sporadic; there was no organised movement among the Santhals as a whole, and no special measures against them were considered necessary after the risings had subsided. Instead, it was decided shortly after the mutiny to raise a levy of Kols and Santhals for military police, and a body of 500 of the more ardent aboriginals was enlisted for this work. Similarly in the north of the district the news of the sepoy rising evoked some small uprising among the dispossessed Bhuiya tikaits, who considered the opportunity suitable for recovering their lands from the purchasers then occupying them; and they received some support from their tenantry." To crush the Santhals the directive that "any insurrectionary movement is to be suppressed by force, and all marauding parties are to be attacked and dispersed, and as many as possible of marauders are to be taken prisoners and brought to trial immediately." *In a letter No. 50, dated the 17th September 1857, Simpson informed Commissioner Dalton that armed Santhals had come into a clash with a detachment of 76 Sikhs including 10 men of the Ramgarh Battalion.

1857 Movement; Background.

The movement of 1857 came as a surprise as the British administrator had refused to learn the lesson of history. The Kol rising of 1834, the Munda rising at Tamar on the border of Hazaribagh district, the Santhal *hul* in Santhal Parganas or in Hazaribagh did not have much of a lesson to him.

Ramgarh Battalion.

The Ramgarh Battalion consisting of two companies of the 8th Native Infantry at Hazaribagh decided on the 30th July to

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* Extract from a Despatch from the Court of Directors in the Judicial Department dated the 2nd January, 1857.

"The report of the proceedings of Captain Alexander (who succeeded Mr. Tweedie in the charge of the Borbee Division) for the suppression of the outrages commenced by the Sonthals in the Khurugdeah district and by the successful capture of some of the insurgent leaders is very satisfactory and highly creditable to that officer and we notice with satisfaction the zealous co-operations of Lieutenant Thompson and Reid as well as the conduct of the Tikait of Duranda in delivering up a Sonthal chief and 17 followers (Military Proceedings dated the 17th April, 1857, nos 465-66).

start mutiny from the evening of the following day. Captain Simpson, the Deputy Commissioner, got the news of the actual hour fixed for the outbreak from one of his servants. The only safety lay in immediate flight. Captain Simpson, Dr. Dalpratt and Mr. Liebart of Sitagarha hastily set out on foot across the forest towards Ichak which they reached at nightfall. They were hospitably received by the Brahmans of a monastery. They were supplied with horses and after a few hours' rest, they set out for Bagodar.

When the news of the impending outbreak reached Ranchi, Captain Dalton, the Commissioner, at once sent Lt. Graham with a detachment of Ramgarh Light Infantry, some cavalry and two guns to disarm the regiments at Hazaribagh. On the way his own infantry mutinied and hurried back to Ranchi by Old Ranchi Road *via* Badam.**

Widespread Insurrection.

Captain Dalton realised that it was impossible to defend Ranchi and ordered an immediate withdrawal of all the Europeans at Ranchi to Hazaribagh and from there to Bagodar. For a few weeks the remnant of administration ran from Bagodar. Mr. J. S. Davies, Senior Assistant Commissioner, Lohardaga Division, took the temporary charge of Hazaribagh Division on the 4th August, 1857, and on the 7th August, he informed Captain Dalton that on the 31st July, there was the mutiny of the troops at Hazaribagh and the mutineers were proceeding to Ranchi. Mr. Davies found the treasury quite empty and the records practically destroyed. The insurrectionists had carried away with them the treasure. They had also looted the dispensary of the Penitentiary Jail and had carried off both the Doctors and nearly all the medicines. The prisoners had escaped, Dalton, however, reoccupied Hazaribagh with the help of Rattary's Sikhs and restored order there.

Battle of Chatra.

The insurrectionists stayed in Ranchi for over a month and then set out towards the north to join Kunwar Singh of Shahabad district. While they were at Chatra, they were attacked and defeated on the 2nd October, 1857, by Major English. Their guns and munitions were captured. 150 of the mutineers were killed and the rest fled towards Sherghati and dispersed. This victory at Chatra really crushed the movement in Hazaribagh district.

** Lieutenant Graham's despatch (Military Consultation, 4th September, 1857, no. 356-59 is an enclosure to this chapter).

The battle of Chatra was a grim fight and there was terrible blood-shed on either side. The following four letters regarding the famous battle at Chatra are very significant.

(1)

No. 83-8.

Message received by Electric Telegraph from Sherghati, Saturday, 3rd October 9-23 P.M. *from Lieutt. Stanton.*

To Calcutta.
To Secretary to the Government of India.

Following message received from Major English at Calcutta. I had a severe engagement yesterday with the Ramgarh Battalion, defeated them, taken four guns complete and fortyfive cartloads of ammunition. I have had fortyfive men killed, and wounded, and am not strong enough to escort what I have through the Jungles surrounding me. Filled as they are with disbanded sepays, and plunderers I take upon you to send me one hundred men if possible. Telegraph to Calcutta when you have done so. With reference to the above I have only twentyfive Sikhs here. Shall I detain a detachment of Europeans and march on Chuttra to assist in bringing in the ammunition.

(Sd.) L. E. W. O'Brien,
3rd Assist. in-Charge.

Calcutta,
Electric Telegraph Office,
The 4th of October, 1857.
Despd. 8-25.

(2)

No. 89.

Message received by Electric Telegraph,
From Chuttra via Burhee, 4th October, 9 *a.m.*
From Major English,
To Calcutta,
To General Mansfield,

I came upon the Ramgarh Mutineers at nine o'clock this morning, encamped on the West side of the Town after the enemy, their guns are captured and their whole camp. We have taken four guns and wagons complete, ten elephants and much ammunition. Our loss is severe, thirtysix of Her Majesty's 53rd and six of the Sikhs killed and wounded all officers are safe, the men and officers behaved nobly.

(Sd.) L. E. W. O'Brien,
3rd Asssit. in-charge.

Calcutta E. T. Office,
4th October, 1857, 9 P. M.
Secretary to the Government of India, Army Department.

(3)

No. 152.

Message received by Electric Telegraph,

From Chuttra via Burhee, 7th October, 8-30 *a.m.*

From Major English,

To Calcutta,

To General Mansfield,

I have moved my camp to the east of the Town on a fine open plain. Major Simpson buried seventy-seven of the enemy yesterday, and, reports that above one hundred are lying wounded in the jungle and that the mutineers have dispersed. Two Subadars were brought in yesterday and hanged this morning. For the sake of the wounded I shall return to Hazaribagh by easy marches. The road is through jungles in many places and my party very weak to escort the line of the wounded, carts, guns and wagons. One hundred men would be great assistance, the guns will have to be dragged across many swamps and the road is very difficult, send me without delay hospital bedding and clothing for thirty men, hospital comforts and two casks of rum. Some treasure has been given over to Major Simpson.

Calcutta E. T. Office, (Sd.) L.E.W. O'Brien,

7th October, 1857. *Pro Head Assist. in-Charge.*

To Captain E. F. Dalton, Offg. Commissioner, Chota Nagpur.

Sir,

My demi-official notes of the 30th, 1st and 2nd instant will have informed you of the advance of the force under Major English on Chuttra and the defeat of the mutineers, Ramgarh Battalion with detail of artillery and capture of four six-pounder guns on the 2nd of this month.

2. The mutineers had taken up a strong position on the west of Chuttra with the whole of the city on their east, the narrow streets of which could not be passed through without endangering our small force. The road leading to the town is over a bridge and to the north of the bridge is one succession of deep ricefields which it would have been difficult to pass with rapidity. After Major Smyth had drawn up a rough plan of the town and approach, it was determined by Major English to make the attack rounding the south of the city and coming opposite the position of the mutineers at the old jail, etc.

3. On the advanced guard passing west of the Jail, the main body of the mutineers were discovered on the heights and skirmishers were immediately sent off by Major English to the north across a narrow belt of rice ground, and soon got into action with the rebels. The first Enfield rifle ball discharged at a distance of 900 yards, it was supposed, took effect and was immediately followed by round shot from the enemy fired in the direction of our approach. But as the main party of the Europeans and Sikhs had nearly crossed the rice ground marked A when the guns opened, providentially the fire did not do much harm. One ball, however, shot dead the horse, an assistant apothecary attached to the Europeans was riding, when the owner a mere lad proceeded on foot manfully with the advancing column.

4. The Europeans on crossing the rice ground, went by the east of the village of Kullotea, and Lieut. Earle commanding the Sikhs with myself and a party of men proceeded through the hamlet which brought us in proximity to the position of the mutineers and on emerging from the lane of the village we found the Europeans hotly engaged with the rebels at the tops of trees marked B and on looking towards the old jail I observed a considerable number of the mutineers rushing up in skirmishing order and advancing on the rear of our attacking party. The attention of the Sikhs was immediately directed to this threatened danger, and taking up a position in the grove we fired steadily upon the enemy killing and wounding some amongst the former a Jamadar with a blue coat whose body I found the following morning with a sepoy at the spot. I saw them when aimed at.

5. After the main party of the Sikhs had beaten off this attack from the south-east, they joined the attack on the two remaining guns which were pouring grape shot, etc., upon us as we passed through the grove. It was there many of the Europeans and some of the Sikhs fell and it was not until the determined intrepidity of Lt. Daunt, who by a rush on the left flank of the remaining gun captured it, that the mutineers discontinued to serve it, as after many of their party must have been killed and wounded by Enfield rifles, yet the shot of this gun was still directed at our advancing party within the grove and every round was tearing away the branches or ploughing up the ground in our vicinity, and had there not been the trees to afford partial cover to the men, the loss on our side must have been much greater.

Our killed and wounded aggregate 56 men,—46 Europeans and 10 Sikhs; of these the wounds of some of the Europeans are very severe, four of them having undergone amputation,

6. The conduct of the troops under Major English in the battle on the 2nd instant was beyond all praise, the cool

intrepidity of the detachment Her Majesty's 53rd with every officer attached to it well seconded in the attack by the Sikhs under Lt. Earle, and the excellent arrangements of Major English and his staff rendered success certain, and although it has been achieved at considerable loss, yet the object gained has been great and I trust will ensure the speedy tranquillity of the whole of the province of Bihar, if not add considerably to the security of the country from the Son to Calcutta.

We changed our camp this morning from the west of the town to this place; which is two miles off, in consequence of the offensive smell in the vicinity of camp where the engagement took place. There were 77 bodies of the mutineers buried in one pit on the 3rd instant and the number of wounded must have been very large. Several of the wounded and absconded, both native officers and men, have been apprehended and brought in by the rural police and villagers since the battle, and numbers of the mutineers have abandoned and thrown away their arms which have been picked up and brought in to me.

7. Jai Mangal Pandey and Nadir Ali, Subadars of the battalion both present in the engagement of the 2nd (the latter wounded) were taken in the jungle and brought to me on the 3rd. These two principal mutineers were tried under the provisions of Act XVII of 1857 and sentenced to death, passed upon them by my court in my capacity of Commissioner under the above law, was duly carried into effect this morning on the very ground where they had made such an obstinate resistance to the British troops two days previously. The confessions of these men recorded in detail are valuable and copies will be forwarded for the use of your office. From these it would appear that several of the Jagirdars, Lalls, or relations of the Raja of Chota Nagpur were cognizant, if not implicated in the proceedings of the mutinous sepoys. One of them, the Lal of Sulgee, Jagatpal Singh, in particular, appears to be a son-in-law of Kooar Singh and to have held correspondence with that individual who would seem to me to have deputed eight of the sepoys of the two companies of 8th Regiment Native Infantry (who mutinied at Hazaribagh) to attend upon the Lall and to keep up the excitement and spirit of rebellion already engendered in the Ramgarh Light Infantry by the machinations of the Jamadar Madho Singh.

8. One of these men of the 8th, I am led to believe, was shot in the engagement of the 2nd. The mutineers had entertained a number of recruits, men from Bhojpur, Mugga or Bihar, and other parts, as also some discharged sepoys, and were actually teaching these with blank cartridge the morning we approached Chuttra. Their ignorance or want of belief in our approach was

most fatal to them as a party was actually plundering in the town at the time we were rounding the southern extremity of the city and within two gun shots of us. These men could have scarcely rejoined the main body before we attacked them and only knew of our approach from the top of a house, into the upper storey of which they had proceeded for the purposes of looting the owner's property.

9. The Jemadar Madho Singh, I fear has escaped. Some say he went with a detachment into the town either to look out for our advance, or with some other object—may be plunder. Bhola Singh Barail of Chorea seems to have been zealous coadjutor of the mutineers in plundering the mahajans of the town and was killed by the people of the place with several sepoys on our attack.

10. The Thakur Bishwanath Singh with Ganpat Roy, former dewan of the Nagpur Raja, seems to have fled in the commencement of the fight; the Thakur's palanquin was brought in to me the following day from the jungle; two servants of the Barkagarh Thakurs have also been apprehended and are forwarded to the Senior Assistant Commissioner, Lohardaga, for investigation into their case.

11. The amount of ammunition recovered has been very large, so much so as to excite suspicions that ammunition from other quarters may have been under charge of the mutineers. I would strongly recommend enquiry to be made as to what ammunition was actually in store at Doranda when the mutiny broke out.

12. I have placed my seal on five boxes containing or supposed to contain treasure, two of those with Chubb locks for want of keys we have been unable to open. In the other boxes there was found a good deal of small coins, pie, pice, etc., some rupees; also a chest of opium, all of which I imagine must have belonged to the Lohardaga treasury.

I observed an office seal in one of the boxes, and on reaching Hazaribagh I will have the whole carefully examined and duly brought to the credit of Government.

13. I have sent on a party in advance to prepare the road to Hazaribagh for the guns, etc., etc., we have captured, and Major English proposes to reach that station by easy marches as soon as possible to get the wounded under shelter.

14. I would have submitted this report earlier but as you may suppose under the circumstances detailed, have had little time to myself. Since the engagement the providing several

requisites for about 50 wounded is no trifling task, and the means of moving them from a place which has been plundered and rifled by a mutinous battalion is no easy matter. However, I trust our efforts will result in the admission of Government that we have all endeavoured to do our duty.

15. I annex a small sketch map of Chuttra and the position of the mutineers which will elucidate and explain the first portion of this communication.*

I have the honour to be, etc.,
(Sd.) J. SIMPSON,
Principal Assistant Commr. of Hazaribagh.

Principal Asstt. Commissioner's Office,
Hazaribagh Division,
Camp Kalapahari near Chitra.
the 4th October, 1857.

At Chatra there are still two tombs near the newly built forest colony to the western extremity of the town. They recall the great battle that took place. One of them is fenced with iron bars and with an inscription on a marble slab. The other tomb is cemented and bears a red cross over it. There is a tank situated on the southern side of the tombs and western side of the existing sub-jail premises. It is commonly believed that a large number of men both military and non-military who had joined the fight against the British were hanged on a mango tree by the side of this tank. The dead bodies of the hanged persons were thrown in the water of the tank. The tank is still known as *Phasiahi alias Bhutuah* talab.

FEATURES OF THE MOVEMENT.

There are quite a number of contemporary letters preserved in the District Record Room in Hazaribagh**. These letters throw a considerable light on the various features of the 1857 movement in Hazaribagh. From the old letters we find that the First Native Infantry at Dinapore, the First Native Infantry at Hazaribagh, the 12h Irregular Cavalry at Segowlee and the Ramgarh Battalion at Chotanagpur had mutinied. Act XXV of 1857 rendered officers and soldiers in the native army liable to forfeiture of property for the mutiny and also provided for the adjudication and recovery of forfeiture of property in certain cases. Judicial Notification dated, Fort William, the 15th

* The map is not reproduced (P. C. R. C.).

** Some of these letters have been published in " Hazaribagh Old Records " (Gazetteer's Revision Section, 1957).

June, 1859, extended Act VIII of 1859 for simplifying the procedure of the Courts of Civil Judicature not established by the Royal Charter to the Hazaribagh, Lohardagga, Manbhum and in the South-West Frontier Agency.

The anxiety of the British administrator would be appreciated if we refer to Circular no. 2382 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur Division dated the 17th June, 1859, mentioning that careful watch should be kept on all religious mendicants or other vagrants and to retain in custody all such as are not expected to give satisfactory account of themselves or to find security for the good conduct It was mentioned that *Latties* of these persons should be looked into as they are used to carry secret letters in the hollow of their *Latties*.

SOME LEADERS.

A statement of cases tried under Act XIV of 1857 and 1858 in the Division of Chotanagpur mentions the following cases among others :—

1. Koreban Ally and Balgobind Shahi for " rebellion and causing the proclamation of the Padshahee Raja on or about the 4th August, 1857 " were transported for life and forfeited all their properties. Koreban Ally was the Jamadar of the Principal Assistant in the Collectorate Department. At the instance of the mutinious sepoys of the Ramgarh Battalion he had caused the proclamation to be made. They were along with another Nuthi Khan separately imprisoned for 14 years for having taken service under the mutineers of the Ramgarh Battalion and of having joined in various acts of plundering.

2. Tikayat Omrao Singh, Brij Bhukhan Singh, Sheikh Bheekharee, Chama Singh, Siboo Singh, Ramlall Singh and Bijai Ram Singh were prosecuted for rebellion and closing the Ghats. Tikayat Omrao Singh and Sheikh Bheekharee were given capital sentence and forfeited the property of every description while the other persons were acquitted. The execution of the sentence was carried out on the 8th January, 1858. The two persons had attempted to prevent the return of the Government officers with troops to Chotanagpur by closing the Chotto Paloo and Charoo Ghats. The prisoners Chama Singh, Siboo Singh were sentenced to 7 years labour for plundering. The Judgment in all these cases were delivered on the 6th January, 1858 and the capital sentence was executed on the 8th January, 1858. No time was lost in executing the sentence.

3. Seetum Chaudhary was convicted on 12th January, 1858 to 10 years' hard labour and a fine of Rs. 250. He was Bazar

Chaudhary in Ramgarh Battalion and after the mutiny of the Regiment and the departure of the officers from the station had plundered the property of Lt. Reevies to the value of Rs. 250.

4. Thakur Bishwanath Shahi of Lohardagga district was sentenced in April, 1858 to capital punishment and forfeited all his property. The remarks against him run as follows :—

> " The prisoner who is one of the most influential zamindars in Chotanagpur joined the Mutineers of the Ramgarh Battalion immediately after the Corps had mutinied and having received a sum of money from the native officers, caused the Ghats to be closed in order to prevent the return of the Government officers to the district. The prisoner moreover promised to give the Sepoys *Badshahee pay*. The prisoner also seized some wealthy merchants and caused them to be plundered and ill-treated them with the purpose of extorting the sum of Rs. 25,000 to enable him to fight against the Government. After the defeat of the Ramgarh Battalion at Chutra the prisoner returned to Chotanagpur and a large body of men having been collected by him, several villages were plundered and the Government Thana at Burwa was burnt. The prisoner had assembled a force of 1,100 men with the view of attacking the town Lohardagga and arrived close to that place when the Principal Assistant who was stationed with some Sowars at Lohardagga made a night march and captured the prisoner who was hanged by the orders of the Court on the 16th April last ".

5. Pande Ganpat Rai who was formerly a Dewan of Maharaja of Nagpur but had been dismissed some years ago was elected Commander-in-Chief by the Mutineers, and came to Doranda. After the defeat of the Mutineers at Chutra, Ganpat Rai returned to Chotanagpur and with Thakur Bishwanath Shahi engaged in plundering several villages and burning the Government Thana at Barwa. This prisoner was also with Thakur Bishwanath Shahi in his attempted attack on Lohardagga. He was also arrested and sentenced capitally by the Court on the 21st April, 1858 and hanged on the same day.

6. One Raja Asman Singh along with others were prosecuted for plunder but were acquitted. There was a series of cases against him.

7. Buhoran Singh was an escaped convict who joined the rebels Thakur Bishwanath Shahi and Ganpat Rai with a body of

200 armed men. He had taken part mainly in burning the Thana at Barwa. He was planning to attack the Principal Assistant who was camping at Lohardagga. When Bishwanath Shahi was arrested the prisoner escaped but shortly was seized and found guilty and was hanged on the 5th January, 1858.

Court martials.

An extract dated Camp Ranchi, the 1st November, 1857 signed by the Commanding Field Force, Ranchi gives a long list of all sepoys of the Ramgarh Light Infantry Battalion that were transported for a period of 7 years and some to 14 years for rebellion. The orders were given by in a Court Martial held under the provisions of Act XIV of 1857 and by Major Mac Donnel, Commanding Field Force of Ranchi, Chotanagpur.

Letter no. 7 from the Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum to the Senior Assistant Commissioner, Lohardagga dated Purulia, the 1st October, 1857 gives a list of the headmen who had plundered in Jaipur, Kaspal and Gola Parganah in the districts of Manbhum and Hazaribagh.

In the same volume of old correspondence there are other extracts from the proceedings of an European General Court Martial where by order of Major G. G. Mac Donnel, Commanding Field Force was given. There are long lists of Sepoys including Hindus and Mohammadans belonging to 9th, 1st, 10th, 3rd, 8th, 6th, 4th and of the Ramgarh Light Infantry that were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Orders were also passed for the forfeiture of their property.

Passively loyal zamindars.

Letter no. 67 from the Officiating Commissioner of Chotanagpur to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William, dated the 19th April, 1858 mentions that the great landed proprietors and Rajas of Garjat Mahals were passively loyal. It was further observed that if they had actively co-operated there would not have been further disturbances in Chotanagpur from the date of their occupation in their districts. They did nothing and it was rather likely that they had secretly aided and encouraged the rebellions. The tribals who had given up their predatory habits had taken advantage of the disturbances. Rewards that had been offered for the apprehensions of guilty persons did not have any effect. Not a single instance of arrest was due to their help. It was always the Military or the Police without the help of the people that had captured the rebellious people in the hilly tracts. The Ghatwalis and the villagers had exploited the situation. A suggestion was made that the system of Police depending for the success on the zeal and energy of the various classes or proprietors and the

holders of service should be substituted by management by the British Officers. It was felt that this should be enforced in Hazaribagh, Lohardagga, Manbhum and Singhbhum.

LOYAL ZAMINDARS.

The Raja of Ramgarh was specially complimented for being loyal. In his letter no. 99 of 1858 (Foreign Consultation, 16th April, 1858 no. 14—16), Raja Shambhu Nath Singh and his family were held to be firm adherents of the British Government from the earliest period of British rule. It was mentioned that during the Kol Disturbances from 1813 to 1833 and the late Santhal insurrection, the Raja of Ramgarh had been ever-ready to aid the cause of order and supported the Government measures. Dalton praised the Maharaja and his predecessor for support to the magistracy during his 16 years of experience. The Maharaja was recommended for a Khillat and sword. Thakur Ganpat Deo and his brother of Hosersarum were also complimented for supporting the Government. The Agent of the minor Raja of Kunda, Dewan Miterjit Singh was also complimented.

That Ramgarh House specially supported the British is apparent from the following document when the title of Maharaja was given to Kunwar Ram Nath Singh :—

" 5. The Government of India are aware of the conspicuous service performed by Raja Shambhu Nath Singh during the mutiny in recognition of which a Khillat of nearly Rs. 3,000 was conferred on him. He not only visited the Commissioner of Chotanagpur when that officer, along with the other European residents was compelled to abandon the station of Ranchi and retired to Hazaribagh but also placed army men at their disposal and promptly responded to their request for supplies and for means of military transport and, moreover, adopted measures for checking the spread of disaffection and for repressing crime and preserving order in his State; in all this loyal inspiration, Kunwar Ram Nath Singh zealously co-operated with his brother, Raja Shambhu Nath Singh. In these circumstances the Lieutenant Governor strongly recommends that the title of Maharaja as well as a Khillat and a sword of honour as recommended by the Commissioner may be conferred on Kunwar Ram Nath Singh ". (Extract from Political G. G., July, 1863, no. 2). This recommendation was accepted and Elgin and Kinkardine on the 20th June, 1863 sanctioned the confer on Kunwar Ram Nath Singh for his life the title of Maharaja on the occasion of his succession to the Ramgarh State.

A reference may also be made to Military O. C., 25th September, 1857, no. 395 in which Captain Dalton had reported to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal rgarding the opposition of the Zamindars to the Ramgarh mutineers who were unable to get through the Tiko Ghat.

AFTERMATH.

The Principal Assistant at Hazaribagh was vested with the powers under Section (*ii*) Act XVII of 1857 to try for Mutiny or Desertion wherever the offence might have been committed. This Act empowered the Principal Assistant to sentence persons convicted of mutiny or desertion to both transportation for life or in the case of private soldiers to imprisonment with or without hard labour for life or in term of the years. Even after the rise had been suppressed and a large number of military men had been imprisoned the situation was not calm. In a letter dated the 7th May, 1858, Simpson, Principal Assistant Commissioner reported to Buckland, General Secretary to the Government of Bengal that he thought Act XII of 1858 should be extended to Hazaribagh district as the number of prisoners in Jail chiefly implicated in the disturbances of 1857 was very considerable. By the extension of enactment many minor criminal cases would be summarily dealt with. Simpson mentioned that the strong measures taken to put down the disturbances had resulted in the district, being, for the time being, free from burglary, theft and such other cases.

Another report from Simpson dated the 18th August, 1858, mentions that the records of Hazaribagh Office, criminal, civil and fiscal were disordered, scattered about and some destroyed by the Mutineers on the outbreak of the mutiny on the 20th July, 1857.Extra Maharrirs had been engaged for classifying and arranging the whole of the judicial records of the office. An attempt was also made to make out a statement of cash securities, etc. in the Collectorship of Hazaribagh on the 19th October, 1857 and it showed that the total money in hand was only Rs. 3,845-10-5½. 46 Cart loads of ammunition had been captured from the rebels of the Ramgarh Light Infantry. Another letter mentions that 4 six-pounded guns were also captured. Major English was made to stay on in Hazaribagh so that he and the detachment of Sikhs could be utilised in case of any other attack.

Depredations were quite wide. Even missionaries and Mr. Liebert who was a German private gentleman growing Coffee at Sitagarha near Hazaribagh were not spared. A widespread hunt was carried on to recapture the sepoys of the Ramgarh Light Infantry who had rebelled. The old correspondence shows long lists of such persons who were captured from time to time. Arjun Santhal and Rambani Manjhi, two

leaders of the Santhals were apprehended and forwarded to Hazaribagh on the 21st November, 1857. Mr. Simpson, the Principal Assistant at Hazaribagh had reported that his personal loss ran to the extent of 6 to 7 thousand of rupees. His house was set on fire and destroyed everything in the house. A general reward of Rs. 10 for the re-capture of the men who had revolted from the army was proclaimed.

A HISTORICAL INACTITUDE.

Lister in the District Gazetteer of Hazaribagh published in 1917 has quoted two paragraphs from the Settlement Report and apparently he corroborates them. The quotation is as follows:

> " The Sepoy Mutiny in Chotanagpur started in and ended in Hazaribagh district. At the beginning of August, 1857, the Hazaribagh detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion consisting of two companies of the 8th Regiment mutinied. News of their revolt was sent to Ranchi and Lieutenant Graham was sent from there with a detachment of the Ramgarh Light Infantry to disarm them. His detachment mutinied on the road, and joined the Hazaribagh detachment which was marching on Ranchi at Burmu. The combined force continued to march on Ranchi, and Captain Dalton, the Commissioner, after ascertaining that the remainder of the native troops at Doranda were not loyal, withdrew with all the Europeans by the Ramgarh road to Hazaribagh and from there retired to Bagodar to await support coming along the Grand Trunk Road. As soon as a guard of Rattary's Sikhs was put at his disposal, Colonel Dalton reoccupied Hazaribagh, and from there kept under observation the movements of the mutineers. The mutinous troops had received no support in Hazaribagh, and very little in Ranchi. They stayed in Ranchi for over a month, and then moved west-ward, with the idea of joining another body of sepoys under Kunwar Singh near Rohitasgarh. Their advance was opposed at two of the ghats by loyal zamindars, but after forcing the breast-works with their cannon, they marched through Chandwa and Balumath in Palamau to the town of Chatra. While they were looting there, they were surprised and attacked by a much smaller mixed force consisting of 320 men, and completely defeated their guns and all their ammunition were captured, 150 were killed, and the remainder fled in the direction of Sherghati and dispersed ".

"While there was no sympathy with the mutineers in Hazaribagh, the Santhals not unnaturally became excited by the weakening of authority and thought the occasion opportune for squaring accounts with oppressive money-lenders and others. Several bands of Santhals collected for marauding purposes and were joined by the local bad characters, and a certain amount of plundering occurred between Gola and Chas (that is, thana Peterbar) in Kharagdiha, at Kuju on the Ramgarh road and at Jharpo near Bagodar. At Mandu they were instigated by three local landholders to commit murder as well as plunder the village. The landholders instigating the murder were subsequently caught and hanged. A small punitive expedition of Sikhs was sent to Gola, and the excitement died out immediately. The disturbances were only sporadic; there was no organised movement among the Santhals as a whole, and no special measures against them were considered necessary after the rising had subsided. Instead, it was decided shortly after the mutiny to raise a levy of Kols and Santhals for military police, and a body of 500 of the more ardent aboriginals was enlisted for this work. Similarly in the north of the district the news of the sepoy rising evoked some small uprising among the dispossessed Bhuiya *Tikaits*, who considered the opportunity suitable for recovering their lands from the purchasers than occupying them; and they received some support from their tenantry".

The facts that have been cited would rather show that it would be a historical inexactitude to state that the Sepoy Mutiny in Chotanagpur had started and ended in Hazaribagh district. It would also not be correct to state that the mutineers received no support in Hazaribagh or in Ranchi. It cannot be said, when thousands of Santhals rose in arms and courted misery and death, that the Santhals were merely excited for looting money or that they were instigated by the landlords to loot and murder. It will be difficult to support the theory that the disturbances were only sporadic and that there was no organised move among the Santhals as a whole. The facts that have been mentioned before will show that the so-called Sepoy Mutiny in Hazaribagh district was a mass movement which had widespread support from the different sections of the civil population. In spite of liberal reward and other emoluments being offered the "rebels" were not being captured *en masse*. The zamindars

on whom the British administrator depended in Hazaribagh district were either lukewarm in their support of the British or secretly hostile. The Ghatwars who filled an important position and were fully capable of arresting the "rebels" did not do so.

The great hunt that was ordered for re-capturing the prisoners who had escaped was not very successful as shown in some of the letters in the archives. This also shows that neither the martial law nor the lure of the rewards nor the creation of a Special Commission for apprehension and punishment of the mutineers was very successful. Mr. J. C. Wilson was put at the head of a Commission that was created "for the apprehension and punishment of Mutineers and Rebellions." It was mentioned that the primary business of the Commission was the detection, trial and punishment of the mutineers although it was not intended that the Commission should be spending time in hunting out people who had been in rebel. These duties were still to be performed by the District Officers and it is quite clear that the Commission that was set up was an independent body for quicker apprehension of the rebellions. There are long lists of sepoys including both Hindus and Mohammedans belonging to the 1st; 3rd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th and 10th and of the Ramgarh Light Infantry who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment and forfeiture of their property under the orders of Major G. G. Mac Donnel who conducted the European General Court Martial. There was no distinction between caste and creed among the people who took to arms against the British. Similarly there are long lists of private citizens including Santhals who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. The authorities were fully implementing the instructions in the first para of a Circular under dated the 31st July, 1857, issued by the Governor-General of India in Council in the Home Department. The first para runs as follows :—

> "The Governor-General of India in Council has observed with approbation the zealous exertions of the local Civil Authorities for the apprehension and condign punishment of the Mutineers and Deserters concerned in the present revolt. It was necessary also by the severe and prompt punishment of such of these criminals as found their way into the districts in our possession where the minds of the Native Troops could not but be in a very unsettled state though the men for the most part had abstained from open mutiny, to show that the just fate of the Mutineers is death, and that the British Government was powerful to inflict the penalty. It was necessary also by the offer of rewards for

apprehension of all deserters, to check the crime of desertion which was becoming rife in some of these Regiments, and to prevent the possible escape of men who, apparently mere deserters, had been concerned in such terrible atrocities that their apprehension and condign punishment was an imperative duty."

The battle of Chatra which has been described in some letters quoted *in extenso* was a major event and really went to crush the movement in Hazaribagh district. It was, indeed a trial of superior military force over disorganised and ill-equipped people who rose as a body.

ENCLOSURE I.

FROM

THE MILITARY SECRETARY,

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

(Original).

Military Consultation, 4th September, 1857 no. 356—59.

Hazaribagh, August 1857.

I have the honour to report for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that on the 30th ultimo I left Dorandah Chotanagpur with a detachment as per margin for the purpose of disarming the detachment of the 8th Regiment N. I. on duty at Hazaribagh. On the 31st ultimo at about middle of the second stage I met Capt. W. H. ....., the Deputy Commissioner of Chotanagpur who informed me that on the previous day at about 3 P.M. the sepoys at Hazaribagh plundered the treasury and released all the prisoners.

Headquarters
Ramgarh Irregular Cavalry
1 Jamadar
2 Kote Dafadar
1 Daffadar
2 Pay Dafadars
1 Nishan Burdar
1 Trumpeter
24 Sowars
Infantry Detail
Ramgarh 2nd Infantry
1 Lieutenant
2 Subedars
2 Jamadars
3 Havildars
3 Naiks
2 Buglers
200 Sepoys
Artillary Detail
1 Quarter Master Sergeant
1 Havildar
3 Naiks
26 Sepoys
1 Tindal
8 Lascars
2 Six pounds guns
28 Bullocks

Immediately on receiving this information I pushed on by myself to Ramgarh area halting place to make arrangements for supplies and for crossing the Damoodah some hours afterwards, Lt.. Middleton and the Quarter Master Sergeant Incharge of the guns reported to me that the gun cattle were quite small to move and that guns would not possibly come or until the morning they were, therefore, left under a strong guard. Previous to this I had been obliged to seize bullocks in order to get the guns along I collected with very great difficulty sepoys sufficient for the whole detachment and ordered an elephant to carry back the provisions for the bullocks and also for the men with the guns I am sorry to say only part of this order was carried out as the greater part of the grain and the village of Ramgarh was plundered by the Infantry.

The same night Ahmudeyar Khan, the Jamadar of the Cavalry came to me and reported that the Infantry were in a

disaffected state, and that they have heard of the outbreak at Hazaribagh. The men were determined to march back to Darundah and take the guns with them. He and others also told me that the Infantry had evil intentions towards the other Europeans and myself.

I directed the Jamadar to have the Cavalry ready to cross at a moment's notice in that morning. I told all the native officers that my intention was to cross the river with the whole force and the guns as quickly as possible, and for this purpose ordered a party of 50 sepoys without arms to go back and assist in bringing up the guns after what I had heard of the intentions of the men, I did not think myself justified in ordering an European to accompany them, having myself seen a number of the men wiping out their muskets and one man loading with ball. The Quarter Master Sergeant also saw another load, so, it is probable that they were not the only ones of the detachment loaded. I then ordered the Cavalry to cross the river and await the arrival of the Infantry and guns. Just at this time Jamadar Madhoo Singh of the Infantry came and reported that the men who had been sent to bring up the guns had taken their arms and refused to go without them, and shortly afterwards the same Jamadar and the Senior Subedar Sheikh Amanat reported that the men had taken the magazine and had loaded it on the elephants. This having personally ascertained to be the case and taking into consideration the fact of some of the men as above mentioned being loaded I thought it prudent to fall back amongst the Cavalry and move down to the river. After the Cavalry had crossed over I sent from the opposite bank of the river a written order to the native officers to get the guns up to the river as quickly as possible and halt for order. I then moved on to Mandoo the next stage capturing a few of the escaped prisoners on the road. Seeing that the road was in excellent order and that there were plenty of supplies at the place I sent another order to the native officers to cross over the rivers immediately and to proceed to Hazaribagh as quickly as possible. Just as I was on the point of starting for that place a Havildar of the Artillery Detail Boolakee Khan and one sepoy Ram Singh came up to report that Jamadar Madhoo Singh had gone back from the river to the guns and that they marched on Ranchi. One native officer Subedar Nadir Ali Khan joined him, the remaining two Subedar Sheikh Amanat and Jamadar Phiroze Khan, with a few sepoys refused to accompany them and will be here today at present. I have only one Havildar, 1 Naik and 4 sepoys with me. A native officer of the Battalion Sheikh Faqueer Bux and sepoys who were on furlongh have joined me and a party of Invalid sepoys are to be here today. I have sent for Rajah of Echauk and will direct him to remain

here as his presence will tend to restore confidence. He is, I believe, well affected. The sepoys of the 8th Regiment Native Infantry, two companies in all, broke down at 3 P.M. on the 30th *ultimo*, and released all the prisoners both in the Penitentiary and district jail to the number of 800. They also robbed the treasury of rupees, Government papers and bank notes to the amount of rupees 74,000 (Co.'s rupees 74,000) and burnt three bungalows part of the Bazar Cutcherry papers and the Jail Workshops were plundered by the prisoners and bad characters of the town and neighbouring village. All the Europeans have escaped, it is said in the direction of Bagodah on the Trunk Road. Our arrival has in a great measure restored confidence the shops are again opened and yesterday evening taking with me, Lt. Middleton and the Jamadar of the Cavalry I proceeded through the different Bazars and persuaded the Amlas and others, who were preparing to go off to remain. The country is quite quiet with the exception of a few of the neighbouring villages where some petty plundering has been going on.

The sepoys of the 8th Regiment N. I. are reported by a Bunneah, who has escaped from them, to have dispersed and gone either in the direction of Palamau or across the country to Sheregotty. It is also said that they have thrown away their arms and are starving, having been plundered by the Zamindars of the treasure they took with them. I have written to Major Simpson at Bagodah urging him to come back, as his presence will restore confidence to all in the district. Considerable quantity of property, some Government stamped paper, and a small quantity of treasure has already been recovered and probably more property will be brought in. I have caused all the Cutcherry papers to be collected and hope they may still be of some use although they are much torn and otherwise destroyed. Very secure measures ought in my opinion to be taken against those who have taken advantage of the disturbed state of affairs to plunder but at present I can do but little owing to the paucity of my force and were I to have my position which is close to the town there would in all probability be an outbreak.

Some Europeans or Sikhs would be invaluable with a view of the former and the Cavalry that I have now with me I could hold the whole district in check without taking an European out of the Station. The people are anything but warlike and the presence alone of Europeans would go far towards restoring orders. In conclusion I have the honour to report that Cavalry have followed me to a man they are showing the best spirit and are on duty night and day patrolling, etc., etc., etc.

I beg most respectfully to bring the name of Jamadar Ahmudyar Khan of the Cavalry to the favourable notice of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for reward and promotion.

He has acted in a manner that few natives would have done doing every thing to assist me and restore confidence. He is a man of first rate character, zealous and well affected. I have made no promises to him of any kind. I will write again probably tomorrow and trust that this letter may arrive safely.

I have the honour to be Sir,
(SD.) J. M. GRAHAM, *Lieutenant,*
Commanding Detachment Ramgarh Local Force and Commanding Hazaribagh.

ENCLOSURE II.

The story of the rise in Hazaribagh district with the mutiny of the two Companies of 8th Regiment N. I. of Hazaribagh has been referred to in a number of original documents preserved in the National Archives New Delhi. Some of them are :— (1) Public O. C., 14th August, 1857, no. 21-22 (Reporting the mutiny of the two Companies of the 8th Regiment N. I. at Hazaribagh), (2) Public O. C., 14th August, 1857, no. 24—26 (Account of the outbreak at Hazaribagh by Assistant Surgeon, Dr. Dalpratt and the Jailor, James Mooney), (3) Public O. C. no. 72, 9th October, 1857 (Ramgarh mutineers at Nabinagar), (4) Public O. C., 18th February, 1859, no. 8 (Successful attack by Turner on rebels at a village Burha and the Secretary's comments and hopes that it would prevent rebels from Palamau from crossing the Trunk Road), (5) Secret O. C., 18th December, 1857, no. 699—701 (Intelligence of Sepoy outbreak at Hazaribagh and request for troops which could not be agreed to), (6) Military O. C., 31st July, 1857, no. 35—39 (Hazaribagh being in danger and Dinapore troops having insurrected), (7) Military O. C., 7th August, 1857 (Revolt of the 8th N. I. at Dinapore—promise of annas 0-8-0 as extra boon to other troops), (8) Military O. C., 7th August, 1857 no. 456—63 (Detachment sent to relieve Hazaribagh had also mutinied and urgent request for European troops), (9) Military O. C., 14th August, 1857 no. 358-359 (Dalton from Burhee requests for urgent re-inforcement otherwise he will have to vacate Hazaribagh which would be a sure signal for the rise of many native chiefs against the Government in that agency—Captain Dalton being forced to leave Hazaribagh). (10) Military O. C., 18th September 1857, no. 569 (Lt. Col. Fischer commanding the movable column to send a detachment to Dorunda to intercept the mutineers), (11) Military Proceedings, 18th December, 1857, no. 156-57 (Movement of troops in Hazaribagh areas) and (12) Military Proceedings, 20th May, 1859, no. 75.-760 (Discontent in the 6th Regiment at Hazaribagh although all was quiet at the moment. An attempt was made to remove some complaints but some men had disobeyed orders and Government had set up an enquiry).

(13) *Military Consultation, dated the 14th August*, 1857, *no.* 366.

Has two letters—one from James Mooney, Jailor of the Hazaribagh Penetentiary and another from Dr. Dalpratt, Assistant Surgeon giving a vivid picture of how troubles broke out in Hazaribagh. It appears that Mr. Mooney stuck to his post till the last and left the station two hours after every one left. Mr. Mooney's report is fully corroborated. Mr. Mooney had to walk on foot through the jungles to reach Bagodar. He first went to Sitagarha and finding every one from there had also gone away, he started from Sitagarha about 4½ P.M. and reached Bagodar at about 11 A.M. on the 31st July. At Bagodar he found Major Simpson, the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Hazaribagh, Mr. Wilson, Magistrate of Burhee, 4 Sergeants of the Public Works Department and the Telegraph officials. He learnt there Doctors Dalpratt and others of Hazaribagh had gone towards Raneegunj.

(14) *Military Consultation, dated 4th September*, 1857, no. 368.

It is a letter from Captain Dalton to A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal in which it is mentioned that Thakoor Bishwanath Shahai of Barkagarh had come out with followers and had cut several breaches in the road leading over the Ramgarh hat to make it difficult for the troops' advance against Dorunda. Looder Singh, a Ghatwal under the Rajah of Ramgarh had joined Bishwanath Shahai.

(15) *Military Consultation, dated 5th February*, 1858, *nos.* 298-300.

Is a letter from Colonel Forster to Major A. H. Ross, Assistant Adjutant General, Presidency Division, Barrackpore in which it is mentioned that before the arrival of Shekhawattee battalion from Chaibasa to Chukurdhurpore on the 24th instant one thousand rebels congregated there under the leadership of Ruggodet Baboo. They ran away with 650 heads of cattle and 600 maunds of rice packed up in borah but the Shekawattee battalion managed to seize.

The letter mentions about the difficulties in getting proper ration. It was thought that in a rice country like this a small detachment of Madras troops, would answer better than men of North Western Provinces.

CHAPTER III.

SINGHBHUM.

The early history of Singhbhum district is rather obscure although relics have been found within the district dating back to the stone age. The remains consist of some chertflakes and knives which were found along the banks of the river at Chaibasa and Chakradharpur. Some coins, gold and copper, that have been found also recall that Singhbhum was fairly developed and had connection with Tamra-lipta, the ancient sea-port and there was a regular trade route. Remains of ancient mines worked by *Saraks* who were Jains have also been discovered.

THE HOS.

The early history of Singhbhum was affected by the Hos who migrated from the Chotanagpur Plateau and overcame Bhuiyas who then held part of Singhbhum. The Hos found hilly fastness in the south of the district, where they successfully maintained their independence, their military process earning for them the sobriquet of '*Larka Kols*', that is, the fighting Kols. The north of the district came under the rule of the Singh family of Porahat who claimed to be Rathor Rajputs and whose head was formerly known as the Raja of Singhbhum. It is said that their ancestors were three brothers in the bodyguard of Akbar's general, Man Singh, who took part of the Bhuiyas against the Hos and ended by conquering the country for themselves. At one time the Singh Rajas also ruled over the country now included in the States of Seraikela and Kharsawan and claimed suzerainty over the Kolhan, a claim, however, which the Hos denied.

The Hos maintained their exclusiveness and successfully repelled the two attacks from the Raja of Chotanagpur and another invasion from the Mayurbhanj side headed by the Chief called the Mahapatra of Bamanghati. The Hos were, however, frequently utilized by the Chiefs of the area to make raids on their enemies. During the Muhammadan period the Hos were left alone more or less by the Muhammadans although nominally they had the whole of the Jharkhand country stretching from Rohtasgarh to the frontiers of Orissa.

EARLY BRITISH RELATIONS.

British relations with Singhbhum date from 1767 when a small British force marched against the Raja of Dhalbhum, or as he is called in the early records of Midnapore, the Raja of Ghatsila. The district of Midnapore had been ceded to the British in 1760 and great difficulty was, at first found in reducing the chiefs of the hilly country to the west and in stopping their predatory raids. In 1766 the Resident at Midnapore sent an

ensign named John Fergusson against them with a few sections of sepoys who succeeded in obtaining the submission of the zamindars to the west of Midnapore, of Chatna, Supur and Ambica Nagar in Bankura and of Barabhum in Manbhum. The zamindar of Dhalbhum, however, held out, and barricading the passes, prepared for resistance. John Fergusson in 1767 succeeded in capturing the Raja and set up his nephew Jagannath Dhal in his place on promising to pay a yearly revenue of Rs. 5,500.

Jagannath Dhal could not have an easy time. He fell into arrears of yearly revenue of Rs. 5,500 and there was an expedition against him. Jagannath Dhal attacked his successor with a large force and freely employed the Chuars or Bhumij and the Hos. Eventually in 1777 Jagannath Dhal was reinstated in the estate on payment of a revenue of Rs. 2,000 for the first year, Rs. 3,000 for the second year and Rs. 4,000 for the 3rd year and in 1800 the estate was permanently settled at an assessment of Rs. 4,267.

Raja of Porahat.

These expeditions against Dhalbhum brought the British into contact with the Raja of Porahat or as he was then called the Raja of Singhbhum. The Raja wanted the Company's help to put his territory into order and agreed to pay them the annual revenue. A reconnoitre was made on behalf of the company in 1768 as to the conditions of the Marhattas whose influence had never extended to Singhbhum nor they received the smallest revenue from it.

A few years later in 1773 it was found that the Raja of Porahat was encouraging the transport of salt through Singhbhum which meant loss of revenue. Singhbhum was not directly under the Company's administrative control at that time. The Raja was forced to execute an obligation not to harbour either ryots or merchants in future, and guarantee for the peace of Haldipokhar. Subsequently in 1793 the two neighbouring chiefs, the Thakur of Kharsawan and the Kunwar of Seraikela were compelled to enter into similar engagements regarding the reception of fugitive rebels from British territories.

The interior, however, remained a sort of closed land under the Hos, who did not allow the strangers to settle in or even to pass through the Kolhan. Their ways were tough and abrupt. The route to Jagannath or Puri ran through Kolhan and for years the pilgrims had to make a circuit of the journey to avoid it. In 1819, the Political Agent, Major Roughsedge, directed his assistant to proceed to Porahat, to negotiate a settlement with its chief and collect all possible information regarding the country and "especially of the extraordinary race called *Larkas*" but he did not succeed in penetrating far enough into the interior to come in contact with them.

British Interference.

In 1820 the Raja of Porahat definitely sought British tutelage, acknowledged himself a feudatory of the British and agreed to pay an annual tribute of 101 *sikka* rupees. His object was to be recognised as Lord Paramount over the chiefs of Kharsawan and Seraikela (a claim which was disallowed), to regain from the latter chief a cherished family idol (which he eventually succeeded in doing) and lastly to obtain aid in reducing the Hos, whom he claimed as his subjects. It is practically the Raja of Porahat who invited the British into the land of the Kols. Major Roughsedge turned down the claim of the Hos that they were never subject to the Chiefs and entered the Kolhan at the head of a Battalion of artillery, cavalry and infantry. The Hos resisted stiffly but the bows and arrows of the Hos were no match to the British equipments. There was terrible slaughter of the unfortunate Hos not more than half the party effecting their escape to the hills. Ultimately the whole of the northern *pirs* submitted and entered into engagements, acknowledge and pay tribute to the Raja of Porahat. But Major Roughsedge had yet to meet the still fiercer Hos of the southern *pirs*. It is said that in his march towards Sambalpur he had to fight almost every inch of his way out of Singhbhum leaving them unsubdued. On his quitting the district a war broke out between the Hos who had submitted and those who had not. The Hos ravaged the best part of the Porahat Raja's estate and threatened Seraikela. This was impolitic as the chiefs again implored the assistance of the Agents. The result was that a large number of British forces was employed to reduce the Hos. After a month's hostilities, the leaders surrendered. They earnestly prayed at this time to be taken under the direct rule of the British, but unfortunately they were compelled to enter into an agreement to pay tribute to the chiefs. But this agreement was soon broken and the Hos continued their old practices of plundering and ravaging the portions of Dhalbhum, Bamanghati and penetrating into Chotanagpur.

Kol rebellion, 1831.

In 1831 the Hos joined the rebellion (commonly called the Kol rebellion) of the Mundas of Chotanagpur. There had been smouldering discontent since long among the Mundas owing to the way in which their villages were granted away to foreign farmers in suppression of their headmen. The spark was actually supplied by the treatment to some of them. Harinath Sahi, the brother of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur, gave farms of some of the villages in his estate to his personal favourites, Muhammadans, Sikhs and others, in utter disregard of their ancestral occupants. Twelve villages bordering on Singhbhum, which had been held by a Manki called Singrai, were thus given to the Sikhs. Not only

was the manki dispossessed, but two of his sisters were said to be molested by these *dikkus* (foreigners). A similar complaint was made against the Muhammadan farmers. One of them had acted very oppressively towards one Surga, a munda of Bandgaon in Singhbhum. It was said he had abducted and dishonoured Surga's wife. The two aggrieved men, with others smarting under their treatment, called together the Mundas of Bandgaon and the adjoining tracts in Ranchi and resolved to " burn, plunder and murder ". This was no vain threat. A few weeks later a body of 700 men headed by Surga and Singrai plundered and burnt the villages from which Singrai had been ejected; and next month sacked the village of Jafar Ali, the seducer of Surga's wife, murdering him, ten of his people and the unfortunate woman.

The Munda population on the borders of the Ranchi and Singhbhum districts rose *en masse*, the Hos of Singhbhum coming to the aid of the insurgents and forming the most formidable division of the rebel army. The Ramgarh battalion from Hazaribagh reinforced from Barrackpore and Dinapore and the 50th Bengal Infantry were deployed to meet the rebellion. The rebellion was finally quelled after much bloodshed.

BHUMIJ REBELLION.

Immediately after there was a Bhumij rebellion in Manbhum headed by Ganga Narayan, a claimant to the Barabhum estate. In November, 1832, however, a strong military force compelled him to take refuge in the hills, from where Ganga Narayan fled to Singhbhum. He wanted the Hos to join him. At this time, the Hos were at quarrel with the Thakur of Kharsawan who claimed supremacy over a portion of them. The Hos wanted to test the capacity of Ganga Narayan and asked him to make an attack on the force of Thakur of Kharsawan. In compliance of this request Ganga Narayan was killed and the Thakur of Kharsawan sent his head to Wilkinson. As a result of this rebellion, a change in the administrative set up was decided. Dhalbhum was detached from Midnapore and was placed under the Special Officer known as the Agent for the South-West Frontier.

WILKINSON.

Sir Thomas Wilkinson, the Agent, was convinced that the Hos should be effectively subdued and placed under the direct management of a British officer to be stationed at Chaibasa and his views were accepted by Government. As a result of this Colonel Richards entered the Kolhan in November, 1836 with the Ramgarh Battalion, and the operations were immediately commenced. By the end of February following all the Mankis and Mundas had submitted. It was stipulated that they should no longer obey the chiefs. Altogether 620 villages with a population of about 90

thousand of whom 2/3 were *Larka Kols* or Hos were thus brought under the immediate control of the British Government. Lt. Tickell was posted as the first British Administrator at Chaibasa in 1837. Wilkinson drew up a set of rules for the administration of the new acquisition and these rules were substantially followed for the subsequent one century for the general administration of the district.

1857 Movement.

Before the country-side had settled down and Wilkinson's directives had been given a fair trial the district of Singhbhum was drawn into the whirpool of revolt. As soon as the troops at Hazaribagh had mutinied on the 30th July, 1857 and the detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion from Ranchi sent to quel them also broke out into revolt there was a great stir in the detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion stationed at Chaibasa. Captain Sissmore, the Principal Assistant Commissioner at Chaibasa was completely unnerved at the wave of excitement. He left the station and took shelter with the Raja of Saraikela, Chakradhari Singh. Captain Sissmore's cowardice was the signal for an open revolt of the detachment of the Ramgarh Infantry. The mutineers plundered the Government treasury, broke open the jail and attempted to join the militant sepoys at Doranda in Ranchi. Captain Sissmore was given an escort by the Raja of Saraikela and he marched to Raniganj. Before he left Singhbhum district he committed the care of the district to the Raja of Saraikela and this second act of Captain Sissmore brought in a lot of trouble to the district. The Raja of Saraikela called upon the other chiefs to send their contingents for the protection of Chaibasa. The Raja of Porahat who considered himself superior to the Raja of Saraikela in status and had looked upon, Captain Sissmore's preference for the Raja of Saraikela with disfavour did not care to send any contingent to serve under the Raja of Saraikela. An extra administrative problem was created by the conduct of Captain Sissmore and the Raja of Saraikela.

The status of the Raja of Saraikela was a cause of jealousy among the neighbouring chiefs. This jealousy has been running from generation to generation and had once before flared up when the chief of Saraikela was given the title of Raja.

This title of Raja was conferred on Kumar Chakradhar Singh, chief of Seraikela on the recommendation of the Lieutenant Governor. It appears the Raja of Mayurbhanj had objections which were over-ruled.

Foreign Department, Political Consultation No. 40/43-44, 2nd February, 1856 is a relevant letter to this effect. The recommendation was based on a report by Henry Ricketts dated the

31st January, 1854. The other relevant papers in this Consultation also mention about the long standing feud between the Porahat and the Saraikela families " which had been transmitted from father to son for several generations".

RAJA ARJUN SINGH.

After plundering the Government treasury the members of the detachment of Ramgarh Battalion from Chaibasa marched towards Doranda but the flood of the river of Sanjai stopped their progress. Raja Arjun Singh of Porahat cut off their onward march and gave them shelter. This action of Arjun Singh was interpreted by the British as an act of rebellion. But the subsequent events showed that Arjun Singh could not be accused of an open rebellion although his action was dubious.

LIEUT. BIRCH.

On the 16th September Lieutenant Birch who had been appointed in place of the Principal Assistant Commissioner, reached Chaibasa with the Raja of Saraikela, Raja of Kharsawan and a body of 3,000 Kols. The subsequent events leading to the proclamation of Raja Arjun Singh as an absconder will be described later. As long as Arjun Singh was at large there was excitement among the Kols and other tribals. At the end of December 1857 Lushington who had been temporarily appointed Special Commissioner for Manbhum and Singhbhum reported about a widespread insurrection in Singhbhum. But the insurgents were slowly reduced and it gradually came to be confined to those Kols who had been the camp-followers of the Raja of Porahat. On the 17th January 1858 a Shakhawty Battalion arrived at Chaibasa. Colonel Foster who was commanding this battalion destroyed the stronghold of Arjun Singh, the village of Chakradharpur and cut off most of the Kols. Raja Arjun Singh and his followers mostly consisting of Kols persisted in their hostility for some time more.

Military Consultation, dated the 19th January, 1858, *no.* 617.

Is a letter from Colonel Forster, commanding Shekawattee Battalion, dated 4th July, 1858 to Major A. H. Ross, Assistant Adjutant General, Barrackpore. This is a report of progress made in the suppression of the rebellion in the Manbhum and Singhbhum districts. It is mentioned that about 80 villages had been destroyed and one thousand heads of cattle and many hundred maunds of rice were seized. Colonel Forster mentions that he was glad that the Government had determined to show their clemency to the ex-Raja of Porahat.

A. P. Scott Moncrieff, officiating Assistant Commissioner of Singhbhum Division informed A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal from Chukurdhurpore on the 27th March, 1858 that he wanted immediately more reinforcement. He mentioned that an attack on his encampment on the 25th March by

the rebel force of the Porahat Raja was repulsed but without more troops it would be impossible to follow up the enemy through the jungles or to bring them to subjection. He thought that a detachment must be maintained at Chaibasa besides his force camping at Chukurdhurpore. In this letter he also recommended that native troops would be better than Europeans for pursuing the rebels. He thought the European soldiers were ill adapted for skirmishing and jungle fighting, besides that heat was very considerable.

"Between March 1858 and June 1858 several battles were fought between them and the Government forces, headed by such officers as Mr. Weldon, the first officer of the Naval Brigade of the Chakradharpur and Mr. Scot, the second officer. The mutineers were forced to take shelter in the mountain fastnesses in which Singhbhum abounds. By 15th February 1859 Arjun Singh and his surviving followers had at long last to surrender to the Commissioner. The mutiny at Singhbhum received a quietus." (Prof. H. P. Chatterji, in Bengal Past and Present, Serial No. 140).

When Lieutenant Birch re-occupied Chaibasa he found the district in a much more unsettled state than what had been anticipated The Secretary to the Government of Bengal informed the Secretary to the Government of India in the Military Department on the 25th September, 1857 that :—

"In Singhbhum Lieutenant Birch had found an idea generally prevalent among the Coles, specially that the British had abandoned the country. The Raja of Sarekala welcomed him on his return and continues in every respect well disposed to assist him but is not powerful enough to oppose the neighbouring chiefs of whom the Raja of Porahaut and Thakoor of Khursooah are believed to be preparing to resist the authority of Government. The detachment of the Ramghur Battalion at the station of Chyebasa succeeded about the 10th instant in plundering the treasury and releasing the prisoners and have been received by the Porahaut Raja, who, Lieutenant Birch seems to think intends to retain them in his own service. Lieutenant Birch asks for the assistance of only 150 men with whom to re-establish the authority of Government."

This letter had some effect and the Shekawattee Battalion at Midnapore, a wing of it at the disposal of the Lieutenant Governor was sent to the aid of Lieutenant Birch.

DALTON'S LETTERS.

There are 40 letters ranging from 5th August 1857 to 13th May 1859 and most of them are from Commissioner Dalton issued from Hazaribagh, Burhi or Ranchi and addressed to A. R. Young,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William. A few of the letters are from Lieutenant R. C. Birch, Senior Assistant Commissioner of Singhbhum Division to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William and some are from A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur Division. These letters throw a flood of light on the outbreak of the movement of Chotanagpur in 1857 and particularly feature the movement in Singhbhum district. They also show that Dalton as Commissioner of Chotanagpur held a view different from Lieutenant Birch who was sent as the Senior Assistant Commissioner of Singhbhum Division on certain vital matters in Singhbhum district. Lieutenant Birch, it appears, was all out for blood and fire and held very strong views regarding the conduct of Raja Arjun Singh. Although Birch was subordinate to the Commissioner it appears that he was writing in some cases direct to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal and merely sending copies to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur and to the Political Assistant of Purulia for information. The letters further indicate that ultimately Dalton had to give way to the views of his subordinate Birch.

In letter No. 16 of Dalton, the Commissioner of Chotanagpur to A. R. Young, the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William printed at page 11 of Dalton's report on the Mutiny at Chotanagpur, we find " I have received a communication from the Raja of Saraikela dated 26th ultimo. He had up to that date been successful in preserving the order and had kept the detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion and their position; as they were in want of money he had made them advance from his own funds. The Government Treasury Records, building, etc., are preserved and the Raja hopes to be able to make all over in good order to the Senior Assistant Commissioner when arrives. The Porahat Raja, it is reported, gave no assistance. I have addressed both the Rajas on the subject, commended the one and stimulating the other ".

It will be seen that Dalton's source of information was the Raja of Saraikela and it was obvious that the Raja of Saraikela who had been put in a superior manner in charge of the affairs of Chaibasa by the fleeing administrator could not but have informed that it was he who was holding the ground and the Raja of Porahat was doing nothing. Ultimately, however, the treasure was plundered at the beginning of September and the looters went towards Ranchi but were intercepted by Arjun Singh, the Raja of Porahat. O'Malley has done a great injustice by holding that Raja Arjun Singh induced the looters to make over to him the greater part of the money. The fact is that as soon as the Lt. Birch came to Chaibasa on the 16th September he fell into the arms of the Raja of Saraikela and gave a hasty order to the Raja of Porahat " to

deliver himself up " and to restore the Government treasury and make over the rebellious Sepoys. The human touch of treating the Raja of Porahat in a proper manner particularly because of the excellent services he had rendered in capturing the rebellious troops and kept the looted treasury with him was missing. It was forgotten that Raja Arjun Singh had successfully stopped the mutineers from joining the mutineers of Ranchi. Ranchi had already been deserted by the British who had gone to Hazaribagh. The Raja's services were absolutely forgotten and he naturally resented the insulting order of Lt. Birch " to deliver himself up. "

The justification of this interpretation is shown in Dalton's Letter no. 41 dated 30th September 1857 to the Secretary, Government of Bengal, Fort William. Dalton writes :—

" I have this day received a letter from the Senior Assistant Commissioner at Chaibasa on the state of affairs of his district of 22nd instant. "

" The Porahat Raja had not up to that date fulfilled his promise of sending any mutinous Sepoys and treasury detained by him and as Lt. Birch had to prove that the Raja had attempted to raise the Kols he has taken the other strong measures of proclaiming him, the Raja as rebel and offering a reward of Rs. 1,000 for his apprehension. "

" Lt. Birch deserves great credit for boldly assuming the charge of the division without any assistance except what he could have obtained from the Saraikela Raja. But under the circumstances his policy should have been to the latest possible moment conciliatory and from the information before me I am inclined to regret his having offered a reward for the Raja's apprehension as this is calculated to drive that Chief at once into violent measure when in all probability he was only waiting the turn of events and might have done all that was required, the moment he heard that Ranchi had been re-occupied. "

Dalton could see clearly through the events that led the Raja of Porahat resent Birch. In his letter no. 42 dated 1st October, 1857 Dalton reported to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William as follows :—

" After writing my letter yesterday no. 41 I received from Chaibasa a copy of Lt. Birch's communication to your address no. 43 dated 23rd instant submitting his reasons for declaring the Porahat Raja as rebel and his estate confiscated. It appears to me highly probable in the negligence of the Porahat Raja to promptly attend on Lt. Birch he has been actuated by his dread and jealousy of the Saraikela Raja. Lt. Birch believes that his intention towards the Raja had been misrepresented and considers that the Raja has been influenced by ill alvices.....To declare him

to be a rebel, confiscate his estate and offer a reward for his apprehension are measures that should not, I think, have been so hastily resorted to. Lt. Birch should at all event, have taken care that the Raja had understood his orders and intentions before he adopted such severe measures against him not acting upto them. "

In the same letter Dalton mentions that " I have this morning received an *urzi* from the Porahat Raja dated 26th instant. He states that the Chaibasa Sepoys after plundering the treasury attempted to get away first by Saraikela and Kharsawan, but being opposed at the ghats they tried the Porahat route. At this the Raja met them, took from them their arms and ammunitions and Rs. 1,850-4-8 in cash intending that when they returned to their posts to give them up. He was, however, alarmed by the Saraikela forces defending against him and feared to go to Chaibasa and now he learns that an order to seize him has been issued which makes him more fearful; notwithstanding that he has allowed to deliver up the treasury, arms and the Sepoy ".

DALTON'S VIEWS ABOUT PORAHAT RAJA.

Dalton had no misgivings in his mind that Lt. Birch did a wrong by declaring the Raja of Porahat as rebel and confiscating his estate. He mentions in the same letter that " in declaring the Porahat State confiscated and issuing orders accordingly to the subordinate landlords, Lt. Birch had I think, exceeded authority and it was not necessary for him to have proceeded to such extremities without previously submitting his proceedings for the consideration of his immediate superiors or to Government ".

Ultimately Raja Arjun Singh saw Dalton and produced before him the prisoners and the looted treasury. The Raja made it clear that as he had been declared a rebel he feared he would not be treated with consideration by Lt. Birch and so he did not go there.

Dalton although in a superior official position had ultimately to yield to Lt. Birch, the man on the spot who was calling for the blood of Arjun Singh all the time and corresponding with the Secretary to the Government of Bengal at Fort William over the head of Dalton, the Officiating Commissioner. In another letter No. 224, dated 30th September, 1859 to the Secretary, the Government of Bengal, Dalton gave very emphatically his opinion on the so called rebellion of Raja Arjun Singh. He writes that " I have already given it as my opinion that up to the period of the Ex-Raja's visit to Ranchi when he delivered up the mutineers, their arms, treasuries, etc., to the authorities there, he had not been guilty of any act of rebellion or treasonable design against the Government and I consider, therefore, he is entitled to full credit for the services rendered on that occasion ".

" This being admitted, he might plead he had committed no act of rebellion till driven to it by the attack on his residence at Porahat, its destruction and the plundering of its property, but I have no hesitation in stating that the wavering, vaccilating conduct of the Ex-Raja after his return from Ranchi, coupled with the war-like preparation that it was proved were pushed on at his residence, fully justified the attack and the other consequences were the natural result of the resistance offered."

It will be remembered that at this time the Raja was still at large. Dalton wanted him to surrender and mentioned in the same letter " I have already stated that the surrender must be regarded as unconditional. But I take it for granted that the Government will be willing to extend to them the full benefit of Her Majesty's amnesty."

" The circumstances appear to be the unreasonable state of alarm and suspicion that led Arjun Singh to conceive that he would forfeit his freedom and perhaps his life, if he presented himself to Lt. Birch, and the Rubicon of rebellion once passed he was no doubt encouraged to remain in revolt by too credulous acceptance of the false report of the designing men."

" If the Government is disposed to take this view of the case, it does not appear to me necessary that any further trial should take place. "

But while Dalton was opposed to the trial of the Raja on grounds of treason he fully supported the confiscation of the Porahat Estate. He writes in the same letter that " the Porahat Estate has been long ago judicially confiscated and nothing would induce me now to recommend the smallest deviation from that sentence. The indifference of the Ex-Raja to the sufferings of the non-combatant cultivators of Porahat whom he caused to be plundered and burnt out of their villages, the immense influence he and his brother are shown to have possessed and to have so banefully used in Singhbhum render it in my opinion imperatively necessary that not one acre of the confiscated Estate should ever be restored to them and they should both be for ever debarred from setting foot in the Singhbhum district. "

There are a number of original documents in the National Archives which may be referred to. They, however, give a somewhat different picture. Home Department Public Consultation No. 38, dated 29th January, 1858 is an important letter no. 31 from the Officiating Commissioner of Manbhum and Singhbhum to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal dated the 29th December, 1857 in which the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, A. R. Young conveyed the opinion of the Lt. Governor that Raja Arjun Singh's treason against the State was fully established as far as it could be, on an *ex parte* investigation, the

Raja having failed to answer for himself and being then a fugitive. The Commissioner was asked to attach Raja Arjun Singh's estate and to put it for the benefit of the Government and with a view to its ultimate confiscation if after one month the Raja would fail to deliver himself.

In this letter the Commissioner of Manbhum and Singhbhum mentions that Raja Arjun Singh was trying to utilise the disturbed circumstances to his own benefit. The Commissioner mentions that the Raja's Mokhtear at Chaibasa was actually found explaining to the Kols that the English had abandoned the country and that it had become the property of the Raja. A letter was subsequently found in Porahat from Nakfouri Mokhtear inviting the Raja to Chaibasa and to take possession. The Commissioner also mentions that the Mundas and Mankis had been called to the residence of the Raja of Chakradharpur and Ojoodiah and were explained that they should be faithful to the Raja and not to side either with the Government or with the Raja of Seraikela. The Raja's sepoys had gone to Doranda and tried to establish contact with Bishwanath Shahi. The Raja had actually sent one Mukunda Rai to the latter. The Commissioner further mentions that on the 11th and 12th September a proclamation was made throughout the Bazar at Chaibasa that everything belongs to God and that the country belongs to the king and that the ruler thereof is Raja Arjun Singh. Witnesses had spoken about this proclamation. It was further mentioned that Lt. Birch's *Perwannah* to the Raja of Porahat was treated with contempt and the validity of the order was called to question. The Raja, as has already been pointed out, went on parleying for a pretty long time before he made over the prisoners and the treasure looted from Singhbhum.

It was further mentioned that an arrow, the emblem of God was taken to Lt. Birch by Dabroo Manki who informed Birch on oath that it had been given to him for circulation in the Kolhan. This deposition was confirmed by Mora Manki by whom the arrow had been previously received for the same purpose and by Hari Tanti who received for circulation from the hands of the Raja.

From Military Consultation dated the 29th January, 1858, no. 890, it appears that there was a severe fight between the Coles of Singhbhum and the force of E. Lushington, Commander of Singhbhum and Manbhum at Chaibasa on the 14th January, 1858. This fight took place at Mogra and as a result all the four European officers were wounded along with a number of their men. Lushington contacted Colonel Forster who was commanding the Shekawattee Battalion at camp Chaundil. Colonel Forster hurried to Chaibasa by forced marches in 2 or 3 days.

Home Department Publication Consultation no. 13, dated 11th March, 1859 is a letter from Commissioner Dalton to A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal (No. 39, dated the 21st February, 1859) which describes the unconditional surrender of the ex-Raja of Porahat and his brothers and a large number of insurgent leaders. Dalton mentions that after the surprise of the ex-Raja's position by Lt. Birch, Dalton had posted a party of Khursoan pykes at Porahat to intercept fugitives and facilitate communication between Birch's camp and Dalton's camp and he had caused Mayurbhanj Raja to take up a position in front of his camp at a place called Keraikella feeling sure that when pressed by Birch's party the ex-Raja would be compelled to surrender to his father-in-law. This is exactly what actually happened. On the night of the 15th February the ex-Raja being hard pressed elected to go to his father-in-law at Keraikella from where he was immediately brought in Dalton's camp at Chakradharpur. The capture of two of the principal rebel leaders Raghoo Deo and Sham Karan still had to be effected.

DALTON OUTWITTED.

In letter No. 224 to Government dated 30th September, 1859, Commissioner Dalton recommended to the Government that he thought it would be sufficient if the two prisoners (Arjun Singh and his brother) with their families were permitted to reside under some surveillance at a station considered suitable by the Government and adequate allowance given to them. But obviously Dalton's recommendation was not accepted and the recommendation of Lt. Birch had the approval of the Government. It is curious that this important letter No. 224, dated 30th September, 1859 does not find a mention in the blue print of Colonel E. T. Dalton's Report on the Mutiny of Chotanagpur printed in 1918.

Arjun Singh subsequently died in Benaras while the trial was pending. The whole of the Porahat State was confiscated and now forms the bulk of Kolhan Government Estate.

The study of the old correspondence gives the firm impression that Raja Arjun Singh was forced to revolt because of the questionable policy of Lt. Birch and it is a tragedy that the more humane suggestions of Commissioner Dalton did not prevail upon the Government.

This case has its parallel in the case of Kuar Singh of Jagdishpur in Shahabad district who had raised the standard of revolt in 1857 in Shahabad. Kuar Singh was also in a way, forced to revolt as Commissioner William Taylor of Patna Division mentions in his autobiography. As a matter of fact if Raja Arjun Singh had joined Kuar Singh after traversing through Ranchi, it is doubtful if the British could have suppressed the revolt in Chotanagpur so quickly.

While the Raja died as a State prisoner in Benaras the Porahat Estate was split up and some of the Chiefs and Zamindars were rewarded for the loyal services by the carving out of Porahat Estate. Saraikela Pargana without its coal-pits and the villages of Bhalupani, Rangrin, etc., was granted to the Raja of Saraikela rent-free in perpetuity. Some villages went to the brother of Raja of Saraikela, some to Thakur of Kharsawan and so on. The Estate remained under the direct management of the Government till 1895. The Ex-Raja Arjun Singh died in 1890 at Benaras leaving behind Kumar Narpat Singh, his only son. By a deed of release dated 4th October, 1895 Kumar Narpat Singh was granted by Government " as an Act of Grace " the unalienated portion of the original Porahat Raj. After the death of Raja Narpat Singh in 1934 the Estate escheated to Government.

The story of the insurrection in Singhbhum district makes a sad tale of unnecessary interference by the British administrator into petty jealousies among the chiefs. A deliberate move was done by Lieutenant Birch when he aligned himself with the Raja of Saraikela and went against the Raja of Porahat. It was forgotten that the Raja of Saraikela had contributed to the cowardice of Sissmore, the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Chaibasa when he arranged to send Sissmore and his family to Ranigunge under an escort of 200 of his sepoys. The Raja of Saraikela was sought to be patronised for his action in sending sepoys at the several ghats to arrest the insurgents that might attempt to pass them. In the Narrative of Events, dated September 5, 1857 which was sent by the Governor-General of India in Council to the Court of Directors of East India Company the loyalty of the Raja of Saraikela was commended and " he was informed that his services were highly appreciated by the Government. " Regarding Sissmore the next despatch dated September 9, 1857 mentions " As the abandonment of his post by this officer was considered highly derogatory and unnecessary the neighbouring chiefs being loyal, zealous, and affording every aid to coerce the detachment at Chaibasa, the services of Captain Sissmore were placed at the disposal of His Excellency the Commander-in-chief and Lieutenant Birch was appointed to the charge of Chaibasa.

Captain Sissmore subsequently requested permission to resign his civil appointment, to which the Lieutenant-Governor had no objection, as that officer had formerly behaved with gallantry on the staff, and at the battle of Chillianwalla ".

The despatch dated September 26, 1857 quoted in the further papers (No. 5) relative to the Mutinees in the East Indies presented to both houses of Parliament in 1857 mentions that the Raja of Saraikela had helped Lieutenant Birch re-occupying the Kolhan on the 16th of September 1857. We read " the distinguished

loyalty exhibited, an efficient aid afforded by the Raja of Saraikela in maintaining order in Singhbhum, after the despatch of Captain Sissmore, as related in several formal narratives were brought to the special notice of the Government of India with a recommendation that a handsome Khillat should at once be bestowed as a mark of the approval of his conduct by the Governor-General in Council ".

All this shows that the British administrator made the same experiment of raising one or two trusted men at the cost of others and continued a policy of divide and rule. They got willing dignitaries in the shape of some one or other in the different districts of Chotanagpur. The insurrection in Singhbhum district could well be described as a wide movement in which a portion of the aboriginals had joined. The fierce rise had to be crushed with severity. In the list of prisoners who were convicted and punished to various terms of imprisonment or executed there are quite a large number of men from the district of Singhbhum. If Raja Arjun Singh had not followed a dubious line for a considerable time, trying to make up his mind whether to side with the British or go against them and had marched at the head of the Kols the whole country-side would have risen in arms and an alliance between Raja Arjun Singh and Kooar Singh of Jagdishpur would have probably proved a stumbling block to the recovery of British power so soon.

The zeal with which the early British administrator in Singhbhum threw himself in reforming the " jungleterry " district into a civilised tract was also partially responsible for the havoc that followed. It was mostly a case of mistaken wisdom and the result of not getting into the genius of the people and their mental frame-work before the policy was made. Far away, the policy makers were laying down the directives. To them, the very ideas that went to make up the mental frame-work of the Hos were an anathema. The result was, the administrator mostly recruited from the military was in a state of perplexity. On the one hand in a letter No. 57, dated 21st October, 1851, he was instructed that in Singhbhum district it was not expedient to treat the enticing away of a married adult woman as a criminal offence while on the other hand he was given repeated instructions to fight the deep belief in witch-craft and " Sokhaism ". On the one hand he was asked to execute the sentence of death in a murder case at the village where murder had been committed, and, on the other hand he was asked to treat the people with kindness. He was faced with the problem of fighting diseases by setting up hospitals and spread of education. But what were the odds he had to fight against? There could have been only 3 reasons for a disease according to the Adivasi. Either the spirits or " Bongas " were displeased or the dissatisfied spirit of someone that had died

recently still wanted to share earth's pleasures, or lastly, and this was the most widespread belief, witch-craft. A hospital was to fight all this.

The political set-up was also rather calculated, to bring about a certain amount of factions to consolidate the British authority. On one hand the Raja of Saraikela was given patronage and a *Khilat* consisting of a pearl necklace with a diamond *sirpatch*, and a pair of diamond armlet, a gold watch with chain, gold-worked shawls, etc., and on the other hand the Raja of Porahat was being chased and proclaimed an absconder. The fidelity of the Raja of Maurbhanj was questioned as is shown in his letter no. 1482, dated the 7th March 1859, from A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur. Smaller States like Keonjhar and Kharsawan were patronised, while a portion of the Hos was won over and another portion adhering to the Raja of Porahat was being hunted. After the Sepoy Mutiny it appears that the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum was especially entrusted with looking after Gangpur, Bamra and Bonai States. These States later on formed a part of the Feudatory State under a Political Agent. The interference with the States was a policy carefully followed.

This policy did meet with ultimate success and the result of the divide and rule policy brought about a certain amount of consolidation for the British authority. In a small measure the bigger policy of the Governor-General in playing with the bigger States in India was being followed.

But a policy which was dangerously miscalculated was in the disintegration of the Mankis and Mundas. The administration should have realised that they formed the backbone of the economic and political structure which had come in their hands. Fearful of them and yet scorch them was the idea. The rights and limitations of a Manki were put down in the form of a *Parwanah* which was a poisonous paper to the Manki. He was commanded to look after a number of villages specified and he was made answerable before the Agent to the Governor-General or his Assistant for the preservation of public peace in those villages along with the regular collection of the assessed land revenue. He was also to implement the order from the Assistant. But he had to take an oath before the *Parwanah* was handed over. A wall was set up between the Manki and the Raja or Zamindar. For centuries before the Raja and the Mankis had sailed their boats together, and by an executive order the Manki was prohibited and had to swear that he must not receive, or follow any order verbal or written from any Raja or Zemindar. This was a most drastic measure for which the country-side was not prepared. The stifled murmurs, the secret whispers and the silent forces of opposition

that were let loose took time to conglomerate, but the result was the flare up in 1857. The very wholesome advice of Wilkinson to the local Assistant to be patient and to be accessible to the people and exercise with sympathy was completely set at naught. The advice to Tickell to take care to prevent the Raja of Singhbhum, Kunwar of Saraikela, Thakur of Kharsawan, Raja of Maurbhanj and other States from intriguing with the Kols worked as a boomerang being acted upon to the letter.

The following original documents preserved in the National Archives, New Delhi throw a good deal of light on the movement in Singhbhum during 1857-58 :—

Military O. C., 27th November, 1857, No. 410-411; Military O. C., 14th December, 1857, No. 155; Military O. C., 15th January, 1858, No. 152-53; Military O. C., 22nd January, 1858, No. 608—613; Military O. C., 5th February, 1858, No. 298—300; Military O. C., 19th February, 1858, No. 6-7; Military Proceedings, 2nd October, 1857, No. 379—81; Military Proceedings, 30th April, 1858, No. 675-76. They indicate the emplyoment of the Shekhawati Battalion for quelling the disturbance at Palamau and Singhbhum, operations of Sikh volunteers against the Raja of Porahat and against the Kols and re-inforcement to support Lieutenant Birch. It will be seen from these documents that the Governor-General in Council approved each of these subjects and agreed to the policy carrying out a total suppression of the Kol insurgents and no measures were considered too big for this view. The march of Shekhawati Battalion from Chaibasa to Chakradharpur, the clearance of Singhbhum and Manbhum of the insurgents and the methods by which the mutiny was suppressed have been clearly shown in these documents.

As a measure of conciliation and to canalise the military and predatory habits of the Kols they were sought to be utilised in the force. Military Consultation, 14th December 1857, No. 520 is a letter from Commissioner Dalton to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal dated the 17th October, 1857 on the materials available in the districts of Chotanagpur Division for the formation of a new Regiment. Dalton has given a good analysis of the available materials. He mentions that the Kols of Singhbhum are very warlike but they have an inveterate prejudice against leaving their own country and the notion of obligatory labour of any kind is repulsive to them. The Kols of Singhbhum, according to Dalton, are a finer race physically than the Kols of Chotanagpur. Dalton observed that Ranchi Kols have no objection to service in any country as they go to Mauritus and other places beyond the sea and are found as labourers on hire in all parts of India. But their stature is rather small and

slow. He thought on good training they would be found wiry and active. Dalton reported at first that it was difficult to get Santhals recruited and some had been recruited. They have gone to their villages with the promise of procuring more young men. Dalton mentions that in Hazaribagh district there is a race called Dusadh, who are faithful and industrious and free from caste prejudice. The Dusadhs can be recruited in the military. The Cheros of Palamau are a warlike race but they are against enlistment. The Goands and Koands in the south are fine men and will be available for recruitment.

Dalton, however, thought that the force should not be exclusively composed of provincials and that there should be a good proportion of Gorkhas and Sikhs.

The 1857 movement in Singhbhum was a nemesis which probably could not have been avoided, and it flew from the administrative policy *inter se* or otherwise and not from any extraneous circumstances.

CHAPTER IV.

PALAMAU.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

Prior to the year 1892, the present district of Palamau formed part of the district of Lohardagga. From 1852 to 1859 one of the Junior Assistants of Governor-General's Agent, South-West Frontier, was in charge of what was then known as the Korundah Subdivision with jurisdiction over the greater part of the present Palamau district. This Junior Assistant in addition to the charge of Palamau was required to act as Special Assistant to the Commissioner in superintending the affairs of Sirgooja and the charge of Odeypore, two tributary States in the South-West Frontier. The administrative headquarters was at Korundah or Jameera Pat, situated on a barren hill within the limits of Sirgooja.

After the flare up in 1857-1858, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, Chotanagpur Division the Government of Bengal in 1859 sanctioned the permanent location of the head quarters of the Junior Assistant of Korundah Subdivision in Palamau. Lesligunj was selected as a Civil Station. It was, however, abandoned later in favour of a more suitable site situated on the bank of Koel river opposite Sahpur. The new civil station which was made ready and occupied in 1863 was given the name of Daltongunj after Commissioner Dalton who was at the head of Chotanagpur Division during the stormy period of 1857 movement. The Subdivision of Palamau was upgraded into a district from January 1st, 1892, according to the Bengal Government Notification dated the 30th October, 1891. Lt.-Col. A. E. Gordon was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the second grade and Deputy Commissioner of Palamau vide Government Notification dated the 27th October, 1891 published in *Calcutta Gazette*, 1891 (Part I, Page 931).

This post had been sanctioned vide Government of India Resolution No. 3263, dated the 5th August, 1891. By a further Notification dated the 5th April, 1892 the Deputy Commissioner of Palamau was vested with necessary judicial power held by the Deputy Commissioners of Chotanagpur Division. The immediate reason for the creation of a separate administrative unit and for placing the headquarters in Palamau in 1859 was that this area was a scene of widespread movement in 1857. It was felt that proper restoration of British authority could only be done after it was given a separate administrative status with full powers. Even when this subdivisional headquarters was located at Palamau the idea was that ultimately the unit will be further upgraded into that of a district.

Early History.

The early history of Palamau is shrouded in legends and traditions. But there is no doubt that the Kharwars, Oraons and Cheros, three aboriginal races practically ruled over this tract. Inscriptions and other relics have been found which show a fairly highly developed civilization in spite of the jungles and comparative inaccessibility of the area. The Oraons had their headquarters at Rohtas Garh in Shahabad district and there is no doubt that for some time a portion of Palamau was ruled from the headquarters of Rohtas Garh. The Cheros reigned in Palamau for nearly 200 years and the most famous of the Chero rulers was Medni Rai who according to tradition made himself Lord Paramount of the southern portion of Gaya and of large portion of Hazaribagh and Sirgooja. His son, Pratap Rai built a fort at Palamau separate from the fort that had been built by his father.

Muslim rule.

Saista Khan, the Governor of Bihar defeated the Cheros near about the middle of the 17th century in several engagements. The area definitely came under the influence of the Mohammadans. The Cheros' chief had to submit to the Mohammadans ultimately. The forts of Palamau were captured by the Mohammadans and since 1666 Palamau was placed under the direct control of the Viceroy of Bihar.

During the Muslim rule there was not much interference as long as the tribute was paid. There were, however, some occasional risings which were put down. Near about 1740 an expedition was undertaken by the Muslim Nawab to subdue the chieftains of the hilly country. A contingent of troop was raised by the Nawabs from this area to support the Emperor Shah Alam in his invasion of Bihar (1759-61).

How the British Came.

As in some other districts here also the British intervened to fish in the troubled water no doubt, but at others' invitation. Dr. J. N. Sarkar in his article on " Palamau Jagirdars " in the Journal of Bihar Research Society, Volume XLI, Part IV, mentions :—

" The circumstances leading to the establishment of British rule in Palamau sowed the seed of disaffection and enmity between the dispossessed Cheros and their new masters. The first intervention of the British in the affairs of the Chero Raj of Palamau occurred in 1772 owing to protracted internecine quarrels between two rival Chero factions (1722-70). Two candidates claiming to be the rightful Raja, one Gopal Rai, grandson of Jai Kishun Rai

(head of the Babuan or younger branch of the family), the other Chitrajit Rai, grandson of the murdered ruling chief, Ranjit Rai, brought their suits to the British. The British, more interested in revenue collection than in family quarrels, decided to occupy the fort of Palamau. As Chitrajit's Dewan, Jainath Singh, refused to agree to this even in return for recognition of Chitrajit's claim, the controlling Council at Patna decided to support the cause of Gopal Rai. The fort was occupied by the British in February, 1771. Gopal was made Raja (feudatory chief) on an annual tribute of Rs. 12,000 for 3 years and Udwant Ram supporter of Gopal was appointed *kanungo* of the *pargana* in return for his help in the bombardment of the fort. In 1773 two relatives of Gopal, Gajraj Rai (ancestor of Bisrampore family) and Sugand Rai (ancestor of Deogan family) were associated with him in revenue collection. Gajraj and Sugand, in an endeavour to gain the influence of Udwant Ram, opposed Gopal Rai. The murder of Udwant Ram was followed by the imprisonment and death of Gopal. The elevation of Gajraj to the position of manager of Basant Ram, the minor brother and successor of Gopal, led to the crystallization of opposition of Sugand with the Thakurais under Shiva Prasad Singh (nephew of Jainath Singh). By virtue of a settlement made in 1786 by Mr. Mathews Leslie (confirmed in the Decennial Settlement of 1789), the Pro-British Shiva Prasad Singh was appointed manager of Churaman Rai, a minor step-brother of Basan Rai (who had died in 1783), and the sums to be paid by the old Jagirdars of Bisrampore and Deogan every year were fixed, while the Thakurais also got a fairly extensive estates.

But the financial liabilities of the estate were also heavy and the methods of recovery so defective that the Palamau Raj rapidly gravitated towards bankruptcy. The resumption of subordinate tenures caused a widespread feudal resentment leading directly to the Chero insurrection in 1800, which had to be suppressed by British troops.

The incapacity of the last Raja, Churaman Rai, an indolent pleasure-seeker, the refractory conduct of the disaffected Jagirdars and the mounting revenue arrears led to the estate being put up to auction and the Government purchased it for Rs. 51,000 in 1814. The estate, because of its strategic position, as guarding a vulnerable frontier, of the wild nature of the country, consisting of hills and forests and of the turbulent people and a proud feudal aristocracy, required a firm person, strong enough to coerce the Jagirdars but wise and just enough not to oppress them and able to maintain inviolate their rights and immunities and the existing assessments. Finally, in 1814, on the recommendation of Major Roughsedge, then commanding the Ramgarh Battalion, it was granted to Raja Ghansham Singh of Deo (in Gaya district) on

an annual revenue of Rs. 9,000 as a reward of past services in quelling the Chero and Kharwar insurrections. In 1817 there was another general insurrection of the Jagirdar against the new Raja's efforts to resume their tenures. Hence to solve the agrarian difficulties in 1819 the estate was taken under *khas* management and so it remained till the Mutiny, 38 years later. The Cheros and Kharwars of Palamau joined the great Kol rebellion of 1832 in Ranchi.

Extinction of Chero kingship.

Thus the imposition of British rule gradually but inexorably led to the extinction of Chero kingship. According to Bradley-Birt " the Cheros, deprived of their ancient line of chiefs, were no longer the prime movers ". But this is far from truth. Indeed, it is not surprising to find that attempts to restore the Chero dynasty would be made in 1857. Further, the traditional Chero-Rajput animosity was fanned not only by this spirit of restoration but by the *en tente* between the British Government and the Rajput Thakurais. Moreover this party alignment was also dictated by feudal agrarian discontent of the Jagirdars and their risings in 1800, 1817 and 1832 were but the faint presages of the coming storm a few years later."

Kol rebellion.

The Kol rebellion was the writing on the wall but the lesson of which was not appreciated. O'Malley in the first District Gazetteer of Palamau has mentioned " The grant of Palamau to Ghansham Singh, Raja of Deo in the Gaya district, had been made as a reward for services he and his family had rendered on several occasions in quelling the disturbances of the turbulent Cheros and Kharwars, and it might have been expected that he would have been able to control them. These hopes were disappointed, for in 1817 the people again broke out in open rebellion, in consequence of the oppression of the agents whom he appointed to collect the revenue; and in 1811 Government revoked the deed of grant and resumed the management of the estate. Under Government rule Palamau remained quiet until 1832, when the great rebellion of the Kols broke out and the Cheros and Kharwars rose. Throughout Chotanagpur the Kols attacked the Hindus, Muhammadans and other foreigners who were settled in their villages, drove them from their homes and property, which were burnt or plundered; and sacrificed numbers of those who fell in their hands to their excited passions of revenge and hatred. But the excesses which attended the rebellion were not so great in Palamau as elsewhere, and the rising was soon quelled. Since that time the district has been peaceful with the exception of a short interlude of revolt during the Mutiny of 1857."

1857 INSURRECTIONS.

Regarding the course of the Mutiny the account from the "Minute of the Lt. Governor on the Mutinies as they affected the Lower Provinces" may be reproluced from the last District Gazetteer of Palamau :—

"The population of Palamau district is composed chiefly of two tribes—the Cheros and the Kharwars, with a sprinkling of Kols and other savages, who took little part in the outbreak, and a few Brahmans, Rajputs and others, who were opposed to the insurgents. The Cheros, a spurious family of Rajputs, said to have originally come from Kumaon a few centuries since, dispossessed the original reigning family and established one of their own chieftains in their room. His descendants continued long to hold the chiefship, and the representative of the family, the last Raja, died within the last few years, leaving no direct heirs. The Cheros having thus established themselves, strengthened their position by conferring *jagirs* on their followers, and numbers of these *jagirdars*, with impoverished and deeply mortgaged estates, still exist. The Kharwars are also settlers said to have come originally from the hills west of Rohtas. They are divided into several clans, of which the principal are the Bhogtas, with whom alone we are now concerned.

"This tribe, inhabiting an elevated plateau between the high lands of Sirguja and the low country of Palamau, from which they are further separated by a range of hills, of which they hold the passes, and possessing almost inaccessible fastnesses have been long known as a race of turbulent free-booters, and their late chief died an outlaw. On his death it was considered a wise policy to confer this territory in *jagir* on his sons, Nilambar and Pitamber, with a nominal quit-rent, and the policy was long successful in suppressing the natural marauding tendencies of these chiefs. Unfortunately, however, Pitamber was at Ranchi, when the outbreak took place, and thinking that here was the end of British rule, and still further confirmed in this opinion by the behaviour of the two companies of the 8th N. I., who passed through Palamau on their way to join Amar Singh, the two brothers determined on declaring their independence, their first efforts being directed against the loyal Rajput *Jagirdar*, Thakurai Raghubar Dayal Singh, and his equally loyal cousin, Thakurai Kishun Dayal Singh, with whom they had long been at feud. Many of the Chero *Jagirdars* were induced to join them, partly on the promise made of placing a Chero chief on the throne, partly, no doubt, in the hope of retrieving their now impoverished and decayed fortunes; and late in October a force of about 500 Bogtas, with others of the Kharwar clans and a body of Cheros, under the leadership of Nilamber and Pitamber, made an attack

on Chainpur, Shahpur and Lesligunj. The attack on Chainpur, was directed as has been said against the loyal zamindars. Raghubar Dayal and Kishun Dayal Singh, on account of ancient enmities, was repulsed; but at Lesligunj they succeeded in doing some damage, destroying the public buildings, pillaging the place, and committing some murders. Lt. Graham, who was at this time officiating as Junior Assistant Commissioner in the district having advanced with a small body of not more than 50 men the Bhogtas retreated into the hills of Sirguja, whither, in consequence of the smallness of his force. he could not pursue them, and he was obliged to await reinforcements at Chainpur.

"By the end of November the whole country appeared to be up in arms, and Lt. Graham, with his small party, was shut up and besieged in the house of Raghubar Dayal, whilst the rebels were plundering in all directions. It had been proposed to send the Shekhawati Battalion into Palamau; but at my urgent request two companies of H.M.'s 13th L. I., which were at this time quartered at Sasaram, directed to proceed under command of Major Cotter to the relief of Lt. Graham. I at the same time called upon the Deo Raja to furnish a contingent for service in the disturbed district. On the 27th November the station of Rajhara had been attacked by a very large body of Bhogtas, and Messrs Grundy and Malzer, who were employed there on the part of the Coal Company, after holding their house as long as possible, at last with some difficulty made their escape.

"Two companies under Major Cotter, with two guns, accompanied by Mr. Baker, the Deputy Magistrate of Sasaram, crossed the Son near Akbarpur on the 30th November. Instructions meanhile had been sent to Lt. Graham that on being relieved he was at once to fall back with the force, advancing again hereafter when he should have the means of doing so. The detachment reached Shahpur on the 8th December, and were joined by Lt. Graham. One of the principal leaders of the insurgents, Debi Baksh Rai, was at this time captured. On the advance of the force, the rebels retreated; but burnt the village of Manka, near Palamau Fort, and destroyed the house of Bhikhari Singh, a zamindar of some influence, who had lent great assistance to Lt. Graham. Major Cotter was ordered to return to Sasaram *via* Sherghati to clear the ghats in the direction, and Lt. Graham accompanied him for some distances but the rebel force seemed to be breaking up, the capture of Debi Baksh Rai noted above had the effect of disheartening them, and the Deo Raja having now joined with his contingent of 600 matchlockmen and 100 sowars, I permitted that officer to return, and, advancing towards his former position, he reached Kishunpur on the 22nd December. Patan Ghat, which had been held by the Bhogtas, was abandoned on his approach. The rebels also withdrew from Chainpur, having

made an unsuccessful attack on Ranka fort, where they were repulsed by Kishun Dayal.

" By this time Lt. Graham had received a further reinforcement of 600 men, supplied by the Sarbarahkar of Sirguja, and was able not only to maintain his position, but to act on the offensive, and hearing that Premananda, *Ilakadar* of Kunda, was in the neighbourhood, he sent out a party which surprised this chief, the most influential leader of the Kharwar tribe, with four of his principal men and 75 followers. Nilambar Sahi was still collecting men, and had lately plundered two villages; he, however, kept most carefully to the jungles, and allowed no opportunity of attacking him. Sirguja was also invaded by the followers of the Singhrauli Raja, a contumacious dependent of the Rewah Raja, from whom he had no authority for thus acting.

" On the 16th January Captain Dalton himself started for Palamau with 140 men M. N. I. under Major MacDonell, a small party of Ramgarh Cavalry, and a body of matchlockmen under Parganait Jagat Pal Singh, a chief who on this and other occasions displayed very remarkable loyalty and attachment to the Government, and has been rewarded with a title, a *khilat* and pension. He reached Manka on the 21st January, and being joined during the night by Lt. Graham, next morning after a reconnaissance of the Palamau Fort finding that it was held by the enemy, they determined on an immediate attack, and advancing in three columns, against which the enemy for some time kept up a brisk but ill-directed fire, succeeded in dislodging them, when they fled, leaving guns, ammunition, cattle, supplies and baggage behind them. Ten bodies of the enemy were found; our loss amounted to only one killed and two wounded. Letters to Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi and Naklout Manjhi were found with the baggage, and amongst them communications from Amar Singh promising immediate assistance from Kuar Singh. Some leading insurgents were captured about this time. Tikait Unaras Singh and his Dewan Sheikh Bhikhari were convicted of being concerned in the rebellion, and executed.

" The Commissioner remained at Lesliganj till the 8th February, collecting supplies and making preparations, and he now determined on forcing the passes into the Bhogta country, having with him a force of upwards of 2,000 men, whilst that of Nilambar and Pitambar were said to be much reduced and not to number more than 1,000. Meanwhile, he had issued *parwanas* for the attendance of the various *jagirdars*, most of whom readily responded to his call; but the most powerful and influential of them all, Babu Bhawani Baksh Rai, head of the Chero family did not, for some time, make his appearance, and was said to be collecting a large force to oppose Captain Dalton, and to have

entertained a number of the Ramgarh mutineers. On the 3rd of February, however, he too came in, and thus removed a principal obstacle to our onward movement. Having divided his force, Captain Dalton sent one body with Kishun Dayal Singh and others to Shahpur to advance against the Baghmara Ghat, whilst he himself moved to the attack of the Tungari Ghat. As he approached this place on the 10th February, he learned that the insurgents, who had held possession of the pass, were plundering the village of Harnamanr in his immediate neighbourhood. Lt. Graham, with a party of sowars, dashed on, and succeeded in intercepting the enemy, and rescuing a band of captives and a herd of cattle which they were in the act of driving off. Three prisoners were also taken, one a leader of some consequence. Two out of the three were hanged, whilst the third was kept for the sake of information, which he seemed able and willing to communicate.

"No opposition was attempted to their entering the Bhogta country, and on the 13th they reached Chemu, on the banks of the Koel, the principal residence of the insurgent brothers, where they had a fortified house. Captain Dalton crossing the Koel, the rebels did not await his attack in the village but retreated and took up positions behind masked breastworks of stones on the sides and ridge of a hill overhanging the village. These were carried in succession, and the enemy put to flight. A dafadar of the Ramgarh Cavalry was killed at the beginning of the flight. The village and the fortified house were afterwards destroyed, as was Saneya, another stronghold of the rebels close to Chemu, which was also found deserted. Large quantities of grain were seized, as well as herds of cattle; and several herdsmen, who had been captured by the rebels, were released.

"The Commissioner remained in the Bhogta country till the 23rd of February, but was not successful in capturing the ring leaders, Nilambar and Pitambar. Parties were constantly sent out in all directions, who penetrated to their hill and jungle fastnesses, in some instances, as was evident, just as the fugitives had made their escape. A few influential men were taken; but neither threats nor promises had any effect in inducing them to reveal the hiding-places of their chiefs. A full retaliation was, however, exacted for all the mischief done by them. Their villages were destroyed, their goods and cattle seized, and their estates confiscated to the State; but whilst stern justice was thus meted out to the inciters of this rebellion, every endeavour was made to conciliate their less guilty followers and the inhabitants of the country, which now seemed to be gradually settling down.

"In the Nawagarh hills a body of rebels was collected in the middle of March under Ganpat Rai and Bishunath Sahi.

Captain Dalton proceeded to Lohardaga with the intention of attacking them, but falling ill was obliged to depute the duty to Captain Oakes, who with a party consisting of Madras Rifles, Ramgarh Irregular Cavalry, and 160 of the Kol and Santal Levy, under the command of Captain Nation, by a rapid march succeeded in surrounding the enemy, who were so completely surprised that they made no resistance. Bishunath Sahi was captured on the spot, and Ganpat Rai, who succeeded for the time in making his escape, was soon taken and brought in by some zamindars and matchlockmen, who had been sent in pursuit. These rebels were afterwards tried, found guilty, and executed.

" Nothing worthy of being recorded has since happened in the district of Palamau, and the restoration of complete tranquility and confidence seems now only to be a question of time. Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi are still at large, miserable fugitives deserted by their followers, and the Commissioner is of opinion that no further danger need be apprehended from them. I must not quit the subject without recording my high admiration of the conduct of Lt. Graham, who, without another Englishman near him, surrounded by thousands of the enemy, never thought of retreat, and by maintaining his post, prevented the district from falling entirely into the hands of the insurgents ".

To this narrative, the last District Gazetteer of Palamau by O'Malley (1907) adds :—

> " To the above account it will suffice to add that Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi were eventually captured, tried and hanged; and with their capture the district was tranquillized. Thakurai Raghubar Dayal Singh of Chainpur, Thakurai Kishun Dayal Singh of Ranka and Bhikhari Singh of Manka were granted *jagirs* in recognition of the local services they had rendered ".

TROUBLES IN 1858.

This lengthy quotation from the last District Gazetteer has been given to present one side of the picture as the British administrator took the movement to be. It will not be, however, correct to state that the mutiny in Palamau was actually over by the beginning of 1858 with the arrest and execution of Nilambar and Pitambar. There are a number of letters in the Record room of the Commissioner of Chotanagpur Division, Ranchi, which indicate that " the smouldering fire of the movement continued to be kindled by a favourable breeze ". Dr. J. N. Sarkar in his article on " Palamau Jagirdars " already referred to mentions a number of such letters. Some more letters have been discovered and referred to later.

BACKGROUND OF THE REVOLT.

Apart from the opposition of the Cheros, Bogtas and the Kharwars there is no doubt that the immediate cause of the movement in Palamau was supplied by the rise in Ranchi and Hazaribagh. Pitambar, as mentioned, actually saw the havoc in Ranchi by the outbreak of the Ramgarh Battalion. On his return to Palamau and taking advantage of the advance of the Hazaribagh Regiment through Palamau towards Rohtas he gave the signal to the Bogtas. It cannot be doubted that the slipping of the power had been nursed by the hilly tribes with great resentment and they wanted to utilise the opportunity to make a bid for independence. But the signal was not confined to the particular sections of the hilly tribes alone. The movement percolated to the masses. The Chero-Bogta alliance had their first target of attack in Thakurai Raghubar Dayal Singh who was taken as the common enemy and the protege of the British. It is difficult to hold with Captain Dalton that the Cheros and Bogtas merely wanted to supplant Thakurai for the old grudge. The move was deeper and Thakurai was attacked more as an agent of the British and the symbolic object of attack. The documents that are still available indicate a quick spread into the interior of the Palamau area in spite of the Zamindar agents of the British trying to stem the tide. It is also possible that the economic condition of the Cheros added fuel to the fire. A large number of small Chero Jagirdars in the district had come into existence and they had mostly mortgaged their small estates. Dalton held that many proprietors might have joined the insurgents to avoid their incumbrances. This does not seem impossible.

The account of the movement that has been quoted from the last District Gazetteer could be supplemented by the details of the movement as mentioned by Dr. J. N. Sarkar in his article on " Palamau Jagirdars ". He has divided the details into two sections, one part from October 1857 to February 1858 and the other part from February to November 1858. As the quotation from the District Gazetteer does not refer to the details of the movement in the second part (February to November 1858) this period will be briefly referred to.

SHAHABAD AND PALAMAU.

The district of Shahabad, the home of the stormy petrel Kuanr Singh on the border of Palamau had always a great influence on the latter. After the death of Kuanr Singh on the 26th April, 1858, his brother, Amar Singh took up the standard and for some time held out and gave a stiff resistance. The Shahabad mutineers had spread and reached Palamau. The disaffected Bogtas were contacted by messengers from Shahabad

and an attempt was made to bring over the Bogtas to the help of Amar Singh's army. On 30th September, 1858 the Commissioner informed the Lt. Governor of Bengal that the Bogtas and the Shahabad rebels must not be allowed to join up. For this reason the Commissioner wanted the approval of the Lt. Governor for keeping Captain Dale's volunteers in Palamau and also Lt. Reeves to be left with a contingent of Kol and Santal levy. He further wanted that the officers of the detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion on their way back from Sambalpur should be furnished.

In November 1858 some rebel sepoys from Shahabad had crossed the Sone and reached Majhiaon and were expected to attack Garhwa. This was the signal for a body of 500 insurgent Bogtas to start plundering again. Captain Davies and Dale were joined by Lt. Graham with reinforcement on the 9th November, 1858 and the insurgents were subdued. The Bhaya of Chechari professed submission. From Lesligunj the British forces were divided for a two-pronged pincer movement. Dr. J. N. Sarkar's description of the later events may be quoted in extenso :—

" While Captain Davies advanced towards Sunya (Saneya) near Chechari, Lt. Graham made a detour southwards *via* Ramkundah. The small guard and armed police of the Burgar thana, apprehending attack by a large body of insurgents. made a planned strategic retreat across the river Kunhar into Sirguja (18th November, 1858). At once the thana building was demolished by a section of the Bogtas led by Bhoja and Bharat, who also started cutting the crops. The guard escaping to Sirguja across the Kunhar procured two Kols as guides to conduct them " by a narrow path through a long great jungle right on the Bogtah marauders. " They were surprised and suffered heavy casualties, with 16 killed, 30 wounded, and 3 prisoners. The two leaders were, however, mounted and taken off, only three on the Government side were wounded.

On 24th November, 1858 a part of rebels under Umee Singh (Amar Singh) encamped at Kurondah (Koranda). Though the party was not very large, the Commissioner suggested to the Government that reinforcements in the shape of two European companies be sent to Ranchi, either for arresting the advance of the rebels towards Chotanagpur or support Capt. Davies, if necessary, and that the Madras infantry at Ranchi might then be sent to Singhbhum.

Up to 30th November, 1858, 1,100 rebels actually entered Palamau under Sedhua Singh (Seadha Singh). Another leader was probably Ram Bahadur Singh of Sunya (Saneya), the residence of the insurgent Bogtas. 600 out of the above number had sepoys' muskets. Another body of 900 was reported to be converging on Saneya.

In compliance with Lt. Graham's request to the authorities in Bihar, a portion of Brigadier Douglas's force was expected to reinforce Graham at Chainpur in Palamau, where his position was " defensible ". Captain Davies at Chechari acted judiciously and correctly on first getting information of the advance of the Shahabad mutineers.

The strategy of the British was this. The rebels could not long remain in Maya hills without getting supplies and if they found the road to Chotanagpur open, they would certainly advance towards it. Captain Davies was holding a very strategic position to check them. He must not attempt to join Lt. Graham. The small Palamau force should, however, be concentrated and interposed to block the escape of the mutineers from Saneya towards Chotanagpur. Hence the Commissioner urged on the Government the expediency of sending troops not only to Palamau but to Chotanagpur as well, and suggested that two companies of H. M. 29th foot expected at Hazaribagh was at once ordered to Ranchi, and another company or two sent to Hazaribagh in their place.

From 11th November to 1st December, 1858, Captain Davies acted judiciously in halting at Akoser (Aksi) village thereby preventing the mutineers from getting supplies therefrom. It also occupied " an excellent position " for his force in co-operation with that of the Rai of Sirguja " to prevent the rebels from proceeding or retreating in southerly or easterly direction ".

An army nearly 500 strong (H. Th. 29th Ry-300; Do. 37th-70; 3rd Regular Punjab Cavalry-116) joined Lt. Graham at Chainpur, on 13th November, they took post at Mayapore one march only from the rebel's position. Lt. Graham added to the force 170 sepoys of the Ramgarh Battalion and Kol and Santal Levy.

There are a large number of documents in the National Archives of India which throw a good deal of light on the facts indicated earlier as well as disclose fresh facts. It appears that the strategic importance of Palamau and the internal troubles were fully appreciated by the ruling authorities and they were extremely anxious that Palamau should be kept in hand. The importance of preventing the rebels from entering Palamau after being driven from Shahabad south was repeatedly emphasised in different documents (Public O. C., 1st October, 1858 No. 31-32 is a document to this effect). In Public O. C., 22nd October, 1858 No. 26-32, a letter from the Secretary, Government of Bengal to the Home Secretary, Government of India, dated 12th December, 1858 shows the unprotected state of Bihar and the possibility of an attempt by rebels from Shahabad and Oude to escape into Palamau. The necessity of more troops being urgently

required was emphasised in this letter. In Public O. C., 29th October, 1858 No. 31-33 the state of affairs in Palamau district was underlined and again the importance of the rebels being prevented at all costs from entering Palamau was emphasised. It was further mentioned in this document that the Bhogtas were expecting help which will make things worse. An idea was expressed that Kols and Santhals might be recruited for help. Public O. C., 29th October, 1858 No. 49-51 again repeated that there was every possibility of the rebels from Shahabad escaping into Palamau and this would add to the already existing causes of trouble and anxiety in Palamau.

That the movement among the Bhogtas* has caused a considerable alarm is also disclosed in Military O. C., 29th October, 1858 No. 163-64 and it was mentioned that Madras troops were still unable to come. The employment of the Madras Rifles for restoring peace in Palamau and Hazaribagh had been previously mentioned in Military O. C., 15th January, 1858 No. 505-506 where it was emphasised that Palamau should not be abandoned at any cost and the drastic steps suggested were fully approved by the Government of India.

That Palamau was a very big headache to the administrators is quite clear from the repeated mention in several documents (Military O. C., 10th September, 1858, No. 400 Public O. C., 17th December, 1858, No. 40-41) in which it was clearly mentioned that Palamau and Burhee should not be placed under Brigadier Douglas as he will be unable to defend them. In Public O. C., 10th September, 1858 it was mentioned by Commissioner Dalton in his letter No. U. U. to A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, dated the 16th August, 1858 " I would, however, earnestly talk about how important it is that the rebels, when driven from Shahabad should be prevented from taking the direction of Palamau which is a country rich enough to support them and strong enough to offer them a revolt against a large force "……

" The mutineers and other rebels under a Bihar Zamindar Bhaunu Pratap, who gives out that he is Kooer Singh's…… for Palamau are with the Bhogtas at Sooree endeavouring to intimate the Kharwars to join them……". *(some of the words are now very indistinct and non-decipherable).

Commissioner Dalton realised the importance of meeting the strategy of the hill men. That is why he suggested in his letter 1944, dated the 30th September, 1858 that Captain Hale should command the Sikh volunteers in Palamau and that a detachment of Kols and Santhals out of the detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion under Lt. Reeves should be retained.

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* Also commonly described as Bogtas.

The danger of infiltration of the rebels from Shahabad was indicated as the Deputy Commissioner at Sherghati sent a telegram on the 2nd December, 1858 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal that 200 rebels had left Odur on the 27th ultimo and had gone to the direction of Palamau.

Commissioner Dalton in his letter dated the 8th December, 1858 preserved in Public O. C., 24th December, No. 38-39 had reported that " rebels had actually entered Palamau under Sindhua Singh and another leader probably Ram Bahadur Singh had gone to join the Bhogtas. 600 of these rebels had muskets and Lt. Graham's position at Chainpur was a defensible one". Dalton held that the rebels cannot long remain in the Sumuya hills, without obtaining supplies from some quarters and if they find the road open at Chotanagpur they are likely to proceed to that direction. Captain Davies was at Chechari at that time and Davies had already reported that the rebels had increased their number by the addition of a good many Kharwars besides the Bhogtas. Davies had further reported that there was a strong rumour that another large party of rebels was on the road to join up the Bhogtas and the Kharwars.

Captain Dalton was well supported by the Court from the Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner of Corundah Subdivision who on the 27th December, 1858 had informed him that 800 rebel sepoys were already in Sirguja and Mirzapur districts. Not less than 300 rebels had come to Palamau. The Magistrate at Corundah had further informed that the rebels were plundering the country at their leisure and a party of 600 of them were marching on for Pratapapur for the purpose of coercing the Karpardaz Lal Bindeshwari Prasad. The Corundah Magistrate mentioned that without exaggeration he gave report that Sirguja district was in the hands of the rebels. He urgently wanted troops and more troops as the small force of that district could give no assistance to the Surguja chief. He further mentioned that there was an idea that troops were required elsewhere and could not be deployed for Palamau. From Lesliganj reports had come that 100 sepoy mutineers had plundered a village called Hootie and that their intention was to proceed to Sherghati. There was a further report from the Deputy Commissioner of Sherghati that 700 mutineers from Palamau were in the jungles close to a place Gondra which was about 6 miles south-west of Corundah and were proceeding in northern direction.

The Military Department were convinced of the necessity of sending troops to Palamau as will be apparent from Public O. C. 21st January 1859, No. 85-86. It was thought that a military force should be posted to Palamau to disperse the rebel party collected in the district.

The military sections fanned out in different directions in Palamau district to suppress the insurrection. Public O. C., 11th February 1859, a document from Commissioner Dalton to Secretary Young, dated the 25th January, 1859 gives a report on the operations against the rebellions for only one week from 6th to 14th instant. This document covering the operations for one week is adequate to show that from different directions Captain Davies, Sirguja Manager, Rani of Koreah and Raja of Jaspur were operating against the insurgent Bhogtas and others.

Another letter of Commissioner Dalton to Secretary Young dated the 8th November, 1858 mentions about the movement of the Sikh volunteers, Ramgarh Light Infantry, Ramgarh Irregular Cavalry, in the interior of Palamau to check the rebels. It appears that Lt. Graham was carrying on the operations under the guidance of Brigadier Douglas and the Commissioner of Patna. The towns of Shahpur, Chainpur, Lesliganj and Garhwa had been attacked. Lt. Graham was put in officiating charge of the appointment of Junior Assistant Incharge of the Korandah subdivision. The Darogah of thana Munika had confirmed the report that the rebels had considerably increased in number to about 5,000.

From a report of Davies, Deputy Commissioner at Sherghati, which has been forwarded by Lt. Graham, it appears that Soonpura Raja and Nawab of Hussainabad and others were implicated in the Palamau disturbance; Lt. Graham was of opinion that Babu Bhawani Bux Rai of Bisrampore in Palamau was also implicated. Lt. Graham in spite of his successes was cautioned against entering the fastnesses of the Bhogtas with a small force. This is apparent from Public O. C. 4th December, 1857, No. 33.

The intensity of the movement will be disclosed from Public O. C., 14th January, 1859 No. 35/38. The Senior Assistant Commissioner for Lohardagga in the course of a letter to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur dated the 23rd December, 1858 mentions :—" As you are aware the extent of country occupied by the rebels comprises some 40 miles square of impracticable hills and jungles, so dense that until the approach of the heat season when it becomes practicable to burn the grass, etc., enemy might be within a few hundred yards off the troops without being discovered.

To add to the difficulties of such a country the whole of the inhabitants without exception are, if not openly, on the side of the rebels, who receive every information of our movements, whilst it is with the utmost difficulty we are enabled to trace them and then not perhaps till they have plundered and burnt some villages in their vicinity ".

Leaders.

The restoration of tranquility in Palamau area is disclosed by Commissioner Dalton's letter No. 59 dated the 14th March, 1859 (Home Department Public Consultation, 1st April, 1859, Nos. 15/16). In this letter Dalton reports that the leaders of the insurgents, the brothers Pitamber and Nilamber, son of the latter Kumar Sahai, Sivacharan Manjhi and Ratan Manjhi had either surrendered or had been captured. In another letter from Lt. Graham to Dalton dated the 6th March, 1859 the name of Bhukha Sah in addition to those mentioned before are mentioned having put into fetters. Secretary Young in his letter No. 1783 dated the 18th March, 1859 reported to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, that all the principal leaders among the Palamau insurgents either had surrendered or had been captured. Captain Dalton was requested to convey to Thakurai Kishun Dayal and Raghubar Dayal acknowledgement of the Lt. Governor for the assistance rendered by them.

Before some of the letters preserved in the district record room are referred to, it is necessary to refer to the names of some of the persons actively associated with the movement. Among the Chero leaders who defied the British, mention should be made of Bhawani Baksh Rai of Bisrampore. He was almost the head of the Chero group and extremely influential. The Commissioner had considered his removal to Ranchi as " necessary ". He was reported to be busy collecting a contingent but later attended the Commissioner's Conference at Lesligunj on the 3rd February, 1858. According to the Commissioner although there was no overt act of treason against him " he must not be allowed to escape the consequence of his not having rendered such assistance to Lt. Graham as he was bound to do ".

Ram Baksh Rai of Chukla and his son Hari Baksh Rai had two serious charges against him according to the Commissioner Dalton although the Commissioner thought that they had behaved well. The charges were that they did not give Lt. Graham proper assistance and some of their retainers were associated with the attack on Rajhara Coal Factory.

Devi Baksh Rai of Luckna had openly sided with the Bogtas. The Commissioner thought that the Bogtas wished to confer the Raj upon him. Later on he came over to the side of the British.

Bhaya Bhagwan Deo of Untari gave little help to Lt. Graham but after the Commissioner's intervention supplied a body of matchlockmen.

Among the Kharwar and Bogta leaders the most important were, of course, Nilambar and Pitambar enjoying the *Jagirs* of Chemu and Saneya and S. W. Palamau. Parmanand, the *Ilakadar*

of Kunda, an influential leader of Kharwars fully sided with the brothers, Nilambar and Pitambar. Subsequently about November 1858 the Bogtas were led by Bhoja and Bharat and about December 1858 by Ram Bahadur Singh of Saneya.

Naklaut Manjhi, who was also a Kharwar gave a lot of trouble to the British. Raja Singh of Hamir was ultimately arrested and executed. His *Jagir* consisting of 5 villages was confiscated and given to Kunwar Bhikhari Singh of Manka. Tikait Unaras Singh and his Diwan Shaikh Bikari were captured in January 1858 and executed on conviction because of their concern in rebellion.

LOYALISTS.

The principal loyalists were Thakurai Raghubar Dayal Singh, Thakurai Kishun Dayal Singh, Sheo Charan Rai of Nawagarh, Bhikhari Singh of Manka, Bhagwan Deo of Untary, Bhaya Deo Nath Singh of Untary, Debi Baksh Singh of Nowadag, Raja of Deo (Gaya) and Jagat Pal Singh of Pithauri (Ranchi).

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS.

A few references to some of the unpublished letters which are available in the Record Room at Daltonganj will be helpful to appreciate the trend of events of the movement during 1857-58.

In his letter no. 4005 dated the 24th November, 1857 A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal had informed the Officiating Commissioner of Chotanagpur that the Lieutenant Governor had approved of the measures suggested by him for the repression of the disturbances in Palamau. The Commissioner seems to have been given an almost blank cheque for crushing the movement and a copy of the letter was forwarded to the Junior Assistant Commissioner of Korundah Subdivision. As large contingents of the people who had risen in arms from different districts had taken shelter in the more dense mountain fastenesses of Palamau, Captain Dalton, Commissioner of Chotanagpur moved and was able to get the deployment of several sections of army into Palamau. Dalton, on his part, asked I. M. Graham, Junior Assistant Commissioner at Korundah Subdivision in his letter no. 191 dated the 28th November, 1857 that he should see to sufficient supply of *rasad* at Manika, Lesligunj, Chainpore and other places. Graham was also asked to see that good and plentiful water was procurable near the halting places and that he should send the Commissioner a route showing the best halting places. Two Companies of Her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry at Sasaram with their guns were ordered to proceed to Chainpore via Akberpore to the relief of Lieutenant Graham. The Raja of Deo (Gaya) was also called upon to co-operate with this force. This order was transmitted by the Secretary to the Government of Bengal in his letter no. 4060 dated the 27th November, 1857.

A portion of the Madras Rifles at Ranigunj was also ordered to march to Palamau via Shergotty. Different sections of the army would not have been deployed to the areas of Palamau unless the situation was rather acute. Lieutenant Graham was mildly reprimanded for needing relief as is shown in letter no. 4803 dated the 30th December, 1857 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Officiating Commissioner, Chotanagpur. It was mentioned in the letter. " The Lieutenant Governor approves of the course pursued by Lieutenant Graham and of his spirited determination to maintain his position in Palamau but at the same time His Honour expects that he will use the greatest caution in all his proceedings as in the event of his being surrounded as before it may not be possible again to send a party to rescue him. " It may be mentioned here that in an earlier letter dated the 28th July, 1858 Captain Dalton had already moved that the Korundah Subdivision which includes Palamau, Sirgoojah, Oodeypore and the Subdivision of Burhee should be added to the district under the military charge of Brigadier Douglas.

There are also relevant documents to show that liberal offers of reward and promotion were held out to the police and civil population for giving active help by way of giving information or leading to the arrest of absconders. The Magistrate of Lohardagga was ordered in June 1857 to increase the horse or foot police in anticipation of the approval of Government. The Police Officers were also told in letter no. 987 dated the 26th June 1857 that they will receive immediate reward if their work is favourably commented upon. In his letter no. 3118 dated the 11th August, 1858, A. R. Young informed the Commissioner of Chotanagpore that the news of the collapse of a section of Thakoorai Kissen Dyal Singh's people has been received with satisfaction. It was mentioned that this party of Thakoorai Kissen Dyal Singh had succeeded in carrying away a Havildar of Ramgarh Battalion.

Rewards were being broadcast for any news or help leading to the arrest of the ' rebels '. In his letter no. 252 dated the 22nd December 1857, Captain Dalton informed Lieutenant Graham, Junior Assistant Commissioner of Korundah Subdivision that he was authorised to offer Rs. 500 for the apprehension of Bhowaney Bux Rai. The Junior Assistant Commissioner was also ordered to offer a reward of Rs. 200 for the apprehension of Mukut Manjhi.

Reference has already been made to Baboo Bhowaney Bux Rai of Bisrampore. Baboo Bhowaney Bux Rai ultimately gave himself up to Captain Dalton who asked Lieutenant Graham to complete his enquiry against Bhowaney Bux Rai after hearing and recording what he has to say in explanation. The indication was quite clear as the second para. of Dalton's letter to Graham dated

the 3rd February, 1858 will show. He mentioned :—"Whatever may be the result of this enquiry, it is necessary that the Babco should be severely called to account for having so long disobeyea the orders issued to him to appear and in regard to his having failed hitherto to afford such assistance towards putting down the insurrection as you were entitled to expect from him and it was his duty to afford. I request that he may be proceeded against on these charges as soon as possible, and that the case when completed may be referred to me for orders with your opinion. "

Bhaiya Koomar Singh of Checharee, as previously referred to had also incurred the displeasure of the authorities. He was placed under restraint and his estate was attached. A police thana was started in this area to stabilize the administration. In his letter no. 113 dated the 2nd October, 1858 the Extra Judicial Commisioner of Korundah Subdivision was further told that Rai Jagatpal Singh Bahadur, Parganait of Pithoria would be " a good man to place a temporary charge of Checharee estate and the thana. "

That the aftermath continued throughout 1858 is also shown from the contents of letter no. 21 dated 31st January, 1859 from Dalton, Commissioner of Chotanagpur, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal. In this letter he forwarded a copy of the report of Captain Davies detailing recent operations in Palamau which had resulted in the evacuation of that and the adjoining district by all the mutineers and rebels who had flocked into them from Behar and Shahabad. Captain Nation was much commended. Dalton mentions in this letter, " It was soon found that numerically strong as were the rebels, it was impossible to bring them to an engagement; every opportunity was then taken to surprise them. They got no rest, were driven from place to place in the barren hills till at length in despair they abandoned the district altogether and left the local people to shift for themselves. The local rebels under the chiefs Nilamber and Pitamber are now again reduced to a small and insignificant band whose complete subjugation will, I expect, be especially brought about by the vigorous and unrelaxing measures Captain Davies and the Officers co-operating with him are carrying out. " The Secretary to the Government of Bengal acknowledged the letter and it was mentioned that the plan of operations was the best that could have been adopted under the circumstances.

There is another important letter no. 1196 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpore, dated Fort William the 21st February, 1859 in which it was mentioned that a party of rebels from Palamau were on the way to Singhbhum to effect a junction with the Porahat insurgents. This party was, however, driven back by some of the Ramgarh

Irregular Cavalry sent for the purpose by Captain Davies and afterwards followed up by detachment under Captain Nation and Lieutenant Graham. The insurgents were very alert to stop the coalition of Palamau insurgents with those of other districts.

The loyalists were being given substantial rewards for services rendered by them. The confiscated estates came in very handy and jagirs were carved out and made over to the loyalists. In his letter no. 2859 dated the 13th August, 1858, A. R. Young intimated the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces that certain awards were made. Thakooraies Raghubar Dyal Singh and Kissen Dyal Singh were given the titles of Rai Bahadur and a *Khillut* including double barrelled rifle. Thakoorai Raghubar Dyal Singh was further given a confiscated service jaigir of 12 villages bearing a quit rent of Rs. 13-11-9 a year. Sew Charan Rai was given a *Khillut* in addition to his existing jaigir. Kuar Bhikari Singh was also given a *Khillut* and a small confiscated jaigir of 5 villages paying an annual rent of Rs. 30 a year. These awards followed the recommendations of the Commissioner of Chotanagpore communicated in his letter dated the 21st June, 1858 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal. The Commissioner placed Thakoorai Raghubar Dyal Singh as his chief help. He referred to both of them in glowing terms and mentioned that " Thakoorai Raghubar Dyal Singh has been the principal brunt of the disturbances. His property has been plundered in all directions and his assistants murdered in several instances. He deserves great credit for the manner in which he held against the whole of the Bhogtas as well as for the assistance he has admirably rendered me and the good will he had exhibited towards Government from the beginning. " The Commissioner recommended that the jaigir of Chamoo Singh lately belonging to the rebels Pitambar and Nilambar, already confiscated should be conferred on Raghubar Dyal Singh. Baboo Sew Charan Rai, jaigirdar, Burugarh estate was referred to as the man who had protected the Government treasure, records and the officials who fled from Lesligunje after the attack on them by the insurgents. He has also given, as Dalton mentioned great assistance to Lieutenant Graham and to himself. Regarding Kuar Bhikari Singh, Dalton observed, " He is one of the Chero Zamindars and also the only one of that class who from first to last stood boldly aloof from all conspiracy against Government and exerted himself in every way to prevent the spread of disorder and disaffection. He was one of the first to join Lieutenant Graham and the information he gave was of great service to that officer. In consequence of this his house at Punka was attacked and burnt .....Not far from Bhikari Singh's villages is the confiscated jaigir of Rega Singh executed as a leader in the disturbance. It consists of 5 villages paying an annual rent to Government of about Rs. 30 ".

Commissioner Dalton recommended that this jaigir along with the *Khillut* should be given to Bhikari Singh. This letter of Commissioner Dalton practically admits that the many small Cheru Zamindars almost to a man took arms against the British. We have also seen that the Bhogtas did the same. This should mean that practically all the country-side must have been aflame.

The Old English Correspondence Volume for 1860 has some interesting letters which show that the aftermath of the disturbances was still there in 1860. The conduct of Bhaiya Bhugwan Deo of Nuggur Oontaree and the enquiry thereof forms the subject matter of an interesting letter from I. M. Campbell, Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner, Palamau Subdivision to Captain Davies, Senior Assistant Commissioner, Lohardagga Division. From the charges it appears that Bhaiya Bhugwan Deo refused to render efficient military service to Government although bound to do so under the *Sunud* on which he held his tenure and had allowed armed rebels to pass through his Zamindary unmolested. He was further charged for having supplied provisions or connived at the supply of provision to the rebels who encamped near Nuggur. It may be mentioned here that the Bhaiya's duty was to guard some of the ghats leading into Palamau Campbell's finding was that he had failed to perform his duty and that this failure rendered his estate liable to confiscation.

From a letter no. 156 dated Lesligunje the 30th August, 1860 sent by the Junior Assistant Commissioner of Palamau Subdivision to the Senior Assistant Commissioner, it appears that the thanas of Chutterpore, Manka and Lesligunje were burnt by the villagers during the disturbances in 1857. The reference to the word ' villagers ' in this context is important and would show that it was not the armed rebels alone who were destroying buildings. From the same letter it would appear that Burgurh thana was destroyed by the Bhogtas.

LIST OF REBELS.

From a statement giving a list of rebels since August, 1857 signed by J. M. Graham, Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner, we find the following names :—

Nilambar Sah, Ruttan Sah, Narayan Baniya, Pitambar Sah, Kutkun Sah and Bhooka Sah charged with rebellion, wilful murder and attack in the town of Chainpore. Nilambar Sah was further charged with plundering and destroying the factory of Bengal Coal Company and burning village Baree, Hehagurrah etc. Koomar Sah, Ruttan Sah, Narayan Baniya, Shew Charan Manjhi along with two brothers Pitambar and Nilambar were also charged with wilful murder of several Government servants and rebellion. Bhooka Sah was charged with the burning of Burgurh thana. Some of the other men who were charged with rebellion were

Ganpat Manjhi, Kurtoo Manjhi etc. There is no doubt that the statement mentions wilful murder of quite a number of persons, dacoity, arson and plunder against these men. It cannot be doubted that there was a considerable amount of blood-shed, plunder and arson. In many cases, however, it was also not possible to have any direct proof as to the individual who committed the crime.

Baboo Teekait Singh who was sentenced to 8 years imprisonment with the additional sentence of confiscation of his estate and property forms the subject matter of a letter no. 14 dated the 23rd May, 1859 from the Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner of Korundah Subdivision to the Government of Bengal. It appears that a review of the case was called for because of a petition from his son Soorjnarayan Deo. Graham, Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner was of the opinion that Teekait Singh was the principal instigator for burning villages in Gurhwa area.

From several documents it is found that the Zamindars and the principal men in the villages were openly helping or at least conniving at the depredations of the insurgents. The Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner in a letter dated the 9th June, 1860 had mentioned that there was no doubt that any body of rebels could be lurking in any area unless the neighbouring Zamindars connived—a frank admission which gave a correct picture of Palamau even in 1860.

A POPULAR MOVEMENT.

The narrative of the events will show that the movement at Palamau was of a very different character from a mere mutiny of the Sepoys. The indigenous population of the district consisting of the Cheros, Bhogtas and Kharwars had taken to arms. Practically the bulk of the Jagirdars and Zamindars had sided against the Government and against the very few loyal Rajput Jagirdars. The important places of the area, namely, Lesligunj, Garhwa, Manka and Chainpur were pillaged. A number of Government thanas and *Abkari Kacheris* were pulled down and were burnt. The summit of the movement was in December 1857 when "nearly the whole of the district of Palamau was apparently up in arms" (Prof. H. P. Chatterji in Mutiny of Bihar, Sl. 140, Bengal Past and Present). By the first week of January 1858 there was a turn in favour of the British. But the fact that Nilambar and Pitambar remained absconders and continued creating havoc for some months more shows that the civil population was in full support of the movement. In March 1858 there was a fresh flare up under the leadership of Ganpat Rai and Bishnath Sahi both of whom were, however, eventually arrested and executed.

The revolt in Palamau was not so agitated as in Singhbhum nor was it more or less a sepoy mutiny as in Santhal Parganas. In

this district the movement had assumed a fully popular character. The different sections of the civil population had thrown their lot together and wanted to shake off the British authority. Here it was not the case of the sepoys rising with or without any support from the civil population. It was a case where the civil population led by their natural leaders, the Zamindars and Jagirdars took to arms. If it was a mutiny at all it was a mutiny which was taken up by the people. The two enclosures are important documents dated 19th December 1857 and 21st June 1858 and throw a flood of light on the movement in Palamau. Dalton's summary (second enclosure) shows that in spite of his restraint Dalton felt the intensity of the character of the movement as far too deep-rooted and popular.

ENCLOSURE I.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT CONSULTATION.

15th January, 1858 *nos.* 505-506.

No. 131.

FROM

THE COMMISSIONER OF CHOTANAGPUR.

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,

Dated, Chotanagpur, the 19*th Dec.* 1857.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No. 4465 of the 16th instant with enclosures, informing me that the Madras Rifles which were under orders to proceed to Palamau are to go to Hazaribagh to relieve Captain Rattray's Sikhs and that no troops are now to be spared for Palamau.

I presume that the Wing of the Madras Rifles will consist of not less than 300 men. If His Honour will be pleased to cause this force to be placed at my disposal for general duty in the two districts of Chotanagpur and Hazaribagh in addition to the Madras troops now here, and if Lt. Graham be not forced to abandon Palamau when to remain there is not hazardous, I will undertake to provide sufficient column to operate against insurgents in Palamau and take care of the stations opposites.

Let it not be forgotten that the Government is the proprietor of Pergunnah Palamau and to abandon its property and well

disposed ryots to plunder and devastation by an disorderly rabble, is an exhibition of weaknesses that will have a most pernicious effect in this Division, in Rewah and in all places where the circumstances are likely to be known. If the Wing of the Madras Rifles consists of 300 men, or if it can be complete to that number I would leave for the present 100 at Hazaribagh, 100 at this station and be able to march into Palamau with the force shown in the margin, which, when united to Lt. Graham party and the men furnished by the Zamindars and Raja of Deo will I doubt not, prove sufficient to restore order and the whole would be commanded by Major Mac Donell of the 27th Madras Native Infantry, an active and intelligent officer.

Madras Artillery
2 Light Field Force Ramgarh Irregular Cavalry
60 Sowars
Madras Infantry
Strength from 300 to 350

I have the honour to be Sir,

SD. E. T. DALTON,

Officiating Commissioner, Chotanagpur.

ENCLOSURE II.

No. P

FROM

CAPTAIN E. T. DALTON,

COMMISSIONER OF CHOTANAGPUR.

To

A. R. YOUNG, ESQ.,

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, FORT WILLIAM.

Dated Camp Chaibassah, the 21st June, 1858.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit for the information of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal a report on the conduct of the principal Jagheirdars of Palamau during the recent disturbances in that district, especially noticing those who displayed conspicuous loyalty to the British Government and zealously co-operated with the authorities in restoring order.

Judicial

2. It is necessary to introduce these names with a brief account of the events that led to the insurrection in Palamau.

3. The population of that district is chiefly composed of two tribes, the Cheroes and the Khyrwars, the latter are the most numerous. There are also Coles and Bhooeyas who took no part in the disturbances. Brahmins and Rajpoots and other castes of

Hindoos who were opposed to the insurgents and Korewahs, a rude hill tribe having kindred with the Cole, some cf whom assisted the Bhogtahs.

4. The Cheroes are a spurious kind of Rajpoot.* Some centuries ago a leader of this tribe made war on, and drove into Sirgoojah the Raksel Rajpoot Raja of Palamau and got himself acknowledged Rajah of the country, the last Rajah Chooraman Rai who died childless was a descendant of this chief. Chhoraman Rai left a widow who still survives and there are three collateral branches of the family, the elder represented by Baboo Bhowaney Bux Rai of Bisrampore, Jagheirdar of 143 villages, the next by Baboo Rambux Rai of Chukla Deogam who holds 370 villages, the third by Baboo Debie Bux Rai of Lakhua.

5. The rulers being Cheroes, they considered it necessary to create a Cheroe yeomanry to support them and hence it is that we have in Palamau a very considerable number of petty Cheroe Jagheirdars. They seem to have been an improvident race of land-holders as the greater portion of these small estates are mortgaged, and it is possible that a hope of summarily voiding such incumbrances was an incentive to many a proprietor to join the insurgents.

6. The Khyrewars are numerous in Palamau and elsewhere in Chota Nagpore they are said to have migrated from the hills west of Rohtas. There is a place there called Kyrah, and the Rajah of Surki is a Khyrwar. In this Division the Rajah of Koondah and the Chacharee Bhaya are the headmen of the Khyrwar.

7. They are subdivided into various clans/" Gashtes " viz. 1 the Bhogtah, 2 Maighee, 3 Bisis, 4 Chowdhree etc. etc. They are not, I believe, considered as included amongst the 4 great Hindoo families, but they speak no language except Hindee.

8. There are a few Jagheirdaries in possession of the Khyrwars, one was created by our Government and conferred on the head of the Bhogtah clan, the Bhogtahs pitamber and Nilamber. This clan occupy a line of villages situated on a plateau or rather a steppe between the low lands of Palamau, from which they are further separated by a ridge of hills, and the high table lands of Sirgoojah. The villages are unapproachable from the low lands except by Ghauts or hill passes easily defended and the hills between them and Sirgoojah, and the Sirgoojah uplands secure to the inhabitants places of almost inaccessible retreat.

9. Thus situated the Bhogtahs were of old notorious as free-booters to whom the arm of the law could with difficulty reach.

* It is said they originally came from Kumaon and they wear a thread as the descendants of Chaman, son of a Brahmin.

Their old chief, the father of Nilamber and Pitamber lived and died an outlaw. The policy that gave to the sons the villages occupied by the clan in Jagheir at a small quit rent was however in a great measure successful in repressing their marauding propensities, till the unfortunate events of the last year incited them to break out anew.

10. It unluckily happened that Pitamber Bhogtah was at Ranchee where the Ramgarh Force mutinied and the officers abandoned the Station. He very possibly went home thinking he had seen the end of British rule. At the same time two companies of the 8th Regiment Native Infantry that mutinied at Hazaribagh marched through Palamau on their way to join Baboo Kooer Singh's brother Ummar Singh at " Rohtas Ghur ".

11. They did not commit any very serious depredations, but they exacted contribution in supplies wherever they went, and their demeanour was such as to lead the ignorant inhabitants of Palamau to give very general credence to the report that the Government had been overturned.

12. Then it was that the Bhogtahs armed, assembled and commenced plundering their raids being in the first instance directed against the villages and property of Thakoorai Raghooburdeal Singh, between whom and the leading Bhogtah there had long been a feud. Unsided they would not perhaps have been able to cope with the Rajpoot Jagheirdars who were opposed to them, but the disturbances began now to assume a more political aspect and expanded into an incipient insurrection.

13. The Ranee relict of the Rajah Chooraman Rai resides at Shahpore in Palamau. On the 25th of September Baboo Bhowaney Bux Rai arrived at Shahpore, and in his own name and the Ranee appears to have summoned all the Cheroes to a meeting there. It is said that the object was to elect a Cheroe Rajah; but the Baboo declares it was to concert measures for the safety of the district in consequence of his having in common with other Jagheirdars received orders from me to do so. The Baboo himself left Shahpore after receiving a *Perwannah* from Mr. T. Campbell attached to Col. Fisher's Column, or after hearing of the reoccupation of Ranchee, and I could find no proof of his having been mixed up in the subsequent proceedings of the insurgents, but whatever took place at the meeting of the Cheroes at Shahpore, it is a fact that it was followed by a general rising both of Cheroes and of Khyrwars, and combining with the Bhogtahs a very large force on the 21st October attacked the town of Chyenpore belonging to Thukoorai Raghooburdeal Singh and where he resides. But the Thukoorai had made good preparations to oppose them, and after a fight of some hours duration the insurgents were repulsed with loss.

14. I am convinced that at this time the Bhogtahs were not so fascinated with the idea of having a Cheroe dynasty over them as led to join the Cheroes for the sake of gratifying their old grudge against the Thukoorai; but it is quite clear that the Cheroes and others considered the destruction of the Thakoorai and his party as essential to the success of their undertaking, because he was devoted to the interest of the British Government, he felt confident that Government would not be subverted; and he opposed himself in every way to the movement in favour of the Cheroes.

15. The Thukoorai's cousin Thukoorai Kishoondeal Singh was equally loyal, equally the object of attack, and as earnestly and vigorously opposed the insurgents.

16. After their repulse at Chainpore the insurgents proceeded to Shahpore and took possession of four old iron guns belonging to the Ranee. They at the same time broke into the Thannah, destroyed all the records and when they encamped for the night on the opposite side of the river, it is currently reported that they sacrificed to the Guns a Government thannah Burkundaaz whom they had made a prisoner. The next day 500 men were despatched to Lesliegunge which they plundered, burning the Thannah, *Abkaree Cutcheries* and setting fire to the *Tuhseel Cutcherry* but this building and most of the records were saved, the flames having been extinguished in time after the departure of the rebels by some of the inhabitants of Lesliegunge. On the same day five other villages were destroyed by the rebels.

17. The *Tuhseel*, Police and *Abkaree* establishments fled from Lesliegunge on the approach of the rebels with some Government treasure, and were sheltered and protected by Baboo Shew Churn Rae of Nawagurh, Jagheirdar of 59 villages, a very loyal and deserving Cheroe Jagheirdar, till the arrival of Lt. Graham sent by me from Ranchee with 60 men of the Ramgurh Infantry. Lt. Graham reached Chainpore on the 7th November, and the immediate effect of his arrival was satisfactory; the insurgent force broke up and returned to their villages, but when they found his escort was numerically so insignificant, and that no offensive measures were taken against them, they again assembled in great force, estimated at several thousands, and passing close to Chainpore encamped in the neighbourhood. Lt. Graham with his small party shut himself up in the Thukoorai's house, the defences of which and of the town he had greatly improved, and the insurgents on this account or for other reasons did not attack him. They proceeded into Rajhara the station of the Coal Company and attacked and subsequently on the skilful retreat, after a gallant defence, of the Europeans in charge, plundered and destroyed the factory. On the 2nd December

the Government Thannahs of Munika and Chutterpore were burnt by different parties of insurgents and all the records destroyed. On the 8th a European force under Command of Major Cotter sent to relieve Lt. Graham, arrived and the rebels dispersed.

18. The services of the Europeans could not then be spared for operations in Palamau, and Lt. Graham had been ordered to fall back with them. He, however, merely fell back till he met the force of matchlockmen and *Sowars* collected and brought to his assistance by order of Government by the Rajah of Deo with which he advanced again and took up a position at Lesliegunge.

19. Lt. Graham reached Lesliegunge on the 25th December, and for some time nothing more was heard of the insurgents, and affairs appeared to have taken a favourable turn, the rebels had lost some of their most daring leaders who had been taken and hanged or were in Jail, and the Cheroes for the most part abandoned their cause. But during this period as appears from correspondence seized in the Bhogtah camp, the chiefs Pitamber and Nilamber were endeavouring to obtain succour from Ummer Singh, and though they failed in this, a party from the Mirzapore hills joined them, and on the 12th January it was known that they were again assembled in force, and several villages were plundered and partly destroyed by them.

20. I was at this time advancing with a small force of Madras sepoys under Major Mac Donell, and the Bhogtahs formed the bold design of opposing us at a small Ghaut *en route.* This was frustrated and they were on the 22nd attacked and defeated by the force under Major Mac Donell as reported in full at the time.

21. The Jagheirdars noted in the margin were present at this engagement, and I was directed to convey to them the thanks of Government for their service.

Thukoorai Rughooburdeal Singh of Hurbhungah, Chainpore.

Thukooraee Kishoondeal Singh of Runkah.

Baboo Devie Buksh Singh of Unmoodang.

Deonath Singh Karpurdaz of Bhuya Bhagawan Deo of Ontaree.

Kumar Bheekharee Singh of Munika.

Deonarain Singh of Bamandeeh.

22. On arriving at Lesliegange I issued a general notice to all Jagheirdars to attend with their followers. This had the desired effect, members who had not previously made their appearance came into Camp with their quotas of armed men, and amongst them Baboo Bhowaney Bux Rai, who had on various pretexts

previously avoided coming in giving rise to a strong opinion that he was disaffected and meant mischief.

23. It was certain that many of the Chero Jagheirdars who now joined us and were prepared to co-operate against the Bhogtahs were not long previously fighting on the other side; but under the circumstances I considered it advisable to accept of their services without in any way pledging myself to pardon those who might eventually be convicted of crime. This policy pretty well completed the secession of the Cheroes from the Bhogtahs' alliance, and we now only had the latter to deal with.

24. It is unnecessary for me to enter into the details of our advance into and occupation of the Bhogtah country, as the operations and their effects have been from time to time duly reported. Suffice it to say that though we did not succeed in capturing the two Bhogtah chiefs, their strength was destroyed and Palamau has since been quiet.

25. I considered it necessary to remove Baboo Bhowaney Bux Rai for a time, and made him accompany me back to Ranchee, where he now is. Lt. Graham has not yet sent me the result of a further enquiry directed by me into the occurrences at Thahpore; but I do not think any overt act of treason will be proved against the Baboo though he must not be allowed to escape the consequences of his not having rendered such assistance to Lt. Graham as he was bound to do.

26. A case against Baboo Debie Bux Rae of siding with the Bhogtahs is still under investigation. He is not supposed to have given them any active assistance; but it is clear that whether he countenanced it or not, the Bhogtahs wished to confer the Raj upon him; latterly he did all he could to display his zeal on our side.

27. The other Cheroe Baboo Ram Bux Rae so far as his conduct and that of his son Harbux Rae came under my own notice behaved well; but he appears to have somewhat held back at one time, and did not give Lt. Graham such assistance, as from the extent of his Jagheir was expected from him. This Baboo or some of his retainers have been accused of complicity in the attack on the Coal factory, and I have not yet heard the result of the enquiry into their case. I abstain at present from saying more about him.

28. Another extensive Jagheirdar, the Bhuya Bhagwan Deo of Ontaree, though he latterly attended and supplied a body of matchlockmen who did good service under his *Karpardaz*, appears to have given little assistance to Lt. Graham before my

arrival, and I regret therefore that I cannot more favourably notice him. He holds his estate of 84 villages.*

29. Having thus alluded to the leading men of Palamau whose conduct was not on the whole satisfactory; it is with much pleasure that I submit to His Honor the names of a few who from first to last did their duty as vassals of Government.

30. I consider that the Thukoorai's Rughooburdeal Singh and Kishoondeal Singh are entitled to the first place on the list. In regard to their conduct Lt. Graham thus expresses himself—"I must, however, particularly mention Thukoorai Kishoondeal Singh of Runka and Thukoorai Rughooburdeal Singh of Chainpore. The former remained with me from the time I entered the District with some of his men, while another party under his *Karpardaz* Rampertap Singh, attacked parties of the insurgents on several occasions driving them out of and restoring order in the Runka District. The Thukoorai Rughooburdeal Singh has borne the principal brunt of the disturbances, his property has been plundered in all directions, and his servants murdered in several instances. He deserves great credit for the manner in which he held out against the whole of the Bhogtahs, as well as for the assistance he has invariably rendered me, and the good will he has exhibited towards the Government from the beginning." I trust from what is stated above I shall be considered fully justified in proposing that the Honorary title of "Rai Bahadoor" be conferred on these two Jagheirdars with suitable Khilluts, and as a portion of the Khillut good double barrelled English made Rifles would be very acceptable to both of them as they are keen sportsmen. Further I propose, should it meet the approval of His Honor the Lt. Governor, and if it be found after a short experiment that he can manage it, to confer on Thukoorai Rughooburdeal Singh the Jagheir of Chemoo Sunnya lately belonging to the rebels Pitamber and Nilamber and now lately confiscated. It was held by them at a quit rent of Rs. 43-11-9. I would give it to Rughooburdeal Singh at the same rent but subject to more stringent conditions in regard to keeping the Ghauts clear and protecting travellers passing through. Rughooburdeal Singh has just now taken the estate in farm, and does not appear to be apprehensive that he will not be able to manage it. The estate nominally consists of 12 villages, but it includes also a number of hamlets and Karewah villages, not much scattered and separated by hills and jungles.

31. Baboo Shew Churan Rai is Jagheirdar of Nowagarh, an Estate consisting of 59 villages. This is the Zamindar referred to above in paragraph 17th as having protected the Government

*Besides hamlets.

treasure, records and the Native Officials who fled from Lesliegunge after the attack on that place by the insurgents. He maintained good order in his own villages and gave every required assistance to Lt. Graham and myself. I recommend that he receives a Khillut for his services, and such an addition to his Jagheir as will give him about an additional 100 or 150 rupees of annual income. This may be accorded from forfeited, lapsed or Khulsah lands, as may eventually be found with reference to position most expedient.

32. Koonwar Bhikharee Singh of Munikah, a petty Jagheirdar but a truly loyal and deserving subject. He is one of the Chero yeomanry and almost the only one of that class who from first to last stood boldly aloof from all conspiracy against Government, and exerted himself in every way to prevent the spread of disorder and disaffection. He was one of the first to join Lt. Graham, and the information he gave was of great service to that officer. In consequence of this his house at Munikah was attacked and burnt and his family only saved from slaughter by the good offices of some friendly Coles who protected them.

33. Not far from Bheekharee Singh's village is the confiscated Jagheir of Rega Singh executed as a leader in these disturbances. It consists of five villages paying an annual rent to Government of about Rs. 30. I beg to propose that these villages or so many of them or such share in them as the Government can dispose of, be conferred in Jagheir on Koomar Bheekharee Singh, in acknowledgment of his loyal services, and that in addition a Khillut be conferred upon him.

34. The undermentioned Jagheirdars are, I think, well deserving of the thanks of Government for their zealous co-operation with the authorities to restore order in Palamau :—

Koonwar Shew Churun Singh of Ladee, Baboo Debie Bux Singh of Namoodag, Deonarain Singh of Bamandeeh Deonath Singh Karpardaz of Bhuya of Ontaree, Akhaurie Gaurie Churun Ram Kanoongoe of Chundegeer Sutgawan, Kowar Turrulojeet Singh of Minatoo.

I have etc.

E. T. DALTON,

Commr. of Chota Nagpur.

ENCLOSURE III.

Some other important documents recently traced in the National Archieve, New Delhi are being mentioned below :—

Military Consultation 27th November, 1857, *no.* 410.

There are several documents regarding the state of affairs at Palamau and a directive to Colonel Forster at Purulia to march

to Dorundah to strengthen the heads of Captain Dalton. Colonel Forster was the Commandant of Shekawattee Battalion. The Commissioner was directed to give Colonel Forster all possible information and assistance. Colonel Forster was asked to march to Dorundah with as large a number of the battalion as he could collect along with such guns, such other troops that the Commissioner may be able to detach from Dorundah and place under his orders. The Superintendent of Trunk Road, Carriage and Supplies was also instructed to give elephants, carriage and supplies.

Military Consultation dated the 27th November, 1857 *no.* 411.

Mentions that the Shekawatee Battalion engaged in the suppression of the insurrection Palamau was eventually to be used for restoring order in the southern part of the Shahabad district.

Military Consultation dated the 10*th September,* 1858 *no.* 400.

It is a report from the Commissioner of Chotanagpur for giving particulars of the state of affairs in his Division. This letter mentions that a Bihar zamindar Bhanu Portap gave out that he was Kuer Singh's Subedar for Palamau and he was working up the Bhogtas and Kharwars population. He had a number of the mutineers and other rebels under him.

Military Consultation dated 29*th October,* 1858 *nos.* 163-64.

It is mentioned in a letter from Commissioner Dalton dated the 30th September, 1858 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal that the disaffected Bhogtas of Sunnea were expecting assistance from the mutineers in Shahabad and that this must be stopped. For this it was suggested that the Sikh volunteers under Captain Hale, a detachment of the Cole and Sonthal levy be employed.

Captain Dalton sent a further report on the 8th December, 1858 where he mentions that 1,100 rebels had up to the 30th ultimo actually entered Palamau under Sibhur Singh and another leader probably Ram Bahadur Singh. Lieutenant Graham was camping at Chainpur and Captain Davies at Checharee. The Commissioner prayed that troops be quickly sent and recommended that the two companies of Her Majesty's 29th Foot expected at Hazaribagh be ordered to Ranchi and another company or two sent to Hazaribagh to replace them.

CHAPTER V.

RANCHI.

Earlier history.

The district of Ranchi, unlike some other districts in Chotanagpur has visible antiquities. The cromlechs or sepulchral slabs that are scattered all over the district are so many antiquities. At village Chokahatu in thana Sonahatu there are thousands of old tombs. Col. Dalton gave the number as 7,360 and thought that excavation would probably disclose an under-stratum of similar graves. Ruins of ancient buildings are still to be seen at village Chapi in Khunti subdivision, at villages in Torpa Circle and other places. Stone slabs representing the palaeolithic and neolithic ages have been discovered and identified. Antiquities of the copper age discovered in Ranchi district, represented in artifacts and bronze and iron implements are to be seen in the Patna Museum. The *Asura* sites in the district had attracted the attention of the late S. C. Roy who from these finds thought that Chotanagpur belongs to the same age of culture as that of the Indus valley. There has not been as vigorous an investigation as the finds would deserve. But the hoary antiquity of the district is well established.

The area figured in the epic age under various names. Loosely the name of Kol was made applicable to different types of aboriginals and they were also known as the *Parbatias* and the *Kiratas*.

Col. Dalton held the view that the Kols, the generic name loosely applied to the aborigines of Chotanagpur were the earlier settlers in the Gangetic valley and that they had attained some advance in civilisation before they migrated. The Mundas and the other aboriginal tribes, it may be said, held the whole country of Kikata or Magadha up to the rise of Buddhism. But they had to give way. The rise of Buddhism and Jainism in this area pushed out the non-vegetarian aborigines who had to migrate to the south to the more hospitable and inaccessible valleys of Chotanagpur. They had a better time in this hilly region. As a matter of fact, the entire area of Chotanagpur was under a rather nominal authority of the Guptas, if the Guptas at all conquered the tract. The Mundas continued their hold and indigenous customs and institutions found ample scope to develop on non-traditional lines. There was an evolution of a distinct social and cultural pattern.

It has been rightly observed that from the 7th century of the Christian era up to the rise of the muslim power we do not find much of political history for this area. In the muslim period the area came to have the name of Jharkhand. Jharkhand was

the muslim appellation for Santhal Parganas and Jharkhand was the muslim appellation for Chutianagpur which later came to be known as Chotanagpur. In *Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita* we find a mention of Jharkhand. Lord Chaitanya on his way from Vrindaban to Puri-Jagarnath passed through the Jharkhand area (1516 A. D.). Shri Chaitanya's influence was remarkable and persists. The Panch Pargana and the subdivision of Khunti are still the strong-hold of Vaishnavism. Bundu, Tamar and Jaria in Khunti subdivision are supposed to have received visit of Lord Chaitanya. A minority but an influential section of the aboriginals like the Tanas and Bhagats do not touch animal food. It is also remarkable that whenever any socio-religious movement has been sponsored in Chotanagpur it has always had some of the basic principles of Vaishnavism in some shape or the other.

Jharkhand received an invasion of Sher Shah through his General Kawai. The Chero Raja of the name of Maharta incurred the displeasure of Sher Shah who sent Kawai.

In 1580 A. D. the area became one of the 12th Subas of Emperor Akbar. The hold of the Mughals, however, continued to be rather loose owing to the inaccessible nature of the countryside and the peculiar character of the hill tribes whose loyalty for their parochial chiefs was far too deep rooted. Occasional detachments had to be sent into this country to maintain the overlordship of the Mughal. It appears that in 1616 A. D. during the reign of Emperor Jehangir there was another invasion of the district when Maharaja Durjan Sal was the chief. Durjan Sal was made a prisoner but was later released by the Emperor from Gwalior and allowed to resume his previous position as an independent chief. It appears that after this the relations between the Mughal Emperors and the Kokra chiefs continued to be somewhat friendly and peaceful. A stipulated revenue of Rs. 6,000 was regularly paid.

The country could be said to have enjoyed almost an unbroken peace from 1624 when Durjan Sal was released till 1772, the appearance of the British. The unbroken peace the area had, is shown by the rise of a class of Jagirdars and Thikadars under various denominations such as Bhaiyas, Baraiks, Ohdars, etc. The rise of a landed aristocracy and the advent of Ahirs, Kumhars and men of other occupational castes are suggestive. Brahmins from Orissa were brought by the aristocracy and settled with gifts of lands to do the work of the Pujari or temple-priest. There are still many Brahmin Oriya families in the remote interior of Ranchi district. There are buildings and temples at Doisa, Chutia, Sutiamba, Jagannathpur, Borea, Tilmi, Nagpheni and Nagar which show a superior type of culture.

From the political stand point the period marks a great influence and expansion of territory for the Maharaja of Chotanagpur. Tributary Mahals of Bonai, Chang Bakar, Gangpur, Korea, Udaipur and Sirguja were included within Chotanagpur Estate and paid homage to the Maharaja. The Zamindars of Bundu, Tamar, Silli, Banta, Hajam, Barwe paid tribute to the Maharaja. Practically, except Padma (Hazaribagh) and Kasipur (Manbhum) most of the estates admitted the Maharaja as the overlord. The Maharaja of Chotanagpur led expeditions against the Hos of Singhbhum.

THE BRITISH ADVENT.

On the 12th August, 1775 with the passing of the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the East India Company this area was also made over nominally to the Company. The internecine quarrels and depridations of Raja of Gidhaur, the Raja of Ramgarh and the rival claim for Raja-ship of Palamau between Gopal Rai and Chitrajit Rai led the British take an active interest in the area. Captain Camac in December, 1771 attacked Palamau and put Chitrajit Rai as the Raja. The immediately later history of Ranchi district is interlinked with the history of the period of Palamau, Hazaribagh and Singhbhum.

It is peculiar that a sort of coolness that had sprung between the chiefs of Ramgarh and Chotanagpur should have led the Maharaja of Chotanagpur, Dripnath Shahi, acknowledge himself as the direct vassal of the British Raj. The Maharaja of Chotanagpur did not want to send his revenue through Ramgarh's chief who was once his vassal. This prayer was the opportunity to the clever British diplomacy. Raja Dripnath Shahi was soon disillusioned of the overture he had made. But the triennial settlement of revenue that was made by Captain Camac was a momentous event and the Raja of Chotanagpur became a full-fledged tributary chief. The second triennial settlement having ended in 1777, yearly settlement with the Raja was made from 1777 to 1778 although the permanent settlement of revenue was not made till 1779.

The immediate result of the Military Collectorship was an outbreak of crime and lawlessness, more bitter jealousy between the Jagirdars and the countryside suffered a lot.

The next British administrative experiment was the formation of a district under the name of the Ramgarh Hill Tract in 1780 which lasted till 1833. The district of Ranchi was not directly included in this unit but the officer of this regulation district indirectly controlled the Raja.

The unwieldy powers of this officer of the regulation district with his Offices of Judge, Magistrate and Collector led to mal-administration and in a letter dated the 15th April, 1800 the Board of Revenue ordered the incorporation of the Collectorship of Ramgarh with that of Bihar. The Collector of Bihar started intervening into the internal management of the Raja and the introduction of stamp papers was the first visible mark of the liquidation of the power of Chotanagpur Raj. Collection of revenue was the main objective and in order to further this collection, an Assistant Collector of Bihar was appointed in 1809 and posted at Ramgarh. Mr. Richard Walpole was the first Assistant Collector. Soon after Major Roughsedge was appointed in 1819 as the " Political Agent to the Government of South Bihar ". This event synchronised with a great drought in the Tamar Pargana and the transfer of the police administration from the Raja to the British under a Superintendent of Police. A tax on *Handia* (rice-beer), the daily drink of the aboriginals was imposed. The discontent due to this was seething and its abolition in 1833 was made but when the various risings and insurrections had already broken out.

The infiltration of the British in the political horizon of Chotanagpur also synchronised with a great socio-economic revolution. The original concept was that the land belonged to the people who cleared the jungles and the hill sides. But from this ultra—democratic concept the institution of feudalism had already grown and taken deep roots. When the British started consolidating themselves, they found, on the one hand, the traditional institutions of the Mankis and Mundas, the Parhas, the Pahans and the Mahatos. The Pahan was the spiritual adviser whose business was to keep the *Bongas* (spirits) in satisfaction and to see that epidemics among men and cattle did not take place. The Mahato was the small administrative head. But these institutions had already started degenerating through the influence of the Raja-ship which had concentrated in the *Gaddi* of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur and his satellites. The Company, at first, did not bother to enter into the internal management but remained satisfied with the receipt of the annual revenue. But it is this very object which brought them face to face with the internal quarrels of the chiefs and the hollowness of the edifice. The three decades or so of the personal rule of the Rajas with the Maharaja of Chotanagpur at the head presented an utter lack of governance. There was hardly any peace and the poor cultivators did not know for whom they were cultivating. The Rajas were no longer capable to fight away the Marathas or the neighbouring States in the areas now known as Chotanagpur, Orissa and parts of Madhya Pradesh. As a result there was a chronic default in the payment of revenue. The six Zamindari police

thanas had been established largely at the instance of the British in 1809. But the Rajas took these Zamindari police thanas as a curb on their power. Even heinous crimes like murder and dacoities were encouraged by the Rajas. The unfortunate Kol was almost nowhere in the thanas or in the courts of the Military Collector. The headquarters of the Military Collector were located at far off Chatra and alternatively shifted to Sherghati. Whenever an aboriginal would go to the thana or to the court he would find that the Zamindar's men had already anticipated him and were ready with got-up witness not only to disprove his case but to put him in custody. The Raja of Tamar oppressed one of his vassals, Raghunath Singh who went to the Court at Chatra with the hope of getting justice. At Chatra he found that the Raja's men were already there with got-up evidence, with the result that Raghunath Singh was condemned to transportation for life. This was one of the important reasons for the subsequent Tamar rising in 1820. The new police officers were *Dikkus* and foreigners from Bihar. Many of the Jagirdars were also *Dikkus* or foreigners. The Maharaja of Chotanagpur and his vassal Rajas depended more on the *Dikkus* or foreigners from Bihar, Bengal or Orissa and all this was extremely galling to the aboriginals who were slowly getting conscious of their oppression.

The political background of the three or four decades preceding the Movement of 1857 had its roots in the socio-economic condition of the countryside. The picture for some reasons may be described as a paradox. On one side we see the institutions of a number of village communities called Parhas under a Manki or Munda. But the latter did not have any proprietary right over the villages which belonged to the villagers as a whole. On the other hand the Parha became the political unit for common interest such as defence, hunt, festival, settlement of disputes and sundry other matters. There was a Panchayat in each of the Parhas with traditional executive and judicial powers. The president of the Panchayat was a chief among equals. He was assisted by a permanent staff of officers such as Pahan, Panvaras (courtiers), Pandes, Sipahis and the like. This Parha system in the countryside had declined at the cost of a single overlord over all the Parha Rajas in the *Gaddi* of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur.

The Maharaja, as mentioned previously, had vassals in the Zamindaris of Tamar, Bundu, Rahe, Baranda, Silli and Barway. These vassal Rajas and the Maharaja went on creating vested interests in the shape of a series of political and social hirelings who were given large gift of lands. They were semi-useless Burraiks, Rajputs and Rowtoeas. Originally the idea was that they would do military service for the Rajas and their indolent younger brothers, commonly known as Lal Sahibs or Tikaits, who enjoyed vast grant of land and money only by the accident of birth.

It is this creation of the vested interests and a hierarchy of semi-useless indolent Zamindars at the top that brought in the infiltration of the British and their consolidation in Chotanagpur.

At first the British diplomacy did not realise or even if they realised they would not tear down the administration or political set-up. The records show that they appreciated that the rents had gone on increasing and usury of the worst type was exacted. *Begari* or forced labour was extracted from the poor aboriginals. The *Kamiauti* system was openly practised and for a debt of a few rupees two or three generations of men had to give their labour free.

The political upheavals that took place in the few decades preceding 1857 cannot be said to be unexpected. It was nemesis that overtook the gilded but hollow edifice with the feet of clay. The violent surge of commotion only needed an outlet and the outlet was supplied by Dukhan Shahi Manki at Tamar. There had been some smaller Munda revolts in the neighbouring Parganas of Rahe and Silli from 1796 to 1798. The rising of the Mundas of Tamar under Bishun Manki and the more formidable rising of the same Pargana in 1807 under Dukhan Shahi Manki had to be faced by the British although they must have felt the truth of the cause which led to the rise. Captain Roughsedge and Lieutenant Welsh and others were kept extremely busy for quite a few years. Fresh disturbances broke out in 1812 at Rahe and no sooner was this suppressed than another great riot occurred at Tamar under Ruddan and Kanta Mundas. The two ring leaders were captured and thrown into prison. But the very fact that the charge of some of the thanas was taken away from the Maharaja and he was prohibited from levying *Sayer* duties shows that the British administrators with their very small experience in Chotanagpur had realised why the disturbances had broken out.

The temporary lull was disturbed again by the Kol rebellion of 1832 which started from Singhbhum. This rise has been described in the Chapter under Singhbhum. The effect on Ranchi district was also formidable. A large gathering of the Mundas in Pargana Tamar assembled and had resolved that the Pathans and Sikhs should be punished. The Mundas, the Oraons, the Hos, the Khariyas—all made a common cause. The Mundas of Tamar met at village Lankha and decided that they had no other alternative but to " burn, plunder, murder and loot " the oppressors. The atrocities that were perpetuated were of the most savage character. The *Dikkus*, many Thikadars including the Zamindars of Tamar, Rahe, Bundu and Barway fled to save their life. The Commissioner had reported some time after " Restless, wild and furious, they rushed into insurrection, scarcely paralleled for ferocity. Eager for plunder, universally prone to inebriation and infuriated by real or imaginary

wrongs, the whole population yielded to the unobstructed tide of rebellion—fire, rapine, and murder marked their paths, nor was their vindictive spirit confined to those to whom their injuries were ascribed but madly extended to unoffending females and helpless infants, apparently with the subtle determination of extirpating a whole race ". It may be mentioned here that the foreigners that fell into the hands of the aboriginals were given seven cuts for seven obnoxious taxes imposed upon them, namely, tax on *Handia, dak, bata or* extra charge for changes, *salami, begari,* or forced labour, *jurmana* or fines and tax on opium proposed by Government.

The movement was really not against the Government but against the Zamindars. But the British administrators naturally had to intervene firstly to restore peace so that their revenue was not affected and secondly, in order to consolidate themselves taking advantage of the troubles. On the 14th February Captain Impey with 5,000 sepoys arrived and killed one of the Munda leader Bhagat Singh with seven of his sons and about 150 of his followers. The policy of repression could bring about a certain amount of tranquillity which was, however, the peace of grave. It has already been mentioned elsewhere about the work of Captain Wilkinson to pacify the Kols. The tax on *Handia* was abolished in 1833 by Captain Wilkinson who was remembered for a long time after as " Al-Kisun Saheb ".

South West Frontier Agency.

As a result of the disturbances the South-West Frontier Agency was created in 1834 which included the areas in Chotanagpur proper and portions of Manbhum. The Court of Justice was transferred from Sherghati to Lohardaga which was raised to the status of a district with over 12,500 square miles. Captain Wilkinson became the first Agent to the Governor-General with his civil headquarters at Kishanpur (Ranchi) and the military cantonment at Doranda. Some say that the name of Kishanpur had been derived from the latter part of the name of " Al-Kishun Saheb". Lt. Ouseley was appointed the Principal Assistant to the Agent for Lohardaga corresponding roughly to the present districts of Palamau and Ranchi.

The ordinary rules and regulations were suspended. The Agent was given more extensive powers with the right to superintend every Department He was the Judge, the Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police, the Post-Master and occasionally worked as the Doctor on leave vacancy. For civil cases he was under the Supreme Dewani and Nizamat Adalat, the Board of Revenue and the Board of Customs and Opium. Two other Principal Assistants to the Agent to the Governor-General were put in charge of the two other Divisions known as Manbhum

and Hazaribagh. These Principal Assistants were the District Officers, the predecessors of the present Deputy Commissioners. The post of Deputy Commissioner, as such, was created in 1843. But in those days the Deputy Commissioner was the Judicial Commissioner of our days. The Agent could be compared with the Commissioner. The present set-up of administration which is common almost throughout India had its beginnings in Ranchi district and the Chotanagpur area in this way.

The Agent had to reconcile the Mankis and Mundas and the other disgruntled aboriginals on the one hand and to keep the discomfited chiefs in loyalty to him. 31 rules approved by the Government were issued by the Agent. The most important rule was the declaration that no sale, mortgage or transfer of landed property would be valid without the consent of the Agent. Another rule prohibited the lawyers from practising in any court and that suits were to be conducted through the agency of Mokhtears or authorised agents. The proposal to introduce opium cultivation was dropped and the excise duty and *dak* cess were suspended. In 1842 the headquarters of the Principal Assistant were transferred from Lohardaga to Kishanpur. The post of Deputy Commissioner, as mentioned before, was created in November, 1843 to try sessions cases, hear civil and criminal appeals and try original civil suits.

But a system of judiciary at a higher level without a corresponding agency at the lower level and an arrangement to check crime and to give protection to the people would have been no good. That is why there was a regular system of police through the thanas brought in. Zamindari police thanas were slowly abolished. The Ghatwals were warned to do their duty. With the Agent two Munsifs were also appointed, one for Lohardaga and another for Kishanpur. By November, 1845 a Principal Sadar Amin was appointed for Lohardaga and Hazaribagh Divisions stationed at Hazaribagh. This Office was shifted to Gola in 1853. For criminal justice, the Principal Assistants exercised all the powers now possessed by the Deputy Commissioner. An appeal from them lay to the Agent who had power to confirm, annul or modify their judgment. The Principal Assistants could not pass a sentence of death but they could pass a sentence of imprisonment for a period of seven years.

Another wholesome rule was promulgated by which no *ex parte* decrees against the Mundas, Mankis, Kols, etc., could be passed by the Munsifs. The Civil Procedure Code was introduced in 1859 and till then the simple code of rules framed by Captain Wilkinson continued to be implemented. The Civil Procedure Code was followed by the passing of the Police Act of 1861. The Police Act liquidated the remnants of the Zamindari-police

thanas. It may be mentioned that although the Zamindari-police thanas had become extremely corrupt and useless, the measure of the liquidation was not well received by the Rajas and the Maharaja of Chotanagpur. At Palkote thana the Maharaja and at the other thanas the Rajas exercised the powers of a Daroga, the most exalted office of responsibility in those days.

A Non-Regulation Division.

That the Government were conscious of the existing defects in the administration could be seen by the promulgation of the Act XX of 1854. By it the Agency was abolished and Chotanagpur became a Non-Regulation Division under the control of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal till 1912. The Agent became the Commissioner, the Principal Assistants became the Principal Assistant Commissioners and the other Assistant Agents became Senior or Junior Assistant Commissioners. The first Commissioner of Chotanagpur Division was W. J. Allen.

Another notable event was the arrival in Ranchi in 1845 of the Christian Missionaries. The Missionaries at once threw themselves into the cause of the depressed and they could realise that the tenantry had to be upgraded. They became extremely popular within a short time and the number of converts went on increasing. From 1845 to 1857 the Christian Missionaries had been able to penetrate into the remote interior of Ranchi district. But the disturbances in 1857 gave a set back and many of the Missions were damaged. The Missionaries had to fly for their life.

It is this background with which the Movement of 1857 has to be appreciated.

The 1857 Movement.

Regarding the 1857 movement in Ranchi Prof. Hara Prasad Chatterji in his article " Mutiny in Bihar " (Bengal Past and Present, Volume LXXV, Part I) observes :—

" The hilly division of Chotanagpur was widely striken with mutiny. In his statement on ' The mutinies as they affected the lower provinces under the Government of Bengal, 1858 ', Mr. Frederick Halliday recorded that during the whole period of the outbreak the division of Chotanagpur had been a source of anxiety and uneasiness and from time to time of embarrassment and difficulty and even of actual danger. In fact no division in the whole of Bengal had been subject to such continued disturbance as this Province.' The division contained several petty states which were once independent. The rulers of these states were glad to try to profit from the existing turmoil. As a consequence the rebellion throughout this division was almost general.

.....Like Hazaribagh, Ranchi had been a centre of disturbance during the mutiny. At the commencement of the mutiny Ranchi was the Headquarters of the Ramgarh Battalion which consisted of a full infantry battalion, with Cavalry and Artillery attached. The battalion was composed of recruits from Chotanagpur, Bihar, and other parts of India. Two companies of the Ramgarh Infantry with thirty horsemen and two guns had been sent under Lt. Graham to disarm the mutinous sepoys at Hazaribagh. But on the way to Hazaribagh they themselves rose in arms on receipt of the news of the actual mutiny of the Hazaribagh sepoys, took possession of the guns, ammunitions and carriage includmg four elephants, Graham's private property and in defiance of the Lieutenant's orders marched back to Ranchi along with the Hazaribagh troops whom they met at Burmu, twenty miles north of Ranchi. The Cavalry, however, remained loyal and proceeded with Lt. Graham to Hazaribagh. Capt. Dalton and a few other European Officers who were then at Ranchi left for Hazaribagh, when they felt unsafe to continue staying in Ranchi. While Dalton reoccupied Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Doranda temporarily passed under the control of the mutineers. In restoring order in Hazaribagh Capt. Dalton obtained valued assistance from the Raja of Ramgarh. The Raja placed at his disposal some 40 or 50 armed men. 'Of the Ramgarh Raja's loyalty there could be no question'. Meanwhile the mutineers after a short stay in Ranchi for a month or so left the station and, as already stated, proceeded towards Ramgarh to meet Kunwar Singh there. Finally they marched through Chandwa and Balumath in Palamau to the town of Chatra. Before leaving Ranchi they behaved in the most brutal manner to the towns people, plundering, torturing and violating their women.....They burnt all the officers' bungalows, the lines, etc. A bungalow belonging to Dr. Brougham was the only one left standing. The Principal Assistant's cutchery (court) and jail were also burnt by the sepoys, and the records destroyed. They left 50 sick in hospital and this building was in consequence left standing. The mutineers also beheaded an old native doctor, Boodoo, attached to the jail. The departure of the mutineers paved the way for a return to normalcy at Ranchi. Order was soon restored at that station to which Dalton returned on 23rd September, 1857.

The mutineers received very little support from the civil population in Ranchi. Most of the leading Zamindars stood by the Government. Among the few Zamindars who stood against Government mention may be made of Ganpat Rai of Bhaunro, an ex-Dewan of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur. He was formally installed by the mutineers as their Commander-in-chief. This is, however, far too brief and an incomplete picture.

The first of August, 1857 brought back to Ranchi Captain Oakes, Judicial Commissioner who had been to Hazaribagh to hold sessions there. He came back with the news that the sepoys of Hazaribagh had taken to arms and of the consequent flight of the Europeans. The news percolated also independently of Captain Oakes. It was widely circulated that the sepoys of Dorundah who had been sent to Ranchi on the previous day under Lieutenant Graham for the relief of Hazaribagh had also revolted. One Jamadar, Jaimangal Singh, took the lead in organising the armed revolt. Commissioner Dalton had a hurried consultation with the European military officers and Captain Oakes and in the afternoon they set out for Hazaribagh by the old Ranchi road running through Pithoria and Baddam to avoid meeting Graham's force that was reported to be coming back. Dalton was able to reach Hazaribagh and then to Bagodar on Grand Trunk Road.

In Military Consultation, dated the 14th August, 1857, *no.* 362.

There is a letter no. 1268 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 12th August, 1857 which gives details of the outbreak at Ranchi. It was mentioned that Captain Dalton and the rest of the Europeans remained till the last possible moment and then rode off to Hazaribagh *via* Pittoria. It was believed that the zamindars were loyal and particularly the Rajah of Ramgarh and that it is the reason why an attempt should be made to reoccupy the district as quickly as possible.

With the flight of the Europeans from Ranchi the town was left to the insurgents. The sepoys were let loose and the court buildings and the bungalows of the Europeans at Dorundah were the first targets of arson and pillage. The treasury was looted and the jail was broken open. The bazar closed in panic. The Christian Missions were very badly treated and many of them left for Calcutta. Four cannon balls were fired on the German Mission Church in Ranchi town but only one hit the tower wall and the hole on the top of the tower can still be seen. The Christians were badly molested.

But the armed revolt did not quite percolate to the masses quickly. The Maharaja of Chotanagpur and most of the other Rajas and Zamindars were indifferent and at that time they held a considerable influence on the tenantry. The two zamindars who came to the help of the sepoys are Thakoor Bishwanath Sahi of Barkagarh and Pandey Ganpat Rai of Bhaunro. Biswanath Sahi along with Jamadar Jaimangal Singh and Madhu Singh assumed the leadership and Pandey Ganpat Rai was made the Commander-in-charge of the sepoys. But these leaders could not keep the men in check. There is no doubt that a considerable

amount of looting and blood-shed had followed. The disgruntled sepoys broke up in sections and different parties went different ways looting on their way. The leaders guided a section through Kuru and Chandwah and ultimately reached Chatra.

Commissioner Dalton returned to Ranchi on 23rd September. Major English had reached Dorundah in Ranchi a day earlier. Major English did not have much to do as Ranchi was practically abandoned by the sepoys. Courts were re-opened and reconstruction of the buildings started immediately after the return of the Commissioner.

Commissioner Dalton at once geared up the administration. A great hunt was made for the insurgents and the punishments were vindictive. Thakoor Bishwanath Sahi and Pandey Ganpat Rai were captured by Major Nation near Lohardagga with assistance of Biswanath Dubey and Mohesh Narain Sahi. They were summarily tried by the Judicial Commissioner and were hanged on one of the trees to the north of the old Commissioner's compound. The Thakoor was hanged on the 16th April, 1858. All the 97 villages of the Thakoor had already been confiscated in December, 1857 along with 11 villages of Pandey Ganpat Rai. The people who led to the captures of Bishwanath Sahi and Pandey Ganpat Rai could not, however, be traced to be awarded. They were terribly apprehensive of their life. Bhola Singh of Chowriya who had helped the sepoys of Dorundah is said to have been shut up in a closed room where he died.

With the restoration of British authority, the Christian Missionaries came back and in quick succession three missions, namely, the English Mission, the Dublin University Mission and the Catholic Mission were established. One of the effects of the 1857 movement in Ranchi district and in a way throughout Chotanagpur Division was that the missionaries took up their conversion programme with great vigour and were successful to a great extent. With hospitals and schools in one hand and the gospel in the other the missionaries penetrated into the interior of the district and there is no doubt that the zeal with which they took up the cause of the Christian converts went a very great way in fulfilling their mission. The missionaries made the cause of the converts their own.

A service message from camp Hazaribagh dated the 4th August, 1857 to the Secretary to the Government of India, Calcutta indicates the position of Ranchi immediately after hostilities broke out and Ranchi was abandoned by the Europeans. It was mentioned that the officers of the Civil Administration of Ranchi and all the officers of the Battalion had retired to Hazaribagh and were awaiting the arrival of European troops. It was requested that Martial Law should be proclaimed as the

country was in a disturbed state. The Europeans present at Hazaribagh included Col. Robinson, Captain Dalton, Oakes, Davies, Lt. Birch, Graham, Reeve, Middleton, Dr. Warmford, Sergt. Major Mckay and Child.

Some of the 40 letters ranging from 5th August, 1857 to 13th May, 1859 from Commissioner Dalton and others referred to in the chapter under Singhbhum would also indicate the development of the movement in Ranchi district. The first letter from Dalton to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, dated the 5th August, 1857 was written from Hazaribagh. Dalton had already left Dorundah in Ranchi along with the European Officers of the Ramgarh Light Infantry and the senior officers of the district. Dalton had sent a telegraph message on the previous day. In this letter also he took care to explain the circumstances as to why he had to leave Ranchi on the outbreak. As mentioned before Dalton explained that the news of the rise in Hazaribagh and particularly the revolt of the two companies of the 8th Regiment followed by the revolt of the detachment of the Ramgarh Light Infantry that had been sent to Hazaribagh to disarm the two companies was the signal for the rise in Ranchi headquarters. Although Dalton had retreated to Hazaribagh his reading of the situation was that the movement was not deep-rooted and the Zamindars would rally round the British if only an adequate force of European troops started quickly restoring order. Dalton pleaded for a troop of 300 men and two guns. In another letter Dalton clearly mentioned that it was only superior military equipments that could break the backbone of the insurgents. After all they could only muster very few weapons and ammunitions. In another letter, dated the 11th August 1857. Dalton had struck a note of despair. He complained that although a week had elapsed since they had left Ranchi there was no news as to the relief. Dalton recommended that under the circumstances it was best to fall back on the Grand Trunk Road as they could not depend on the small force on which their safety depended and it was absolutely inadequate in case of an attack. Dalton repeated that a small force would have been able to drive out the ' mutineers ' from Ranchi and any longer delay would increase the difficulties of re-establishing their authorities.

Dalton fell back upon Burhee on the Grand Trunk Road with a small section of Rattray's Sikhs leaving at Bagodar another small section. At this time Grand Trunk Road was held to be secure as military aid for the British came by that road and the Grand Trunk Road was avoided by the insurgents.

Till the end of August, 1857 Dalton had stopped at Burhee. From Burhee Dalton was issuing directives to the *ghatwals* that

they would be held responsible and liable to exemplary punishment and forfeiture of the property if they failed to keep open to passes or if they gave any help to the insurgents.

The reoccupation of Hazaribagh naturally was hailed with joy by Dalton. The insurgents from Ramgarh Battalion in Ranchi were about 600 strong. But they were very keen on plunder and there was a slight dispute regarding their leadership. The bigger proprietors like the Raja of Chotanagpur did not come out with any active help. Ultimately they left Ranchi and their object was to go beyond the *ghats* and proceed to Palamau for joining Kuanr Singh's party at Rohtasgarh. It is understood that they were in communication with Kuanr Singh from before. The letters of Dalton make out that the rate of progress of the insurgents from Ramgarh Battalion was very slow and they were covering about 6 to 8 miles a day.

The correspondence makes it clear that Dalton was given a force under Major English and marching through Hazaribagh and Chutopaloo Dalton came to Ranchi and reoccupied it. One Hari Singh Baraik, Zamindar of Chootia, had felled numerous trees on the road to stop the progress of the insurgents. Hari Singh was forced to give in when the mutineers brought their guns to bear upon his people.

The insurgents from Ranchi ultimately made their way to Chatra. The battle of Chatra was rather decisive in favour of the British. All the ammunitions, fire-arms, several boxes of plundered treasure had been seized. The clearance of Chatra was the signal throughout Chotanagpur that the British had reoccupied Chotanagpur. Subadar Jaimangal Pandey, Nadir Ali Khan and others were apprehended Jamadar Madhu Singh, a stormy petrel, had, however, escaped. It is this decisive victory of the British at the battle of Chatra where hundreds of the insurgents were brutally mowed down that re-established the British in Chotanagpur and the frustration that followed was quickly utilised to liquidate the movement in various parts of Chotanagpur.

A study of the old English correspondence preserved in the record rooms of the Commissioner of Chotanagpur Division and of the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi district gives a lot of information regarding the trends of the movement of 1857 not only in the Ranchi district but in the entire Division. Some of these letters are referred to.

Letter no. 67 from the Commissioner of Chotanagpur Division to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William, dated the 19th April, 1858, mentions that the Commissioner had asked the Government of Bengal that the provisions

of Act X of 1858 should be extended with advantage to all the districts, civil and political, in the Chotanagpur Division wherever there were European Officers. This is an important letter because it further mentions the Commissioner's firm belief that the Rajas and Zamindars throughout were only passively loyal to the Government. The Commissioner observed that had those who professed to be the friends of the Government actively co-operated then the authorities might have defeated the mutineers at the very beginning. His view was that the Rajas and Zamindars as a body did nothing and it was very likely that the mutineers were secretly aided and encouraged. So far as villagers were concerned, the Commissioner thought that they took part in the mutiny as they could not resist the temptation of plundering. The Commissioner was very sore that although rewards had been offered to the public to find out the culprits after the mutiny of Ramgarh Battalion there was not one instance where the offer of the reward had the desired effect. Many criminals were arrested, no doubt, not by the help of the people but by the military force or by the police.

This observation of the Commissioner would show that the insurrection was much more deep-rooted and it was not a mere mutiny of the army. The mutineers, if they could be called so, had the support of the civil population and that in spite of a certain amount of pillaging and other crimes that were being committed by the rebels. It cannot be said that the whole countryside was terrorised and could do nothing. After all the so-called mutineers were not in overwhelming majority.

Another letter of the Commissioner, dated the 13th July, 1858 mentions that the Porahat rebels were supplied with match-locks from Jhalda and Sili. Police Officers were employed to ascertain as to by whom these match-locks were manufactured and sold. A party under the command of Lt. Reeves captured 30 quite new match-locks in attempting to surprise one Raghu Deo and his force. It may be mentioned here that Jhalda is still famous for manufacture of steel goods.

There are a number of letters regarding Thakoor Bishwanath Sahi, one of the largest landholders of Chotanagpur. Bishwanath Sahi, as already mentioned took active part in the insurrection and was arrested. The Assistant Commissioner of Lohardagga had reported that he had joined the Ramgarh Battalion immediately the mutiny broke out on the 20th August, 1857 and that he continued to work in co-operation with the mutineers. The Deputy Commissioner of Chotanagpur in his letter No. 9 dated the 4th October, 1858 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal moved for the confiscation of his entire property. Not only Thakur Bishwanath Sahi was hanged for 'rebellion' but

his temple and property at Jagannathpur which was under the priest were also confiscated. The Government, however, separated the temple property from other confiscated property and handed over the temple to the priest for the service of the temple.

The quickness with which the sentences awarded to Tikayat Omraon Singh, Sheikh Bhikari, Thakoor Biswanath Sahi and Pandey Ganpat Rai were executed shows that they were the leaders of the movement and were held in great awe by the British. From letter no. 3118 from Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur, dated the 11th August, 1858 it would appear that the sentences on Tikayat Omraon Singh and Sheikh Bhikari were passed on the 6th January, 1858 and the capital sentences on them were executed just two days later. Thakoor Biswanath Sahi was sentenced to death and executed on the very same day (16th April, 1858). Pandey Ganpat Rai was sentenced on the 21st April, 1858. and was hanged on the same day. Tikayat Omraon Singh, Brijbhusan Singh, Sheikh Bhikhari, Chama Singh, Shiboo Singh, Ram Lall Singh and Bijai Ram Singh were prosecuted for closing the *ghats*. Seetum Chaudhury, Bazar Choudhury of Ramgarh Battalion was given 10 years' hard labour. Buhoran Singh, who planned to attack the Principal Assistant of Lohardagga was hanged on 5th January, 1858.

Regarding Thakoor Biswanath Sahi the letter quoted above mentioned that he was one of the influential Zamindars in Chotanagpur and having joined the mutineers of the Ramgarh Battalion had closed the *ghats* to prevent the return of the Government Officers to the district. It was further observed :— "The prisoner moreover promised to give the Sepoys *Badshahee* pay. The prisoner also seized some wealthy merchants and caused them to be plundered and ill-treated them with the purpose of extorting the sum of Rs. 25,000 to enable him to fight against the Government. After the defeat of the Ramgarh Battalion at Chutra the prisoner returned to Chotanagpur and a large body of men having been collected by him several villages were plundered and the Government Thana at Barwa was burnt. The prisoner had assembled a force of 1,100 men with a view to attacking the town of Lohardagga and arrived close to the places when the Principal Assistant who was stationed with some Sowars at Lohardagga made a night-march and captured the prisoner who was hanged by the orders of the Court on the 16th April last."

Special mention may be made of one Koreban Ally, a Jamadar of the office of the Principal Assistant in the Collectorate in one of the long lists of the persons that had "mutinied".

In the old correspondence volumes in the office of the Commissioner of Ranchi for 1857-58 particular mention has been made of Koreban Ally. Koreban Ally had been convicted to 14 years' imprisonment for " rebellion and causing the proclamation of the *Badshaee* Raj on or about the 4th August, 1857 ". It further appears that Koreban Ally had not only actively joined the mutineers but he was the link between the mutinous section of the army and some of Zamindars. He was also, it appears, the connecting link between the Zamindars Thakurai Kissen Dyal Singh and others in Palamau. As he was the Jamadar of the Principal Assistant, he could ferret out information.

Besides the ring leaders, the authorities were very much apprehensive of the head-men of the villages who had joined the movement or were lukewarm in their feelings. In letter no. 77, dated the 15th October, 1857 from the Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum to the Senior Assistant Commissioner, Lohardagga long lists of head-men were given who had been plundering in the districts of Manbhum and Hazaribagh. The contagion appears to have spread to the district of Ranchi. In the hilly tracts the ghatwals had fully exploited the situation and were often cutting away small section of the police and the army. The attitude of the zamindars, particularly the smaller ones, created a lot of suspicion in the mind of the British Administrator. At this time most of the police thanas were in the hands of the Zamindars and Zamindar-thanas had completely broken down either by connivance or internal reasons. It may be mentioned here that after peace was restored the Zamindar-thanas were slowly liquidated. The military pensioners were also looked upon with suspicion. In his letter no. 1434, dated the 25th August, 1859, the Secretary to the Government of Bengal warned the Secretary to the Military Department that the military pensioners should be watched and screened. The reason given was that large number of the insurgents under Kuanr Singh of Jagdishpur " included a large number of military pensioners of Government."

Letter No. 436 from the Secretary to the Board of Revenue to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William, dated the 29th October, 1857, which refers to a report on the loss of Government property and public records in the districts of his division in consequence of the mutiny of the Ramgarh Battalion and the Detachment of the 8th B. N. I. From this letter it appears that the treasure, stamps and opium of all the civil stations of Chotanagpur were plundered and the records either totally destroyed or disarranged. Singhbhum was the only station where the records had not been destroyed. Of the treasure plundered at Singhbhum Rs. 50,303 was recovered by the

column under Major English and Rs. 25,500 through the instrumentality of the Porahat Raja. The Commissioner was requested to enquire particularly whether the stamp papers and postage labels were destroyed or carried away and was authorised to offer a reward of 15 per cent of the value of such of them as may be brought in. The declaration of these rewards did not appear to have any effect as there are no letters showing results.

From another letter No. 7 dated the 7th October, 1857 from Commissioner Dalton to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Fort William, it appears that the Infantry and Artillery Sections of the Ramgarh Battalion had mutinied at Doranda (then in Lohardagga district) on the 2nd August and the officers, civil and military, had left the station on the same day leaving the mutineers in possession of the treasure. The station was reoccupied on the 22nd ultimo. But in these 20 days the cutchery in the thatched buildings had been completely destroyed by fire and a great bulk of the vernacular records. To this letter is attached a memorandum showing the damages done by the mutineers to the several treasuries in the Chotanagpur Commissionership. From this it appears that Lohardagga treasury sustained a loss of Rs. 162,296-4-8, Hazaribagh treasury Rs. 93,872-1-1½, Manbhum treasury Rs. 111,194-3-8 and Singhbhum treasury Rs. 37,705-7-0.

It appears from some of the old correspondence that by August 1857 strict measures were being taken to tighten up the administration. The Principal Assistant of Lohardagga was appointed to be a Commissioner under Section 7, Act XIV of 1857 under Government order No. 1555, dated the 1st August, 1857. This was followed by Circular No. 1792 dated the 15th August, 1857 clarifying the effect of the declaration of martial law and of the extension of Act XIV of 1857 at the cost of the jurisdiction of the ordinary criminal courts of the district. It was mentioned, however, that the declaration of martial law does not affect the executive function of the martial law. As regards the higher criminal courts their functions were entirely suspended by the declaration of martial law and all heinous offences were henceforth to be tried by the Commissioner appointed under Act XIV of 1857. All the Sessions Judges of the districts where the Act had been extended were vested with powers under this Act and it was a wish of the Government that all cases arising out of or connected with the disturbed state of the country should be tried by them in their capacity of Commissioners and all other cases in the ordinary course in their capacity as Session Judges.

From time to time descriptive roll of the persons who had taken leading part in the " rebellion " in the Province of Bengal indicating at the same time the parentage of the parties was being

called for. This was necessary as Government were frequently circularising such lists to the different districts so that the disbanded sepoys and the so-called mutineers were not again permitted to find their way into Government employment.

There was also a circular that if capital punishment was not awarded in case of mutiny and murder adequate grounds for not awarding such sentences should be indicated.

There are documents to show that the news of the capture of the two leaders Bishwanath Sahi and Ganpat Rai was quickly circulated in order to give confidence to the local administrators. Letter No. 1280 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpur dated, Fort William, the 13th March, 1858 mentions the receipt of a letter reporting the dispersal of the Nauagurh insurgents and that the capture of the two leaders, Bishwanath Sahi and Ganpat Rai, had the effect of restoring order and tranquillity in the Lohardagga district. Quick action was being taken under Act XXV of 1857 which rendered the property of officers and soldiers in the army liable to forfeiture for " mutiny " and provided for adjudication and recovery for forfeiture of property in certain other cases.

There are further documents to show that insurgents from Ranchi, Hazaribagh and Palamau were wending their way to join Kunwar Singh who had gone away to Uttar Pradesh. The military pensioners were strongly suspected and an executive order was issued in letter no. 1434 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, dated the 25th August, 1857 asking that all the pensioners should present themselves within a given period before the officers through whom their pensions were given.

An extract dated, Camp Ranchi, the 1st November, 1857, signed by the Commanding Field Force, Ranchi, gives a long list of the sepoys of the Ramgarh Light Infantry Battalion that were transported for a period of 7 years and some to 14 years for rebellion. The orders were given in a court martial held under the provisions of Act XIV of 1857 and by Major MacDonnel, Commanding Field Force of Ranchi, Chotanagpur.

Foreign Miscellaneous Records No. 383 preserved in the National Archives at New Delhi has a list of persons who had rendered loyal services to the British Government and were rewarded. This list mentions Jagat Pal Singh, Parganait of Lohardagga with the following observation :—

" He was given title of Raja Bahadur and a *Khillut* for holding the Pithoria *ghat* against two companies of the mutinous sepoys of the Native Infantry and maintaining a communication

with the Officiating Commissioner of Chotanagpur during his absence from Ranchi." The list also mentions Maharaja Jagannath Shahi Deo of Lohardagga who, along with his nephew and cousin, received the thanks of the Government. The Raja of Jhalda was also mentioned as one of the persons that had rendered good service to the British. Regarding him the despatch mentions :—" The Raja was a prisoner in the Hazaribagh jail and was released by the mutineers. He made use of his liberty to close the passages between Ranchi and Purulia to prevent the mutineers from moving in that direction. He received a remission of his previous sentence."

The Maharaja of Chotanagpur and his three nephews were suitably commended for their steady loyalty. It may be mentioned here that the passive loyalty of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur was, in a way, a great help to the British.

A few others were also recommended for their ' loyalty ' for the *Khillut* of double-barrelled guns. They were Baraik Hari Singh, Emum Bux Khan, Baraik Jabbu Singh, Thakur Bhim Singh, Chammun Singh and Becham Misser.

The immediate effects of the Movement should be briefly summarised. With the restoration of peace, normal conditions were quickly restored. The Missionaries came back with the redoubled vigour and by openly taking up the cause of the Christian Adibasis against the Thikadars and Zamindars they had a very easy field to spread the gospel. In quick succession three other Missions, namely, the English Mission, the Dublin University Mission and the Catholic Mission were established. As a matter of fact, Ranchi district afforded a vast field for conversion to the Missionaries throughout Chotanagpur.

The shop-keepers, the *Amlas* and the *Dikkus* also returned to the district with the restoration of order. The changes in the administrative set-up have already been indicated. The immediate work of the administrator was to pacify the aboriginals. The Christian Missionaries backed their own fold and gave open fight in the court on behalf of the tenants to the landlords. The landlords went on instigating false cases of dacoities against the Christians and were openly helped by the Hindu Zamindari police. The incidence of crime in the decade that followed the restoration of the order in the country should not be gauged from the statistics of riots, affrays, murders and plunders. Tenancy legislation was thought to be necessary. The introduction of the Civil Procedure Code in 1859 was followed by Act X and in 1872 the Chotanagpur Tenures Act was passed. The Police Act of 1861 was quickly implemented followed by the Hazaribagh and Lohardagga Rural Police Act in 1878 and the Chotanagpur Rural

Police Act of 1887. The Registration Act was passed in 1865 and the first Registrar of the district was Mr. H. L. Caliphant. Ranchi Municipality was constituted in 1869. All these measures were calculated to tone up the tempo of the people and to introduce a better type of administration.

But in spite of these attempts some of the basic causes of discontent were not removed as could be seen in the later *Sardari Larai* and the other agrarian disturbances of 1889-90, Birsait Movement in 1894-95 and again in 1900.

CHAPTER VI.

A REVIEW.

An objective study of the facts of the 1857 movement in the districts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas shows that there were diversities in the trends due to the circumstances peculiar to the districts although to the discerning eye a common pattern because of the uniformity of the basic elements in the Adibasis could be made out. Although the trends in the different districts have been discussed a short comparative review may be useful.

The 1857 movement in the districts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas cannot be described as a sudden outburst due to a set of immediate causes. The roots of the movement have to be appreciated with the background in the past few decades, if not from the decade when the British infiltrated. In Santhal Parganas the 1857 movement following absolutely on the wake of the Santhal revolt of 1855 could not spread. The authorities were alert after the Santhal revolt of 1855. They had tried to remove the basic causes for the Santhal revolt of 1855 to a certain extent. The Santhals were crushed and the memory of their sorrows was too fresh and poignant and it is no wonder that they had not joined *en masse* the movement within two years of Santhal revolt. That is the reason why the movement of 1857 in Santhal Parganas could quickly be suppressed.

If the British had learnt a good lesson by the Santhal revolt of 1855 and had been able to convince the Santhals and the other indigenous population of Santhal Parganas that they were serious about their welfare, the authorities in Singhbhum or the other districts in Chotanagpur did not take to heart the lessons of the earlier movement. We have seen that in Hazaribagh there was a Santhal revolt almost on similar lines as in Santhal Parganas. But in Hazaribagh the authorities did not think it at all necessary to do anything to appease the Santhals or the other indigenous elements of the population. In Singhbhum district the great Kol rebellion was an eye-opener. The authorities did take some steps but they had not been able to enter into the genius of the Hos and other aboriginals there. The set-up that was framed in the wake of the Ho revolt was not as thorough as the steps that were taken in Santhal Parganas. Then again in Singhbhum district there was a certain amount of lust for power on the part of the British authorities and they were deliberately playing into the hands of some chiefs and trying to emasculate others. This pattern was being worked out with a certain amount of complacence but the peace was the peace of the grave and not the result of good administration. The British authorities were not able to carry the people of Singhbhum or Hazaribagh district

along with them. That is why both in Hazaribagh and in Singhbhum districts the military revolt was taken up by the civil population and there was an excitement which pervaded the entire countryside. Not only the aboriginals but the other elements of the civil population also threw their lot along with the disbanded sepoys. Whether active or passive they all had their sympathy with the revolutionaries. It is true that both in Hazaribagh and in Singhbhum districts there were powerful chiefs who were acting on behalf of the British and that is why the movement could be suppressed quicker. In Hazaribagh district the Raja of Ramgarh and in Singhbhum district the Raja of Seraikela and the Thakur of Kharsawan were actively helping the British. There was a divorce between the common man and the powerful Rajas and the British fully utilised the difference. In the district of Ranchi the military revolt was taken up by only a section of civil population. Here also big chiefs like Maharaja of Chotanagpur actively helped the British. The military was not joined by the civil population *en masse*. But a few landlords, much inferior in status and influence to the Maharaja of Chotanagpur, did join the movement. But it was easy for the British to suppress the movement in Ranchi district quickly, firstly because the insurgents were guilty of a certain amount of avoidable bloodshed and arson on the civil population and secondly because the Maharaja of Chotanagpur had a unique position in the district. If the Maharaja of Chotanagpur had thrown his weight on behalf of civil population there would have been a great conflagration.

But the district that was most severely affected was Palamau. In this district the whole countryside was aflame and it was a real national uprise. The common man and the landed proprietor made a common cause. There was less of the movement from the military but more from the civil population. It was in this district that one of the two causes of a rebellion, namely, a sense of power acted as the main inspiration. The Bhogtas and the other tribal chiefs realised their helplessness in the present set up and really wanted to throw away the halter round their neck.

It was true that there was no single leader of the stature of Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur (Shahabad) in Chotanagpur. It is also correct that there was not much of a concerted move among the different sections. But this was partially due to the fact that the superior military strength of the British could easily crush the insurgents. After all the small zamindars could only muster some of the rusty guns and swords that they had and the aboriginals fought with their bows and arrows. They were no match to the superior military equipments of the British. But even if the movement was quickly suppressed it can safely be said that the movement in portions of the Chotanagpur districts could well be described as a popular and national movement.

Another fact emerges from a study of the movement and that is the almost common pattern of the character of Adibasis throughout the districts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. Highly emotional and simple but not unintelligent, easeloving but not averse to very exacting physical and mental hardships, if necessary, they have an almost crazy adoration for their traditions, institutions and above all their lands. Whenever there has been a movement among the Adibasis in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas it is because of a deep-rooted idea that what that they value and love is being affected. The movement in these areas can be crushed by police and military action but cannot be rooted out. That should be a lesson for us.

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BSP (Rev.) 11—Lino—1,000—13-1-1959—KNP and others.