

HISTORY
OF THE
PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

J. J. A. CAMPOS







PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

*Aguas do Gange, e a terra de Bengala,
Fertil de sorte que outra não lhe iguala.*

Camões, *Lusiadas*, Canto VII, Stanza xx.

Here by the mouths, where hallowed Ganges ends,
Bengala's beauteous Eden wide extends.

Mickle's *Trans.*



DE BARROS' MAP OF BENGAL (1550 circa) — Asia, Dec. IV, Pt. II, page 451.

Portuguese in Bengal, 1919

[Frontispiece.



DE BARRIOS MAP OF BENGAL (1550 circa) — Asia, Dec. IV, Pt. I, page 451.

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HISTORY OF THE
PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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INTRODUCTION

Mr. Campos has collected some interesting facts relative to the commercial, political and religious enterprises of the Portuguese in Bengal. The work done by the Portuguese as pioneers of European commerce in this part of India has not, perhaps, been sufficiently recognized, for it may truly be said that they paved the way for the commercial ventures of the Dutch, the English and other European nations. Mr. Campos quotes an array of authorities in support of his account, which shows that the Portuguese, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, occupied a position in Bengal comparable to that of the British in the middle of the eighteenth, with their settlements and factories, not only at the principal ports, Hughli and Chittagong, but at many other places in Eastern and Western Bengal, and as far up the Ganges as Patna. The earliest British mercantile adventurers in Bengal and the adjacent countries established themselves, naturally, at places where the Portuguese had already found openings for European commerce. Some of the Portuguese settlements in Bengal became virtually independent of the Mughal rulers of India, being directly subject, for a time, to the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Government of Ceylon.

The causes of the decline of the Portuguese power in the East, and the hostilities between the Portuguese in Bengal and the Mughal Emperor, culminating in the Mughal attack on Hughli, the heroic defence, and the tragic fall of that place, are briefly sketched in this book. There is a striking parallel between the early history of Hughli and that of Calcutta, though the circumstances of the taking of Hughli by Kasim Khan in 1632, differed greatly from those of the

capture of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-daula in 1756, which led to the establishment of the British Empire in India.

The Portuguese were the first to introduce Christianity in Bengal, and their Missionaries of different Orders were active at all their settlements. Christian Churches and settlements still existing are the most conspicuous and enduring memorials of Portuguese influence in this province.

The first type-printed works in the Bengali language were a Catechism, a Compendium of the Mysteries of the Faith, and a Vocabulary, published at Lisbon in 1743. It is difficult to realize now, that, at one time, Portuguese was the common language of the important centres of maritime commerce in India, spoken by Europeans of all nations, who came to trade in this country and by the Indians who did business with them. Current Indian languages contain many Portuguese words, most of them connected with trade, or the Christian religion, or names of articles of common use, imported from Europe.

Mr. Campos has evidently devoted much care to the compilation of the book and has drawn on Portuguese sources not often utilized by students in this country. He has been careful to refer to the authorities for statements made by him and his work is, I think, an useful contribution to the history of Bengal and bibliography of the subject with which it deals.

CALCUTTA, 9-1-19.

F. MONAHAN

PREFACE

This work has grown out of a series of lectures delivered on the "History of the Portuguese in Bengal," in commemoration of the fourth centenary of the advent of the Portuguese in the Bay of Bengal.* It is scarcely necessary to explain the *raison d'être* of the book for, in spite of the existence of vast stores of material for a history of the Portuguese in Bengal, there is not a single comprehensive work on the subject. Most of the information about the Portuguese, given in modern historical writings and scattered in the Calcutta Journals and in the Bengal District Gazetteers, is fragmentary and often erroneous.

No Portuguese writings, except Captain Stevens' misleading translation of Faria y Souza's *History*, have been generally taken into account, and some errors of Faria y Souza himself, which F. Danvers perpetuated, have gained ground. Considering that the Portuguese were the earliest Europeans to found settlements in Bengal, that other European nations generally established themselves on or near the very places which had grown into centres of trade owing to the Portuguese, and that the influence which the Portuguese once exerted is still working silently in Bengal, a work presenting their history in a correct perspective is evidently a pressing need. The production of this book will, I hope, supply this long-felt need. I am conscious of its many imperfections which were unavoidable owing to the stress of other duties which left me little leisure, but I have spared no effort to sift truth from tradition, to obtain unvarnished historical accuracy,

* The lectures were delivered at the Union Chapel Hall, Calcutta, under the auspices of the *Indo-Portuguese Association* and the *Young Men's Union*, on the 3rd, the 10th, and the 17th

April, 1918, the first and the second being presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Greaves, and the third by the Hon'ble Mr. F. J. Monahan, I. C. S. Presidency Commissioner of Bengal.

and to present a connected account of the rise, the fall and the relics of the Portuguese in Bengal.

In the preparation of this work I cannot claim to have exhausted all the sources of information, but I can say I have utilized the chief Portuguese writings and balanced them with contemporary foreign and Indian writings. The importance of the Portuguese writings lies in that they give valuable information not only about the Portuguese doings in Bengal but also about the general history and geography of Bengal. In this work I have, however, confined myself to the essential facts about the Portuguese only, compelled as I was by other duties to set narrow limits to it. In the near future, it is my intention to bring out a contribution to the History and Geography of Bengal, based on Portuguese and other European writings, which have not yet been utilized or exist in scarce and scattered fragmentary studies. The materials for such a work are numerous and should fill volumes.

I must express my gratitude to the Hon'ble Mr. F. J. Monahan, I. C. S. for generously consenting to write an introduction for the work, to Mr. O. Lys, Acting Consul for Portugal for much encouragement and a donation towards the costs of printing, to Dr. H. W. B. Moreno B. A. Ph. D., my learned colleague in *The Century Review*, for many valuable suggestions, to Mr. H. M. Rogers, who has always been my ready helper, to Mr. E. Boxwell and Dr. P. Bragança e Cunha for much kindly assistance, and to Mr. S. P. Banerjee for carefully revising the proof sheets.

My thanks are due in a special measure to the Revd. Fathers of the St. Xavier's College, my old professors, for having kindly placed at my disposal, their "Count Goethals Indian Library," which contains valuable Portuguese works and also to the Revd. Vicars of the Portuguese Churches in Bengal, who very kindly furnished me with information regarding the Churches entrusted to their care.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the management of *The Bengal Past and Present*, for their courtesy in lending for this book, the blocks of the illustrations facing pages, 58, 108, and 149.

The orthography followed in the book is that of the Bengal Gazetteers, but the Portuguese proper names, with a few exceptions, have been spelt as in the Portuguese language.

J. J. A. CAMPOS

CONTENTS

| | PAGES |
|---------------------|-----------|
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | XVII—XXVI |

PART I

THE RISE OF THE PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

CHAPTER I

PORTUGUESE EPIC PERIOD

| | |
|--|------|
| A General Outline—The Taking of Ceuta, 1415—Prince Henry, the Navigator—England, an Ally—First Discoveries—The Dawn of Trade—Prince Henry's last Successes—Dom Affonso V, 1438-1481—Dom João II, 1481-1495—Peres de Covilhão and Paiva Affonso—Bartholomeu Dias, 1486—Vasco da Gama, 1497-1498—The Period of Conquests—King Manoel, 1495-1521—Dom João III, 1521-1557—Dom Sebastião, 1557-1578—The Extent of Trade—The Epic—The Verdict | 1—18 |
|--|------|

CHAPTER II

BENGAL

THE PARADISE OF INDIA

| | |
|--|-------|
| Bengal at the time of the Advent of the Portuguese—The "Bengalas"—Geography of Bengal—Chittagong—Satgãon—Topography of the Hooghly—Bengal, an attraction for Pirates—Bengal Trade | 19—25 |
|--|-------|

CHAPTER III

EARLY EXPEDITIONS TO BENGAL

| | |
|---|-------|
| The First Traders—D. João de Silveira, 1517-1518—Ruy Vaz Pereira, 1526—Martim Affonso de Mello Juzarte, 1528—The Ransom of Martim Affonso de Mello, 1529—Second expedition under Martim Affonso de Mello, 1533—Antonio da Silva Menezes, 1534—Sher Shāh, 1535—Diogo Rebello, 1535—Sher Shāh's Invasions and the Portuguese Successes, 1536—First Settlements in Chittagong and Satgãon, 1536-1537—Affonso Vaz de Brito, 1538—The Campaigns of Sher Shāh and Humāyūn, 1538—Vasco Peres de Sampayo, 1538... | 26—43 |
|---|-------|

CHAPTER IV

PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS IN THE HOOGLHY
DISTRICT

- Hooghly—Common Errors about the Portuguese Settlements in the Hooghly District—The First Settlement, Satgāon, 1537-1538—A Muhammadan Account of the Settlements—Other Accounts—Second Settlement, Hooghly, 1579-1580—Pedro Tavares, the Founder of the Settlement of Hooghly, 1579-1580—When Hooghly was founded ... 44-54

CHAPTER V

THE GROWTH OF THE SETTLEMENT OF
HOOGLHY

- Hooghly, 1580—The Decline of Satgāon—Question of a Fort in Hooghly—Portuguese Government in Hooghly—Derivation of 'Hooghly' ... 55-65

CHAPTER VI

PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS IN EASTERN
BENGAL

- Chittagong, 1537—Capture of the Fort of Chittagong—Sandwip, 1602—Battles with the King of Arakan—Second Attack on Sandwip—Career of Carvalho—The Sites of the Portuguese Settlements—'Cidade de Bengala'—The Settlement of Dianga—Filippe de Brito e Nicote—The Massacre of Dianga, 1607. ... 66-80

CHAPTER VII

THE RISE OF SEBASTIAO GONSALVES TIBAU

- Sebastião Gonsalves Tibau, 1605-07—Sandwip, Further History—The Second Conquest of Sandwip, 1610—Gonsalves, an Independent Ruler, 1607-1610—Marriage Relations between the Portuguese and the Royal Family of Arakan—Gonsalves, a treacherous ally, 1610 ... 81-87

CHAPTER VIII

MINOR SETTLEMENTS OF THE PORTUGUESE

| | |
|---|-------|
| Dacca—Sripūr—Chandecan—Bākla—Catrabo—Loricul —Bhulua—Hijili—Tamlūk—Pipli—Balasore | 88—99 |
|---|-------|

CHAPTER IX

PORTUGUESE MISSIONARIES

| | |
|---|---------|
| The Jesuits—Bengali Children Educated in Goa—Jesuits, 1617—Augustinians—Augustinians in Chittagong, 1621— Missionary Disasters, 1632—The Return of the Augustinians 1633—The Return of the Jesuits, 1640—The Rivalry between the Portuguese and other Missions, 1834 | 100—111 |
|---|---------|

CHAPTER X

PORTUGUESE TRADE IN BENGAL

| | |
|---|---------|
| Porto Grande—Porto Pequeno—Manrique's Account of Portuguese Trade—East India Co. Records—Portuguese Exports—Local Commerce and Industries. | 112—120 |
|---|---------|

PART II

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE PORTUGUESE
IN BENGAL

CHAPTER XI

THE PERIOD OF DECADENCE

| | |
|---|---------|
| General Decline—The Follies of the Spanish King—The Dutch in Bengal—The English in Bengal—The French in Bengal—The Danes in Bengal | 121—127 |
|---|---------|

CHAPTER XII

THE FALL OF HOOGLHY

| | |
|---|---------|
| The Siege of Hooghly (1632), Causes—Muhammadian Versions of the 'Casus Belli'—The Siege—The forces engaged in the Attack and in the Defence—First attack—The fight continues—The Flight, Sept. 24th 1632—The Losses on either side—The Survivors—The Prisoners | 128—140 |
|---|---------|

CHAPTER XIII

THE RETURN OF THE PORTUGUESE TO HOOGLHY

| | |
|--|---------|
| The Return to Hooghly, 1633—The Privileges of the Portuguese—The Explanation of the Return—The Miracle—The Property of the Crown or the Church—After the Return—Commercial Rivalry. | 141—153 |
|--|---------|

CHAPTER XIV

EASTERN BENGAL

THE FALL OF GONSALVES AND THE RISE OF PIRACY

| | |
|--|---------|
| The Fall of Gonsalves, 1615—1616—Character of Gonsalves—The Rise of Piracy—The Offer of Chittagong to the Mughals—Portuguese relations with Piracy—The Pirate <i>Damião Bernaldes</i> —The Practices of the Pirates— <i>Shaista Khān's</i> Conquest of Chittagong (1665—66) | 154—168 |
|--|---------|

PART III

RELICS OF THE PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

CHAPTER XV

THE RELICS

| | |
|--|---------|
| General outlines—Portuguese Descendants or Luso-Indians—The Portuguese Language—Portuguese Archaeological remains—Geographical names—Plants introduced by the Portuguese in Bengal. | 169—176 |
|--|---------|

CHAPTER XVI

PORTUGUESE DESCENDANTS (LUSO-INDIANS)

General—The Goans or the Goanese—Common Luso-Indian Surnames in Bengal—Common Luso-Indian Christian names in Bengal—Different elements in the Luso-Indian community—First Group, Pure Indians with Portuguese names—Second Group, True Luso-Indians—Third Group, Luso-Indians with English names—Luso-Indian Merchants—The *Barrettos*—The *de Souzas*—Luso-

| | PAGES |
|---|---------|
| Indian soldiers and mercenaries in the Eighteenth century— | |
| Luso-Indians in the English and in the Nawāb's army— | |
| The Luso-Indians during the capture of Calcutta and the | |
| Black Hole Tragedy—The Sack of Hooghly, 1756—Luso- | |
| Indian militia—Luso-Indian life—In Eastern Bengal— | |
| Luso-Indian statistics, Calcutta—In Hooghly—In Midnapore | |
| —In Eastern Bengal—Chittagong, Noakhali, Bākarganj, | |
| Dacca | 177—203 |

CHAPTER XVII

PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

| | |
|--|---------|
| General—Luso-Indian and Feringhi words—Anglo-Indian | |
| words of Portuguese Origin—Bengali words of Portuguese | |
| Origin—Assamese words of Portuguese Origin—Oorya words | |
| of Portuguese Origin—Hindustani words of Portuguese | |
| Origin | 204—227 |

CHAPTER XVIII

PORTUGUESE CHURCHES

| | |
|--|---------|
| Bandel Convent, Hooghly : Privileges of the Convent— | |
| 1757—Public Faith and Traditions—A Nunnery—Immorality | |
| in Bandel? | 228—238 |
| The Roman Catholic Cathedral, Murghihatta, Calcutta : | |
| Foundation, 1689—Protestant worship in the Church—Erec- | |
| tion of the present building | 238—243 |
| Church of Our Lady of Dolours, Boitakhana, Calcutta ... | 243—244 |
| Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Dharamtala Street, | |
| Calcutta | 245 |
| The Church of Jesus, Maria, José, Chinsura | 245—246 |
| Church of Santa Madre de Dues, Serampore | 246 |
| St. Patrick's Church, Dum-Dum | 246—247 |
| Church of St. Nicholas of Tolentino, Nagori, Dacca | 247—249 |
| Church of Our Lady of Rosary, Tesgāon, Dacca | 249 |
| Church of Our Lady of Rosary, Hasnabad, Dacca | 249—250 |
| Church of the Holy Ghost, Tuitai, Dacca | 250 |
| Church of Our Lady of Piety, Dacca | 250 |
| Church of Our Lady of Guidance, Shibpur, Bākarganj ... | 251—252 |

ADDENDA

| | |
|---|---------|
| I. Some Plants introduced by the Portuguese in Bengal... | 253—258 |
| II. Appeal of a Portuguese from Calcutta to Queen D. Maria I of Portugal (1784) | 258—262 |
| III. Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, a Luso-Indian Poet ... | 263—265 |
| IV. Feringhī Kali, Calcutta | 265—266 |
| V. Early Indian Christians of Eastern Bengal ... | 266—268 |
| VI. The Dominicans in Bengal | 268—269 |
| VII. A Governor of Chittagong slain by the Portuguese ... | 269 |
| VIII. Luso-Indian names | 269 |

MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. De Barros' Map of Bengal (1550 <i>circa</i>) ... | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| 2. Sketch Map of Hooghly River showing the sites of European Settlements | <i>To face page 44</i> |
| 3. Ruins of a supposed Portuguese fort in Hooghly | " 58 |
| 4. Fr. J. Tieffenthaler's <i>Hugli Bander</i> (1765) ... | " 108 |
| 5. Hooghly Survey Map of 1886, Sheet No. 1, Sect. 1, showing the plan of the Northern portion of Hooghly | " 149 |
| 6. Henry Louis Vivian Derozio | " 263 |

CORRIGENDA

| Page | Line | |
|------|----------|--|
| 22 | 2 | for "joins it higher up" read "flowing southwards joins the Hooghly above Sankrail." |
| 43 | 3 | for "conducted" read "conducted" |
| 52 | 17 | for "wife" read "wife's name" |
| 54 | 8 | for "be" read "he" |
| " | note I | for "Akbarname" read "History of India" |
| 90 | note I | for "Pilgrimes" read "Pilgrimes, Vol. X." |
| 93 | 19 | for "wreek" read "wreck" |
| 94 | 11 | for "the earliest settlement" read "one of the earliest settlements" |
| " | 15 | for "was referred" read "referred" |
| 102 | 4 | for "church*" read "church" |
| 105 | 2 | for "Nicote" read "Nicote's" |
| " | 23 | for "1622" read "1632" |
| 107 | 6 | for "280" read "380" |
| 110 | 9 and 10 | for "The Marquis...premier" read "the Portuguese government" |
| 115 | 8 | for "cinammon" read "cinnamon" |
| 118 | 7 | for "unstinced" read "unstinted" |
| 130 | 8 | for "intervened" read "interviewed." |
| 132 | 10 | for "his" read "her" |
| 148 | 13 | for "historian" read "historic" |
| " | 15 | for "seige" read "siege" |
| " | 18 | for "280" read "380" |
| 150 | note † | for "elsewhere" read "in the Addenda" |
| 205 | 23 | for "Quarterly" read "Quarterly" |
| 206 | 18 | for "the some" read "some" |
| 227 | I | for "Bengali" read "Hindustani" |
| 244 | 12 | for "Jesoph" read "Joseph" |

The references to the pages of *The Bengal Past and Present* relating to the quotations from Manrique's *Itinerario* are not correct as the pagination of the reprints, which were consulted, did not correspond to the original pagination of the *The Bengal Past and Present*. But there will be no difficulty in finding the correct page, when the No. of the Journal is known.

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the third in 1563, and the fourth was left in disorder at the time of the author's death. As arranged and completed by Lavanha it was published in 1613. The whole history deals with the affairs up to 1539. The best edition is the one published along with Couto in 1777-78 in 24 volumes. The fourth Decade contains a chapter especially devoted to the history of Bengal and an invaluable Map which though published in 1613 is based on the author's drawings. Its date may be roughly set down to 1550, and as such it is the earliest Map of Bengal.

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a long time employed at Goa. He wrote nine decades in continuation of de Barros treating of the history of the Portuguese from 1526 to 1600. The first decade of de Couto overlaps the last decade of de Barros. The eleventh decade is lost. The sixth decade was touched up by Adeodato, Couto's brother-in-law, and is not of much value. The edition consulted is of Lisbon 1778—1788.

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PART I

THE RISE

OF THE

PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

HISTORY OF THE PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

CHAPTER I

THE PORTUGUESE EPIC PERIOD

Cesse tudo o que a Musa antigua canta,
Que outro valor mais alto se alevanta.*

Camões, Lusiadas Cant. I St. iii.

Four centuries have sped since the Portuguese first drank of the waters of the Ganges. It was 1517. King Manoel, the fortunate (*o venturoso*), whose reign was immortalized by the discovery of the sea-route to India, was on the throne of Portugal. Queen Elizabeth was not yet born and over eighty years were yet to elapse before she was destined to sign the memorable charter which originated the East India Company. Baber had not come down from the heights of Kabul to found the Mughal Empire. The Portuguese had, however, already established the foundation of an Eastern Empire and were already pushing their power to Bengal.

A General Outline

* Cease, ye heavenly Muses, songs of ancient lore,
A greater star now rises on Creation's shore.

Trans. J. C.

D. João de Silveira was the first Portuguese commander* of an expedition to come to Bengal. In 1517 he landed on the coast of Arakan whence he steered towards Chittagong staying in the Bay for a considerable portion of the year 1518. He had come to Bengal not as an itinerant foreigner like the Venetian Nicolo Conti or the Bolognese Ludovico Di Varthema. Like the ancient Megasthenes, who was perhaps the first European to behold the Ganges, Silveira came to Bengal as the envoy of a European nation—of that small nation, shot into the western corner of Europe, geographically occupying an area of barely 34,000 square miles but historically great in civic feats and martial triumphs. He belonged to that race that had scurried the Moors out of Portugal and had hotly pursued them into Africa, conquering such possessions as Ceuta, Fez, Morocco, Macau, Mozambique, Congo, and Guinea ; that had even penetrated into their stronghold in Asia establishing their supremacy in such rich Eastern centres as Goa, Malacca, Ormuz, Cochin and Ceylon. The Portuguese visited Bengal when their long-cherished dreams about the creation of an Empire in the East were about to be realized. The dawn of the sixteenth century had ushered in a period of conquest as the close of the fifteenth century had witnessed the culmination of discovery. As early as 1494 Spain and Portugal, known together as Iberia to Herodotus and the Greeks, and called Hispania by the Romans, had already divided between themselves the eastern and western hemispheres.

A glance on this great movement that revolutionized an age and marked a new era in discovery and geographical expansion, revealing to man "more than half the globe" !

* Silveira commanded the first expedition to Bengal but he was not the first Portuguese to come to Bengal, as stated by modern writers. João Coelho was in Chittagong before Silveira, and many Portuguese, specially from Malacca, had come to Bengal in Moorish ships as roving traders. Besides, the Portuguese who had settled in Pipli (Orissa) in 1514 had visited Hijili (Western Bengal) about the same time.

On a July morning in the year 1415 the waters of the Tagus witnessed the departure of an esquadron of 59 galleons, *The Taking of Ceuta,* 63 transports and 120 various kinds of *1415* vessels carrying 20,000 soldiers and 30,000 sailors against the Moorish stronghold of Ceuta*. On the 21st of the next month Ceuta passed into the hands of the Portuguese after a glorious and well-contested fight with the Moorish Chiefs. Overwhelmed with joy the King of Portugal knighted on the battlefield his three sons, one of whom was the renowned Prince Henry the Navigator, and the other Dom Pedro, the first foreigner to be elected Knight of the Garter. It was the first conquest, the first firm foothold on the coast of Africa. The effect of the conquest was magical. The whole nation rose as one man in a burst of enthusiasm. The spirit of discovery and conquest was kindled and Portugal dreamt of greatness at the cost of the vast, unknown lands where a legend placed a Prester John† and of a boundless sea that extended from her shores to—where?

The national sentiment would have, however, been strangled and all aspirations suffocated unless a master-hand had guided the energies of the Portuguese people. With the times arose the man. *Prince Henry, the Navigator* This genius was the Prince, known to immortality as Infante Henrique. Strong, daring, and determined, his one ardent desire was to rescue from the oblivious empire of the sea, lands that were unknown or else indifferently regarded by the rest of the civilized world. But the task was not easy. The current opinion was that Africa was not circumnavigable. Hipparchus had

* Ceuta, situated on the African side of the Straits of Gibraltar, was strongly fortified and defended by the bravest portion of the Muhammadan population.

† Prester John, a semi-mythical Asiatic potentate of the Middle Ages, was supposed to be both king and priest of a Christian country between Persia and Armenia. Modern scholars identify him with Gur Khan founder of the Black Cathay Empire in the XII. century.

stated that Africa was a big continent extending to the South Pole and that there was no sea, but was shut up by land. Ptolemy had adopted his opinions and the Greek geographers had mapped out about the equator of the earth an uninhabitable land which they fancied as being surrounded by a torrid zone of fiery heat, where life would be scorched by the blazing sun. The Prince, however, was convinced of the error of these views by the power of inspiration which is the gift of genius. In the twilight age of geographical knowledge he fought, with the firmness of his conviction, the geographers and the existing beliefs. He vowed to show that Africa was circumnavigable and that in all probability there existed a maritime route to India.* He found heroes equal to the task. It is difficult to say whether the people made the man or the man the people. A race Celtic in origin but mixed with Roman, Carthaginian, Gothic and lastly Semitic blood had developed into heroes and sages. When Prince Henry proposed the conquest of Ceuta the whole nation rose to the call. Even the dying queen† was foretelling days of grandeur on her death-bed, and when consoled that she would yet see Portugal emerge glorious was murmuring with lips that were soon to close for ever :—

“No.....yes, from above. My death will not, however, detain you a moment. In a week, for the feast of San Thiago.....” She had breathed her last.

It is interesting to note that in the expedition to Ceuta

* It is not certain whether Prince Henry was fully convinced of the existence of a sea-route to India, but he had hopes of reaching India by rounding the southern point of Africa.

† Queen Phillipa, wife of Dom João I, and mother of Prince Henry was an English Princess being the daughter of John of Ghaunt, Duke of Lancaster. She was so high-souled that on her death-bed she gave a sword to each of her five sons in order to wield it in defence of the country, widows, orphans and especially against infidels.

England sent some help to Portugal and encouraged a wealthy Englishman to take with him four ships laden with provisions. There had been amicable relations between England and Portugal since King João, the father of Prince Henry had signed with Richard II of England the Treaty of Windsor in 1386 and had tightened the bond of alliance by his marriage with Phillipa of Lancaster. Prince Henry the Navigator was, therefore, the nephew of Henry IV of England and great-grandson of Edward III.

The whole of Europe was so astounded at the conquest of Ceuta that Prince Henry was invited by the Pope of Rome, by the Kings of England and Castille and by the Emperor of Germany to take command of their forces on land and sea. His dreams were however different. He had bridged over the Atlantic and had united Portugal and Africa. He would not rest satisfied until the whole continent of Africa was explored and, if possible, the maritime route to India discovered. He erected an observatory and established a naval school on the promontory of Sagres in Algarve where he collected the best geographers and mathematicians. It was in this school that Columbus learnt the first principles of navigation. Absorbed in his sea-problems he discussed here the probability of the existence of new worlds and investigated the secrets of the sea and the winds. Here he built those small barques of one mast, or two in the case of long voyages, with which the first Portuguese argonauts braved the fury of the sea. It was here that for the first time the possibility of sailing round the continent of Africa and ultimately reaching India was established.

It was the time when sailing a few degrees beyond the Straits of Gibraltar was considered to be a wonderful feat.

The last limit of Spanish exploration was Cape Non, (*No*) and as its name indicates it was thought to be impossible to double its rocky point where the winds and waves beat furiously. Prince Henry, however,

England, an Ally

First Discoveries

knew no impossibilities. Year after year he sent expeditions till at last Cape Non was passed. Zarco at the head of an expedition landed about 1418 in the Island of Madeira. This discovery was the first result of Prince Henry's explorations. Another expedition driven eastward by the winds discovered Porto Santo. In 1433 Gonçallo Velho discovered the Azores; In 1434 Gil Eannes at last doubled Cape Bojador and dispelled the age-long superstitious belief, that none would return who rounded it.

However successful the Prince may have been there were not wanting captious minds who questioned what was, barring an empty glory, the material benefit of these discoveries. He was too far in advance of his age and had to battle with ignorance and blind prejudice. The geographers still ridiculed the belief in the existence of a sea route to India. The enormous cost of the expeditions was not worth incurring for the barren gain of a cape or a coast land. But the Prince was inflexible and the nation stood by him. He was conscious, however, that a small country like Portugal could not fit out so many expeditions without risking financial ruin. He was sure on the other hand that there would finally grow up between Portugal and the discovered lands a trade which would enrich her beyond measure. He, thereupon, prevailed on the Pope to concede to the crown of Portugal the perpetuity of all lands beyond Cape Bojador including the Indies, on the ground that he had to contend at an enormous expense against the infidels of the African coast. The vast revenues of the Order of Christ at first provided him with necessary resources for his daring plans of conquest and discovery.

What the Prince anticipated was at last realized. In 1439 one of his expeditions entered Porto Cavalleiro and for the first time brought gold and slaves to Portugal. Here at last was the material advantage of the discoveries clearly demonstrated. Gold quickened the

desire for more gold. The very same critics who had tried to convince the nation that the cost of the Prince's expeditions was more than she could bear, laid down their pens and flocked to the Bay of Lagos. Not only in Portugal but all over Europe there was a feverish excitement to navigate under the Portuguese flag. Success followed success. One expedition explored the coast as far as Cape Blanco and another going beyond Cape Blanco discovered Arguin in 1445. Thus regions lying 300 leagues distant from the continent were revealed to the knowledge of man. The sea was dark no more.

In 1447, a new fleet was in preparation. To bring rich cargoes of merchandise, gold and slaves small boats were no longer serviceable. They now built caravels

*Prince Henry's Last
Successes*

with two to four masts, weighing 50 to 150 tons. This was the type of ships which

made the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries notable for a wonderful geographical expansion. The next year a fleet of these caravels entered the Gulf of Arguin and laid the foundations of the first military fortress. In 1455-56 Luigi Cadamosto, a Venetian gentleman who commanded the Navigator's expeditions, not only discovered Cape Verde Islands but cruised along the Senegal, the Gambia and the Rio Grande. Prince Henry was not unfortunately destined to live long to see the fruit of his enterprises. Death came to claim him in 1460 amidst his plans still unfructified and maps still incomplete. He left, however, in the hearts of his people the love of discovery and conquest. The motto which graces his statue to-day—"Talent de bien faire"—is a striking testimony to his genius and his greatness.

Dom Affonso V, who was on the throne of Portugal at this time had the enterprising spirit of his uncle Prince Henry

*Dom Affonso V
1438-1481*

but did not possess his energy. Moreover in the latter part of his reign his attention was directed towards his war with

Spain for the succession of Queen Joana to the crown of

Castille. He entrusted all the maps, which his uncle had not lived to complete, to a Venetian in the Convent of San Miguel of Murano. The completion of the new map took three years to accomplish. In this map, *Cavo Di Diab* (Cape of Good Hope) was distinctly laid down as the southern-most extremity of Africa and to the north-east of it, *Sofala* and *Xengibar* (Zanzibar) were correctly marked, 30 years before Dias doubled the Cape of Good Hope or Covilhão landed in Sofala from a Moorish ship. In 1461, a year after the Prince's death Pedro de Cintra, who was entrusted by the king with two caravels, discovered Sierra Leone and went some miles southwards. Fernão Gomes, on the other side, who had bought the monopoly of trade with the African coast went for the first time two degrees south of the equinoctial line and woe to the geographers ! he was not scorched by the fancied fire of the sun. A period of inactivity followed, synchronous with the war with Spain. The kingdom of Prester John was still obscure ; there was not the faintest sign of the gorgeous and mysterious land of India. After half a century of voyages Portugal had only collected a little gold and a few slaves. The national sentiment was growing cold.

Dom Affonso's son, João II, now ascended the throne and a new era dawned. He set to work with all the energy of Prince Henry but was unfortunate, however, in that he treated Columbus as a visionary when he submitted to him his schemes of a wonderful discovery.* He sent an expedition under Diogo Cão, who in 1484 went up to the Zairie and discovered Congo, sailing 200 leagues beyond. On his voyage back, Diogo Cão brought with him an ambassador of the King of Benin who requested the King of Portugal to send

Dom João II
1481-1495

* It must be said to the credit of Dom João II that he himself was ready enough to accept the proposals of Columbus, but he was overruled by his Council.

missionaries to his kingdom in order to establish there the Christian religion. He also spoke of a powerful king named Ogane, who wielded temporal as well as spiritual power over a large number of people dwelling 350 leagues in the interior of Benin. Could he be the Prester John of the legend? The description tallied. The time was opportune for the propagation of the Christian religion and for commercial expansion.

He lost no time in despatching in search of Prester John, Peres de Covilhão and Paiva Affonso whom he knew to be the fittest men as they had been in Barbary before and knew Arabic well. They started in May 1487, went to Naples, thence to Rhodes, Alexandria and Cairo. In Cairo they joined a company of Moors who were going to Aden, where they learned of the profits that could be derived from the trade with Calicut. They parted at Aden and agreed to meet again in Cairo. Paiva went to Ethiopia, Covilhão bent his way towards India. With his good knowledge of Arabic and fascinating manners he made friends with the Moorish traders he came across. In their ships he travelled to Cananor, to Calicut, to Goa, to Ormuz and even to Sofala. His object was to observe and draw a map of his travels for his king. He saw at Calicut an enormous trade of ginger, pepper, cloves and cinnamon. In Sofala he gained the valuable information that all along the west, the coast may be sailed and that not far off lay the Island of the Moon (*Lua*) now known as Madagascar. He immediately communicated to the King all he had seen and learned, assuring him that if he sent an expedition to sail along the coast of Sofala the vast Island of the Moon would be in his hands. He also suggested the possibility of crossing the eastern seas and reaching Calicut. He at last returned to Cairo in order to meet his friend Paiva, only to find that he had died some time before. Here ended all that Covilhão did for the Portuguese Empire. His future career was quite

singular. He went to Ethiopia and penetrating near Zeila at last reached the court of Prester John whom the Portuguese people were determined to reveal for almost a century. The legend was not wholly a myth. The discovery was memorable. Covilhão was however a changed man. He renounced the west for the luxuries and gorgeousness of the East. He did not even care to give an account of his discovery to the King. Neither did he see Portugal any more. He spent 33 years of his life in the court of Abyssinia, where he was the leading spirit. It is worthy of note that to Covilhão belongs the honour of having been the first to mark the itinerary of the voyage to India showing that the East might be reached by cruising round the south of Africa.

King João not hearing anything from Covilhão, prepared another expedition under command of the renowned navigator Bartholomeu Dias. This memorable expedition consisted only of one tender and two ships weighing 50 tons each. With the object of reaching India he sailed southwards along the route which Diogo Cão had traced and reached the bay named Dias Point. Against rough weather he persisted in a southerly direction until he reached the southern point of the Orange River. He called it *Angra das Voltas* or Cape of Turns. The storm increased in fury. With ragged sails and battered ships the crew were driven mercilessly along the coast. But Dias did not flinch. Suddenly the weather changed. Why was it so terribly cold? Dias guessed the position of land was some geographical landmark. With the skill of a navigator he turned in an easterly direction and then steered northwards. He had achieved a feat of far-reaching importance and he knew it not. He had rounded the Cape. He continued his course and endeavoured to ascertain where he really was. He reached a small island, where he planted a pillar with a cross on a rock which still survives. This island is known as Santa

Cruz. He hardly realized still that he was treading the land beyond the Cape where no European had yet ventured to appear. He had braved fierce winds. His crew clamoured for return. He turned west and the reality dawned upon him. He sighted the Cape and found to his surprise that he had rounded the southernmost point of Africa. He called the cape *Cabo Tormentoso*, (Stormy Cape) in memory of the tempests and high winds that assailed this vast promontory.

When Dias returned to Portugal the people were in raptures. The passage to India which haunted the dreams of Prince Henry was now within reach. Amidst the acclamation of the people, the King, buoyant with hopes of reaching India, changed the name of the Cape into *Cabo de Boa Esperança* (Cape of Good Hope.) This was the last discovery which King João II rejoiced over, before his death.

The era of navigation saw its climax in the reign of King Manoel who ascended the throne in 1495. Two years later the new monarch with Bartholomeu Dias, was occupied in presiding over ship-building works and the construction of a new fleet. This fleet consisted of only four ships of 100 to 200 tons each. Why, then, this great sensation on the shores of Belem? The King was sending Vasco da Gama to discover the sea-route to India. After attending Mass in the chapel of Santa Maria de Belem in the midst of the nobility of Portugal, da Gama sailed out from the Tagus, on the 8th of July 1497* with the fleet which was destined to lay open the gates of the mysterious East. He passed the Canaries, Cape Verde Islands, San Thiago, St. Helena, and then turned towards the Cape of Good Hope. He sailed to Mombassa, Mozambique and Melinde where there were already a handful of Portuguese. At Melinde they took a pilot and sailing northwards reached the coast of

* This date is the one given by de Barros. Correa fixes the date on the 25th March, Osorio on the 9th July.

Calicut in August 1498.* The riddle of centuries was solved. East and West had met.

When da Gama allowed a Portuguese convict to land in Calicut a Moor from Tunis asked in Castilian "*Al diablo que te doy, quem te trouxe aqua?*" †

The Moor, the Moor again—in Portugal itself, on the coast of Africa and now again in India. What was the reply?

"*Vimos buscar Cristãos e especiarias*". ‡

Christians first and then spices. The incident shows that the object of the Portuguese discoveries was more to convert new people to Christianity than to establish commercial relations.

Portugal did not still rest satisfied. In 1500 Alvares Cabral set out with an imposing fleet from the shores of Portugal, commissioned by the King to establish commercial relations with India. He had, however, his own ideas. Steering eastwards in the Atlantic he asked himself—what lay to the west? In the northern hemisphere Columbus had discovered the Indies. Were there no Indies in the southern hemisphere? He determined to explore. The result was the discovery of Brazil.§ Within the next five years Ascension Island (1501) St. Helena (1502) and Ceylon (1505) were discovered. In 1506 Tristão da Cunha explored in the Atlantic, the Islands known by his name and in the same year the veil which covered the Island of the Moon or Madagascar was lifted. In 1507 the Maldivé Islands, in 1509 Malacca and Sumatra, in

* It is not quite correct to suppose that da Gama *first* landed in Calicut. He first landed in Pantalani and not in modern Calicut. As to the exact date of da Gama's arrival there are quite a dozen different versions. De Barros and Goes give 29th August, Correa 18th September, Castanheda beginning of September.

† "May the devil take you, what brought you here?"

‡ "We have come to seek Christians and spices."

§ De Barros, Goes and Osorio state that Cabral was driven westwards by the gales ascribing the discovery of Brazil to chance. The author of the *Lendas* has another story. However, recent researches based on the letters written to Dom Manoel show that Cabral deliberately bent his way westwards in the Atlantic.

1512 the Moluccas and China were explored. In 1519-22 Magellan at last penetrated the portentous Pacific, landed in the Philipines and for the first time in the history of mankind sailed round the world.

The discovery of the sea-route to India! What was its meaning for the world? When the Moorish sword was hanging over the fate of Europe, the discovery struck a blow to the Moorish power in Asia checking its onward advance. It gave the deathblow to the trade of three continents that passed through the Arab gates, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf,—to this trade that had made the East proverbial for wealth and embellished the dreams of the Arabian Nights. Portugal was now no longer the *discoverer*. She was the *conqueror*. Early in the sixteenth century the entire trade of Europe, Asia and Africa was by force of arms wrested from Moorish hands by the bold Portuguese. Albuquerque that astute and far-seeing administrator, the first European after Alexander the Great to dream of an Eastern Empire and the first European who actually held sway in the East, since the Tartars had driven out the last of the Greeks from Bactria, had already achieved his memorable conquests by 1515. He had secured in safety three most important centres on the Eastern coasts: Malacca, commanding the straits through which the trade of India and China passed; Ormuz that commanded the other channel through which the traffic of the east was forced to pass on its way through Persia and thence to Europe; and Goa, on the Malabar Coast, which eventually became the Portuguese metropolis in the east where flocked the traders from Arabia, Melinde, Sofala, Cambay, Bengal, Pegu; merchants from Siam, Java, Malacca, Persia, China and even America. Every vessel that passed the Persian Gulf had to first pay the Portuguese toll at Ormuz; and even the African vessels that crossed the Red Sea paid their toll at Muscat. The

Portuguese commercial supremacy was now firmly established in the East and her flag waved triumphantly on an almost unbroken coast from Gibraltar to Abyssinia and from Ormuz to Malacca.

In the reign of King Manoel, the reign immortalized by the discovery of the sea-route to India, factories were established

King Manoel
1495-1521 in Calicut, Cananore and Cochin, (1500). The Kings of Quiloa* and Baticola were forced into submission (1502). In 1503 the first Portuguese fortress in India was erected at Cochin. Mombassa was occupied in 1505 and in the same year forts were erected at Quiloa, Angedive† and Sofala. The fortress of Socotra was captured (1506) and a settlement established there and in Ormuz. In 1510 Goa was finally conquered. Malacca (1511) and Ormuz (1515) the two keys to the main Arab channels of commerce passed into the Portuguese hands. In 1517 the Portuguese penetrating into China settled at Canton establishing factories at Shangch'wan and Ningpo. In the same year the Portuguese began to visit Bengal. A fort was erected in Ceylon, in 1518, and treaties of peace were signed with the Kings of Siam (1518) and Pegu (1515). In 1521 the Portuguese supremacy was firmly established in the Malay Archipelago and forts were erected at Pacem (Sumatra) and Ternate (Moluccas).

The reign of Dom João III, which followed, marked a period of the foundation of towns and the establishing of settlements. On the Coromandel coast
Dom João III
1521-1557 were founded the cities of St. Thomé of Mylapore, of Negapatam and of Jafnapatam. In the Moluccas, Tidore was made tributary to the crown of Portugal.

* Quiloa is not the same as Quilon. The former is an island off the coast of Lanzibar, and was a kingdom in Africa. The latter (Coulão of the Portuguese) was a kingdom and a city south of Cochin.

† Angedive is an island two miles off the coast of North Canara.

On the northern coast rose the Portuguese cities of Chaul Bassein and Damaon and various towns on the coast of Cambay. Forts were built in Diu and Chale. In Ceylon were raised the towns and forts of Galle, Negumbo, Baticola and Trincomali. On the coast of China was founded Macau which still belongs to Portugal.

On King Sebastião ascending the throne, the Portuguese empire in the east flourished for a time but soon after its decadence began. In the earlier part of his reign the conquered foes were pacified and Portugal was reaping the benefits of her former struggles. It seemed the new King might easily occupy the throne of the Great Mughals and the destinies of a vast empire pass in his hands. The successes were, however, the last flashes of a flickering flame, about to be extinguished. Mombassa was secured and a fort erected; more forts were raised in Mangalore, Barielore and Onore (Canara province), in Siriam (Pegu) and in Sena and Jete on the rivers of Cuama. And then the town of Hooghly was about to be founded in Bengal. The Moorish vessels were swept from the Indian Ocean while the Portuguese vessels sailed with safety in the eastern seas commanding all the principal sea-routes.

Well may Faria y Souza be stirred to ecstasy when he speaks that his country's power extended from the Cape of Good Hope to the frontiers of China embracing a coast line of not less than 12,000 miles.

The riches which the Portuguese commercial enterprises brought to the nation are inconceivable. From Japan came fleets laden with silver. China furnished gold, silks and musks. Cloves were shipped from Moluccas; spices and nutmegs from Sunda, cinnamon from Ceylon, wood from Solor, camphor from Borneo. From Bengal came rich varieties of cloth; from Pegu the finest rubies; from Masulipatam valuable diamonds;

from Manar pearls and seed-pearls. The Maldives were explored for amber; Cochin was sought for raw hides; Malabar for pepper and ginger; Canara for all sorts of provisions; Cambay for indigo and cloth. Linseed was conveyed from Chaul, incense from Casem; horses from Arabia; elephants from Jafnapatam; carpets and silks from Persia, aloes from Socotra; gold from Sofala; and ivory, ebony and amber from Mozambique. Above all vast sums of money came from the gateways of commerce—Ormuz, Goa and Malacca, and from the tributes paid by the kings under Portuguese suzerainty.

One can scarcely imagine this violent superhuman impulse which led a small nation to immortalize two centuries of discovery and conquest. To say that a fort was built in Ormuz or that Malacca and Goa were captured is easy enough. It is difficult, however, to realize what sacrifices it entailed. The East which the Portuguese found was far, far different from the East which the English and Dutch found when they sought for facilities of trade. The Portuguese had to overthrow the influence of the Moors when their avalanche was threatening to sweep through the whole of Europe and make the way easy for themselves and, incidentally so, for other European nations. They succeeded, but the nation small as it was, and is, soon exhausted itself in the attempt. When the Portuguese came to India they had not to deal with savage tribes as the Spaniards and the English found in America, but they were confronted with a civilization much older than that of Europe and with theological and philosophical speculations whose antiquity extended far beyond the times of Greek and Roman legends.

Fortunately the soul of the nation found expression in an epic—the sublime epic of Camões in which as Montesquieu says* the poet combines the charm of the *Odyssey* with the magnificence of the *Æneid*. Though the golden age of the Portuguese has

The Epic

* *Spirit of Laws* (Nugent) xxi, 21.

departed, the song that the poet sang still burns bright immortalizing the flame of Portuguese genius. By a strange irony of fate the *Lusiadas*, "that Homeric apotheosis of a great, heroic people" was voiced forth at the hour of their fall. Were Camões to add any more strophes to the *Lusiadas* they would constitute an elegy, not an epic.

Fallen, as is the Portuguese Empire in the East, it may be well to quote the verdict pronounced on the Portuguese by the *Historians' History of the World*.*

The Verdict

"If the Portuguese had been as skilful speculators as they were intrepid sailors and distinguished warriors, Henry the Navigator, who set the example of maritime conquest, Dias, Vasco Da Gama, Cabral Albuquerque, valiant captains identified with all the glories of the Aviz dynasty, would have imitated the speculative prudence of the Dutch, their rivals. And if, when the illustrious house of Braganza opened the era of national liberties, the people had had in their heads less of poetic imagination, and more power of reason; if, courageous and adventurous as they were, they had shown themselves more positive, the French, at first, and then the English, would never have invaded their treasury, exploited their soil, and paralyzed their industries. Truly a child-like nation, satisfied with little, pursuing the ideal, economical without avarice, pure in morals, sober, generous, hospitable, the Portuguese have bred heroes in place of diplomats, poets in place of capitalists."

In the glowing picture of the heroic age of the Portuguese one cannot fail to discern the shadow of crime that followed in the wake of their triumphs; but which nation has been spotless? Portugal abused her power; but when was not abuse the curse of mankind? The Portuguese efforts for dominion in the East have been attended with much violence

* *Historians' History of the World* Vol. X p. 425.

and bloodshed but one cannot help gazing in wonder on the enterprise and valour of a small nation that taught the world a new geography and opened the gates of the East to the West.

CHAPTER II

BENGAL

"The Paradise of India"*

When in quest of new horizons and a wider scope of activities the first Portuguese bent their way to the shores of Bengal the reigning dynasty was that of the Lodi independent kings who had thrown off the yoke of Bakhtiyār Khilji's successors in 1338. Syūd Husain Shāh, known as the most powerful of the independent kings of Bengal, was on the throne and held his court in historic Gaur, which was, it is computed, a magnificent city five or six centuries before Christ. Gaur was to Bengal what Delhi was to Hindusthan. It was still magnificent and opulent, seat as it was of a thousand kings, though Husain Shāh in a freak of fancy had allowed his soldiers to plunder it on his ascending the throne. The dynasty of the independent Kings lasted only up to 1538 when Sher Shāh, the Tiger, made himself master of Bengal. In the beginning the Portuguese had, therefore, to contend with the Muhammadan chiefs and only a few years after, with the successors of Sher Shāh. Neither the Lodi rulers nor the Afghāns were so liberal-minded as the Mughals proved to be when after the fall of Daūd Khān in 1576 they wrested the kingdom of Bengal from the Afghān chiefs.

* A Memoir by Monsieur Jean-Law, Chief of the French Factory at Cossimbazar says : "In all the official papers, *firman*s, *parwanas* of the Moghal Empire, when there is question of Bengal, it is never named without adding these words "Paradise of India", an epithet given to it *par excellence*". Cf. Hill's *Bengal in 1756-57*. Vol. III p. 160. Aurangzeb is said to have styled Bengal, "the Paradise of nations."

The Portuguese found a vast majority of Hindus in Bengal ruled by a minority of Muhammadans for more than 300 years, that is, since the defeat of the last Hindu King Lukshmanya and the taking of Nadiā in 1203. Until the battle of Plassey in 1757, that is, for more than five centuries and a half, Bengal was practically in the hands of the Muhammadan chiefs, strangers to Bengal by race and custom if not by birth. Hindu principalities flourished for a time but seldom exerted any considerable influence on the government of Bengal as a whole. Peaceful by disposition, docile and easy going, the people of Bengal were submissive to this foreign rule and apparently content with seeing their liberties not trampled upon and the virtue of their wives protected from force in their cloistered seclusion. But given the opportunity, the Bengalees were ready to rise against the Muhammadans and join with the new European comers as they did when Sebastião Gonsalves conquered Sandwīp and ordered the Hindus to deliver up to him every Moor in the land.

The Portuguese historians dwell much on the wickedness of the "Bengalas". De Barros remarks: "the people natural to the land of Bengal, are mostly Hindu, weak in fighting but the most malicious and treacherous in the whole East; so that to injure a man anywhere (*sic*) it is enough to say he is a Bengala".* The Portuguese historian seems to have erred in the application of the word "Bengalas", whom the Portuguese in India referred to as treacherous in the reports sent to Portugal. By "Bengalas" the Portuguese in India did not only mean the Hindus but the Muhammadan rulers of Bengal who were indeed most malicious and treacherous especially towards the Portu-

* De Barros, Dec. IV. Liv. IX Cap. I p. 457.

Whiteaway says in his *History of Rise of Portuguese Power in India*, that a Portuguese description of the Bengalis calls them "False and thieves, people who get up quarrels as an excuse for robbery" See p. 233, n. 1.

guese whose earliest expeditions they had either treacherously put an end to or tried their best to do so in every covert manner. Hence de Barros who had never come to India probably confounded "Bengalas" with the "native people of Bengal" and ascribed to the latter the character which the rulers of Bengal possessed.

The geography of Bengal was not exactly what it is to-day. It was an irony of fate that in India towns and cities should have risen and fallen, depending as they did on the fickleness of a river that shifted its course here and there ; or on the whims of a ruler who fixed his heart on a newer spot ; or still more on the grim destinies which in every age create kingdoms and as quickly destroy them.

When the Portuguese came to Bengal, Chittagong was its chief port, and the main gateway to the royal capital Gaur. Its geographical position lent it importance.

Chittagong Situated as it is at the mouth of the Meghna, this port was most convenient for navigation. The Meghna was the principal route to Gaur, the other being up the Hooghly. With the fall of Gaur, Chittagong began to decline, and trade was diverted to Sâtgāon, which in its turn was supplanted by Hooghly. Chittagong was always a bone of contention between the Rajas of Bengal, Arakan and Tippera, who strove for supremacy over the seaport until the Mughal conquest of Bengal. All the Portuguese commanders that came to Bengal first entered Chittagong. In fact to go to Bengal meant to go to Chittagong. It is the "city of Bengala" referred to in the early Portuguese writings. They named it *Porto Grande* (great port) in contradistinction to their *Porto Pequeno* (small port) in Sâtgāon. Hooghly eventually came to be known as *Porto Pequeno*.

From ancient times the chief port and emporium of trade on the Western side of Bengal, was Sâtgāon, situated on the

river Saraswatī, which branches off from the Hooghly below Tribeni and joins it higher up. The main current of the Hooghly till the middle of the sixteenth century streamed through the Saraswatī; hence the importance of Sātḡāon which was more accessible to larger ships. The town of Hooghly was then a mere collection of huts. Sātḡāon was the Saptagrama that figures so prominently in the ancient Puranas. It was so called because it consisted of seven villages on the banks of the river Saraswatī, each of which was occupied by one of the seven sons of the Rishi King Pryavanta. This district undoubtedly played an important part in the Mauryan civilization. It is Sātḡāon (*Gangē*) that is probably described by Ptolemy as the capital of the *Gangaridæ*, Saraswatī being the *Ganges Regia*.* The unknown author of the "Periplus of the Erythræan Sea" who wrote in the first century A. D. speaks of Sātḡāon thus: "There is on it (Ganges) a mart called after it *Gangē* through which passes a considerable traffic consisting of betel, the Gangetic spikenard, pearl and the finest of muslins, those called the Gangetic".† There were times when the muslins of Dacca shipped from Sātḡāon clad the Roman ladies and when spices and other goods of Bengal that used to find their way to Rome through Egypt were very much appreciated there and fetched fabulous prices. Till the middle of the 16th century large vessels sailed up to Sātḡāon with merchandise. In the reign of Akbar it brought an income of 12,00,000 *dams* or 30,000 rupees.‡ This historic port was, however, destined to decline on the advent of the Portuguese, chiefly because the river Hooghly diverted its current through the main channel, and caused the silting up of the Saraswatī which became unsuitable for naviga-

* Wilford's *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. V., p. 278.

† McCrindle's *Commerce and Navigation of the Erythræan Sea* p. 146.

‡ Gladwin's *Ayin Akbari* pt. II, p. 472.

tion. Fifty years ago the Saraswatī was a dead river, with its bed traversed by a few chains of pools. To-day, however, it is a running stream even in summer as water is let into it from the Kala Nadā in connection with the Eden Canal Scheme. The Portuguese called it *Porto Pequeno* (small port) as it was of lesser importance than the port of Chittagong.

De Læet who in his *India Vera* (1630) described Sātḡāon as a beautiful town drew largely upon his imagination. In 1660 Van den Broucke called it a village and by 1870 the proud name of Sātḡāon, the *Gangé* of Ptolemy, was applied to a collection of eleven huts. A ruined mosque can be seen at Sātḡāon even to this day attesting to its former glory.

The river Hooghly was not navigable for larger vessels higher up than the Adhi-Ganga (Tolly's Nollah) but lighter craft could transport to Sātḡāon and other places on either bank of the river the goods which the Portuguese disembarked at

*Topography of the
Hooghly*

Garden Reach. The topography of the Hooghly river was not very different from what it is to-day. Kalikatta (Calcutta) was an insignificant village on the left bank. The towns of Hooghly, Chandernagore, Chinsura, Serampore and Barrackpore did not even exist in name. They flourished only as European settlements. An idea of the villages on the banks of the Hooghly can be well formed by the following description of the voyage of Kabi Kankan who wrote the famous Chandi in 1577 (1499 of the Saka Era). Going down the Hooghly from Burdwan to the Sea, the poet passed or touched at the following places :—

“ Floating down the river Ajai the boats came to Indrani. Further down they passed Bhrigu Sinha's Ghat on the right and Materi Ghat on the left. Then they passed Chandi Gach ; Balanpur Ghat ; Puravastali ; Navadip ; Parpur ; Mirzapur ; Ambua on the right side, Santipur on the left, Guptepara on the right ; Oola Kismar Fula, Joshepur Kodal Ghat, Hali-shahar on the left side, and Tribeni on the right ; Sapt-

gramma (Sātḡāon), Garefa (Gouripur), Andalpara, Jagathal, Nowpara, Teliapur, Nunai Ghat, Mahesh on the right side and Kurdaha, Konnagar, Kotrung, Kuchinan, Chitpur, Sulkhia, Kalikatta (Calcutta) Bithoor (Betor or modern Howrah). Leaving on the right, the way to Hijuji (Hijili) they turned to the left, passed Balughata, Kali Ghat, Mirnagar, Nachangacha, Vaisnav Ghata, Barasat, Chatra Bhuj, Ambri Bhuj, Hithagar and then came to Mogara."* How many of these places are not familiar to us to-day, and with a slight change in the orthography, do appear in our most modern guide-books?

The geographical position of Bengal has considerably influenced its history. Away from the heart of India, Bengal was a refuge for fugitive princes who like Humāyūn, Sher Shāh and Shāh Jahān made it the scene of their bloody exploits. Southern Bengal, woven as it is by a network of rivers as no other part of India, was calculated to offer the sea-faring people like the Portuguese the greatest scope for their instincts of navigation and love for adventure. Unfortunately this very geographical character of Bengal, fostered a greed for piracy and plunder, the terrors of which still form the darkest themes of popular tradition. In a labyrinth of rivers, the adventurers could dive and dart, appear and disappear, ravage the country and escape with impunity. Hence Bengal has been the victim of exploits and depredations of foreign and native adventurers alike,† who inclined by temperament or driven by circumstances looked to privateering as the best and most convenient method of making a bid for wealth. Before the Sundarbans became a nest of pirates, this unfortunate part of Bengal, a prey to the wickedness of men and no less to the whims of the rivers was not in such a flourishing condition as some writers have made

*Bengal, an Attraction
for Pirates*

* *Calcutta Review* No. 186. Oct. 1891, p. 373.

† The Portuguese were not the only nor the worst offenders. Cf. Chap. XIV.

it out to be. The ruins of the villages and towns marked by de Barros and Van den Broucke in their maps and overspread to-day by thick jungles, indicate according to Blochmann* mere attempts at civilization. Westland† has moreover shown that the desolation of the Sundarbans is due to the changes of the river system of the Delta, and Beveridge‡ in his enquiry, "*Were the Sundarbans inhabited in ancient times?*" comes to the conclusion that it is very doubtful indeed that the Sundarbans were ever largely peopled, and still more so that their inhabitants lived in cities or were, otherwise civilized.

Regarding the trade and wealth of Bengal, the Portuguese had the most sanguine expectations which did not, indeed,

Bengal Trade

prove to be far from true. Vasco da Gama had already in 1498 taken to Portugal the following information: "*Benguala* has a Moorish King and a mixed population of Christians and Moors. Its army may be about twenty-four thousand strong, ten thousand being cavalry, and the rest infantry, with four hundred war elephants. The country could export quantities of wheat and very valuable cotton goods. Cloths which sell on the spot for twenty-two shillings and six pence fetch ninety shillings in Calicut. It abounds in silver."§ From time to time Albuquerque had written to King Manoel about the vast possibilities of trade and commerce in Bengal. When the Portuguese actually established commercial relations in Bengal, they realized to their satisfaction what a mine of wealth they had found. Very appropriately, indeed, did the Mughals style Bengal, "the Paradise of India".

* H. Blochmann, *Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal*, p. 23, reprinted from J. A. S. B. 1823, pt. I.

† *Report on the District of Jessore.*

‡ *History of The District of Bâkarganj*, p. 169.

§ Appendix to the *Roteiro of Vasco de Gama.*

CHAPTER III

EARLY EXPEDITIONS TO BENGAL

For almost twenty years after Vasco da Gama discovered the sea-route to India, the Portuguese had no definite commerce with Bengal. The goods of Bengal, indeed, *The First Traders* found their way in native crafts to Goa, Malacca and other Portuguese ports. As evident from the letters sent from Malacca to Portugal, the Portuguese had visited Bengal in these crafts even before D. João de Silveira, who came with the first expedition to Bengal, but these were passing tradesmen who sold or exchanged their goods at the first port in Bengal they touched at, and then availed themselves of any vessels to repair to their own havens.

Albuquerque who with a lynx-eye had surveyed the whole map of the East had not left Bengal out of his reckoning; but his attention was absorbed with affairs on the other side of India. Besides, he had only a limited number of ships and with those that he had, he preferred to consolidate the conquests he had already made, rather than embark on new ventures in trying to secure the trade of Bengal and China. He, however, informed King Manoel* about the possibilities of trade in Bengal, and probably acting upon his injunctions the King sent in 1517 Fernão Peres d'Andrade with four ships particularly to open a trade with Bengal and China. This captain sailed towards Sumatra, took Pacem, filled his ships with chillies and other commodities and learning that the goods would fetch a higher price in China, sailed towards the Chinese coast thinking

* On Dec. 1513 Albuquerque wrote to King Manoel "Bengal requires all our merchandise and is in need of it." *Cf. Doc. de Arch. Nacional da Torre do Tombo* p. 300.

of returning to Bengal at a later date. But a candle flame by an accident set fire to his largest ship and he was forced to return to Malacca where he hoped to replace the lost vessel. On his way back he sent a messenger to Bengal in a Moorish ship as an advance agent to announce his arrival. This man was João Coelho who had arrived at Chittagong before Silveira. Fernão Peres, however, explored the coast of China, secured its trade, returned laden with riches, but never realized his hopes of coming to Bengal.

D. João de Silveira* was sent to Bengal from the Maldives with an expedition by Lopo Soares de Albergaria, the Governor of the Portuguese possessions in the East, who had succeeded Albuquerque.

D. João, de Silveira
1517-1518

The Governor sent three other expeditions at the same time to Malacca under D. Aleixo de Menezes; to Diu under Manoel de Lacerda; and to the coast of Arabia under Antonio de Saldanha. The Governor himself went with an expedition to Ceylon and on account of some commercial disputes compelled the King to become a vassal of the King of Portugal, and to pay a yearly tribute of 12,000 *Quintals*† of cinnamon, twelve rings of rubies and sapphires, and six elephants. To ensure the Portuguese interests, he built a fort thus laying the foundation for the conquest of Ceylon, which proved to be one of the richest Portuguese possessions in the East. All the expeditions that had sailed at this time were successful but the one that came to Bengal. Silveira landed in a port situated, according to de Barros, at the mouth of the river Arakan that flowed from the country called Arakan itself ‡ and where the King of the place resided. As Chittagong

* For an account of Silveira's expedition see de Barros Dec. III. pt. I. Chap. III. p. 135 *et seq*. There were at least four Portuguese captains by the same name João de Silveira. The one that came to Bengal was the nephew of the Governor Lopo Vaz de Sampayo according to Correa.

† Each *quintal* was equivalent to 128 lbs.

‡ At present, Arakan is the most westerly division of Lower Burma

was at this time the chief port in the whole of Bengal Silveira moored there and found that João Coelho whom Fernão Peres d'Andrade had sent in order to announce his arrival had already arrived at Chittagong in a Moorish vessel, by a curious coincidence belonging to Gromalle himself. Silveira sent with a messenger his compliments to the King of Bengal* asking in the name of the King of Portugal for facilities of trade and for permission to erect a factory where the Portuguese merchants could rest during their voyages and exchange goods with other parts of India; but the messengers were never received. During Silveira's voyage to the Maldives an event had occurred which influenced the fate of this expedition to a great extent. He had captured two ships that were going from Bengal to Cambay and sent them to Cochin. These ships belonged to a Moor named Gromalle who was related to the Governor of Chittagong. Silveira took over in his own ship the pilot of the captured ships and his nephew who were from Bengal. The latter pretended to be a great friend of the Portuguese and even informed Silveira about some of the plans of the country; but no sooner did he land in Bengal than he related to the Governor at Chittagong all that had happened. The Governor covertly made preparations for a fight taking Silveira for a corsair, though Silveira had no intentions what-

consisting of a narrow tract which extends from Chittagong Division to within 90 miles of Cape Negrais. The old kingdom of Arakan was practically the same in boundaries as the present Division. The capital of Arakan was Myo-haug and this is the City of Arakan referred to by Portuguese writers.

* It is doubtful who this king was. Husain Shāh was at this time King of Bengal but according to the *Rājmalā*, the King of Tippera conquered Chittagong from him in 1512. O'Malley, *Chittagong Gazetteer* p. 22, says, "in 1517, when, as mentioned later it was visited by John de Silveira it was a port held by the Kings of Arakan." For a statement like this there is no evidence in the Portuguese historians. On the contrary de Barros says, Dec. III. pt. I. p. 142, that at this time the King of Arakan was a vassal of the King of Bengal. Any way, it is related that Nasir-ud-din Nasrat Shāh, the son of Husain Shāh reconquered Chittagong from the King of Arakan.

soever but those of commercial interests. The suspicious and unfriendly manner in which the early European merchants were received by the Indian rulers, impelled them in a large measure to constitute themselves into a military power. The Portuguese originally came only for purposes of trade and evangelization. From the difficulties that were put in their way and from the consequent commercial disputes, arose the necessity of defence by arms, and from this grew up the idea of conquests.

Suspecting nothing of the attack that was about to be made against him, Silveira was waiting still to open negotiations. The Governor was, however, well disposed towards Coelho, as the Moors who had come from Pacem along with him and who had received good treatment from Fernão Peres, gave favourable reports about Coelho to the Governor, who naturally thought that while Coelho was the real messenger of the King of Portugal, Silveira was actually a corsair. Silveira, knowing nothing about what was passing, would not allow João Coelho to arrange the trade matters preferring to do so himself as he was the real ambassador sent by the Portuguese Governor. Meanwhile food ran out and Silveira found himself in the necessity of capturing a boat full of rice. This pretext served the Governor's intentions. He suddenly opened fire from land and Silveira had to defend himself with great difficulty. He did not give in, however, though his men were about to die of starvation and spent the whole of winter in the Bay of Bengal as he could not return during the rains.

The only revenge Silveira could take, was to paralyze the whole sea-trade of the Governor's ports. He must have, indeed, stopped all shipping in the Bay, because the Governor who was expecting the arrival of some ships which he knew very well Silveira would capture, made overtures of peace. During these negotiations Silveira learnt how well disposed the Governor was towards Coelho. Coelho being allowed to land, arranged the

terms of peace with the Governor and sent food stuffs to Silveira. But the Governor never really meant to stand by the treaty. As soon as the Governor's ships landed unmolested by the Portuguese, he made war again on Silveira. Coelho was meanwhile on land. The Moors who had come in the new ships, also knew well João Coelho and Fernão Peres d'Andrade and confirmed the earlier reports as to how favourable these two captains had been to the Moorish people. Coelho used all his influence in favour of Silveira but the Governor* was obstinate in his hostility towards Silveira. Coelho, thereupon, sailed to China, and Silveira bent his way towards the coast of Arakan, where he had first touched. The King of Arakan was at this time subject to the King of Bengal, and his city, called Arakan itself was, according to de Barros, 35 leagues from Chittagong. On opening negotiations, the King sent a messenger with a precious present of a ruby ring assuring Silveira that though he was not well received in Chittagong he would be pleased to be friends with the Portuguese. Silveira however came to know in time that the offer was part of a treacherous plot that was laid in order to capture him just after landing. Unsuccessful and disappointed, he sailed to Ceylon and was given the command of the Fort of Ceylon which Lopo Soares had built sometime before.

Although Silveira had achieved nothing, it became an established custom from the time of Silveira's visit to Bengal to send annually to Bengal a Portuguese ship with merchandise. According to this yearly custom of sending ships, the Governor Lopo Vaz de Sampayo chose Ruy Vaz Pereira† to command the ship going to Bengal in 1526. Having entered Chittagong with his merchandise, Ruy Vaz Pereira saw in the

Ruy Vaz Pereira
1526

* Though the Governors of Chittagong were subject to the authority of the Kings of Bengal or of Arakan, they seem to have acted largely on their own.

† De Barros, Dec. IV. pt II. pp. 466-7.

port a galleot belonging to one Khājah Shihāb-ud-dīn (Coge Sabadim), a rich Persian merchant, built after the Portuguese fashion in order to plunder merchant ships and ascribe the crime to the Portuguese. Ruy Vaz Pereira immediately captured this galleot and took it along with him with all its merchandise. It was this event, as it will be seen, that eventually contributed to the liberty of Martim Affonso de Mello, after two years of captivity.

In 1528 an expedition commanded by Martim Affonso de Mello* landed by a curious chance on the coast of Bengal.

*Martim Affonso de
Mello Fusarte, 1528*

This Captain had built a fort in Sunda where he had gone with eight ships and four hundred men. He then sailed to Colombo and put to flight *Pate Marcar*, the captain of the King of Calicut, who was coming to attack King Cotta of Ceylon, the Portuguese ally. Proceeding on his voyage he was overtaken by a storm, and his ships being driven adrift he was left stranded on a sandy bank near the island of Negamale opposite the city of Sodoé.† Some fishermen promised to guide him to Chittagong but they played him false and took him to Chakariā ‡ which was under the Governorship of Khudā Baksh Khān (Codovascam), a vassal of King Mahmūd Shāh III, the last independent ruler of Bengal. This King kept a gay and rich court at Gaur, his women alone, according to Faria y Souza, amounting to ten thousand. As Khudā Baksh Khān had a feud with a neighbouring chief, he employed the Portuguese to fight for him promising to give them liberty and leave to go to their destinations. They won for him the victory but far

* De Barros Dec. IV. pt. I. p. 171 *et. seq.*

† Neither Negamale nor Sodoé has been marked by de Barros in his Map of Bengal, *Da Asia, Dec. IV.* The city of Sodoé referred to is obviously the town of Sandoway in Burma (Arakan).

‡ Chakariā is a police division of the Chittagong District containing at present a thana and a subregistry. De Barros speaks of it as "the city called Chacuriá".

from keeping his promises he imprisoned them in his city of Soré* situated on a river which emptied in the sea eight miles away. This was the second instance of treachery the Portuguese met with in Bengal.

Two of the ships of Affonso de Mello that had gone adrift during the storm reached Chakariā under Duarte Mendes Vasconcellos and João Coelho, probably the same Coelho who had joined Silveira in Chittagong. These captains tried to ransom Affonso de Mello with all the goods they had brought in their ships but Khudā Baksh Khān demanded more. As a last bid for safety, Martim Affonso de Mello made an attempt to escape with the co-operation of Coelho and Vasconcellos but it proved unsuccessful. And then followed a tragedy. The Brahmins† had made a vow that if they ever caught hold of the Portuguese they would sacrifice to their gods the most handsome of them. The man sacrificed was the nephew of Affonso de Mello himself, named Gonçalo Vas de Mello, a young man on whose cheeks, as de Barros says, the downy plush of youth had not yet begun to appear—“*Jeune homme d'une figure charmante et d'une très haute espérance*”, as Van der Hout describes him.

Nuno da Cunha, the son of the famous Tristão da Cunha whose name is borne by three islands in the Atlantic, was at this time the Governor in Goa. Although he concentrated most of his energies on obtaining fortresses in Bassein and in rocky Diu as defence against the powerful Muhammadans of Gujrāt, his cherished ambition was to secure

*The Ransom of
Martim Affonso de
Mello, 1529*

* Soré is marked by de Barros in his Map of Bengal and also by Van Blaeu in his Map in *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Vol. II. It is placed south-east of Chittagong further in the interior.

† The fact that the Brahmins vowed to make sacrifices of foreigners in the face of a Muhammadan Government would show that they had some power in the land. Couto, however, explains that they obtained their victim by bribing the Moors. Dec. IV, Liv. IV, Cap. X. p. 323.

the trade of Bengal and gain a footing on its shores. With this object in view he fitted out many expeditions to Bengal. It happened that Khājeh Shihāb-ud-dīn referred the matter of the capture of his galleot to Nuno da Cunha and agreed to ransom Affonso de Mello for 3000 *cruzados** if he got back his vessel. His vessel, with all its goods, was restored to him and he indeed ransomed Affonso de Mello in 1529 and sent him with his cousin Khājeh Shakr-Ulla (Coge Sukurulá) to Goa. Khājeh Shihāb-ud-dīn became now a great friend of the Portuguese and with their help he determined to free himself from some trouble he had got into with Nasrat Shāh, the Sultan of Bengal, and to escape to Ormuz in a Portuguese vessel. He promised to use his influence with the king to give them great facilities for trade and even to give them permission to build a fort in Chittagong, if they would only send an expedition to help him in his projects.

Nuno da Cunha naturally chose Martim Affonso de Mello, the same man whom the Persian had ransomed, to command

*Second Expedition
under Martim Affonso
de Mello, 1533*

the expedition. This captain landed in Bengal in 1533 with five ships and two hundred men.† One ship called São

Raphael was government property, the other four being the property of private captains. All the cargo belonged to joint stock companies. The object of this expedition was not only to help Khājeh Shihāb-ud-dīn but through his influence to attempt to open commerce with Bengal and choose a suitable site for a factory. When Affonso de Mello reached Chittagong, he sent to Gaur his ambassador, Duarte de Azevedo with twelve men

* A *cruzado* was a Portuguese coin, so called from the cross marked on it. It was worth 420 *reis* that is about 9 sh. according to the value attached by Yule to the *reis* in the sixteenth century. Cf. *Hobson-Jobson* s. v. *pardao*. According to Gerson da Cunha a *cruzado* or 420 *reis* would be worth about 2 sh. only. Frei Ambrosio de Santo Agostinho says in 1750 "we spent 1,200 rupees which amount to 1200 Cruzados". Cf. *O Chronista de Tissuary* Vol. II. p. 62.

† Correa gives the date as 1533, de Barros as 1534, Faria y Souza as 1538. I have generally followed the dates of Correa.

among whom was Nuno Fernandes Freire and according to the prevailing custom, he sent presents to the King such as horses, brocades and sundry other things worth in all about £1200. King Mahmūd Shāh was at that time in a sullen and irritable frame of mind, gnawed as he was by the remorse of having ascended the throne by the murder of his nephew Fīruz Shāh III. Moreover, he is said to have been prejudiced against the Portuguese because he recognized among the presents some boxes of rose water which a Portuguese corsair named Damião Bernaldes had seized from a Moorish ship. Highly incensed, the King immediately decided to put to the sword not only the ambassador and his men but, by any form of treachery, all the Portuguese that came in this expedition. A Moor named Alfu Khān* and a Moorish saint, reputed to be a hundred years old, interceded in their favour dissuading him from murder. The King, however, determined to imprison them, and sent a Guazil † to the port of Chittagong where Affonso de Mello was staying, in order to seize him and his men. A dispute had meanwhile arisen between Affonso de Mello and the Moorish custom officers; and the Guazil took this opportunity to interfere and ultimately invited the Portuguese commander and his men to a dinner. Affonso de Mello and forty other Portuguese suspecting no treachery accepted the invitation while the rest preferred a hog-hunt. The dinner was held in a large courtyard surrounded on all sides by verandahs above. During the dinner the Guazil rose on pretence of illness and immediately a number of Moors came with guns and bows and arrows and began to hurl them against the unfortunate guests. The Portuguese did not, however, give in but tried to defend themselves with their

* Blochmann identifies him with Alfā Hussānī of Baghdad. Cf. *Geography and History of Bengal J. A. S. B.* 1873 p. 298 n.

† De Barros defines *Guazil* as a Moorish judicial Officer. Correa, *Lendas*, Vol. III, p. 722, calls Nuno Fernandes Freire *Gozil* of the custom house of Sātgaon in connection with his appointment as chief of the custom house. The word finds no place in *Hobson-Jobson*.

swords. Unable to hold out, they eventually surrendered. Some of those that were on shore were also killed and property valued at £100,000 was confiscated. De Barros dwells at length on this event and his pages read like the description of the Black Hole.* Ten Portuguese were killed including Christovam de Mello, the nephew of the Governor Lopo Vaz de Sampayo. Affonso de Mello himself was wounded. Thirty Portuguese who survived the massacre were tied up and put in a dark room. Their wounds were not attended to for some days and then they were forced to march six leagues during one whole night till they reached a place called Mavá. They were eventually taken to Gaur and were treated not like men but like beasts. Duarte d'Azavedo and his twelve men who had gone to Gaur as envoys were also confined in what de Barros calls a hell (*inferno*).

Nuno da Cunha, the Governor, swore revenge when the news of this disaster reached Goa. He prepared in great haste a fleet of nine sail manned by 350 Portuguese. He sent it under the captainship of Antonio da Silva Menezes† instructing him to demand an explanation from the King of Bengal why his ambassador who had gone to establish relations of peace and friendliness was so badly treated. If the King did not return Affonso de Mello and his men, Menezes was ordered to wage war with "fire and blood." As soon as Menezes arrived in Chittagong he sent Jorge Alcocorado to King Mahmūd Shāh with the message of the Portuguese Governor and with the threat that if any harm were done to him or if he were not allowed to return within a month, war would be declared against him. Mahmūd Shāh, as obdurate as ever, would not think of setting free Affonso de Mello and his men but sent a letter to Antonio da

* Couto, Dec. IV. Pt. I. Liv. IV, Cap. X, and Francisco D'Andrade Part II, Chap. 80, 81, describe this episode a little differently.

† De Barros, *Da Asia*, Dec. IV, Pt. II, Liv. IX, Cap. V.

Silva Menezes requesting from the Governor of Goa a number of carpenters, jewellers and other workmen. Before these negotiations were over, a month had elapsed. Menezes thereupon, set fire to a great part of Chittagong and captured and killed a great number of people.* Although Jorge Alcocorado had to stay beyond the limit of his time, he had departed from Gaur only three days before the burning of Chittagong had begun. The King immediately ordered his arrest but Jorge Alcocorado escaped just in time and joined Antonio da Silva Menezes. One would expect that the days of Martim Affonso de Mello and his men were numbered; but new developments were taking place, and Bengal was soon to become a theatre of war owing to the quarrels between Sher Shāh and Humāyūn in which Affonso de Mello was destined to play an important part.

Sher Shāh,† who was perhaps the greatest and the most treacherous of the Afghāns; who had introduced himself in the service of Bābar and then sworn to oust the Mughals from India; who unable to oppose the Lodi King of Bihar had joined him, marched with him to fight against Humāyūn and then deserted him and given the victory over to Mughals, came now to Bengal and determined to make himself master of it whilst Humāyūn was busy in Gujrāt. He began a campaign against Mahmūd Shāh who, now no longer proud and unrelenting, was compelled by circumstances to implore the help of the very man whom he had treated so cruelly. He sought advice from Martim Affonso de Mello as to the plan of defence and decided

* Another account differs a little from de Barros and relates that Mahmūd Shāh demanded £15,000 as ransom, which being too exorbitant, Menezes decided upon bombarding Chittagong.

† At the time of Sher Shāh's invasion of Bengal he was known as Sher Khān and hence the Portuguese historians call him *Xercansur*. De Barros, however, calls him *Xerchan*, quite correctly.

to send an ambassador to Nuno da Cunha, the Portuguese Governor in Goa, asking for help.

At this critical juncture there happened to arrive at Sāt-gāon, Diogo Rebello, the Portuguese captain and factor of the Coromandel pearl fisheries.* According to Gaspar Correa he came in his own vessel and two foists well armed with guns. Nuno da Cunha had asked him to go to Bengal to see if by any means he could save Martim Affonso de Mello and his men. At this time two big ships laden with merchandise came to Sāt-gāon from Cambay. Rebello, without molesting these ships, forced them to leave this port and forbade them to carry on any trade. This illustrates the policy which the Portuguese had adopted, in order to destroy the Arab commerce, claiming for themselves alone, the right of trading in the Indian seas. Rebello sent Diogo de Spindola, his own nephew, and Duarte Dias, to the King in Gaur with a message that if he did not liberate the Portuguese prisoners he would seize his ports and repeat in Sāt-gāon what Menezes had done in Chittagong. This was the first time when a Portuguese captain is recorded to have sailed up to Gaur by the Hooghly, the others having gone to Gaur up the Meghna from Chittagong. As already stated, Mahmūd Shāh was no longer the same as Menezes had found him. He wrote to the Governor in Sāt-gāon to receive Rebello well, and to inform him that he was sending his ambassador to the Portuguese Governor in Goa as a proof of his friendship. He asked for Portuguese help and in return he promised to grant them land to erect their factories and permission to build fortresses in Chittagong and Sāt-gāon. The object of Martim Affonso de Mello was gained; he had been in prison for two years before he was liberated, and had undergone captivity again in pursuance of the very object which was now about to be realized. The

* Cf. De Barros, *Da Asia*, Dec. IV, Pt. II, p. 496 *et seq.*, and Correa, *Lendas*, Vol. III, p. 649; also Castanheda, Liv. VIII. Cap. CX. p. 261 *et seq.*

King returned twenty-two prisoners to Diogo Rebello and excused himself for not sending back Martim Affonso de Mello because he needed his advice most of all. Affonso de Mello himself wrote a letter on behalf of Mahmūd Shāh assuring the Governor that the Portuguese would get permission to erect their factories and fortresses. *Sic tempora mutantur et nos in illis.*

Meanwhile Sher Shāh was advancing and decided to enter Gaur by the passes of Teliāgarhi and Sikligali leading to the fortress of Gorij (Garhi).^{*} To defend these passes which were considered to be the gateways to Bengal, troops were sent in two

*Sher Shāh's Invasion
and the Portuguese Suc-
cesses, 1536*

ships, one under the command of João de Villalobos and the other of João Correa. The Portuguese offered a stubborn resistance and prevented Sher Shāh from taking the city of Ferranduz, which was twenty leagues from the city of Gaur. The Portuguese historians say the Portuguese did wonders and captured a particular elephant which King Mahmūd Shāh especially wanted; but Sher Shāh went by another less protected way and entered Gaur with 40,000 cavalry, 1,500 elephants and 200,000 men and with a fleet of 300 boats.† Mahmūd Shāh, unable to offer any resistance paid an enormous sum of money amounting to thirteen lakhs of gold or 525,000 *pardaos* ‡ and made peace with him although Martim Affonso

* These passes, near Colgong, are now traversed by the East Indian Railway. For the position of Ferranduz and fortress of Gorij see Map of de Barros.

† De Barros, *Da Asia*, Dec. IV. Pt. II. Liv. IX, Cap. VII, p. 500.

‡ Castanheda, *Historia*, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXXVIII. The historian is not definite as to in what coins the "thirteen lakhs of gold" were paid. He however gives the equivalent of the sum in *pardaos*. As the Portuguese historians generally speak of money in *pardaos* it is important to ascertain the value of a *pardao*, the value of which has undergone many variations. Originally it was a gold coin of Western India, which was adopted in the Goa currency. Later on a Portuguese silver coin was called a *pardao*. Hence there were two kinds of *pardaos* a gold one (*Pardao d'ouro*) worth 360 *reis* and a silver one (*Pardao de Tanga*) worth 300 *reis*. Castanheda obviously attaches to a *pardao* the value which A. Nunes (1554) attached to it, viz. 5 silver *langas* or 300 *reis* which amount

de Mello advised him to the contrary. The soundness of Affonso de Mello's advice was apparent when Sher Shāh soon after attacked Mahmūd Shāh again, utilizing the latter's money against him.

Though Mahmūd Shāh had not emerged victorious in the campaign, he did not fail to recognize the services of the Portuguese. He gave to Affonso de Mello a present of 45,000 *reis* and allotted to each of the Portuguese a daily sum of money equivalent to ten *cruzados* for food expenses. However, finding himself secure from the menace of Sher Shāh, he changed his mind as to allowing the Portuguese to build fortresses in Chittagong and Sāt-gāon but he permitted Affonso de Mello to build factories and offered to give them custom-houses. He, indeed, appointed Nuno Fernandez Freire the chief of the custom-house of Chittagong, granted him land with many houses empowering him to realize rent from the Moors and Hindus who lived there, and gave him many other privileges over the people. The custom house of Sāt-gāon which was less in importance than that of Chittagong, was given to João Correa. The people were indeed surprised to see that the King had given the Portuguese so much power and such a firm footing in Bengal. This was the first establishment of the Portuguese in Bengal, almost simultaneously in Chittagong and Sāt-gāon.*

Under conditions so favourable and pregnant with possibilities, Affonso Vaz de Brito† came in a ship to Bengal from

to about 4 sh. 6 d. as the value of a *real* in the 16th century was about one-fourth of a penny while to day it is about one-seventeenth. The value of a *pardao* deteriorated until its worth became 10½ d. Cf. Yule and Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson* s. v. *Pardao*.

* Castanheda, *Historia*, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXXVIII, 303. For a fuller account of these settlements, *Vide infra*.

† Cf. Correa, *Lendas*, Vol. III, p. 814 and Castanheda, *Hist.* Liv. VIII, Cap. CLXXVII, p. 403 *et seq.* De Barros makes only a passing reference to Affonso Vaz de Brito. *Vide Dec. IV*, pt. 11. p. 502.

Cochin with instructions from Nuno da Cunha to bring back Martim Affonso de Mello and carry his letter in reply to Mahmūd Shāh's request about the help that the latter had asked for. He, however, hesitated a good deal to land in Chittagong as there was temporarily a great commotion against the Portuguese arising from a report to the King about the Portuguese Governor having murdered the King of Cambay and ransacked his property. But Antonio Menezes de Crasto having, at this juncture, arrived in Chittagong, with merchandise and a letter from the Portuguese Governor explaining the Cambay affair, there was no more trouble. Affonso Vaz de Brito landed in Chittagong where he met Nuno Fernandes Freire at the Portuguese custom-house. Having, then, gone to the Court of Gaur he requested the King to liberate Affonso de Mello and gave him Nuno da Cunha's letter in which it was stated that he could not send him any help because the wars in Cambay had made a demand on all his available men and that he would assuredly send it the following year. Mahmūd Shāh highly grateful as he was to the Portuguese for the valuable assistance they had rendered in defending the passes permitted Martim Affonso de Mello to leave Bengal with his men. He kept only five Portuguese, including Affonso Vaz de Brito, as hostages for the promised help.

After the departure of Affonso de Mello, news arrived in Gaur that Sher Shāh was advancing again with a very powerful force in order to demand another large sum of money which he declared was to be his annual tribute and was now due to him after the lapse of a year. Mahmūd Shāh who had never agreed to such a compact refused to pay the tribute; whereupon, Sher Shāh invaded Gaur, burnt and pillaged the town, and took possession of sixty millions in gold. Mahmūd

Affonso Vaz de Brito,
1538

The Campaigns of
Sher Shāh and Humāy-
ūn, 1538

Shāh covered with wounds fled to Hazipore and thence to Chunar, where Humāyūn was waiting with a large army to punish the revolt of Sher Shāh. Humāyūn sent one of his captains to Mahmūd Shāh asking him to come to him, but the latter died of his wounds before he could see Humāyūn and was buried by the Mughals with great pomp and ceremony.

Humāyūn advanced against Sher Shāh, attacked Gaur and forced him to retreat to Sasseram, after which he spent three months rioting in Gaur. The rains having set in, Sher Shāh cut off the retreat of Humāyūn, who was forced to ask the Afghān to allow him to return promising to give him Bengal and Bihar. Sher Shāh agreed and swore on the Koran that during the return of Humāyūn's army he would injure no Mughal. But that very night he treacherously put eight thousand Mughals to death and the Emperor himself narrowly escaped with a few friends and fled to Lahore where his brother Kamrān (Camiran Mirza) whom he had recently poisoned and who had not yet recovered from the effects thereof, received him hospitably.* Sher Shāh proclaimed himself Emperor of Bengal in 1538 and the following year marching against Humāyūn at the head of 500,000 Afghāns, fought the great battle of Kanouj, defeated him and ascended the throne of Delhi. Thus he gained the throne for which he had fought for fifteen years and which he after all retained for only five years.† Henceforward till 1576 the Portuguese had to struggle with the successors of Sher Shāh.

The help which Nuno da Cunha had promised Mahmūd

* Faria y Souza, *Trans. Stevens*, Vol. I, p. 241.

† The campaigns of Sher Shāh and Humāyūn in Bengal are described in the Portuguese chronicles so minutely, that it is a pity no History of Bengal has taken them into consideration. Even the Muhammadan accounts give a poor and scanty information of this period, a comparative study of which I reserve for my larger work referred to in the Preface.

Shāh did come indeed, but it was too late. The expedition was commanded by Vasco Peres de Sampayo and consisted of nine vessels.*

Vasco Peres de Sampayo, 1538

This captain reached Chittagong when Sher Shāh was already master of Bengal. At this time disputes arose between the generals of Mahmūd Shāh, Khudā Baksh Khān (Codovascão) and Amirza Khān (Amarzacão) regarding the possession of Chittagong. Nuno Fernandes Freire whom Mahmūd Shāh had created chief of the custom-house and who wielded great influence in Chittagong intervened and declared in favour of Amirza Khān. Sher Shāh, however, sent his captain (Nogazil) to Chittagong and he took possession of the town. Finding Chittagong in such a precarious state Nuno Fernandes Freire advised Sampayo to conquer the town which he could easily have done. But whether it was on moral or political grounds, he refused to do so. Meanwhile Amirza Khān collected a force and sent it against Sher Shāh's captain who asked for the help of Nuno Fernandes Freire preferring rather to be a prisoner of the Portuguese than of the "Bengalas". When Fernandes went to the house of Sher Shāh's Nogazil which was now under a siege, the men of Amirza Khān who knew him well gave him a great ovation. He dissuaded them from seizing the Nogazil but, he himself, with fifty Portuguese whom Sampayo had sent ashore, eventually captured the Nogazil and imprisoned him in one of Sampayo's vessels whence after six month's captivity he managed to escape by bribing a subordinate. It happened, however, that a galleot with sixty armed Moors of Raja Suleiman came to Chittagong and engaged some of Sampayo's men; but Sampayo who had behaved cowardly all throughout, would not send any more men for their help nor send a ship to defend a Portuguese merchantman, which

* The account of this expedition is based on Castanheda, *Historia*, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXCVIII.

was in danger, inspite of Fernandes repeatedly asking him to do so. Diogo Rebello and Nuno Fernandes themselves conducted the defence during which the latter was wounded.

Vasco Peres de Sampayo passed the whole of winter in Bengal and then went to Pegu where he died. Castanheda who gives a very full account* of this event concludes that through the folly and indiscretion of Sampayo the King of Portugal lost Chittagong which could easily have been taken possession of, considering that Sher Shāh was busily engaged on the other side of Bengal. Any way, Martim Affonso de Mello's sufferings had not been in vain. The Portuguese had obtained from Mahmūd Shāh a vast establishment and a custom-house in Chittagong and a smaller one in Sātgāon. The latter establishment did not seem to have prospered and gained any importance, as Mahmūd Shāh died and the Afghāns came into power. Most writers on Hooghly have, curiously enough, given Sampayo the credit of having established the first settlement in Sātgāon or rather Hooghly, when the fact is that Sampayo never came to Hooghly.

Many other Portuguese captains came to Bengal besides those mentioned above, but their doings may be passed over in silence as not being of sufficient importance.

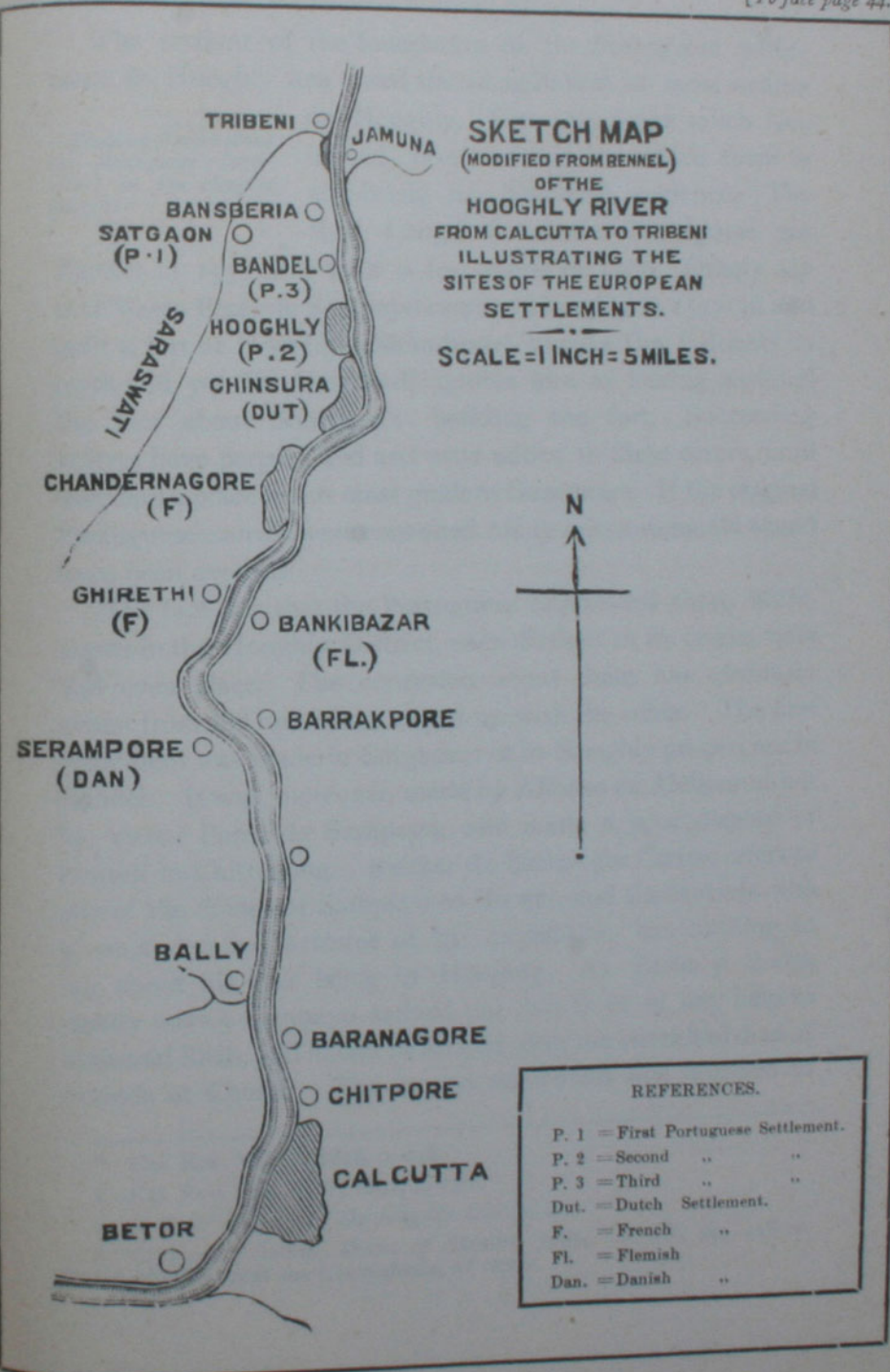
* Castanheda, *Historia, ut supra.*

CHAPTER IV

PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS IN THE HOOGHLY DISTRICT

The history of the Portuguese is not now one of expeditions but of their trade and settlements in Bengal, nay more, of their conquests. The Portuguese, as has been shown, had already come with arms and fought on the fields of Bengal, not so much for themselves as for others, in return for which they obtained a settlement in Sâtgāon, in the Hooghly District. In Indo-European history there is not, undoubtedly, a more interesting Indian town than Hooghly because there, within a range of a few miles, seven European nations fought for supremacy: the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English, the Danes, the French, the Flemish, and the Prussians.* Before the Portuguese settlement Hooghly had neither a distinct existence nor history of its own. It was only a small insignificant village consisting of a few huts, while Sâtgāon was a great port and a flourishing city whose antiquity extended beyond the times of Ptolemy. The Portuguese, indeed, were founders of the town of Hooghly.

* The Dutch settled in Chinsura, with headquarters in Fort Gustavus; the English first established themselves in the town of Hooghly; the French in Hooghly, then in Chandernagore; the Danes in Gondalpara, south-east of Chandernagore and then in Serampore; the Flemish in Bankibazar; and the Prussians or Embdeners in a place a mile south of Fort Orleans in Chandernagore. There is a good deal of confusion about the Prussian and Flemish settlements. O'Malley, *Hooghly Gazetteer*, p. 87-91 understands that Bankibazar was a Flemish and not Prussian settlement and that the Ostend Company which settled there was a Flemish and not Prussian Company. Hill in his *Bengal in 1756-57* enters Bankibazar as a Prussian settlement in the Index, though he says it was held by the Ostend Company. Sir W. Hunter also calls Bankipur (Bankibazar) a Prussian settlement understanding the Ostend Company to have been the Prussian Company. *Vide, India of the Queen and other Essays*, pp. 201-2. The real name of the Prussian or Embden Company which was founded by Fredericke the Great in 1753 was *Bengalische Handelsgesellschaft*.



The account of the foundation of the Portuguese settlement in Hooghly has taxed the imagination of most writers on Hooghly. On this point much has, indeed, been written for which there is absolutely no historical evidence. The Rev. Long* states the Portuguese got Bandel in 1538 and built a fort there in 1599. Others say that Vasco Peres de Sampayo came to Hooghly in 1537-38 and built a fort at Hooghly. Shumbhoo Chunder Dey † doubts its truth and yet Dr. Crawford ‡ quotes him as having asserted the fact about Sampayo's building the fort. Succeeding writers have perpetuated and even added to these errors, until they find a place in our most modern Gazetteers. If the original Portuguese sources were consulted many mis-statements would have been avoided.

The fact was that the Portuguese established three settlements in the Hooghly District, each distinct in its origin, time and even place. The confusion about them has obviously arisen from the one being mixed up with the other. The first settlement was made in Sātgaon, not in Hooghly proper, nor in Bandel. It was, moreover, made by Affonso de Mello and not by Vasco Peres de Sampayo, who made a poor display of himself in Chittagong. Neither de Barros nor Correa refers to any of the doings of Sampayo in Bengal, and Castanheda who gives a detailed account of his expedition has nothing to say about his ever being in Hooghly. As Faria y Souza rightly says, § Sampayo arrived too late to be of any help to Mahmūd Shāh, and in fact he arrived after the latter had died of wounds at Chunar. The second settlement was founded in

* Cal. Rev. Vol. V, 1846, p. 258.

† Cal. Rev. Vol. XCV, 1892, p. 259.

‡ *A Brief History of the Hughly Dist.* p. 4.

§ Cf. Faria y Souza, *Trans. of Stevens*, 1695, Ch. IX, pp. 418-20. For further account see Castanheda, *ut supra*.

Hooghly proper by Tavares to whom Akbar granted a *farman* (1579-80). The third settlement was established in Bandel, close to the previous one, under a *farman* of Shāh Jāhān granted in 1633, a year after the Siege of Hooghly. As to the supposed existence of a Portuguese fort in Hooghly, all evidence points to a contrary conclusion.*

The descriptions of the Portuguese settlement in Sāt-gāon are found in Castanheda and Correa. The following is a literal

*The First Settlement,
Sāt-gāon 1537-38*

translation of the passage in Castanheda† a gist of which has already been given:—
 “and the King after seeing himself free from war, or for some other reason, changed the wish which he had of giving fortresses to the King of Portugal in Chittagong (Chatigão) and Sāt-gāon (Satigão) but not of giving the custom-houses with houses of factories, and thus he told Martim Affonso who reminded him that he promised fortresses; and he seeing that the King would not assent to this, did not like to dispute it and told him to give whatever he liked. And at his request the King made Nuno Fernandes Freire the chief of the custom-house of Chittagong giving him a great circuit of houses in which the Moors and Hindus lived in order that it might bring him rent as also the custom-house of Chittagong (might bring him rent) and gave him many other powers at which all in the land were surprised, as also at the King being such a great friend of the Portuguese whom he wanted to settle (*arreigar*) in the country. And the custom-house of Sāt-gāon which was smaller he gave to João Correa and soon he and Nuno Fernandes Freire went to these two cities to perform their offices, for which the Guazils of these two cities were very sad because the power that they had was taken, chiefly of Chittagong which was bigger.” Castanheda

* *Vide* Chapter V.

† Cf. Castanheda, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXXVIII, p. 303.

does not, indeed, distinctly say that the Portuguese erected a factory in Sātḡāon but it is evident that they did erect a factory or made some sort of establishment from the fact that Mahmūd Shāh did not change his mind as to giving the Portuguese, custom-houses and factories both in Chittagong and Sātḡāon and did actually appoint João Correa, the head of the custom-house in Sātḡāon. Gaspar Correa* also confirms Castanheda differing only in that he says Nuno Fernandes Freire was given the custom-house with much rent (*sic*) in Sātḡāon (Satigāo) and that Christovam Correa (not João Correa) was given the custom-house of Chittagong (Chatigāo) with much rent and power (*sic*) over the people of the land. As early as 1554 Antonio Nunes† referred to Sātḡāon as Porto Pequeno and obviously the Portuguese must have thus named it from the time of their first settlement in 1537-8. When the Portuguese established themselves in the town of Hooghly, and Sātḡāon was no longer the great city that it was, they applied the name Porto Pequeno to the port of Hooghly. Yule and Burnell lose sight of this second denomination in their *Hobson-Jobson*, where only Sātḡāon is said to have been called Porto Pequeno.

The Muhammadan historian Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī who died in 1654, also dates the Portuguese settlement earlier than Akbar's time. He says in the *Bādshāhnāmā*‡:—"Under the rule of the Bengālis, (*dar'ahd-i-Bāngaliyān*) a party of Frank§ merchants, who are

* Cf. *Lendas*, Vol. III, p. 722. Castanheda certainly deserves more credence than Correa because we find Nuno Fernandes Freire in Chittagong and not in Sātḡāon, receiving Portuguese Captains in his custom-house and settling the quarrels between Khudā Baksh Khān and Amīrza Khān.

† Nunes, *Livro dos Pesos etc. Subsídios*, p. 37.

‡ Elliot, *Hist. of India*, Vol. VII pp. 31-32.

§ *Frank* is the parent word of *Feringhī* by which name the Indian-born Portuguese are still known. The Arabs and Persians called the French cruzaders *Frank*, *Ferang*, a corruption of France. When the Portuguese and other Europeans came to India the Arabs applied to them the same name *Ferang*, and then *Feringhī*.

inhabitants of Sūndip came trading to Sātḡānw. One *kos* above that place they occupied some ground on the bank of the estuary. Under the pretence that a building was necessary for their transactions in buying and selling, they erected several houses in the Bengālī style. In course of time, through the ignorance or negligence of the rulers of Bengal, these Europeans increased in number, and erected large substantial buildings, which they fortified with cannons, muskets, and other implements of war. In due course a considerable place grew up which was known by the name of the Port of Hūglī. On one side of it was the river, and on the other three sides was a ditch filled from the river. European ships used to go up to the port and a trade was established there. The markets of Sātḡānw declined and lost their prosperity. The villages and the district of Hūglī were on both sides of the river and these the Europeans got possession of at a low rent." It is evident from this passage that the Portuguese had some sort of settlement in or above Sātḡāon before Akbar's conquest of Bengal in 1576. The question is who these Bengali kings were, during whose reign the Portuguese settled above Sātḡāon. The Oriyā Kings possessed the Hooghly district from Tribenī downwards from 1560-1567. From 1568 to 1575 reigned the dynasty of Sulaimān Kararānī (1568-73). O'Malley* suggests that the settlement must have taken place between 1568 and 1573 in the reign of Sulaimān Kararānī. This conjecture has nothing to support it.

It is probable that Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī confirms the Portuguese historians though rather vaguely and that the Bengali rulers referred to were the Lodi Kings, the last of whom granted the Portuguese a settlement in Sātḡāon. The Mughal historians actually referred to the earlier Muhammadan rulers of Bengal as *Bengali* kings. It cannot be said

* *Hooghly Gazetteer*, p. 48.

the account of Lāhorī is quite indefinite for while he places the settlement *above* Sātḡāon, he says it grew up into what is known as the port of Hooghly, which is really *below* Sātḡāon. It is true in a way that he confounds the Portuguese settlement of Sātḡāon with that of Hooghly. Yet the fact that he places the first Portuguese settlement *above* Sātḡāon has some significance in that he probably means that it was a little above the main Muhammadan city of Sātḡāon, whence it extended to Hooghly. Else, Lāhorī's account would be an absurdity.

In spite of the abundant evidence of Portuguese historians partly corroborated by a Muhammadan account modern writers have not recognized the Portuguese settlement of Sātḡāon.

Other Accounts

Fr. H. Hosten S. J. whose authority is very valuable in Portuguese history asserts*: "The Portuguese first settled at Hugli under a farman from Fatehpur Sikri between 1578 and 1580. Until that time they had not been allowed when coming up the river to do more than build godowns in bamboo and thatch which were burnt down regularly every year when they returned to Goa." Fr. Hosten evidently bases his statement on the account of the traveller Caesar Federici who writing about what he saw in Bengal about 1565 says.† "Every year at Buttor they make and unmake a village with houses and shops made of straw, and with all things necessary to their uses; and this village standeth as long as the ships ride there, and till they depart for the Indies, and when they are departed, every man goeth to his plot of houses and there setteth fire on them which thing made me to marvel. For as I passed upto Satagan, I saw this village standing with a great number of people, with an infinite number of ships and bazars, and at my return coming down with my Captain of the last ship for whom I tarried, I

* *Bengal Past and Present* Jan.—Mar. 1915 pp. 42-43.

† C. Federici. *Purchas* V. 411, 439.

was all amazed to see such a place so soon raised and burnt and nothing left but the sign of burnt houses." Federici, it will be seen, only speaks of the making and unmaking of villages in Betor, (Howrah, near Botanical Gardens) which he saw when going up to Sātḡāon. Even though in the rest of his account he does not refer at all to the Portuguese settlement in Sātḡāon, it cannot be inferred that the Portuguese never had a settlement in Sātḡāon. By 1565 when Federici visited Sātḡāon all traces of the Portuguese settlement might have disappeared and the Afghāns who reigned after Māhmūd Shāh might have taken away from the Portuguese their custom-house and their factory, so that they found it necessary to build many sheds on the banks of the Hooghly to store their goods in. If Castanheda and Correa are to be believed, and there is no reason to doubt them, the Portuguese did something more than "build go-downs in bamboo and thatch" before they founded their great settlement in Hooghly in Akbar's time. Manrique also dates the origin of the city of Ugolim (Hooghly) to the *farman* of Akbar and speaks of the *golas* (store-houses) of the Portuguese.* His evidence does not obviously go against that of Castanheda since he speaks of the Portuguese settlement in Hooghly and not the one in Sātḡāon about which he does not seem to have been informed at all. It must be considered that between the date of the settlement in Sātḡāon and Manrique's visit to Hooghly almost a century had elapsed.

Whatever might have been the fate of the first establishment of the Portuguese, they definitely settled in the town of Hooghly about 1580 by virtue of a charter conceded to them by Akbar. Manrique, who was in Bengal (1628-29) gives a pretty detailed account of this settlement, prior to which the Portuguese according to him, did not permanently stay in Bengal. They remained during the

*Second Settlement,
Hooghly, 1579-80*

* Manrique, *Bengal Past and Present* Apr.—June 1916, p. 286.

rainy season in Bengal buying and selling goods and went home to Goa when the rains were over. Later on the Portuguese remained for one or two years without going back and the Moorish collector in the district even invited them to bring their Fathers and erect churches. Akbar seeing the precious goods which the Portuguese used to bring to Bengal from Borneo, Malacca and other ports ordered the Nawab of Dacca under whom the Hooghly District then was, to send from Sātḡāon two principal Portuguese to his Court in Agra. The Nawab immediately sent a messenger to Sātḡāon for this purpose but on account of the delay that occurred on the way he reached Sātḡāon after a journey of twenty-eight days and found that the Portuguese had gone, some to Malacca and others to China. However the Mirza assured the Nawab that the Portuguese would come back the next year as they had left behind in the hands of some merchants (Sodagones) goods worth more than two thousand rupees. But Akbar having expressed his indignation at the Nawab's negligence, the latter took it so much to heart that, as Manrique relates, he died shortly after.

The following year a Portuguese captain named Pedro Tavares* "a man well versed in politics and state-affairs" arrived in Sātḡāon and was received with great joy. On learning that the Emperor Akbar wished that two Portuguese should come to him from Bengal, he gladly accepted the invitation and choosing two Portuguese and many servants went to Agra. Akbar, favourably impressed with the conduct and valour of the Portuguese who with Antonio Cabral had, sometime before, gone to see him at Surat,

* A full account of Pedro Tavares is given by Manrique, *Itinerario* etc. For what relates to Bengal *Vide* Fr. Cardon's *Trans. Bengal Past and Present*, April—June 1916. Bartoli, *Missione al Gran Mogor*, 1819, p. 5. calls Tavares a military servant of Akbar, which is wrong.

*Pedro Tavares, the
Founder of the Settle-
ment of Hooghly, 1579-
80*

took a great liking to Tavares and had several interviews with him. He gave him many valuable presents and a *farman* permitting him to build a city in Bengal wherever he liked. He granted the Portuguese full religious liberty with leave to preach their religion and build Churches and even baptize the gentiles with their consent. Besides, the Mughal officers were ordered to help the Portuguese with all materials necessary for the construction of their houses.

The Akbarnāmā* mentions one Partāb Bār Feringui one of the chief merchants of the port of Bengal who came in 1579† to Akbar's Court at Agra with his wife Basūrbā and won great favour and esteem from the Emperor. As H. Beveridge suggests,‡ this Partāb Bār must have been Pedro Tavares. The name, indeed, approximates very closely, in spite of the mutilation which is very common in the Muhammadan historians. In the different MSS. of the Akbarnāmā there are various forms of the spelling of Partāb Bār's wife, such as Basūrbā, Nashurna, Nasunta, while some MSS. do not refer to her at all. It is only a guess of H. Beveridge or of the lady who told him, that the real name of Tavares's wife might have been Assumpta. Considering the severe mutilation which the Portuguese names have undergone in the Muhamadan histories it is wiser not to hazard groundless conjectures in the attempt to identify them. In the Akbarnāmā§ there is a further reference to Partāb Bār where it is said that Mirza Najat Khān, Akbar's *Faujdar* at Sāt-gāon, fled to the Portuguese Governor of Hooghly, after being defeated by the King of Orissa. This leads

* Elliot *Hist. of India*, Vol. VI. p. 59.

† Though Tavares was at Akbar's Court in 1579, he must have gone there a year or two before. *Vide infra*.

‡ J. A. S. B. 1888, p. 34 and J. A. S. B. 1904, p. 52.

§ P. 320 of the original.

Blochmann* to identify Partāb Bār with the Portuguese Governor of Hooghly. As Tavares who was at Akbar's Court in 1579 must have been the same as the Portuguese Governor of Hooghly in 1580, the account of the Akbarnāmā beautifully tallies with that of Manrique; and Partāb Bār was evidently no other than Pedro Tavares. Blochmann's and Beveridge's identifications of Partāb Bār should not therefore be taken as referring to two different persons.

Tavares must have exerted a great influence on Akbar. At his request Akbar exempted the Portuguese merchants from all the custom-duties of which they had defrauded the treasury until 1529.† To Tavares and two Jesuit Missionaries of Bengal must be given the credit of having convinced Akbar of the "truth of Law of Christ" or at least impressed him favourably towards the Christians. In consequence of a petition of Tavares, Akbar called for a priest named Fr. Juliano Pereira from Bengal so as to learn from him something more about the Christian Faith. Fr. Juliano Pereira having acquainted the Emperor with the tenets of the Christian religion asked him to send for more learned priests from Goa. From this resulted the famous Mission of Fr. Rodolfo Aquaviva.‡

When Tavares returned to Hooghly in 1579 or 1580 he was high in the estimation of the people and choosing a favourable site in Hooghly established the settlement, which grew into the greatest centre of trade in Bengal and supplanted the historic glory of Sātḡāon. It is unfortunate that Manrique; does not specify the date of the foundation of Hooghly by Tavares. It can, however, be determined within close approximation from a consideration of contemporary writings. The

When Hooghly was founded

* *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I. p. 440.

† Fr. F. de Souza, *Oriente Conq.* Pt. II, Conq. I, Div. ii, § 44.

‡ An excellent account of this Mission is given by Vincent Smith, *Akbar*, p. 170 *et seq.*

Akbarnāmā* records Tavares's visit to Akbar as occurring in 1579 (23rd year of Akbar's reign) but if Fr. du Jarric† is correct in dating Fr. Juliano Pereira's arrival at Fatehpur Sikrī in the year 1578 then Tavares must have gone to the Court of Akbar in 1577, or 1578 at the latest, since it was through his request that Fr. Pereira was called by Akbar. According to Fr. F. de Souza‡, Tavares must have been in Agra even upto 1579 because he obtained a decree from the Emperor exempting the Portuguese of Bengal from all their dues upto 1579. Now, it is certain that Tavares was in Bengal early in 1580 because Fr. A. Monseratte§ relates that when the first Jesuit Mission arrived at Akbar's Court on February 18, 1580, they found there some of Tavares's men while no mention is made of Tavares. The confirmation of the fact is found in the Akbarnāmā|| which relates that in 1580 Mirzā Najat Khān Akbar's *Faujdar* at Sāt-gāon being defeated by the king of Orissa, fled to Partāb Bār (Pedro Tavares) at Hooghly. Hence it may be asserted that the settlement of Hooghly was established either towards the close of 1579 or in the earlier months of 1580.

* Elliot, *Akbarnāmā* Vol. VI. p. 59.

† *Hist. Des. Choses plus Memorables.*

‡ *Oriente Conquistado* Pt. II, Conq. I, Div. ii, § 44.

§ *Mongol. Legat. Comment.* 20 a. 3. Vide, Fr. Hosten's annotations to Manrique, *Bengal Past and Present*, April—June, 1916, Ch. V.

|| Blochmann, *Akbarnāmā* *l.c.* *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I. p. 440.

CHAPTER V

THE GROWTH OF THE SETTLEMENT OF HOOGLHY

The Portuguese settlement in Hooghly flourished with amazing rapidity. In 1580, about the same year that the settlement was made, the Portuguese influence was so well established that according to the Akbarnāmā* Mirza Najat Khān, Akbar's *Faujdar* at Sāt-gāon being defeated by the king of Orissa near Solimabad† fled to the Portuguese Governor at Hooghly for protection. Hooghly rose to be indeed "the richest, the most flourishing and the most populous" of all the Bandels that the Portuguese possessed in Bengal. As Fr. Cabral says, Hooghly became the common emporium of the vessels of India, China, Malacca and Manilla and a resort not only of a large number of the natives of the country but also of the Hindustanis (*sic*) the Mughals the Persians and the Armenians. Ralph Fitch who visited Hooghly in 1588 found the whole of the town in the hands of the Portuguese of whom he says it was the "chief keep." He adds the town was one league from Sāt-gāon, and was called *Porto Pequeno* in contradistinction to their *Porto Grande* which they had in Chittagong. Within the next ten years the Portuguese authority extended even to Sāt-gāon. The *Ain-i-Akbari* written in 1596-1597 says that in the *Sarkār* of Sāt-gāon there were two ports (Hooghly and Sāt-gāon) at a distance of half a *kos* from each other both of which were in possession of the Portuguese, Hooghly being the more important. Besides the Portuguese, had bought lands and possess-

* Cf. Blochmann *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I. p. 440.

† A town south-east of Burdwan on the left bank of the Damodar.

ed villages on both sides of the river for a considerable distance from their town of Hooghly. Manrique, describing his voyage to Hooghly in 1628 says* "...we entered the mouth of the large and far-famed old Ganges at a distance of *Ganges* sixty leagues from the City of Vgolim (Hooghly). As we were navigating 'al uzane' which in the Bengala and Industana languages means going against the current we found it a very tough and tedious piece of work inspite of the many villages and towns, some of them the private property of the Portuguese of Vgolim which were covering both banks of the river all the way up to Vgolim." Fr. Cabral asserts the Portuguese did not confine themselves to the banks of the river but extended their settlement sixty leagues inland. The Portuguese population was fast increasing in Hooghly and so was the number of Christians who were converted by the Portuguese. The Augustinians built therefore in 1599, the year when the East India Company was formed, their great Convent at Bandel which still exists though not as originally built and not even on the original site.†

Towards the latter part of the sixteenth century, the greater part of the Bengal trade had passed into the hands of the Portuguese. Hooghly, Sāt-gāon and Chittagong were not their only ports and settlements, but they had also Hijili, Banja, Dacca and many other small ports. The extent of the Portuguese trade in Hooghly can be imagined from the fact that they paid over a 100,000 *tangas* or rupees as custom duties to the Mughals. For an account of the Portuguese trade in Bengal a separate chapter will be devoted.

The Portuguese were equally well thriving on the side of Chittagong and owned innumerable Bandels or *Bunders* on the

* Manrique, Fr. Cardon's Trans. *Bengal Past and Present* April—June 1916 p. 284.

† Fr. Hosten supposes the Convent stands on the same site as the old one. Cf. *A Week in Bandel Convent, Bengal Past and Present* Jan.—Mar. 1914. The question will be discussed below.

banks of the Ganges, of the Brahmaputra and of their various tributaries. In fact at this time more important events were occurring on the coast of Arakan and in the islands at the mouths of the Ganges than in Hooghly. In course of time the Portuguese of Hooghly became really independent of the Mughal Emperor in as much as they discontinued to pay the nominal tribute despite the remonstrations of the Mughal Governor. The Shāh Jahānnāmā* refers to the fact that the Portuguese had lands on both sides of the Hooghly and that they collected revenue from them. Even at the time when the *Ain-i-Akbarī* was written (1596-97), Hooghly had supplanted the historic Sātḡāon, and both these ports were in the possession of the Portuguese.†

Two causes contributed to the decline of Sātḡāon. The first was that the Portuguese, when they settled in Hooghly, diverted all the trade to their own port to the detriment of Sātḡāon. The Mughal officers in Sātḡāon actually complained to the Emperor that on account of the Portuguese, the revenue of Sātḡāon was decreasing. The second cause was that the river Saraswatī on which Sātḡāon was situated and through which flowed the main stream of the river Hooghly began silting up and was navigable only by smaller vessels. The Portuguese must have, indeed, chosen Hooghly for their settlement because they had noticed the main stream no longer flowing through the Saraswatī. This is one of the few examples in which the waters of the Ganges have played fast and loose with the ambitions of man. The holy Ganges does indeed work changes in its water system but it is not like other rivers such as the Indus, on which throughout its course no great city has ever flourished because it shifts its bed so very frequently. Well may it be called the Holy Ganga.

* Rev. Long, *Portuguese in North India*, Cal. Rev. Vol. V, June 1846.

† *Ain-i-Akbarī*, Jarret, Vol. II. p. 125.

The Rev. Long remarks* that in 1599 the Portuguese erected a fort of a square form, flanked by four bastions, surrounded by a ditch on three sides and on the fourth by the Hooghly. This statement rests on no authority and it is one of the great many creations of his fancy. Each subsequent writer, probably relying upon him, has referred to the existence of the Portuguese fort in Hooghly, the remains of which are supposed to be the foundations of two walls that can be seen jutting out into the river at low tide.† The fact seems to be, however, that the Portuguese had not erected any fort in Hooghly.‡ No reference to it can be found in the Portuguese records. Ralph Fitch who was in Hooghly in 1686 makes no mention of a Portuguese fort and Van Linschoten (1593-97) distinctly says there was none.§ Most conclusive evidence is that of Manrique and Cabral who in their descriptions of the Siege of Hooghly regret that the Portuguese could not well defend themselves as they possessed no fort, having to content themselves with raising embankments and barricades, and converting their houses into citadels. It must be remarked Khāfi Khān|| in his description of the siege asserts that the Portuguese defended themselves from a fort; but throughout his account he enlarges upon the *Bādshāhnāmā*,¶ which records that the Portuguese erected substantial buildings (not forts) which they fortified with cannon, muskets and other imple-

* Rev. Long, *Portuguese in North India, ut supra*.

† O'Malley, *Hooghly Gazetteer* p. 272.

‡ Fr. Hosten S. J. was the first to deny the existence of a Portuguese fort in Hooghly and to adduce evidence in support of it. *Vide Bengal Past and Present*, Jan.—Mar. 1915, p. 80 *et seq.*

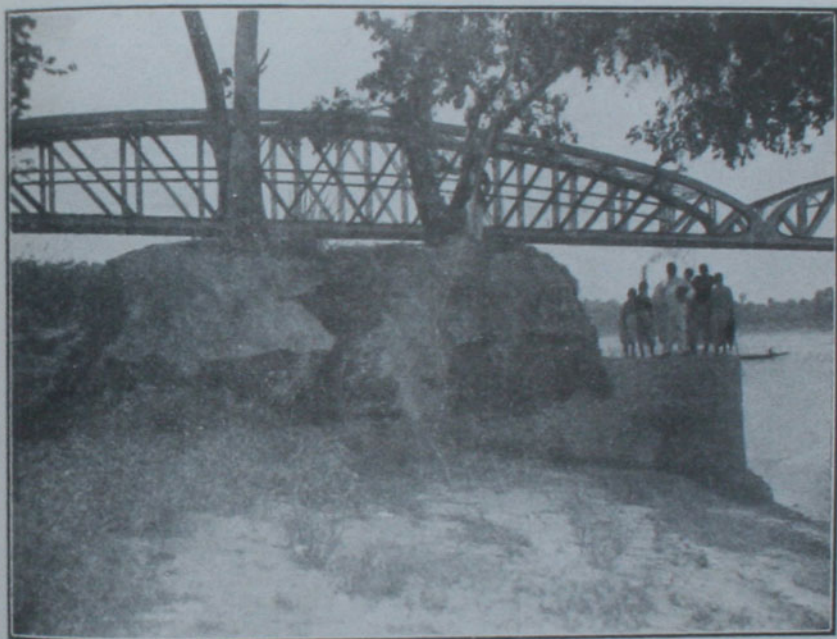
§ Van Linschoten is however open to doubt as he says the Portuguese had no Government in Hooghly and lived like wild men, which could not be true.

|| Elliot, *Hist. of India*, Vol. VII. p. 211.

¶ *Ibidem*, pp. 31, 32.

Portuguese in Bengal, 1919.

[*To face page 58.*]



RUINS OF THE SUPPOSED PORTUGUESE FORT IN HOOGHLY.

ments of war. It is not probable nor is there any evidence that the Portuguese built a fort after the Siege of Hooghly which took place in 1632.

The Rev. Long and Toynbee* refer to the fact that in 1603 Cervalius captured a Mughal fort with a garrison of 400 men all but one of whom were killed. This Cervalius was Domingo Carvalho who, as it will be seen, was the conqueror of the island of Sandwīp. Fr. du Jarric† gives some details about this interesting event. Carvalho came to Hooghly from Sripur (Bakargānj district) in order to take reinforcements for the capture of Sandwīp. He found there were about 5000 inhabitants in the Portuguese colony and that the Moors wanted to make them pay new tributes. Seeing the increasing prosperity of the Portuguese, the Moors had built a fortress near Hooghly so as to check their progress and had placed there a garrison of 400 Mughal soldiers. Whenever the Christians passed with their ships down the river, the Moors robbed them and even killed several of them inflicting indescribable cruelties. They tried to do the same with Carvalho when he was passing by their fortress with his thirty *Jaleas*‡ and began to discharge on him their arquebuzes. Carvalho jumped ashore with sixty Portuguese, and some seizing the gate of the fortress and others scaling its walls, they captured it and massacred the whole garrison excepting one Caffre who escaped through a channel. The further history of this fort, does not seem to exist in any records. Excepting this temporary hold on a Mughal fortress, the Portuguese cannot be said to have possessed a fort in Hooghly.

It is much to be deprecated that no adequate account is left

* *Sketch of the Administration of the Hooghly District*, p. 4.

† Cf. Fr du Jarric, *Histoire des Choses plus Memorables*, Part IV., Liv. VI p. 861-62.

‡ *Jalea* was a vessel used both for trading and fighting purposes; the word Jolly-boat is derived from it. Cf. *Hobson-Jobson* s. v. Gallevat.

of the Portuguese system of Government either in the official or individual writings. While so much is written about the Portuguese possessions in Western India, their doings in Bengal and the names of the chief actors have comparatively been consigned to oblivion. As to the names of the Portuguese Governors or Captains in Hooghly the only three names that can be given are Pedro Tavares (1580) Miguel Rodrigues (1623) and Manoel d' Azavedo (1632).*

The two of the earliest accounts of the Portuguese of Hooghly, throwing incidentally some light on how they governed themselves, contain doubtful statements. Van Linschoten who travelled in India between 1583 and 1589, remarks in a brief description of the Portuguese of Chittagong and of Hooghly† "The Portingalles deale and traffique thether, and some places are inhabited by them, as the havens which they call Porto Grande (Chittagong) and Porto Pequeno (Hooghly) that is the great haven and the little haven but there they have no Fortes nor any government, nor policie, as in India [they have] but live in a manner like wild men, and untamed horses, for that every man doth there what

* In spite of repeated investigations I have not been able to find a list of the Portuguese Governors of Hooghly. Out of the three names given the first is mentioned on the authority of Manrique and others. As to Manoel d' Azavedo being Captain of the Portuguese of Hooghly we have the statement of Fr. Cabral, in his letter from Ceylon (1633) describing the Seige of Hooghly. Though Miguel Rodrigues is mentioned by Stewart, in his *History of Bengal*, and by others who have repeated his statement, as the Governor of Hooghly when Shāh Jahān fled to Bengal, yet there is considerable doubt about it. Stewart probably based his statement on Fr. Catrou's *History of the Mogol Empire*. But Manrique calls Miguel Rodrigues Captain of the Portuguese in Dacca. Fr. Catrou's is not a sure evidence because he makes Miguel Rodrigues a Captain of the Portuguese in Hooghly even in 1632, which cannot be true according to Fr. Cabral. Yet I have included Rodrigues's name among the Portuguese Captains of Hooghly for if he was a Captain of the Portuguese in Dacca he might have, at the same time, been Captain of those in Hooghly.

† Van Linschoten, Hakl. Ed. Vol. I p. 95.

hee will, and every man is Lord [and maister], neyther esteeme they anything of justice, whether there be any or none, and in this manner doe certayne Portingalles dwell among them some here, some there, [scattered abroad] and are for the most part such as dare not stay in India for some wickednesse by them committed ; notwithstanding there is great trafficke used in those partes by diverse ships [and marchants] which all the year divers times both go to and from all the Orientall ports." As Van Linschoten was in Bengal not more than five years after the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly it is probable they had no perfect system of government and that there were many abuses but this writer seems to have been in some points either misinformed about Hooghly or else he applies to Hooghly what he saw in Chittagong, just as a later traveller Pyrard de Laval did. If in 1580 there was a Portuguese governor in Hooghly to whom Mir Najat Khān fled for protection it is difficult to conceive how there could be no government at all only about five years after, especially since all evidence points to the fact that the Portuguese were flourishing rather than degenerating into "untamed horses". Ralph Fitch who was in Hooghly in 1588 saw a great town in the possession of the Portuguese and has nothing to say about their living like wild men. Pyrard de Laval who was in Chittagong in 1607 perpetrates the same blunder imagining that the condition of the Portuguese in Hooghly was the same as in Chittagong. It must be mentioned Pyrard de Laval did not visit Hooghly. "A large number of Portuguese", he says* "dwell in freedom at the ports on this coast of Bengal ; they are also very free in their lives being like exiles. They do only traffic, without any fort, order, or police, and live like natives of the country ; they durst not return to India, for certain misdeeds they have committed and they have no clergy among them." To say that the Portuguese had no

* Pyrard de Laval, Hakl. Ed. Vol. I p. 334.

clergy in Hooghly in 1607 is quite erroneous. As will be seen, the religious orders, Jesuits and the Augustinians, had erected in Hooghly many churches and undoubtedly there were priests in the great Augustinian convent built in 1599, which after being destroyed and re-built many times, still exists in Bandel.

Manrique who was in Hooghly in its palmiest days, devotes many pages to quite insignificant matters but as to the system of government or its officials he has scarcely to say anything beyond mentioning that "there was a government which did not think it fit to send an embassy to Shāh Jahān on his ascending the throne."* Fr. Cabral, however, gives some information, about how the Portuguese governed themselves in Hooghly.† He says the Portuguese enjoyed absolute independence, the Mughals being content with merely collecting custom duties and market dues. This is a fact which Shāh Jahānnāmā confirms. Not even the Emperor's Guazil could enter the Portuguese town except with the consent of the Portuguese and the Mughal ships had to submit themselves to many regulations which the Portuguese enforced in their port. The Portuguese government was under a *Captain Convidor* and four assistants annually elected by the citizens. This Captain was obeyed by common folk and even by the gentry of the place. It is worthy of remark that Fr. Cabral says that it was the King of Portugal who had these officials in Hooghly showing that the Portuguese of Hooghly were loyal to the crown. The reason why Manrique, Cabral and other Portuguese who were in Hooghly have not left any detailed description of the system of government was probably because

* Manrique's, *Itinerario*, Fr. Hosten's Trans. of the Siege of Hooghly, in Catholic Herald of India, Calcutta, Vol. XVI, April, 17th 1918 and succeeding Nos.

† Fr. João Cabral's Letter from Ceylon, dated 14th Nov. 1633. *Vide* Fr. Besse's Trans. Catholic Herald, *ut supra*. Jan. 30th 1918 and succeeding Nos.

it was the same as in the other Portuguese possessions, with only some modifications to suit the conditions of the country.

Mannuci who was in Hooghly about 1660, does not also refer in his *Stória do Mogor* to any Portuguese officials though he has a lot to say about opulent Portuguese merchants. It cannot be said that after the Siege of Hooghly in 1632 the Portuguese were mere traders without any officials or responsibilities. In the Diaries of Streynsham Master appears a deed, in the Portuguese language, enacted and signed by a Portuguese public notary named Antonio Gil de Brito in the year 1657.* In Bandel some tenants of the Augustinian Convent still possess deeds and documents in Portuguese, signed by public notaries at a comparatively recent date.†

The Portuguese in Hooghly were under the authority of the Ceylon government and not directly under the Portuguese Viceroy in Goa as communication with the latter place was only possible by sea and involved considerable delay. In a large measure the Portuguese managed their affairs independently, but they never shook off the authority of the Portuguese Viceroy who from time to time communicated to the King of Portugal the state of affairs in the Portuguese possession of Ugolim (Hooghly).

It is commonly supposed that the word Hooghly is derived from *hogla*, (*typha elephantina*) the name for the tall reeds growing in abundance on the banks of the river. This derivation

* *Diaries* Temple's Edition Vol. II p. 62. "I Antonio Gil (not Gonsalvez as Temple has) de Brito, notary public of deeds for his Majesty in this Bandel of Nossa Senhora de Guadalupe of Xahabad, certify that the signature above Gaspar de Breu is that of the said Gaspar de Breu, a Portuguese. I assured myself that the said Gaspar de Breu was his signature, in faith of which I have enacted this at present, signed by me with my public signature which is as follows.

To-day, 3rd Oct. 1657. He paid for this half a *tanga*."

† One deed, dated 22nd Sept. 1794 is signed by Thomas de Fasia, *Escrivão Publico das notas d'esta Villa de Bandel*, and another, dated 21st Oct. 1824 is signed by João Lobo, *Escrivão e Notario*.

first proposed by H. Blochmann,* does not seem to be true. The *hogla* reeds which always grew on the river banks cannot alone account for a remarkable change of the name of the river from Bhāghīrathī or Ganges into Hooghly towards the end of the sixteenth century. The river acquired its name from the town of *Hooghly* which the Portuguese founded about 1580. Before this date Hooghly did not exist in name. The *Chandi* written in 1577 makes no mention of it though it refers to places close to it and opposite to it such as Harishar and Gouripur (Gorifa). O'Malley says † that Hooghly is mentioned in a Bengali poem dated 1495 but the reference which he gives, has no word about Hooghly and deals about quite different matters. The Portuguese obviously originated the name. The earliest mention of the word is in Ralph Fitch who in 1588 spells it *Hugeli*. Two years later we find in Fr. Monseratte's map the town marked *Goli*. The *Ain-i-Akbarī* (1596-97) has *Hugli*. As to the Portuguese historians, de Barros, Correa and Castanheda do not refer at all to Hooghly as their histories cover an earlier period than 1550, while Hooghly came into existence about 30 years later. Fr. Fernandes (1599) has Gullum or Gullo. Bocarro (1612-17) has *D'Ogolim*, *Golim*, *Dogolim* and Faria y Souza speaking about the Siege of Hooghly has *Golim*. Other forms are *Gollye* (Hughes and Parker 1620); *Ugolim* (Manrique, 1628); *Ugoli* (De Laet, 1630); *Oegli* or *hoegli* (Van den Broucke 1660); *Ogouli* (Bernier, 1665). Towards the end of the seventeenth century and after, *hughly*, *hooghly* began to be adopted.

It is very interesting to know whence arose the designation *Hooghly*. As already said it is not likely to be derived from the *hogla* alone, as it was not the river that was called

* Blochmann, J. A. S. B. 1873, p. 217 n.

† *Hooghly Gazetteer* p. 48.

Hooghly first but the town, where, as far as the Portuguese were concerned, the *hogla* reeds were not of any importance. Besides *hogla* reeds are to be found all over the banks of the river and not confined to the town of Hooghly. As Fr. Hosten suggests* the Portuguese might have named their settlement from the large amount of *golas* (store-houses) which they erected on the banks of the river. Fr. Hosten is not well inclined to adopt this derivation and raises many doubts. It has also been suggested that Hooghly is derived from *Gal* or *Goli* (Beng.) meaning a narrow passage, though there is nothing definite to justify such a conjecture. After all, the explanations suggested, resolve into attempting to suit facts to the theory. Whether Hooghly is derived from *hoglas* or *golas*, one thing certain at the present stage of historical research is that the name was originated by the Portuguese. Most probably both the words explain the origin of the name *Hooghly*, as the *golas* must have been covered with thatches of *hoglas*, as it is done even to this day.

* *Bengal Past and Present*, Jan.-Mar. 1915, *A week at the Bandel Convent*, pp. 89-91.

CHAPTER VI

PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS IN EASTERN BENGAL

From the earliest times Chittagong was the greatest harbour of Bengal, as already stated, and it continued to be so, as long as the far-famed Gaur remained the royal capital of Bengal, and one of the queens of Eastern cities.* All the early Portuguese captains João Silveira, Affonso de Mello and others, sailed up to Chittagong and stoutly braved the vicissitudes that the Bengal rulers subjected them to, until Mahmūd Shāh, in consideration of the help rendered him by the Portuguese, granted them in 1537 their settlement of Chittagong with a custom-house, and land and houses with powers to collect rent.† Unlike the one in Sāt-gāon, the settlement of Chittagong grew into a great centre of trade. Nuno Fernandes Freire who was appointed chief of the custom-house exercised vast powers in Chittagong and was asked to decide the quarrels between the Moorish Governors who did not fully acknowledge the authority of the King of Bengal.

* Camões thus speaks of Chittagong, *Lusiadas*, *Canto X*, *St. cxxi*.

*Vê Cathigão, cidade das melhores
De Bengala, provincia que se preza
De abundante; mas olha que está posta
Para o Austro d'aqui virada a costa.*

See Cathigam, amid the highest high
In Bengal province, proud of varied store
Abundant, but behold how placed the Post
Where sweeps the shore-line towards the southing Coast.

Burton's *Trans.*

† Vide Chapter IV; also Castanheda *Hist. Liv. VIII. Chap. CXXVIII.* p. 303.

Towards the last two decades of the sixteenth century, when the Portuguese settlement in Sāt-gāon was flourishing so well and the Portuguese were in high favour with Akbar and Jahāngīr, the Chittagong settlement was equally well progressing. The Mughal authority had not, however, yet extended to Chittagong side. The King of Arakan who held it, was favourably disposed towards the Portuguese. The Portuguese, it appears, had a skirmish with him and one Antonio de Souza Godinho about 1590 had captured by force of arms the fort of Chittagong and made the island of Sandwip tributary to it.* But a reconciliation had taken place and the King was, in fact, permitting the Portuguese to build other forts in his kingdom, which the King of Portugal found were not quite necessary and difficult to maintain. The Portuguese and the King of Portugal spoke at this time in glowing terms of their settlement of Chittagong.

Though Antonio de Souza Godinho had made the Sandwip island tributary to the Portuguese Settlement of Chittagong it did not come completely in the possession of the Portuguese until 1602, when Domingo Carvalho and Manoel de Mattos captured it from the Mughals who had deprived Kedar Rai (Cedarai) from its possession. The details of this conquest have not been given by the Portuguese historians but fortunately much information about the feats of the Portuguese in Sandwip is found in Fr. Nicolau Pimenta, and Fr. Du Jarric. This island, where two hundred ships were annually laden with salt and which, indeed, according to Fr. Du Jarric supplied the whole of Bengal with salt, belonged to the famous Kedar Rai, one of the tradi-

* *Arquivo Portuguez Oriental*, Fasciculo III p. 257, King's letter, 12th January 1591. It is surprising that the letters in Fr. Pimenta do not refer to this event which had occurred only eight years before they were written.

Sandwip is a big island at the mouth of the Ganges in the district of Noakhali. According to Faria y Souza it is 70 leagues in length.

tional heroes of Bengal. The Mughals, however, after their conquest of Bengal deprived him of this possession. The Portuguese who for long had an eye on this rich island took advantage of this situation and under Domingo Carvalho, one of the most valliant Portuguese in Bengal or even in India, attacked and captured the fortress of Sandwip in 1602.* But the inhabitants of Sandwip (*naturels du pais*) having risen against the Portuguese, Carvalho appealed to the Portuguese of Chittagong for help. Manoel de Mattos who was captain of the Portuguese in Dianga came to succour Carvalho with 400 men and put the enemy to rout. This victory placed Sandwip completely in the hands of Carvalho and Mattos who divided it between them. Fr. Du Jarric mentions that Carvalho was born in Montargil (Portugal) and was previously in the service of Kedar Rai.

Though Domingo Carvalho and Manoel de Mattos were jointly governing the island, the former wrote to the Portuguese King that they held authority under the crown of Portugal. In recognition of their brilliant services the King of Portugal created Carvalho and Mattos *Fidalgos da Casa Real* (i.e. nobles) and bestowed on them the Order of Christ.†

The King of Arakan who had many Portuguese in his kingdom, was highly enraged at their conquest of Sandwip, and apprehended that as they were becoming very powerful especially in Siriam (Pegu), ‡

*Battles with the King
of Arakan.*

* This account is based on Fr. Du Jarric's *Histoire des Chose plus Memorables etc.* Part IV. Chap. XXXII & XXXIII. The passage referring to Kedar Rai has been mistranslated by Nikhil Nath Roy in his *প্রতাপবিজয়*. It runs: "Ceste Isle appartenoit de droiet à un des Roys de Bengala, qu'on appelle Cadaray: mais il y auoit plusieurs années qu'il n'en jouissoit pas à cause que les Mogores s'en estoient emparez par force. Or quād il sceut que les Portugais s'en estoient saisis, comme nous dirons bien tost, il la leur donna de fort bonne volunte renoncant en leur faveur a tous les droiets qu il y pouuoit pretendre." Vide op. cit. p. 848.

† Doc. Rem. Tom. I. p. 25.

‡ Phayre identifies Siriam with Thanhlyin. Cf. *History of Burma*, p. 124.

where they had built a fortress, they might prove a source of danger to his Kingdom. He prepared, therefore, a fleet consisting of hundred and fifty *jaleas*, *caturs*,* and other larger vessels well equipped and armed with guns and canon. Kedar Rai also joined the king of Arakan and sent hundred *cosse*† from Sripūr to help him in the attack. The Portuguese of Dianga and Caranja having got scent of the impending attack took to their ships and sailed off with all their goods since they could not face the enemy's enormous forces. Those of Chittagong also began to escape with their most precious things doubting the intentions of the King (*sic*) of Chittagong who was the uncle of the King of Arakan and who outwardly pretended to be a great friend of the Portuguese. On the 8th of November 1602, the Arakan fleet appeared in the port of Dianga where Manoel de Mattos was in a foist, with many other Portuguese in their *jaleas*, which being badly equipped, drew in the rear. The foist of Mattos bore the brunt of the attack in which many Arakanese were killed. Only one Portuguese was killed and seven were wounded of whom Mattos himself was one. The Arakanese captured four Portuguese vessels and in honour of their victory they drank and feasted in the wildest joy.

Two days after, things changed, as Domingo Carvalho came with relief from Sandwīp. He and Mattos got up fifty vessels among which were two *foists*, four *caturs*, three *barques*, the rest being *jaleas*. With this fleet they set out early in the morning and made a surprise attack on the enemy's ships with such fury and violence that they were completely routed. They became masters of all the Arakanese ships to the

* *Caturs* were light rowing vessels, 60 to 80 ft. long, used in sea-fights. the word is probably the origin of the English marine term *cutter*. Cf. Hobson-Johnson S. V. Catur.

† *Cosse* were light boats suitable for fighting on the rivers and not at sea.

number of hundred and forty nine, with all the ammunition, arquebuzes, muskets and other implements of war. Many Arakanese lost their lives in this engagement, notably the uncle of the King of Arakan, named Sinabadi. Some escaped by jumping into the sea and swimming across to land.

When the news of the Portuguese victory reached Chittagong, all were panic-stricken. The people thinking that the Portuguese would march on the city began to run away carrying their valuable things on their shoulders and the Queen herself mounted on an elephant took to flight. The Portuguese, however, did not follow up their victory, though they could have easily taken possession of the fort of Chittagong as there was nobody to defend it.

The King of Arakan, though humbled in his pride at sea revenged himself on the Portuguese who were on land in his kingdom. He sacked their houses which they owned in many Bandels (*bunders*) on the river and imprisoned men, women and children in his fortress and subjected them to many cruelties. He, however, set to liberty the women on the day following their imprisonment. The Portuguese missionaries, Jesuits and Dominicans, who had come to Bengal in 1598 and 1599 and were carrying on very successful work also suffered immensely.* A treaty was, however, concluded by the Portuguese with the King of Arakan, and peace was restored for a time. According to the chronicles of the Dominicans the King of Arakan actually offered to rebuild at his own expense the church and the residence of the Dominicans which he had destroyed and requested them to stay in his kingdom.†

The Portuguese were now becoming very powerful in Eastern Bengal and Burma. Fillipe de Brito e Nicote had established a kingdom in Pegu and made treaties with the

* Vide Chapter IX.

† Frey Luis de Cacegas, *História de San Domingos*, 1767, Vol. III. Liv. V. Ch. XI.

kings of Tangu, Siam and Proem. After the conquest of Sandwīp the Portuguese conceived the grand project of holding the whole of the Eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal with Chittagong and Pegu as bases. Purchas remarks* the Portuguese feats were of great consequence for "here they (the Portuguese) might both build their Fleets, and be furnished of sustenance, might send at any time to all places in the South (which from Goa cannot be done but with the Monsons) and might cause that no ship of Moores should lade Pepper Cinamon or other commodities at Martavan, Reitav, Juncalao, Tanassarín and Queda, for Surat or Mecca, but with custome to them and passe from them."

The King of Arakan, dreading the Portuguese might oust him from his kingdom, decided to attack Sandwīp a second time and sent an enormous fleet of a *Second attack on Sand-* thousand sail consisting of "the most *wīp* Frigates, some greater, Catures and Cosses" against Carvalho. Again were the Portuguese victorious. The gallant Carvalho with only sixteen vessels destroyed the whole fleet of the Arakan King. Nearly two thousand Arakanese were killed and a hundred and thirty of their ships were destroyed, while the Portuguese lost only six men. This signal defeat enraged the King of Arakan beyond measure. He punished his captains by forcing them to put on women's clothes as they behaved so effeminately that they could not bring one Portuguese alive or dead.†

Though the Portuguese had won a brilliant victory their ships were badly damaged. Carvalho soon found out that he could not withstand another attack of the King of Arakan whose resources were unlimited. The Portuguese with the native converts of the place, therefore, evacuated Sandwīp and transported all their possessions to Sripūr, Bākla and

* Purchas, *His Pilgrimage*, Book V., Chap. vi., p. 582.

† Du Jarric, *Histoire*, Part IV., p. 860.

Chandecan, whereupon the King of Arakan at last became master of it. Carvalho curiously enough stayed with thirty frigates in Sripūr which was the seat of Kedar Rai. The Jesuit Father Blasio Nunes and three others who had begun building a church and a residence in Sandwīp abandoned their new ventures and repaired to their residence at Chandecan which was the only one left to them, all the others having been destroyed.

Even in Sripūr Carvalho was not destined to be left undisturbed. The Mughals who were extending their power

The Career of Carvalho all over Bengal and Arakan sent against

Kedar Rai a fleet of hundred *coses* under one Mandarai with a view to capture Sripūr. The Mughal captain find Carvalho in Sripūr directed his fleet against him. Carvalho had only thirty *jaleas* under him. But he who with sixteen vessels had defeated the King of Arakan's fleet of a thousand vessels could never hesitate to stand against only a hundred vessels of the Mughals. Not long after he engaged the Mughal fleet, he worked its destruction and even slew Mandarai who is described as "a very valiant man and very famous all over Bengal." Carvalho himself was wounded but he soon recovered and determined to embark on new ventures.

The re-capture of Sandwīp never ceased to haunt the dreams of Carvalho. As the Portuguese were very powerful in Hooghly, he personally went there in order to bring reinforcements for the execution of his plans. In Hooghly, still more stirring events were in store for him. He found that the Mughals gave the Portuguese a lot of trouble, demanding from them new tributes and imposts, and that in order to check their growing power they had built close to the Portuguese town of Hooghly a fortress garrisoned by four hundred soldiers. From this fortress the Mughals came down upon the Indian-born Christians when they passed by and inflicted on them untold

cruelties. "Wishing therefore" adds Fr. Du Jarric,* "to do the same with Domingo Carvalho when he was passing by their fortress with his thirty Jaleas, those who were inside began to discharge on him many arquebuzes. Carvalho, unable to tolerate such an affront, promptly jumped ashore with eighty Portuguese soldiers, and at first seized the fortress, while others scaled the walls. Entering inside the fortress they made such a slaughter that of the four hundred soldiers who were there only one a Caffre escaped through a channel."

The victories of Carvalho won for him a legendary reputation in Bengal and Arakan. His name was so much dreaded that one of the Arakanese commanders who had fifty ships under him, having dreamt one night that he was assaulted by Carvalho he "terrified his fellowes and made them flie into the river; which when the king heard cost him his head." The grand career of Carvalho was brought to a tragic end by the cruel and treacherous king of Chandecan, who was, according to Beveridge,† no other than Raja Pratāpāditya, the great hero of Bengal. This unscrupulous chieftain desired to make friends with the King of Arakan who after taking possession of Sandwīp and conquering the kingdom of Bākla had become considerably powerful, and menaced the kingdom of Chandecan. As he knew that nothing would please the King of Arakan more than the death of Carvalho, he invited the latter to his court in Chandecan and had him treacherously murdered. The King of Arakan, indeed, prized the head of Carvalho more than Sandwīp. Not long after, Raja Pratāpāditya, a cruel monster as Beveridge calls him, expiated his crimes in an iron cage in which he died.

The identification of the exact sites of the Portuguese Settlements offers many difficulties. Old Chittagong or

* Du Jarric, *Histoire, Part IV.*, p. 862.

† *The District of Bakarganj Chap. V.*

Chatigam of the Portuguese writers was according to de Barros's map (1540), Bleav's map (1650), Broucke's map (1660) and other old maps, on the northern bank of the Karnaphuli river almost at its mouth. It is not the same, therefore, as the modern town of Chittagong which is situated ten and half miles to the east of the mouth of the Karnaphuli. Strangely enough in 1598 Van Linschoten* assigned to Chittagong a position fifty miles eastward from the mouth of the Karnaphuli. The first Portuguese settlement, founded by Affonso de Mello in 1537, was obviously in the real *Chatigam* as marked by de Barros in his map. There is no trace left of the Portuguese factory, their custom-house and their "circuit of houses". But the relics of their later establishments still survive.

O'Malley† refers to the remains of a Portuguese fort close to Pahartali which is two miles from the civil station of Chittagong and adds that according to tradition the Portuguese bucaniers buried their treasures in this fort. According to the Portuguese records‡ the Portuguese possessed a fort in Chittagong before 1590 but it was rather in the port of Chittagong than close to Pahartali. If it is true that the Portuguese bucaniers buried their treasures in the Pahartali fort, it must have come into their possession after 1615, after which date they constituted themselves into a piratical power and settled in Dianga with the sanction of the King of Arakan. Yet Manrique does not refer to any Portuguese fort between 1621 and 1635 in Chittagong or Arakan. Fr. du Jarric§ mentions that in 1602 the Portuguese under Carvalho and Mattos could have easily taken possession of the fort of Chittagong,

* Linschoten, Hakl. Ed. Vol. I p. 94. "From this River Eastward 50 miles lyeth the towne of Chatigam which is the chief town of Bengala."

† *Chittagong Gazetteer*, p. 176.

‡ *Arch. Port. Orient., Fasc. III*, p. 257.

§ *Histoire des Choses plus Memorables, Part IV.*, p. 851.

which seems to have been close to the mouth of the Karnaphuli. It is this fort on which the Portuguese must have had a temporary hold about 1590. The King of Chittagong was in fact willing to allow the Portuguese to build more fortresses but the King of Portugal in his letter to the Viceroy dated 12th January 1591 did not consider them necessary. "And thus I am told", the letter runs* "that Antonio de Souza Godinho has served me well in Bemgualla and has made the Island of Sundiva (Sandwip) tributary to this State, and that he gained the fort of Chatiguão (Chittagong) by force of arms and that the King is making some offers (permitting the Portuguese) to build fortresses in his country. Because new fortresses when they are not quite necessary are useless and quite inconvenient to this State in which it behoves to have more garrisons to increase and preserve, than extra forts to guard and thus divert the forces of the same State, I do not consider it proper that the offers of this King should be accepted and it will be enough to maintain with him good friendship." Little did the King know that if the Portuguese had erected forts in Chittagong and Arakan they might have defied the King of Arakan on land as they defied his fleets at sea, in the constant struggles that arose in the next few years.

In the literature of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries and especially in the Portuguese writers, there are frequent references to a "City of Bengala," 'Cidade de Bengala' which is generally supposed to have been Chittagong. Varthema † as early as 1510 speaks of taking his route to this City of Bengala though according to Garcia de Orta, ‡ he never came to Bengal. Duarte de Barbosa, who was one of the earliest Portuguese to write a geographical

* *Arch. Port. Orient, ut supra.*

† L. de Varthema, *Travels*, Hakl. Ed. p. 210.

‡ Garcia de Orta, *Colloquios* p. 30.

account of the African and Indian coasts says,* "..... this sea (Bay of Bengal) is a gulf which enters towards the north and at its inner extremity there is a very great city inhabited by Moors which is called Bengala, with a very a good harbour." Lord Stanley of Alderly understands this city of Bengala to have been Chittagong and in a note says that where Ortelius places Bengala, Hommanus places Chatigam, or Chittagong. Considering a chart of 1743 in Dalrymple Chittagong, as Yule remarks,† seems to have been the City of Bengala. Ovington‡ in giving the boundaries of the kingdom of Arakan remarks "Teixeira and generally the Portuguese writers reckon that (Chatigam) as a city of *Bengala*; and not only so, but place the city of Bengala itself upon the same coast, more *south* than *Chatigam*." From this quotation, Fr. Hosten concludes§ that the City of Bengala was Dianga, which is opposite Chittagong on the southern bank of the river Karnaphuli; and adds that Dianga was the first Portuguese Settlement in the Gulf of Bengal and that it was called Porto Grande. That the first Portuguese settlements in Bengal were Sātḡāon and Chittagong has been already shown. In the Gulf of Bengal, however Pipli (Orissa) was the earliest settlement, being founded in 1514.¶ To say that Dianga was called Porto Grande is to give it undue importance. The name Dianga does not occur except at the beginning of the seventeenth century¶ while *Chatigam* the real Porto Grande where the Portuguese settled, and the *City of Bengala* were referred

* *The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, Hakl. Ed. p. 178-9.

† *Hobson-Jobson* s. v. Bengal.

‡ *A Voyage to Surat*, p. 554.

§ *Bengal Past and Present* 1916, Vol. XIII No. 25, p. 128.

¶ See Chapter VIII.

¶ The earliest mention of Dianga I have found is in Fr. Fernandes's letter dated 22nd December 1599. *Vide*, Pimenta, or Du Jarric *Hist.* Part IV, p. 828.

to early in the sixteenth century. De Barros marks Chatigam in his map (1540) but neither Dianga nor the City of Bengala. Ovington, it must be remarked, reckons Chatigam or Chittagong as the City of Bengala and not Dianga though he says the Portuguese writers place the City of Bengala more south than Chittagong. Fr. Fernandes* in his letter written from Dianga on 22nd December 1599 calls Dianga a town (ville) in the Port of Chittagong. It was at about this time that it began to acquire some importance. Besides Dianga could not be the City of Bengala as it really formed a part of the Kingdom of Arakan.

In Blaeu's map, which is not generally accurate, the City of Bengala is placed on the southern bank of the Karnaphuli more or less where Van den Broucke places Dianga. Vignola in a map of 1683 assigns the same position to the City of Bengala. But in an old Portuguese map in Thevenot† the City of Bengala is placed above *Xatigam* (Chittagong) or probably it is meant to be Chittagong itself. Without at all enquiring into the relative accuracy of these maps it may be safely asserted that all evidence points to the conclusion that Chittagong was the real City of Bengala, spoken of by the early writers. As Chittagong was the Great Port of Bengala it was more likely the Great City of Bengala. The Arabs and later on the Portuguese generally named a foreign important city or a seaport after the country in which it was situated.

Dianga is now known as Bunder or Feringhi Bunder. The word Dianga still survives as *Diang Pahar* which is the name of a low ridge of red rock running along the last three miles of the southern bank of the Karnaphuli. The Portuguese who had established themselves in Chittagong extended their activities to Dianga towards the end of the sixteenth century.

*The Settlement of
Dianga*

* Du Jarric, *ut supra*.

† Thevenot, *Voyages Curieux*, Vol. 1, Map facing p. 128.

In the above mentioned letter, Fr. Fernandes referred to a great number of Portuguese of Dianga, who made their confessions. The captain of the Portuguese Dianga and of Chittagong was Manoel de Mattos. The King of Arakan owned both these ports at this time and in the letters-patent granted to the Portuguese Fathers he styled himself "the highest and the most powerful King of Arakan, of Tippera, of Chacomas, and of Bengala ; Lord of the Kingdoms of Pegu etc."* Fr. du Jarric though mentioning that Chittagong was subject to the King of Arakan says that the latter's uncle was King of Chittagong, probably meaning thereby that he was Governor of Chittagong. The King of Arakan was well disposed towards the Portuguese of Dianga and Chittagong until in 1602 he fell out with the Portuguese over their conquest of Sandwip. A Portuguese map in Thevenot marks many houses and a Church in the locality of Dianga though this place is not mentioned. In 1607 there were six hundred Portuguese in Dianga who were put to the sword by the King of Arakan in a general massacre. The Portuguese settled in Dianga again after 1615 when the King of Arakan took the Portuguese adventurers in his service and with their conjoined efforts brought to a culmination an age of plunder and piracy. Till then the Portuguese of Dianga and Chittagong were loyal subjects of the crown of Portugal.

The circumstances that led to the massacre of Dianga belong more to the history of Pegu than of Bengal. Philippe de Brito e Nicote was a Portuguese settled in Pegu, who with his men helped the King of Arakan, Salim Shāh (*Xilimixa*)† in his battles with the King of Tangu and actually defeated the latter conquering the castle of *Mecao*. In recognition of his

*Filippe de Brito e
Nicote*

* Du Jarric, *Histoire* Part IV., p. 830.

† Salim Shāh was the Muhammadan name of King Meng Rājāgyi, (1593-1612).

services, Salim Shāh conceded to Brito e Nicote* the title of *Changa* (the good man) and granted to the Portuguese the port of Siriam in Pegu. Encouraged by success, Brito e Nicote returned to Goa to consult with the Viceroy D. Ayres de Saldanha how to carry into effect his plan of conquering the whole of Pegu. He was received with great joy and eventually obtained the Order of Christ and was made *Fidalgo da Casa Real* (Noble). The Viceroy gave his niece in marriage to Brito e Nicote and conferred upon him the title of Commander of Siriam and General of the Conquests of Pegu. Meanwhile the King of Arakan finding that the Portuguese were fortifying themselves in Siriam, sent his captain Banadola with a large fleet and 6000 men against them, but he was routed by the brave Salvador Ribeiro de Souza, who was in command of the Portuguese. Three more attacks with enormous forces were withstood by Salvador Ribeiro de Souza, who with an epic gallantry would not surrender even after a siege of eight months. Help at last arrived from Goa, with which Salvador Ribeiro de Souza inflicted a crushing defeat on the whole of the fleet and army of Salim Shāh. Soon after, he gained another victory over the King of Massinga, drove him away from his kingdom, and was hailed by the people as the King of Massinga. Such was the high renown won by the Portuguese that they could easily command the services of twenty thousand natives of the place.

Brito e Nicote having returned from Goa, Salvador Ribeiro offered the crown of Massinga to him, who accepted it in the name of the King of Portugal. Salim Shāh astonished at the success of the Portuguese hastened to make friends with them, and the Kings of Tangu and Martaban entered into an alliance with Nicote. While Brito e Nicote was rising on the tide of fortune Salvador Ribeiro, the real hero of

* This brief account of Brito e Nicote is based on Bocarro, *Decada XIII*; Faria y Souza, *Asia*; and *Documentos Remettidos*.

the exploits returned to Portugal and died a poor man. In the letter of 12th September 1608, addressed to the Viceroy at Goa, the King of Portugal accepted the crown of Pegu.*

Brito e Nicote now formed the plan of taking possession of Dianga and as he exercised a great influence over the King of Arakan he sent his son with a fleet asking him to grant him that port. The King suspecting that Brito e Nicote wished to deprive him of the whole of his kingdom invited Brito e Nicote's son and his men to his court and put them all to the sword. A general massacre of the Portuguese in the kingdom was ordered and about six hundred Portuguese who were peacefully residing in Dianga were murdered in cold blood. From this massacre about ten Portuguese escaped with their ships and one of them was Sebastião Gonsalves Tibau who was destined not only to revenge the grim massacre but also to play an important part in the history of Bengal.

*The Massacre of
Dianga, 1607*

* *Arch Port. Orient.* Fasc., VI. p. 975.

CHAPTER VII

THE RISE OF SEBASTIAO GONSALVES TIBAU

The history of the original Portuguese who settled in Chittagong and who were directly under the authority of the Portuguese Governor in Goa, is closely associated with the history of another section of the Portuguese who shook off the authority of the Governor and beginning life as adventurers eventually became so powerful as to establish an independent kingdom. The hero among these adventurers was Sebastião Gonsalves Tibau, a Portuguese of an obscure extraction born in Santo Antonio de Tojal.* He arrived in India in 1605 and having come to Bengal soon exchanged the profession of a soldier for that of a trader. He purchased a vessel of his own and filling it with salt went to Dianga at such an inopportune time that but for his cunning and bravery he would have perished in the general massacre of the Portuguese which the King of Arakan had ordered in 1607. He with nine or ten other Portuguese who had escaped with their ships, settled in the small islands at the mouth of the Ganges and sought the means of life in piracy. To revenge on the King of Arakan they ravaged his coast and carried off the booty to the King of Bākla's (Bacala)† ports, who was a friend of the Portuguese. With the massacre of Dianga, an era of piracy had dawned—piracy that led by the Arakanese, was to assume frightful proportions.

* The feats of Gonsalves are generally known through Stevens's Translation of Faria y Souza, Vol. III. p. 154, *et seq.* Bocarro, however, has a more detailed account in, *Decada XIII*, Chapters, 97—101.

† The Kingdom of Bākla included a large portion of the Bākarganj district and a part of Dacca; it was ruled by one of the *Bhuyās* of Bengal.

It was mentioned that Manoel de Mattos was in sole possession of the island of Sandwīp since Domingo Carvalho had died in or about 1605. Wishing to absent himself for some time, Manoel de Mattos entrusted the government of the island to Fateh Khān, a Muhammadan in the Portuguese employ.* But this man learning that Manoel de Mattos had died proved treacherous and took possession of the Portuguese vessels. He murdered all the Portuguese and the native Christians with their wives and children and decided to drive away Gonsalves and other Portuguese, from the islands they had occupied. He prepared a fleet of forty vessels, embarked six hundred soldiers and went in pursuit of the few Portuguese who had escaped from the massacre of Dianga. At a time when these Portuguese adventurers were engaged in dividing their booty in the island of Dakhin Shāhbāzpur, Fateh Khān came to attack them. He was so confident of success that he inscribed these words upon his colours : "Fateh Khān, by the grace of God, Lord of Sandwīp, shedder of Christian blood and destroyer of the Portuguese nation."† The small band of the Portuguese who, driven by circumstances, were indeed now no better than corsairs determined to face Fateh Khān. They had only ten vessels and all the men numbered eighty. The fleets met at night and till the following morning there was a desperate struggle, in which one Sebastião Pinto distinguished himself very highly. Victory was on the Portuguese side. Not one vessel of the Moors escaped and those that were not killed were captured. Fateh Khān, who had styled himself the destroyer of the Portuguese nation, was among the dead. The victory did not

* According to the *Doc. Rem. Tom. I. pp. 175-76* Manoel de Mattos died leaving a minor son and appointing Pero Gomes, Governor of the island. Fateh Khān probably siezed the island from Pero Gomes.

† Faria y Souza Vol. III. p. 155 ; Bocarro, *Decada XIII*, p. 433.

cost the Portuguese anything, save the death of Sebastião Pinto, who was loved by all on account of his noble character.

The Portuguese who though victorious were merely roaming vagabonds felt the necessity of a captain who could train and discipline them, and chose Estevão Palmeyro "a man of years, experience and discretion" to command them. But he refused to be at the head of men who, though brave, had proved themselves to be wicked by their ravages, and appointed Sebastião Gonsalves Tibau as the commander whom all agreed to obey.

Under the new commander, the Portuguese determined to gain Sandwīp that was lost to them through the thoughtlessness of Mattos. They gathered the Portuguese

*The Second Conquest
of Sandwīp, 1610*

from the various neighbouring ports and by March 1609 they managed to collect a force of forty sail and four hundred men. Gonsalves arranged with the King of Bākla for assistance on the promise of giving him half the revenue of the island. The King, indeed, sent some ships and two hundred horse. Fateh Khān's brother who conducted the defence of the island met the Portuguese at the landing place but was forced to retire into the fort. The Portuguese then besieged the island for two months, but ran short of provisions and ammunition, which could not be brought up on account of the enemy's opposition. At a time when all seemed to be lost a Spaniard named Gaspar de Pina at the head of fifty men came to the rescue from Hijilī, with only a ship but much courage and ingenuity. He approached by night with shouts, blare of trumpets, noises of drums and a blaze of lights, creating an impression that a powerful succour had come. In this confusion Gaspar de Pina and the whole of the Portuguese force effected a landing and took possession of the island. The Hindu inhabitants of the island, who were already accustomed to the Portuguese rule during the time of Manoel de Mattos welcomed the entry of

Gonsalves. He received them well on condition they brought to him every Moor in the island. They gladly brought to him about a thousand Moors who were all murdered in cold blood. The massacre of Dianga and Fateh Khān's murder of the Portuguese in Sandwīp were thus revenged.

Gonsalves became now the sole master of the island, independent of the Portuguese of Hóoghly or of the Goa

Government. Besides, he owned lands on the coast of Arakan. He had under him one thousand Portuguese, two thousand

soldiers, all well armed, two hundred horse and eighty ships with canon. Many merchants of Bengal and of the coasts of Tenasserim and Choromandel resorted to Sandwīp and paid duty at the custom-house which Gonsalves had erected. He dictated the laws of the place. The neighbouring princes sought his friendship and his alliance. He was at this time at the height of his power and glory ; but power dazzled him. He grew insolent and ungrateful. He took back the lands from the very Portuguese who had raised him to power. Instead of paying half the revenue of Sandwīp to the King of Bākla as he had promised he made an attack on him and seized the islands of Dakhīn Shāhbāzpur and Patelbanga.

In the year 1609 disputes arose between the Prince (Heir-apparent) of Arakan and his brother Anaporan* over trifling matter such as the possession of an elephant. The Prince actually fought a battle against his brother who being defeated fled to Gonsalves. Gonsalves promised to succour him and kept his daughter† as a hostage. He and Anaporan, combining their armies, marched against the Prince of Arakan but as

* Faria y Souza calls Anaporan brother of the King of Arakan and in *Documentos Remettidos* he is said to be nephew of the King of Arakan. I have followed Bocarro.

† Sister, according to Faria y Souza.

the latter came with an army of eighty thousand men and seven hundred fighting elephants, they returned to Sandwip. In the sea fight, however, Gonsalves's brother Antonio captured a hundred sail of the enemy with only five vessels on his side. Anaporan brought over to Sandwip his wife, children and all his treasures. It is an interesting fact that on her becoming Christian, Gonsalves married Anaporan's daughter whom he had kept as a hostage. Shortly after, Anaporan died and as Gonsalves seized his treasures it was suspected he caused his death. To suppress this suspicion Gonsalves wanted to marry his brother Antonio Carvalho Tibau to Anaporan's widow but she refused to embrace Christianity and hence his project was not realized.

Many were the marriage relations contracted between the Portuguese and the Royal Family of Arakan. Not only did Sebastião Gonsalves marry the daughter of Anaporan (Meng Phaloung?) who was, as Bocarro says, the second son of the King reigning in 1610 (Xalamixa I or Meng Radzagy), but also according to Manrique a son of Gonsalves married a daughter of Alamanja whom he calls the younger son of Xalamixa I (and of Xalamixa II in another place). It would seem that the Alamanja of Manrique is the same as Anaporan of Bocarro. But Manrique seems to speak of them as two different persons. According to Faria y Souza, Anaporan was the brother, and according to *Documentos Remetidos*, the nephew of the King of Arakan who ruled in 1607, that is Xalamixa I or Meng Radzagy. It is curious that all the Portuguese writings should differ on this point. The daughter of Alamanja who married the son of Sebastião Gonsalves was baptized under the name of Maxima. After the death of Alamanja his two other children, a boy and a girl, were baptized under the names of Martinho and Petronilla respectively. Martinho was brought up by the Augustinians at

*Marriage Relations
between the Portuguese
and the Royal Family
of Arakan*

Goa, and at the age of eighteen he joined the Portuguese navy in the hope of gaining the crown of Arakan which he claimed on the ground that he was "the legitimate son of Alamanja, and grandson of Xalamixa II (sic)". He served in the Armada of Dom Ruy Freire de Andrade and then in the fleet of Nuno Alvares Botelho. He fought on the Portuguese fleet against the King of Achin in Malacca (1627-28) being wounded in the attack. He went to Portugal when D. João IV was proclaimed King of Portugal (1640) and died when returning to India. His sister Petronilla died at Hooghly*. It may be added, Brito e Nicote's son married the daughter of the King of Martaban, and another of his son was about to marry the daughter of Anaporan.†

The Mughals since the fall of Daud Khan in 1577 were in possession of Bengal and Orissa and according to Bocarro had overthrown the *Bhuyās* by 1610. They had not, however, yet penetrated into Arakan and were now planning the conquest of the kingdom of Bhulua.‡ As this kingdom was close to Sandwip as well as to Arakan, Gonsalves and the King of Arakan thinking the Mughals would be a danger to their kingdoms forgot their enmity and entered into a mutual agreement to combat them. Stewart however says§ that the reason of this alliance was that they planned between themselves to invade Bengal, the agreement being that the King of Arakan was to proceed with an army by land and the Portuguese in a fleet by sea. The King of Arakan entrusted the whole of his fleet to Gonsalves keeping his nephew as a hostage. During

Gonsalves, a Treacherous Ally. 1610

* Cf. Fr. Hosten's *Annotations to Manrique, Bengal Past and Present*, 1916, Vol. XIII, No. 25, p. 130.

† *Documentos Remettidos* Tom. I, p. 356.

‡ Bhulua is the largest pargana in the Noakhali district of Bengal. The village of Bhulua is a few miles west of Noakhali on the Lakhipur Road.

§ *History of Bengal* p. 236.

these negotiations Gonsalves gave back the widow of Anaporan who afterwards married the governor of Chittagong. The King of Arakan and the Portuguese attacked the Mughals and drove them out of the kingdom of Bhulua and took Lakhipur, while Gonsalves barred their advance from the sea.

Gonsalves, however, soon changed his mind and whether he was influenced by a bribe or actuated by a desire for revenge on the former crimes of the King of Arakan, he allowed the Mughals to pass to Bhulua up the river. They then easily attacked the King of Arakan and routed his army. The unfortunate King with his nobles fled towards the forests of Tippera for safety. The King of Tippera who was the vassal of the King of Arakan rebelled at this time and put to the sword the nobles of Arakan. The King of Arakan with great difficulty escaped, mounted on a swift elephant and at last arrived in Chittagong.

Seeing the King of Arakan defeated and driven to his own limits, Gonsalves took possession of the Arakan fleet with which he was entrusted and murdered all the Arakan captains. What is more, with a bold effrontery he set out with his fleet and plundered all the forts on the Arakan coast especially those of Chittagong, Maju and Ramu and destroyed many ships some of which belonged to other nations. Amongst these ships was one the loss of which the King felt most. "It was," says Faria y Souza,* "of a vast Bigness and wonderful Workmanship with several Apartments like a palace all covered with Gold and Ivory and yet the curiosity of the Work surpassed all the rest." All that the King could do in revenge was to order a stake to run through Gonsalves's nephew who was kept as a hostage. He impaled him on a high place near the Port of Arakan in order that his uncle might see him as he departed from the coast of Arakan. But he, to whom treachery and insolence were ordinary affairs, had no feelings for a nephew.

* Faria y Souza, Stevens Trans. Vol. III, p. 161; Cf. also Bocarro *Decada XIII* p. 433.

CHAPTER VIII

MINOR SETTLEMENTS OF THE PORTUGUESE

Situated on the banks of the Bouriganga, or as Manrique says, on the banks of the famous (and at that place fertilizing) Ganges, *Dacca* commanded an extensive trade and was the resort of many foreign merchants especially since Islam Khān made it the capital of Bengal in 1608. At the time of the Portuguese settlement in about 1580, *Dacca* did not hold this proud position though it was noted for its rich industries. After the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly, they were not slow to avail themselves of the benevolence of Akbar and establish themselves in *Dacca* to secure the trade of this important centre. Her richest muslins and her various kinds of cloth found their way to Portugal, Italy, Malacca, Sumatra and Goa in the Portuguese ships. Ralph Fitch describes *Dacca* in 1586, as abounding in rice, cotton and silk goods. From the account of Ralph Fitch it can be gathered that only six years after the Portuguese had settled in the *Dacca* district they had grown into traders of much importance especially in Sripūr. Manrique says that Akbar as well as Jahāngīr offered the Portuguese Fathers lands for their maintenance or as an assignment of revenue, which they refused because the Asiatic princes were wont to take advantage of the favours they conferred to turn the foreigners out. When the natives of *Dacca* were terrifying the people against the Portuguese because they ate pork, and drank wine, Akbar sent a positive order that no harm should be done to them. Caesar de Federici found the Nawab of *Dacca* in very friendly terms with the Portuguese and the Christians; and Tavernier records that in 1670 he saw

in Dacca a Church of the Augustinians, built of brick, and of a very fine workmanship.*

These Portuguese settlers did not belong to the other section of the Portuguese who were powerful in Sandwip and in Arakan and who during Shaista Khān's viceroyalty settled in Dacca at a place called Feringhi Bazar. In fact, when Shaista Khān was bent upon the conquest of Chittagong he sent Shaikh Ziāuddin Yusuf to the original Portuguese settlers trading in salt in Loricul near Dacca asking their countrymen in Chittagong to abandon the King of Arakan and enter the Mughal service.† They having agreed to do so, were given by Shaista Khān the land known as Feringhi Bazar. About twelve miles from the city, springing from the banks of the Ishamutti, lies this Feringhi Bazar calling to mind the days of the Portuguese domination in Bengal. Dacca possesses another relic of the Portuguese. Though every trace of the factories of the Dutch, of the French and even of the English is gone,‡ a part of the Portuguese factory, beautiful in its ruins, still exists in Dacca close to the Church of O. L. Rosary. Bradley-Birt remarks§ "All that remains to-day of the various factories (in Dacca) is a portion of the house which the Portuguese once made their headquarters. It must have been in those days a fine commodious building, but like every thing else in this city of the long sleep it is sadly fallen and decayed retaining but a memory of its better days." Many, many of the early European archaeological remains are so ignominiously disappearing and crumbling into dust that a

* Tavernier, Ball's, Ed. Vol. I, p. 128.

† Shiabuddin Talish, *The Conquest of Chatgaon*, J. A. S. B. 1907 p. 407.

‡ The Dacca College stands on the site of the English Factory; the palace of the Nawab of Dacca covers the French factory; and the Milford Hospital tends to suffering humanity where the Dutch factory once stood.

§ F. Bradley-Birt, *Romance of an Eastern Capital*, p. 286.

Lucretius might have well exclaimed "*et etiam perierunt ruinae.*"

In the Dacca, Bäckarganj, and Noakhali Districts the Portuguese had numerous minor settlements where they did not erect factories or forts, though they carried on a considerable trade. Many of them were entirely Christian centres, where the Portuguese Missionaries built their churches and effected the conversions of the inhabitants. Most of the names of these places, once the scene of considerable activities are no longer current. But Dr. Wise and Beveridge, and latterly Fr. Hosten have thrown much light on the identification of the places that belonged to the twelve *Bhuyās* of Bengal.

Sripūr, situated according to Ralph Fitch six leagues below Sonargaon, has played an important part in the history of Bengal, being the seat of the kingdom

Sripūr.

of Chand Rai and Kedar Rai. De Barros, Blaev and Van den Broucke differ in the exact locality which they assign to it in their maps but all of them place it south of Sonārgāon. De Barros and Blaev, whose map as far as relates to Bengal is almost a re-print of that of de Barros, mark Sripūr as *Bunder*. Van den Broucke calls it Sherpur Feringhi, which shows it was an important Portuguese settlement. Ralph Fitch says in 1586 that the Portuguese had sole authority in Sripūr. He speaks of having gone to Pegu from Sripūr in a Portuguese ship belonging to one Alberto Carvalho.*

Chandecan was another small settlement of the Portuguese, where the Jesuits built their first Church. Beveridge considers Chandecan to be identical with Dhumghat

Chandecan.

or Jessore after an elaborate discussion.†

He has not however considered Van Linschoten's references in his *Le Grand Routier de Mer* to the river of Chandecan which

* Purchas, *His Pilgrimes*, Ralph Fitch p. 185.

† *The District of Bäckarganj* p. 176 et seq.

appears to have been a part of the river Hooghly or one of its channels near Saugor Island. Though, he says, he could not find Chandecan in any maps, it is marked in Sir Thomas Roe's map of 1632 and in Fr. Monseratte's map of 1580-1600. Much information about Chandecan can be derived from the letters of Fr. Fernandes and his companions who carried on missionary work in Chandecan at the express invitation of the King*. The Portuguese built a Church in Chandecan which was formally opened on January 1st, 1600. As it has been shown, the Portuguese activities in Chandecan were checked when the King of Chandecan, whom Beveridge supposes to be Raja Pratāpāditya soon changed his attitude towards the Portuguese, and in order to please the King of Arakan treacherously murdered Domingo Carvalho, the gallant captain of the Portuguese.

The Portuguese had a small settlement in Bākla which according to Beveridge included a great part of the Bākarganj district and was really identical with the Chandradwip *pargāna*. Fr. Melchior Fonseca who came to Bengal in 1599 has left a very good account of Bākla, which materialy helped later investigators in tracing on the history of its rulers. Bākla, was under the rule of a Hindu prince who was one of the twelve *Bhuyās* of Bengal.† He was well disposed towards the Portuguese and granted Fr. Fonseca a decree allowing the Jesuits free liberty to preach their religion and erect their churches. Fr. Fonseca found a colony of the Portuguese under a captain II (Capitano) in Bākla, which for many years had not been visited by priests.

Catrabo called by Manrique one of the Kingdoms of

* Du Jarric, *Histoire*, Part IV, Chap. XXIX.

† According to Fr. du Jarric out of the twelve *Bhuyās* of Bengal only three were Hindus, those of Sripūr, of Bākla and of Chandecan.

Bengal was under the rule of one of the twelve *Bhuyās* of Bengal. Van den Broucke places it below Sonārgāon and Beveridge identifies it with Katrabuh or Katibari in the Mānikganj sub-division.* *Catrabo* Dr. Wise however suggests† “Catrabo is Katrabo, now a ‘tappa’ on the Lakhya opposite Khizrpūr which for long was the property of the descendants of ‘Isā Khān Masnad-i-‘Ali’”. Fr. Fernandes was in 1599 in Catrabo and relates that the population was mainly Muhammadan. The people were convinced through his efforts that the Christian law was true and good but they were not willing to be converted.‡ It was a place where the Portuguese founded a small colony which at one time was very influential.

Loricul, twenty eight miles south of Dacca, was another Christian settlement of the Portuguese. It appears in Van den Broucke’s map (1660) as Noricoel and is marked by a cross like all the other christian settlements. *Loricul* La Touche very curiously suggests§ the place was so named after the Portuguese Viceroy, Marquis of Lourical, who ruled from 1741 to 1742, but as Fr. Hosten points out, the place was much older. Blochmann identifies it with Morculij of Blaev’s map (1650). Merculij also is marked in de Barros’s map, which was the origin of Blaev’s information about Bengal. Manrique mentions that the Augustinians built a Church in Loricul though he does not give the date. It must have been built towards the end of the sixteenth century when the Augustinians had spread all over Dacca. According to Sicardo, the Augustinian historian, the Church existed in

* Proc. A. S. B. 1903, pp. 133-134.

† J. A. S. B. 1875, XLIV p. 182.

‡ Du Jarric, *Histoire*, Part IV, p. 829.

§ La Touche, *The Journals of Major James Rennel* etc, Mem. A. S. B. Vol. III No. 3, 1910 No. 39.

1682 but Rennel wrote on February 14, 1765 "Here are ye ruins of a Portuguese Church and of many brick houses."*

The famous Portuguese merchant Nicolo de Paiva who left twenty thousand xerafins for the upkeep of the Jesuits at Hooghly and farmed the customs of the Nawab of Dacca lived in Loricol in 1675.† One Nicola Pareres, a "Portugall Merchant," probably the same as Nicolo de Paiva, as Fr. Hosten supposes, assured William Hedges in 1684 that "their (Portuguese) whole community had wrott ye Vice King of Goa and besought him earnestly to send them two or three frigates with aid and assistance of soldiers to possess themselves of ye Islands of Kegeria and Ingelee (Khijri and Hījili) for which purpose they had sent him draughts and large descriptions of ye said Islands." ‡

In Bhulua, which was an independent principality in the seventeenth century there was a colony of the Portuguese.

Bhulua

There were also numerous Portuguese converts in Bhulua who were very influential.

Glanius who has left a graphic description of the wreck of *Ter Schelling* remarks§, "The Prince's Guard (in Bhulua) consists wholly of Christians which are there in great esteem and although perhaps they are only Christians in name being *Negroes* born; subjects to the King of Portugal; yet they are counted such brave fellows, that they have a particular respect shew'd them and therefore the grandees of the court so highly prize their familiarity, that they relate to them whatsoever passes in Council." The Portuguese influence was so completely established in Bhulua that many of the people spoke Portuguese.||

* *The Journals of Rennel, ut supra.*

† J. A. S. B. 1911 pp. 27, 29.

‡ Yule, *Diary of Hedges* Vol. I p. 172.

§ Glanius, *A Voyage to Kingdom of Bengal*, pp. 138-9.

|| Glanius, *ut supra*, p. 136, "we bought Milk and Rice which we drest in a Pot that was lent us by Moors that spoke Portugaise."

Hijili is a littoral tract extending from the mouth of the Rupnarayan along the western side of the Hooghly estuary and forming part of the Midnapore district. It was formerly an island now united to the mainland and was a district of Orissa under native rulers. At the time of the Portuguese occupation it had its own chiefs but in 1505 according to the local traditions the Muhammadans under Taj Khān and his brother, took possession of it.* After a period of eight years however a Hindu chieftain recovered it. The Portuguese settlement in Hijili can be said to be the earliest European settlement in Bengal. The Portuguese not long after establishing themselves in Pipli (Orissa) in 1514 migrated northwards towards Hijili. Before the town of Hijili existed as such, the author of the *Chandi* was referred in 1577 to a Portuguese territory in or near Hijili as the "*Feringhee Desh* where they (the poet and his companion) ply their boats night and day for fear of the *Harams* (a term of abuse applied to the Feringhis) and pass it in twenty days."† If the boats plying night and day, took twenty days to pass the country under the Feringhi influence the Portuguese occupation of the Hijili coast must have been an extensive one. On the return journey of the poet he refers to another *Feringhi desh* on the Orissa coast where they visited Jagannath Puri.

The Augustinians built in Hijili two Churches both dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary. In 1582 both Churches contained three hundred parishioners grown to an age of confession.‡ Sicardo refers to another Church built by the Augustinians in the Bandel or village of Banja (which Manrique places in the kingdom of Hijili), dedicated to Our Lady of

* Blochmann, *Contributions to the Geog. and Hist. of Bengal*, p. 17.

† *Calcutta Review*, Oct. 1891, No. 186, p. 373.

‡ Fray J. Sicardo O. S. A. *Christiandad del Japon* Ch. III. (Quoted by Fr. Hosten).

Salvation, "the Christian community there counting five hundred souls exclusive of those whom the commerce of that Port brought to the place albeit the climate is little salubrious." Manrique throws some light on the commerce of Hijili. Referring to the Church of Banja he says* it was built "to be able to cope with the great number of merchants who gather there to buy sugar, wax and Gingham (*guingones*) which I have said is a kind of cloth made of grass (*yerua*) and silk, a very nice and cooling texture to wear during the hot summer." An earlier account of Ralph Fitch (1586) says† "To this hauen of Angeli (Hijili) come euery yere many ships out of India Negapatam, Sumatra, Malacca & divers other places & lode from thence much store of Rice & much cloth of cotton wool, much sugar, & long pepper, great store of butter & other victuals for India."

W. Hedges mentions‡ in his Diary that the Portuguese were ousted from Hijili in 1636 by the Mughals and in 1724 Valentyn referred to Hijili as a *former* Portuguese settlement. The Arakanese and Portuguese pirates now began to commit depredations on the Orissa coast and in Hijili. Tracts of lands became depopulated and the ryots left their fields. Shāh Jahān thereupon annexed Hijili to Bengal so as to enable the imperial fleets stationed at Dacca to guard against these piratical raids.

The ruins of the Portuguese settlements in Hijili can still be seen. A couple of miles south of Geonkhali lies Merepore, known still as *Feringhi Para*, where the S. P. C. Mission found in 1838 some Christians who declared that they were descendants of the Portuguese from Goa who were given the village of Merepore rent free as a reward for some services

* *Bengal Past and Present*, Cardon's Trans. 1915, Vol. XII p. 48.

† Horton Ryley's, *Ralph Fitch*, p. 114.

‡ Yule, *Diary of Hedges*, Vol. II. p. 240.

rendered by them to the Raja of Mysadal, which is now in the Hooghly District.*

In Midnapore the Portuguese also had another important settlement in Tamlük. Tamlük is situated on the southern bank of the Rupnarayan and was an important seaport in ancient times deserving a mention as *Tamalites* in Ptolemy's geography.† But it lost its importance towards the tenth century as the channel that afforded an easy communication with the sea gradually silted up. Hijili then rose into prominence. It is noteworthy, however, that the Portuguese settlement in Tamlük remained long after they were driven away from Hijili. In 1635 a church was built there through Manrique's influence. Gemelli Careri refers ‡ to it in 1695 as having been subdued by the Portuguese and in 1724 Valentyn remarks§ "Tamboli and Banzia (Banja) are two villages where the Portuguese have their Church and their southern trade. There is much dealing in wax here".

Tamlük, like Pipli and Balasore in Orissa, had a great slave market where the Arakan and Portuguese pirates brought their captives for sale. In a description of the exploits of these pirates Shiab-ud-din Talish (about 1665) says, || "sometimes they brought the captives for sale at a high price to Tamlük and the port of Baleswar (Balasore), which is a part of the imperial dominions and a dependency of the province of Orissa. The manner of the sales was this. The wretches used to bring the prisoners in their ships, anchor at a short distance from the shores of Tamlük or

* *Indo-European Correspondence*, Calcutta 1869 pp. 80-81. (Quoted by Fr. Hosten).

† M. Chakravarti, J. A. S. B. May 1908, p. 289.

‡ *A Voyage Round the World*, Churchill's Collection, Vol. IV p. 109.

§ Valentyn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien* V de Deel p. 159.

|| *The Feringhi Pirates of Chatgaon*, J. A. S. B. 1917, p. 422.

Baleswar, and send a man ashore with the news. The local officers, fearing lest the pirates should commit any depredation or kidnapping there, stood on the shore with a number of followers and sent a man with a sum of money to the pirates. If the terms were satisfactory, the pirates took the money and sent the prisoners with the man." As the Portuguese pirates did not actually land ashore, it is obvious that the Tamlūk settlement was not founded by these renegades but by the loyal Portuguese, like those of Hooghly, who according to Valentyn carried on a southern trade and possessed Churches even in the eighteenth century.

The earliest European settlements in the Gulf of Bengal were established in Orissa. It was the same with the Portuguese as with the English and the Dutch.* Ascending

Piplī

along the western shore of the Bay of Bengal the coast of Orissa was the first to offer a landing place. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, that is, a short time after the discovery of the sea-route to India (1498) the Portuguese established themselves on the coast of Madras. Alarmed at the growth of a foreign power, the natives rose against the Portuguese who escaped northward and in 1514 founded a town in Piplī† about four miles from the mouth of the Subarnareka River, establishing their earliest settlement on the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Piplī was then an important harbour on the Orissa coast and a great centre of Portuguese trade when their fleets commanded the whole sea-board from Chittagong to Orissa. It was also a great slave market where the Arakanese and the Portuguese pirates sold their prisoners.

Joannes De Laët refers in 1631 to this port as being in the possession of the Portuguese. Early in the seventeenth century

* Before the English had any footing in Bengal, they settled in Piplī in 1625 and in Balasore in 1625.

† W. Hunter, *Orissa* 1872, p. 37. O'Malley in his *Balasore Gazetteer* asserts that the Portuguese settled in Piplī in 1599, Cf. p. 36 and 204.

the Augustinians had built a Church and a residence in Pipli, the Church being dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary.

The Portuguese settlement in Pipli continued to be a trading centre for a long period of time. Bruton describes Pipli in 1683 as a "Port town of the Portuguese where the Portugals are resident" and Fr. Barbier in his description of the Episcopal visitation of Bishop Laines in 1723 refers to a large Portuguese or *Topas* congregation.

When the East India Company sought for trade in Orissa there arose bitter hostilities between them and the Portuguese settlers. W. Hunter, in his *History of British India*, gives a graphic description of a fight between an English and a Portuguese vessel.* A Portuguese frigate from Pipli, launched an attack in Harishar, a port in Orissa, against the first English junk that came to Bengal in 1633 and assisted by some "ribble-rabble rascals of the town," nearly finished with the English. Ralph Cartwright, a merchant of E. I. Co., claimed before the Mughal Governor the Portuguese frigate as a redress for the Portuguese attack in a Mughal harbour. The Portuguese also entered their protests. The Mughals who were ill disposed towards the Portuguese and only a year before had sacked their settlement of Hooghly confiscated the Portuguese vessel for themselves to the great chagrin of Cartwright.

The famous English ship Swan which came to Bengal in the same year received a quite different treatment from the Portuguese. According to the Diary of Hedges† the Portuguese redeemed the Swan when seized by the Arakanese. "Last year (1633)," it says, "when the Swann was in Bengalla her boat beinge sent on shoare for water was suddenly surprized by some of the Kinge of Arackans *Gelliaes*

* Cf. also C. R. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English*, Vol. I. p. 1 *et seq.*

† Yule, *Diary of Hedges*, Vol. III p. 180.

of Warr : 3 : of her men killed, and the rest taken and carried to a place in Bengalla called Piplee where a Portugal Captain that came thither on a small vessel from Macassar redeemed them for 400 : Ruppes which mony was presently sent him from Ballasarra.....for which affront we doe away all opportunitye to force a satisfaction." This account is in marked contrast with that of the first junk in which the English came to Bengal.

The Portuguese also had a small settlement in Balasore of which no vestige now remains. Stirling however says* that in his time the only relic of this settlement was a small Roman Catholic Chapel with a wooden cross over the principal doorway. Even this has now disappeared. This Chapel or really a Church was dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary.

Balasore

* *Account of Orissa.*

CHAPTER IX

PORTUGUESE MISSIONARIES

The ecclesiastical history of the Portuguese in Bengal would fill up volumes. No nation came to India with a religious zeal more fervent than that of the Portuguese. Their conversions went *pari-passu* with their conquests. The sword always allied itself with the Cross and while the one extended the domain of the Empire the other propagated the Christian faith. The first words of a sailor of Vasco da Gama in reply to the question of a Tunisian Moor, were "we have come to seek Christians and spices." In the propagation of faith, the methods as well as the agents would in many cases be open to reproach if judged according to the modern canons of liberty and justice. One may, indeed, blame the aggressive proselytism of the Portuguese missionaries, as the Portuguese themselves have condemned it, but it cannot be denied it was through their zeal and efforts that the best fruits of Christian civilization were spread even in the most recondite parts of India.

The first members of the illustrious Order of the Jesuits, came to India in 1542, among whom was St. Francis Xavier. Before them the Franciscans and the Dominicans had begun the work of evangelization in India. The

The Jesuits

Jesuits and the secular priests were, however, the earliest on record to have come to Bengal. The Jesuit Fathers Antonio Vaz and Pedro Dias arrived in Bengal in 1576,* and a secular priest named Juliano Pereira, *Gangarides Archimystes*, as Monserratte calls him is mentioned as a vicar in Sâtgāon in 1578. Akbar invited him to his court in Fatehpur

* Fr. Delaunoy gives the date as 1579, Cf. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s. v. Calcutta.

Sikri to explain to him the tenets of the Christian religion and he having done so as best as he could, requested Akbar to summon more learned priests from Goa.

The work of the Jesuits who came to Bengal between 1598 and 1600 is aptly described in their letters to Fr. Nicolau de Pimenta who was in Goa.* Pimenta sent in 1598 two Jesuits named Francisco Fernandes and Domingo de Souza from Cochin and two more in the following year, Melchior da Fonseca and André Boves. They arrived in Hooghly in May of the same year and preached in the bigger Church (*summo temple*) which was built before their arrival. They erected a school and a hospital, evidently the first one in Bengal. In Hooghly they received an invitation from the King of Chandecan to pay him a visit but they first went to Chittagong in the course of their missionary tour, leaving their school and their hospital in the hands of the Vicar of Hooghly probably a secular priest. They erected in Chittagong two Churches and a residence. Though Chittagong belonged at this time to the King of Arakan they found it almost entirely in the hands of the Portuguese. Fr. Fernandes gives the text of the letters-patent† which the King of Arakan granted to the Portuguese, allowing them to preach the Christian religion and build Churches in his kingdom. As the King of Chandecan was angry with the Jesuits for their not having responded to his invitation, Fr. Fernandes sent Fr. de Souza to Chandecan and he was received favourably. In October 1599, Fr. Fernandes himself went to Chandecan and obtaining from the King letters-patent with full authority to carry on his mission and to erect a Church and a residence. The Church was formally consecrated on the 1st January 1600. This was the first Jesuit Church in Bengal and was therefore dedicated to Jesus Christ. Fr. Fonseca was very successful in the kingdom of Bākla where

* Pimenta's *Carta*. Cf. Du Jarric, *Histoire*, Part IV., Chapters XXIX and XXX.

he found many Portuguese. He obtained free permission from the King of Bākla to preach the Christian religion in his kingdom and the Jesuits actually built a residence and appear to have begun a Church.*

The successes of Fr. Fernandes and his companions unfortunately came to a melancholy end. In connection with the disputes between the Portuguese and the King of Arakan, already described, a tumult arose in Chittagong in which the Portuguese suffered heavily. Fr. Fernandes having attempted to save some children who were being forced into slavery by the Arakanese was mercilessly thrashed and deprived of one eye. On the 14th November 1602 he expired in prison. Fr. Andre Boves was also cast into prison with chains round his neck and legs. To crown all this ill-treatment, the Arakanese used the sacred *chalice* as a spittoon. Following the fortunes of Carvalho, they took refuge in Sandwīp and then in Sripūr, Bākla, and Chandecan. Carvalho was soon after murdered by the King of Chandecan. Under these melancholy circumstances the surviving fathers eventually left Bengal, some going to Pegu and some to Cochin.

From the letters of Fr. Fernandes and his three companions, it appears that long before them, the Portuguese Fathers had begun missionary work in Bengal. The Jesuits, then as now, not only converted the people of Bengal but also sent Bengali children to be educated in the great Jesuit College of Santa Fé in Goa, which was afterwards known as the College of São Paulo. Fr. H. Josson S. J. mentions* the names of five Bengali children who were pupils of the College of Santa Fé in 1558—Filippe, Gaspar de Deus, Antonio do Ermo, and two Pedros. In the catalogue of the pupils of that College, dated 1559, and still preserved in

* *Mission Belges*, 1913, Sept. p. 331. Cf. H. Hosten, *Bengal Past and Present*, 1915, Vol. XII, No. 24 p. 45.

the Royal Library of Ajuda, Portugal, several names of Bengali children are mentioned.*

From 1599 to 1617 there is no record of any Jesuits in Hooghly. The Augustinians meanwhile had established themselves in Hooghly and when the
Jesuits, 1617 Jesuits came back in 1617 they found that the former claimed the sole right of evangelisation. The Jesuits however, took possession of their College of St. Paul and their hospital and in the same year they erected in Hooghly their first Church and residence. Three years after, both these buildings had to be re-constructed, because they were too close to the river.

The Augustinians accomplished the most important work in Bengal. They were the fourth religious Order to come to
Augustinians India, their first batch of twelve missionaries having arrived in Goa in 1572. When they came to Bengal, is a disputable point. Sicardo and other Augustinian historians say that they came to Bengal in 1599. Manrique however asserts that they came after the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly in 1580. When Tavares came to Bengal with a *farman* from Akbar granting the Portuguese full religious liberty and permission to preach openly the Christian faith, to erect Churches and to baptize the natives, who would consent to be Christians, he applied to the Viceroy at Goa and the Bishop of Cochin for missionaries. The Augustinians having been chosen to minister in Bengal they came to Bengal as soon as the season permitted, with Frei Bernardo de Jesus as superior and in his absence Frei João de Cruz. Probably Sicardo has lost sight of the first batch of missionaries that came to Bengal. Tavares and his Portuguese certainly required religious missionaries to carry on their religious work and as the two Jesuits who were in

* Fr. Cros S. J. *Lettres de St. François Xavier*, Vol. I, p. 484.

Hooghly had gone away, only secular priests or Augustinians could have ministered in Hooghly at this time. Whatever be the truth, all agree that five Augustinians came to Hooghly in 1599 and the same year they built their Convent dedicated to Sam Nicolau de Tolentino, to which was attached the Church of Our Lady of Rosary. They took possession of all the Churches existing there. They also built a *Casa de Misericordia* (Alms House) with an attached Chapel. The parishioners of the Churches numbered five thousand including the Portuguese, their descendants and Indian converts. The next batch of seven Augustinians came in the following year, that is, in 1600.

The Diocese of Cochin formed in 1557 was at the head of all the Catholic missions in Bengal but Dom Frei André, a Franciscan Bishop of Cochin, transferred the sole possession of the Churches and right of evangelization to the Augustinians of Goa. These Augustinians extended their labours all over Bengal. They established themselves in Hijili (Angelim) where they built two Churches dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary; in Piplī where they also erected a Church dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary, and in Tamlūk (Tumbolim) where they built a Church in honour of Our Lady of Hope. In 1606 the Diocese of Mylapore was created and the jurisdiction of Bengal passed from the diocese of Cochin to that of Mylapore. But the Augustinians continued to enjoy their privileges. In 1612 they established themselves in Dacca where they built a Church dedicated to Our Lady of Assumption. They also erected Churches in Nuricol, Sripūr and Catrabo.

The Augustinians extended their activities to Chittagong in 1621 and, in fact, took the place of the Jesuits who had up to that time ministered there and had undergone many troubles. In 1598 there were 2500 Portuguese and their descendants in Chittagong and Arakan; besides these there were Indian

*Augustinians in
Chittagong, 1621*

Christians. In the massacre of Dianga which followed Brito e Nicote demand of this port, all the Churches of the Jesuits were pulled down and some of the missionaries were killed. Those who escaped to Sandwip and established the Catholic religion there, were afterwards massacred by Fateh Khān. When the Augustinians established themselves there in 1821, a revival of Christianity took place. They built a Church and residence in Angaracale, and also a chapel in Arakan dedicated to Our Lady of Success. This was the time, it must be remembered, when the Portuguese were in the service of the King of Arakan and along with the Maghs were committing frightful depredations all along the banks of the rivers in the Sunderbunds carrying off Musalmans and Hindus as captives. Between 1621 and 1624 the Portuguese brought to Chittagong 42,000 slaves of whom 28,000 were baptised by the Augustinians. Besides these, they converted 5000 Arakanese or Maghs.* In 1640 the Augustinians spread to Balasore where they built a Church dedicated to our Lady of the Rosary. They also built a Church in Ossampur and two Churches in Rangamati dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Guadeloupe.

Though the Christian religion was flourishing in Eastern Bengal, it received in 1622 a great check in Western Bengal owing to the siege of Hooghly. During the sack the lofty Convent of the Augustinians was burnt down and all the Churches and buildings belonging to the missionaries were destroyed. Only the Jesuit College and a few other houses escaped destruction as the Mughal officers took up their abode in them. According to Fr. Cabral four Augustinians, six or seven secular priests and three Jesuits lost their lives in the siege. But the number of Jesuits killed must have been more

Missionary Disasters,
1632

* Fr. Delaunoit, *Catholic Encyclopedia* s. v. Calcutta.

because he records that Fr. Fialho S. J. died during the night and that Br. John Rodrigues S. J. died in the vessel which Pedro de Couto blew up and that the corpses of three Jesuits more, Fathers Pedro Gomes Benedicto Rodrigues and Gaspar Ferreira were dug up from the graves by the Moors, who surprized at their not being decomposed very respectfully deposited them again in the Jesuit Church which was broken down. Four Jesuits, including Father Cabral escaped with those who took refuge in the Saugor island, numbering in all three thousand Christians of whom two hundred were Portuguese. Among the four thousand Christian prisoners who were taken to Agra there were two Augustinians, Frei Antonio de Christo and Frei Francisco De Incarnação and two secular priests Manoel Garcia and Manoel da Anhaya. Considering the brilliant arguments of Father Hosten, it is doubtful whether Frei João da Cruz, the hero of a miracle in Agra was among these captives.* According to Manrique he was severely wounded across the shoulders while escaping during the siege of Hooghly with some Portuguese descendants (*Topasses*) and was left for dead. These *Topasses* carried him to a neighbouring Hindu village from where a Hindu merchant took him to his own house. His wounds were so bad that worms set in. A *Topass* removed the festering flesh and cured him with applications of cocoanut oil and tamarind. Frei Bernardo de Jesus who was superior of the mission, was thrashed to death in Dacca at the time of the siege.

The siege of Hooghly, however, checked the progress of the Catholic religion only for a short time. The following year the Christian Fathers and other Portuguese returned with a grant of 777 *bighas* of land (about 260 acres) from Shāh Jahān and with privileges the like of which they had never enjoyed

The Return of the Augustinians, 1033

* *Bengal Past and Present* Jan.—Mar. 1915, p. 49 *et seq.*

before in Hooghly. They did not establish themselves at their former site in Hooghly proper but a little outside the town in Balagarh, the present Bandel. Fr. Hosten supposes that they must have erected new Churches on the ruins of the former buildings. The Augustinians took possession of the 777 *bighas* of land, about 280 *bighas* of which still belong to the Bandel Convent. They spread themselves all over Bengal, and it is chiefly through their efforts that numerous people in Bengal were converted to Christianity. In 1666 Bernier wrote that Hooghly (Ogouli) alone, contained eight to nine thousand Christians and that the Jesuits and the Augustinians possessed there large Churches.

Although the Augustinians had raised in Goa a monastery to St. Augustine which as Mandelso said,* looked from a distance like one of the noblest palaces in the world and in which there was a Library the sight of which made Dr. Buchanan suddenly transport himself to one of the libraries of Cambridge, yet their Mission in Bengal was the wealthiest. Cottineau says † regarding the Augustinians in Bengal, "The Mission of Bengal is the chief source of their opulent situation; the two churches in Calcutta, one of which is the richest now in all India (probably Murgihatta Cathedral) and all the other Churches in Bengal under the British Dominions are exclusively entrusted to the care of the members of this Order sent directly from Goa though they take the faculties or licences of exercising the ministry from the Bishop or Administrator of St. Thomé of Mylapore near Madras who is commonly since near a century a member of the same Order." Their chief seat was the Bandel Convent and Church, on which depended all the Churches and parishes in Dacca, Solicur, Chandpur, Banja, Piplī, Balasore, Tamlūk, Jessore, Hijīlī, Tesgāon Chittagong Dianga, Rangamati, Catroba, Sripūr and Arakan.

* *Voyages and Travels*, p. 81.

† *Historical Sketch of Goa* p. 123.

When the French started a factory in Chandernagore in 1688, the Augustinians erected their Churches there and claimed sole jurisdiction to the chagrin of the French Jesuits. But the French Government intervened and the Bishop of Mylapore created in 1696 a parish for the French Jesuits. The Capuchins built a Church there in 1796. In 1753 the Catholic population in Chandernagore was four thousand.

The Jesuits got back their property in 1640 through the good offices of Fr. Joseph de Castro S. J. but they did not get permission to build a Church until

*The Return of the
Jesuits, 1640*

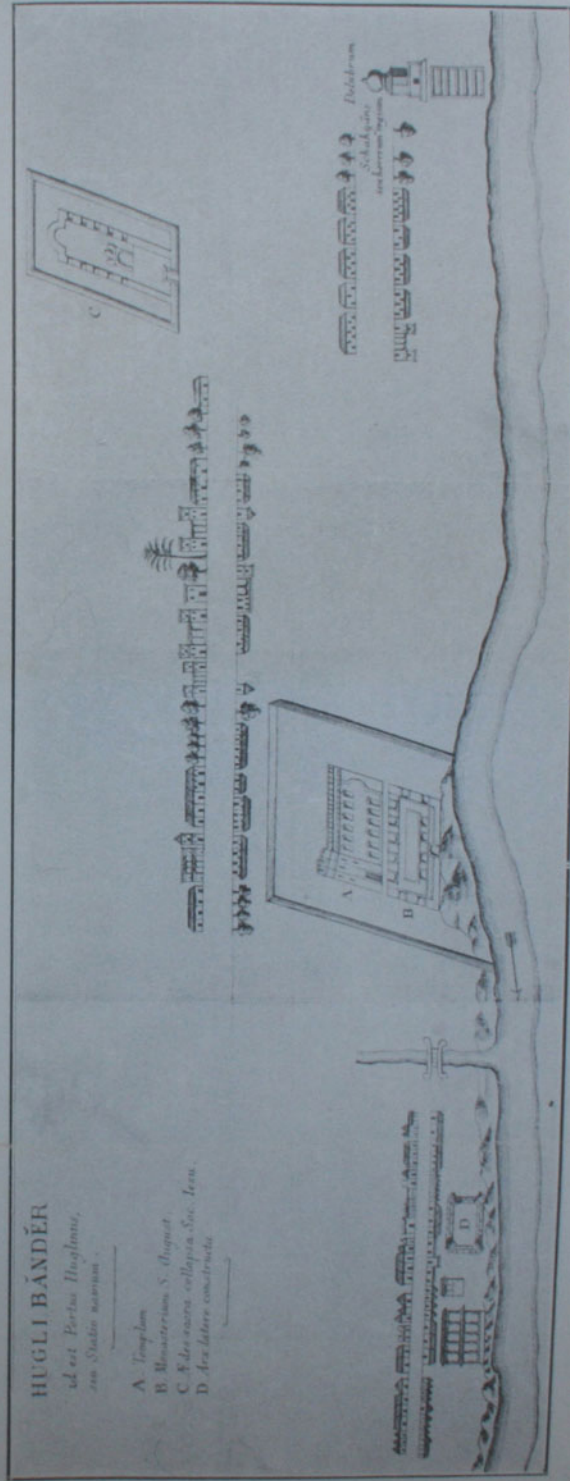
1663, when the historian Manucci interviewed the Mughal Governor Mirzagol on their behalf.* Manucci remarks that he was told in Hooghly by the Jesuit Fathers that before 1663 they had built a tiny Church made of straw. When a new Governor succeeded Mirzagol in 1664 he forced the Portuguese to pay Rs. 1,000 because they had built without permission a Church, which, as Fr. Hosten supposes, must have really been the Jesuit Church. Abbate Ripa called it a fine Church in 1709. They had a residence and a garden which is still known as *Sam Paulo Bagan*† and which marks the site of the Jesuit residence and College. Various writers refer to a College of Jesuits in Hooghly and their superior was indeed called the Rector. According to Fr. Barbier S. J. who wrote an account ‡ of the Episcopal Visitation of Bishop Laines of Mylapore in 1712-15 this Bishop died at the College of Hooghly. Fr. J. Tieffentaller S. J. who wrote a sort of a statistical account of Hooghly§ in 1765 speaks of the Jesuit College as already in ruins. But

* *Storia do Mogor*, Irvine's Ed., Vol. II, p. 90.

† The Jesuits were known as Paulists in India from their great institution in Goa, Collegio de Sam Paulo de Sante Fé.

‡ *Bengal Past and Present*, 1910, Vol. VI, p. 223 et seq.

§ *Vide* Tieffentaller in Bernoulli, *Description historique et géographique de L'Inde*.



FR. TIEFFENTHALER'S PLAN OF HOOGLY, (1765).

The ground plan of the Bandel Convent and Church (A and B) is not quite accurate. The site of the Jesuit Church (C) corresponds with Muktodasi's Garden, (vide map facing p. 149) in which its ruins can still be seen.



Fr. Hosten holds that this College was nothing but the Jesuit residence in which only two or three Jesuit Fathers lived with occasionally a lay brother. * The Jesuit Mission ministered in Hooghly till 1740 when Fr. George Deistermann the last Jesuit Rector died. But Fr. Delaunoit says † there was one Jesuit managing the Church and the college even up to 1746 when they were given up. At present there is no trace of the Jesuit Church and college but Fr. Hosten unearthed in 1915 in the *Sam Paulo Bagan* a wall 47 ft. long and 2 ft. 11 in. broad, which he believes formed part of the Jesuit Church. Most visitors to Bandel have probably seen this Jesuit garden, about four acres in area, now occupied by Bengali tenants and planted with various kinds of trees including cocoanut trees, mango trees and plaintain trees. Excepting the southern wall the other walls are decaying.

When Job Charnock founded Calcutta in 1690, the Portuguese and other Christians followed him and obtained a plot of ground where the Augustinians built a Chapel. In 1797 this Chapel was replaced by a Church dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary now known as the Cathedral Church. Its history will be dealt with later. As Calcutta was growing in importance and in population a need for another place of worship was felt; consequently a new Church was erected by Mrs. Grace Elizabeth at Boitakhana in 1808. The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Dharamtolla Street was built in 1834 by a Portuguese lady, Mrs. Sabina Barretto de Souza in fulfilment of a vow. The Barretto family is noted for the erection of many chapels and for munificent donations for the Churches in Calcutta and in its neighbourhood.

The year 1834 marked a new era in the history of the Catholicism in India. Hitherto the work of evangelization

* *Bengal Past and Present*, Jan.—Mar., 1915 p. 66.

† *Catholic Encyclopedia*, S. V. Calcutta.

was carried on only by the Portuguese Missions under the sanction and protection of the Portuguese Government. The Pope with a view to supply the growing needs of the Church created an Apostolic Vicariate and entrusted it to English Jesuits. But Portugal claimed the sole right of religious (Catholic) jurisdiction, known as *Padroado*, which she had received from the Pope for her zeal in the propagation of the faith in the East. The Marquis of Pombal, the Portuguese premier aggravated matters in 1835 by suppressing all Portuguese Religious Orders. Thus interminable disputes and controversies went on between the Courts of Rome and Portugal for over fifty years. This period may be passed over in silence while mention may be made of only a few points of interest to the Church in Bengal. An Irish Jesuit, Robert St. Leger, was appointed the first Vicar Apostolic of Bengal and he took possession of the Portuguese Murgihatta Church. By the suppression of the Religious Orders in 1835 very few friars were able to come to Bengal to carry on the work of the Mission among the Christians that were converted by the early Portuguese missionaries. The vast field of the Vicar Apostolic in Bengal was divided in 1850 and a new Vicar Apostolic was appointed for Eastern Bengal and Assam.

In 1857 the Concordat between the Holy See and the King of Portugal curtailed furthermore the rights of the Portuguese Mission. The Augustinians having now left Bengal the Goanese who had stood up for the rights of the Portuguese began to supply missionaries for Bengal while the English Jesuits being unable to cope with the work, the Pope entrusted the Mission to the Belgian Jesuits while the Fathers of the Order of the Cross took the place of the Benedictines. The rivalry did not subside until 1887, when the Delegate Apostolic Mon. Agliardi came to carry out the clauses of the Concordat entered into

between the Holy See and the King of Portugal Dom Luis I. By that Concordat it was decided that the following parishes and Churches should belong to the Portuguese Mission in Bengal under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Mylapore :— Boitakhana in the town of Calcutta ; Chinsurah and Bandel in the district of Hooghly ; in Eastern Bengal Dacca, Tesgong, Nagory, Hashnabad, Sripūr, Tangrakali and Tuital ; while all other places passed on to the Jurisdictions of the Archbishop of Calcutta and of the Bishop of Dacca.

CHAPTER X

PORTUGUESE TRADE IN BENGAL

The high hopes which the Portuguese had entertained regarding the possibilities of trade in Bengal were realized beyond their expectation. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century a great part of the Bengal trade and shipping passed into the hands of the Portuguese. As early as 1535 Diogo Rebello had forbidden any alien ship to touch at Sāt-gāon without the permission of the Portuguese. The Portuguese applied to Bengal the law they had enforced in the Indian seas in order to destroy the Moorish trade. Any ship that travelled without a Portuguese pass was treated as an enemy ship and was either not allowed to sail or captured. The superiority of Portuguese vessels over native craft rendered the enforcement of this principle practicable, though sometimes the Portuguese met with their rivals elsewhere in the Turkish and the Egyptian ships. The ordinary merchant vessels of the Portuguese consisted of a captain, a master and a pilot, while among the crew there would be Moors or any class of Asiatic people. Until the Portuguese established their great settlement of Hooghly in 1580 their ships did not permanently stay in Bengal. However, the Portuguese ships commanded the whole sea-board from Orissa to Chittagong from about 1537, when they had founded their settlements on both the arms of the Bay of Bengal. Kabi Kankan mentions in the *Chandi*, written in 1577, that the coast near Hījili was dangerous on account of the Feringhi ships. The Portuguese came with their goods before the monsoons set in and spent the rainy months in Bengal buying and selling goods and transacting their business. When the monsoons were over the

ships would repair to Goa and other Portuguese ports laden with the merchandise of Bengal.

The earliest commercial relations of the Portuguese in Bengal were with Chittagong (Porto Grande). De Barros wrote in 1532 "Chittagong is the most famous and wealthy city of the kingdom of Bengal, on account of its port, at which meets the traffic of all that eastern region." From 1517 expedition after expedition had come to Chittagong with no great success until the Portuguese founded their settlements in 1537 and owned independent custom-houses both in Chittagong (Porto Grande) and Sāt-gāon (Porto Pequeno). Ever since the fall of Gaur and especially after the foundation of the Portuguese settlement in Hooghly, Chittagong had begun to lose its commercial importance. Even then Eastern Bengal and the kingdom of Arakan continued to be the seat of many industries and Portuguese ships used to go to Chittagong with their goods, though Hooghly was a more frequented port. In 1567 Cæsar de Federici found more than eighteen ships anchored in Chittagong, and he writes that from this port the traders carried to the Indies "great store of rice, very great quantities of bombast cloth of every sort, sugar, corn, and money with other merchandise."*

In Western Bengal, Sāt-gāon was the emporium of Portuguese trade since 1537. It was then the chief mart where all the merchants of Northern India flocked with their merchandise. After the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly in 1580 this port became the centre of their trade while Sāt-gāon gradually dwindled into insignificance. Hooghly was then termed Porto Pequeno.

The Portuguese ships of the larger type, came up to Garden Reach or rather Betor (Howrah) where they anchored because the river Hooghly was not navigable higher up than

* Purchas, *His Pilgrimes*, C. Frederick, Vol. X. p. 138.

Adhiganga (now Tolly's Nollah) except by smaller vessels. Cæsar de Federici who was in Hooghly in 1567 says* that in the Hooghly river the large ships of the Portuguese came up to Betor (near Sibpur, the modern Howrah), whence the smaller ships sailed up to Sāt-gāon and laded "Rice, Cloth of Bombast of divers sorts, Lacca, great abundance of Sugar, Myrobolans dried and preserved, long Pepper, Oyle of Zerseline and many other sorts of merchandise." In Betor the goods were stored in thatched houses of straw or bamboo and were either sold or exchanged in big local markets or taken to other places. Gradually these goods swelled the markets of Calcutta and Chitpore, which were then very insignificant villages. It is to these thatched houses and villages which as Federici and Manrique say, were made and unmade by the Portuguese when they went back, that can be traced the origin of the great city Job Charnock founded. It is in those marts of Betor, Chitpore and Sutanuti which were supplied by Portuguese goods that can be seen the first glimmerings of the great commercial importance that Calcutta attained many years later. C. R. Wilson well remarks,† "It is under their (Portuguese) commercial supremacy that the place which we know by the name of Calcutta first began to have any importance; it is to them that we are chiefly indebted for our first reliable information about Hughli and its markets."

The best account of the Portuguese trade in Bengal is found in Manrique's *Itinerario*.‡ Manrique, it must be stated, was in Bengal during the palmiest days of the Portuguese and actually saw what he described. The Portuguese imported into Bengal various kinds of goods from other places which

*Manrique's Account
of Portuguese Trade*

* Purchas, *His Pilgrimes*, C. Frederick, Vol. X. p. 114.

† *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*.

‡ *Vide* Fr. Cardon's Trans. of the chapters relating to Bengal in *Bengal Past and Present* 1915, Vol. XII, No. 24.

were visited by the Portuguese vessels. The principal things they brought to Bengal were from Malacca, Sumatra and Borneo, such as "Brocades, Brocateles, Cloth, Velvets, Damasks, Satins, Taffetas, Tafiosinas, Tafissirias Escomillas or Muslins" of all colours but black, which colour was considered ill-omened in Bengal. From Malacca they also brought cloves nutmegs, and mace; and from Borneo the highly prized camphor. They brought cinammon from Ceylon and pepper from Malabar. From China they brought silks, gilt furniture such as bedsteads, tables, coffers, chests, writing-desks, boxes and very valuable pearls and jewels, for labour being cheap in China "these were made in European style but with greater skill and cheaper." From the islands of Maldives they brought sea-shells (*kaurim*) which were, during the period of Hindu kings, current in Bengal as coins and were known as *cowries*. The bigger kind of shells called *chanquos* were brought from their fisheries on the Choromandel Coast. They imported from Solor and Timor both the white and the red varieties of sandalwood which was in Bengal a rich commodity. These commodities fetched such high prices that according to Tavernier, if the Dutch had not come to India there would be no piece of iron in the Portuguese factories but all would be gold and silver, for the Portuguese with two or three voyages to China, Japan, Philipines and Mollucas would earn as much as a thousand per cent on their goods. In spite of the Dutch having come, however, gold and silver abounded in Portuguese houses in Goa and other parts of India.

From the records of the East India Company we learn a good deal about the trade and power of the Portuguese in Hooghly and in the rivers of Bengal. In a letter dated the 26th February 1616, the English factors at Surat communicated to the East India Company, "that hitherto they had not

found it practicable to open a trade in the countries bordering on the Ganges, the Portuguese being in exclusive possession of the commerce in this part of the Peninsula." Another communication in 1618 says that "for small shipping there were no ports but such as the Portuguese possessed." The Portuguese extended their commerce to Patna in Bihar, in which connection Hughes and Parker, who had gone there from Surat to found a factory, write in 1620,* "The Portingalls of late yeares, have had a trade here in Puttana, cominge up with their friggitts from the bottom of Bengalla where theye have two porttes, th, one called Gollye, th, other Pieppullye and therein are licenced by this kinge to inhabitt. Gollye is their cheefest porte where theye are in greate multitudes, and have yearlye shipping both from Mallacka and Cochine. The commodities theye usiallye bringe up hether is for the most part tyne, spices, and China wares, in live whereof theye transporte ambertye callicoës, carpets and and all sortes of thine cloth, which theye die into reds purposlye for saile to the sothwards. This cittye stands upon the river Ganges, whose suifte currant transportes their friggitts with such dexteritye that in five or six dayes theye usiallye go hence to their portes, but in repairinge up againe spend thrice the tyme."

In their other communications, Hughes and Parker throw some light on the Portuguese trade. "There are" they wrote on July 12th 1620,† "some Portingalls at present in towne and more are latlye gon for their portes in Bengala ; into whose trafique I have made enquirye and gather that theye usiallye bringe vendable here all sortes of spices and silke stufes of Chyna, tyne and some jewelleres ware ; in lewe whereof theye transporte course Carpets of Junapore (Jaunpore), ambertyes cassaes (a kind of cloth) and some alike." On the 6th of

* Foster, *The English Factories in India (1618-1621)*, p. 213-4.

† *Ibidem*, p. 115.

August 1620 Hughes and Parker spoke of many Portuguese frigates having come to Patna from Sāt-gāon and remarked that the Portuguese merchants were wont to buy all they could lay hands on.*

The Portuguese shipped various things from Bengal, seat as it was of a great many industries and manufactures. Pyrard de Laval who travelled in Bengal in the beginning of the 17th century says,† “The inhabitants (of Bengal), both men and women, are wondrously adroit in all such manufactures such as of cotton, cloth and silks and in needlework, such as embroideries which are worked so skilfully, down to the smallest stitches that nothing prettier is to be seen anywhere.” The natural products of Bengal were also abundant, and various are the travellers who have dwelt on the fertility of the soil of Bengal watered as it is by the holy Ganges. When Manrique came to Bengal in 1628 he found there plenty of foodstuffs, fowls, pigeons, castrated goats whose meat the people preferred to mutton, veal, vegetables, rice, butter, sweetmeats and milk, sweets. To export such commodities as rice butter, oil and wax 100 ships were annually laden in the ports of Bengal. Rice was very cheap, a *candi* (about 500 lbs. but in Bengal 1200lbs.) costing only three or four rupees; one *contaro* of butter (75lbs) cost only two rupees. Twenty or twenty-five fowls cost also about two rupees (one *peso*). A cow cost a rupee (three or four *reals*); 200 lbs of sugar seven or eight annas. These prices which Manrique gives may seem extraordinarily cheap but many others confirm him. In Bowrey’s time (1669-1679) prices had gone a little high excepting of fowls. He says ‡ “A very good cowe is sold for foure shillings six pence *viz.*, two rupees, a good hogg for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a rupee, 45 or 50 fowls for one

* *The English Factories, ut supra*, p. 197.

† Pyrard de Laval, Hak. Ed. Vol. I. 329.

‡ *Countries Round the Bay of Bengal*. pp. 193, 194.

rupee." Bowrey adds that the Portuguese themselves used to prepare in Hooghly all sorts of sweatmeats from mangoes, oranges, lemons, ginger, mirabolans, ringroots etc. and also make pickles from mangoes, bamboo, lemon etc., which were all good and cheap.

Fruits seem to have been abundant in Bengal, the daintiest of all being mangoes on which unstinted praise has always been lavished by European writers. There were no wines in Bengal but spirit distilled from rice and jogree was plentiful.

Local Commerce and Industries

The trade in opium and its extracts was very great as it was used as an aphrodisiac. Dacca was then the Gangetic emporium of trade. It was there that those priceless muslins were made even as early as the Roman days. Its thread was so delicate that it could hardly be discerned by the eye. Tavernier mentions,* "Muhammad Ali Beg when returning to Persia from his embassy to India presented Cha Safi III with a cocoon of the size of an ostrich egg, enriched with precious stones, and when it was opened a turban was drawn from it 60 cubits in length, and of a muslin so fine that you would scarcely know what it was you had in your hand." These muslins were made fifty and sixty yards in length and two yards in breadth and the extremities were embroidered in gold, silver and coloured silk. The Emperor appointed a supervisor in Dacca to see that the richest muslins and other varieties of cloth did not find their way anywhere else except to the Court of Delhi. Strain on the weavers' eyes was so great that only sixteen to thirty years old people were engaged to weave. These are the men who with their simple instruments produced those far-famed muslins that no scientific appliances of civilized times could have turned out.

The betel-leaf alone brought four thousand rupees of revenue to the Governor of Dacca. In Midnapore scents were manufac-

* Tavernier, Ball's Ed., Vol. II, pp. 7-8.

tured from flowers and scented oils from a kind of grain and they were highly valued because they were used by the people to rub themselves with, after bath. In Hijili there was a great trade in salt, sugar, wax, silk and cloth made from grass (*Ginghams*). There was a vast trade in salt in Sandwip and annually as many as two hundred ships laden with it sailed from there. Ship-building material was very cheap in Sandwip and Cæsar de Federici says that the Sultan of Constantinople had found it cheaper to have his ships built there rather than at Alexandria. He calls Sandwip "the fertilest Iland in all the world." Speaking about the cheapness of goods he remarks,* "And when the people of the Iland (of Sandwip) saw the ship, and that we were coming a land : presently they made a place of Bazar or Market, with Shops right over against the ship with all manner of provision of victuals to eate, which they brought downe in great abundance, and sold it so good cheape, that wee were amazed at the cheapnesse there of. I bought many salted Kine there, for the provision of the ship, for halfe a Larine a piece, which Larine may be twelve shillings six pence, being very good and fatte, and foure wilde Hogges ready dressed for a Larine ; great fat Hennes for a Bizzie a piece which is at the most a Penie ; and the people told us that we were deceived the half of our money, because we bought things so deare. Also a sacke of fine rice for a thing of nothing and consequently all other things for humaine sustenance were there in such abundance that it is a thing incredible but to them that have scene it." In the beginning of the eighteenth century Captain A. Hamilton says† that he was informed by one who wintered there "that he bought 580 pound weight of rice for a rupee or half a crown, eight geese for the same money and sixty good tame poultry for the same, and cloth is also incredibly cheap, it is but thinly inhabited."

* Purchas, *His Pilgrimes*, Frederick, Vol. X, p. 137.

† *A New Account of the East Indies* Vol. II, pp. 23-24.

The Portuguese took full advantage of the cheapness of goods in Bengal and sold them at an enormous profit in their numerous ports in the East. The wealth that such commerce brought to the Portuguese is unimaginable. It also brought luxury in its train. Pyrard de Laval says* that the Portuguese men of quality travelled on horseback, and that the harness of horses coming from Bengal, China, and Persia was all of silk embroidery enriched with gold and silver and fine pearls. The stirrups were of silver gilt, the bridle was adorned with precious stones and silver bells. The grooms carried fine horsecloths of red velvet fringed with gold and embroidery for covering the horses when their masters dismounted. It would be out of place here to relate the luxuries and wealth, which the trade of Bengal as of the whole East brought to the Portuguese. One of the reasons why Akbar asked two Portuguese from Hooghly to come to him was that he was charmed to see the precious goods they brought there. The Portuguese had found the trade of Bengal so profitable that even in the latter half of the eighteenth century there was an attempt in Lisbon at the proposal of Viceroy Conde de Ega to form a Company exclusively to trade with Bengal.† The Company was however soon wound up and the plan, like most of the plans at this time, was never realized.

* Pyrard de Laval, Hakl. Edition, pt. II. pp. 75-80

† *Conselho Ultramarino No. 32. Vide Danvers, Report on the Portuguese Records etc.* p. 15.

PART II

THE DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

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PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL

CHAPTER XI

THE PERIOD OF DECADENCE

...Ah ! Que desmaio
Apaga o marcio ardor da Lusa gente ?*
Barbosa du Bocage

With the dawn of the seventeenth century the Portuguese power in the East had begun to decline. After spreading her influence over two worlds, Portugal had exhausted herself. The task undertaken was too great for a small nation. The energy soon spent itself out. Sailors could not be found to man her fleets even when outlaws and convicts were set at liberty. Even the expedition of the Governor Estevão da Gama who came to India in 1540 was chiefly composed of convicts. The later Portuguese were not of the type of Albuquerque, Cunha or Castro. In judging of the Portuguese of the seventeenth century, one should remember that the ships which sailed from the Tagus brought chiefly the refuse of Portugal to India. The last flash of Portuguese genius shone in D. João de Castro, Viceroy of Goa, 1545-1548. The subsequent half a century marks the period of transition from glory to actual decadence.

Pampered by wealth, the Portuguese in India had grown indolent. Luxury bred vice and profligacy. The civic virtues of the earlier rulers had given place to venality and corruption. Concealed beneath the pomp and splendour of the Portuguese grandees in India lay the seeds of decay and dissolution. Vice and corruption as in the days of the

* Ah ! Lusians, what dull gloom o'erspreads, what dire dismay
Quells the conquering fire, where heroes hold their sway?

Trans J. C.

Roman Empire were but the symptoms of the impending collapse. The earlier Portuguese were schooled in hard facts, while those who followed were easy-going and reaped the harvest which had been sown after years of hard struggles. Growing immensely rich without any difficulty they lost themselves in a whirl of orgies.

The ecclesiastical supremacy in the political atmosphere had also its own results. In 1560, during King Sebastião's reign, the Inquisition was introduced in India. Its excesses in Europe alienated other European nations from the Portuguese who in a religious zeal cultivated this institution. Diogo de Couto has painted in vivid colours how the interference and preponderance of priests in politics contributed to the downfall of Portugal.* Ennes calls Dom Henrique, the Cardinal King, the grave-digger of Portugal, for tolerating ecclesiastical abuses and allowing a free hand to the Inquisition.†

The monastic orders in India had really grown to be an *imperium in imperio*. The Viceroys of India though beset with numerous enemies, considered the friars and secular priests the most dangerous of all. The Jesuits not only arrogated to themselves magisterial power but even collected custom duties from the vessels, sailing past their convents, threatening to open fire from the cannon planted on the towers.‡ The government could hardly enforce submission and even when the Portuguese galleys threatened to bombard the Franciscan monastery in Goa they had to retreat when the Sacred Host was exposed to their view. As it has been said, one does not know how far, the abuses of power and the defiance of law, were the causes or symptoms of the collapse of Portuguese power in India.

* *Dialogos do Soldado Pratico*, Lisbon, 1790.

† *Historia de Portugal*.

‡ *O Chronista de Tissuari*, Vol. 11, pp. 70-71.

When King Dom Sebastião, "a beardless youth enamoured of glory" was killed whilst fighting on the sands of Kassar-el-kebir and his successor the Cardinal King Dom Henrique died before a year was over, the crowns of Spain and Portugal were united in 1580 under Philip II of Spain, (Philip I of Portugal). The event sealed the fate of Portugal. The Spanish King had no sympathies with Portugal, and treated her as a conquered country. A nation fettered with the bonds of captivity and slavery could no longer rule the world. Another little nation was now destined to break her bonds of servitude. Spain dominated at this time the Low Countries which possessed the two great ports of Antwerp and Amsterdam. It was to these ports that the Portuguese commerce of the East was shipped and thence transported all over Europe. But the Flemish and the Dutch having broken with Spain, the "fatal Philip" closed all the Portuguese ports against the Dutch in 1594. Being thus deprived of their trade in eastern commodities, the Dutch determined to sail to the East with a view to secure it for themselves. Portugal paid dearly for Philip's crime by the loss of an Empire.

The Dutch not only wrested a great part of the trade from the Portuguese but in the constant struggles that followed for the next sixty-nine years, at length emerged victorious. Portugal whom "Neptune and Mars feared" was unable to stand before a small nation but recently under the Spanish yoke. It was not that the Dutch were bolder than the Portuguese. A nation that had won the supremacy of the seas from the Arabs and the Turks when the Crescent was supreme even in Europe, cannot be said to have been excelled in maritime power and enterprise. The fact was that the Dutch, free from a foreign yoke, found the Portuguese demoralized and groaning under the oppression of the Spanish monarch. The Dutch first captured from the Portuguese the fort of Amboina and then

the forts of Ternate and of Tidore in the Moluccas. In 1641 fell Malacca, the rich gateway of commerce and the scene of the heroic feats of Albuquerque. Galle, Trincomali, Baticola, Negumbo, Calacature and Colombo in Ceylon were then captured. The fort of Jafnapatam, the Island of Manar noted for its pearl fisheries, Tuticorin, Negapatam, the forts of Quilon, Cranganore, Cannanore and the city of Cochin successively passed into the hands of the Dutch.

The English followed in the wake of the Dutch and bitter hostilities arose between them and the Portuguese. The English and the Dutch, indeed, combined to overthrow the Portuguese supremacy in the Indian Seas. Three English vessels* and four Dutch ones blockaded Goa in January 1623 but were forced to retire by the middle of March. The English, did not wrest so many places from the Portuguese as the Dutch. They, however, lent assistance to the Persians in conquering Ormuz and were indirectly responsible for many Portuguese losses which followed.

The rivalry of the European nations was no less keen in Bengal. The Dutch ships arrived in Bengal for the first time in 1615, though Dutchmen like Van Linschoten† visited Bengal towards the latter half of the sixteenth century. The Dutch fleet joined the King of Arakan and signalized its first appearance in Bengal by fighting with the Portuguese, near the coast of Arakan‡. The battle lasted one day but the victory was indecisive. Thereafter the Dutch continued to trade with Bengal but did not settle permanently in Bengal until towards the middle of the seventeenth century§ when they

*The Dutch
in Bengal*

* The names of the vessels were *Exchange*, *Ann*, and *Diamond*.

† It may be mentioned that Van Linschoten served in the Portuguese Indian fleet.

‡ *Vide* Chapter XIV.

§ Orme loosely says that the Dutch settled in Bengal in 1625. Cf.

established their factory in Hooghly. The Dutch rapidly extended their sphere of activities while the Portuguese settlement in Hooghly sustained a severe disaster in at the hands of the Mughals in 1632. Though the Portuguese continued to trade in Hooghly long after, the Dutch easily outrivalled them. The Dutch erected their Fort Gustavus in Chinsura, founded a silk factory in Cassimbazar, another factory for salting pork in Baranagar, north of Calcutta, owned a beautiful garden near Chandernagore and later on established a station at Fulta for their merchant vessels.

The first attempt of the English to open a trade with Bengal in 1617 through the influence of Sir Thomas Roe was unsuccessful. The attempts of Hughes and Parker in 1620 and of Peter Mundy in 1632 to establish factories in Patna also proved failures. The first English vessel that came to Bengal or rather Orissa, fared badly in a fight with a Portuguese frigate. In the letters of the early English factors who strove to secure trading concessions in Bengal there are various references to the supremacy of the Portuguese and to their possession of most of the ports in Bengal. Through the good offices of Dr. Gabriel Boughton who cured the Emperor Shāh Jahān of an illness, the English obtained a *farman* from the Emperor permitting them free trade in Bengal. In 1651 the English founded their first factory in Bengal and six years later they established subordinate agencies at Balasore, Cossimbazar and Patna. How the English spread all over Bengal and triumphed in the end is ably dealt with by other writers.

History of Hindustan Vol. II, p. 8. Bowrey remarks that both the English and the Dutch owned factories in Hooghly about the time of the massacre of the English in Amboina (1623) Yule however has shown that the English had no factory in Hooghly before 1651. In the English Factories records there are references to the Dutch trade but not to their factory till after 1650. Toynbee's reference to the Dutch *farman* of 1638 is not confirmed by Stavornius in his List of Dutch *farmans*.

The first French settlement in Bengal was the result of an accident. The first French ship, the Fleming, which made its appearance in Bengal in 1674 did not come of its own accord but was brought a captive by the Dutch from Balasore to Hooghly. The vessel was however set at liberty and the Frenchmen established near the Dutch garden, a small factory, which is mentioned by Streynsham Master.* The foundation of the great French settlement of Chandernagore is believed to have originated in the *farman* of Aurangzeb granted in 1688. The French, however, did not put any difficulties in the way of the Portuguese trade in Bengal. Until Joseph François Dupleix was appointed Intendant of Chandernagore in 1731, this little French territory was an insignificant place containing a few families and, as Alexander Hamilton said, "a pretty little church to hear mass in which is the chief business of the French in Bengal."

The first factory of the Danes was established at Balasore about 1636, and in Hooghly they settled sometime after 1676.

The factory was built in Gondalpara to the south-east of Chandernagore. A part of Gondalpara is still called *Dinemardanga*, that is, the land of the Danes. They obtained the settlement of Serampore in 1755 from Ali Vardi Khān. As the rise of the Danes, the Prussians, and the Flemish who successively established themselves in Bengal, did not contribute to the downfall of the Portuguese in any way, their account need not be given here.

It was the Mughals who struck the fatal blow at the Portuguese power in Bengal. Once their best friends, the Mughals proved to be their worst enemies. The siege of Hooghly in 1632 was the beginning of the downfall of the Portuguese in

* Yule, *Hedge's Diary*, Vol. II, p. 233.

Western Bengal. In Eastern Bengal the Portuguese were, indeed, flourishing at this time, but only as adventurers and pirates. When Shaista Khān conquered Chittagong in 1668 the era of piracy was over. From this date onward the Portuguese cannot be said to have wielded paramount influence in Bengal. The day of the Portuguese was gone while that of the other European nations had dawned.

CHAPTER XII

THE FALL OF HOOGLY

The privileges which Akbar had granted to the Portuguese were well maintained by his son Jahāngīr ; for the latter like his father was glad at the promise made by the Portuguese to keep the Bay clear of pirates. He was, however, a weak-minded man and was entirely ruled by his wife, Nur Jahān. This fact had its influence on the history of Bengal. Nur Jahān favoured the fourth son of the emperor, Shāhryar, who had married the daughter of her first husband and tried to secure the throne for him. Prince Khurram (Shāh Jahān) raised the standard of revolt in 1621, but being defeated he fled to Bengal and resided in Burdwan. During the time of the Mughals, every Mughal prince who was driven away from Delhi or had fallen into trouble in some way or other, looked to Bengal as a place of refuge, as it was far from the influence of Delhi and not peopled by warlike races. Humāyūn had done the same, then the Afghan Sher Shāh, and then again Prince Khurram. From Burdwan Prince Khurram asked Miguel Rodrigues, the Portuguese Governor of Dacca (or Hooghly), to help him with men and artillery and promised in return immense riches and vast tracts of land. Rodrigues declined to help him because he was a rebel son.* This insult cut the future Emperor to the quick and he swore revenge. Whatever the intention of the Portuguese Governor might have been, whether he thought it was unjust to help a rebel or that by helping the son he would incur the displeasure of the father,

* Manrique, Fr. Hosten's Trans, *Catholic Herald of India*, May 8, 1918, p. 354.

his rebuke was destined to cost the Portuguese a good deal. According to Fr. Cabral S. J., a Portuguese actually went to help him with a few ships and then deserted him.* Prince Khurram fought the Mughal Governor on the banks of the Ganges, defeated him and he became the sole master of Bengal in 1622. But under the conditions he was placed in, he could not muster a force strong enough to give any trouble to the Portuguese. Two years later the imperial army engaged Prince Khurram again and defeated him, but on his asking pardon his kindly father forgave him. On the death of Jahāngir, Prince Khurram ascended the throne in 1627 as Shāh Jahān and appointed his best friend, Kasim Khān, Governor of Bengal ordering him to keep a watchful eye on the Portuguese, so that the earliest opportunity might be taken to drive them from Hooghly. Another cause which heightened Shāh Jahān's wrath against the Portuguese was that the year before the siege of Hooghly he had sustained serious defeats losing more than 50,000 horse in his quarrel with Adil Khān of Bijapore and he attributed the latter's success to the help which the Adil Khān had received from the Portuguese.†

Fr. Cabral S. J. and Manrique who have left the best accounts of the siege of Hooghly enumerate many other causes which led to that tragic event. Fr. Cabral was an eye-witness of the siege and was one of those who escaped. Manrique was in Bengal at the time and was in fact mixed up with the causes of the siege. Shāh Jahān, relates Fr. Cabral, felt the affront of one Manoel Tavares, a country-born Portuguese who having gone to his help with a few galleys when he rose in revolt against his father, had abandoned him at a critical moment. To add to the insult, the Portuguese of Hooghly had not sent him an embassy to congratulate him on

* Fr. Cabral, Fr. Besse's Trans. *Catholic Herald of India*, Feb. 6, 1918, p. 111.

† Faria y Souza, *Asia*, Steven's Trans., Vol. III, p. 402.

his ascending the throne. They were, it was alleged, in league with the King of Arakan who committed depredations on the Mughal territories and were supplying him with men, munitions and galleys. Above all the Mughals seem to have been exasperated at the conduct of a Portuguese captain of Chittagong who seized a fair and pretty Mughal lady during one of his piratical raids. Manrique dwells at length on this episode in which he intervened the lady to console her daughter and mother-in-law in their misfortune. It was this incident which according to him precipitated the siege. Fr. Cabral S. J. supposes that the Mughals were indeed afraid that the Portuguese might possess themselves of the 'kingdoms of Bengal,' considering their increasing power in Bandel (Hooghly) and the high regard in which they were held by the native Hindus.

According to the Muhammadan historians the causes of the siege of Hooghly were quite different. Kasim Khān the Governor of Bengal is said to have sent a report to Shāh Jahān complaining "that instead of confining their attention to the business of merchants, the Portuguese had fortified themselves in that place (Hooghly), and were become so insolent that they committed many acts of violence upon the subjects of the empire, and presumed to exact duties from all the boats and vessels which passed their factory, and had completely drawn away all the commerce from the ancient port of Satgong, that the Portuguese were in the habit of kidnapping or purchasing poor children and sending them as slaves to other parts of India and that their pirates in consort with the Mughls committed innumerable aggressions on the inhabitants of the districts on the eastern branch of the Ganges." * Though it is true that the Portuguese in Hooghly had grown insolent and took many liberties, they were not in league with the Chittagong pirates. They

*Muhammadan version
of the 'Casus Belli'*

* Stewart, *History of Bengal*, p. 240.

however, bought the slaves sold by the pirates as they would buy of any body else. Kidnapping people and committing aggressions were not the practices of the Portuguese of Hooghly but of the Portuguese of Chittagong and lower Bengal, who had disowned their King and country and were mercenaries in the pay of the King of Arakan. As to the alleged aggressions in Hooghly the Mughals themselves indulged in them freely as can be seen from Fr. Du Jarric's description of the visit of Domingo Carvalho to the Portuguese of Hooghly *

There might have been some private Portuguese individuals against whom the accusations made by the Mughals might have been rightly made. But considering as a whole, it is necessary to differentiate between the adventurers of Chittagong and the Portuguese of Hooghly. It was thus that the Portuguese replied to the Mughals during the peace negotiations, "To the complaints of the two Moors, the captain and his assistants answered in writing stating that the greater part of the charges against the city were mere falsehoods, the inventions of Martin Afonso and his crew. If necessary they would prove it by the authoritative evidence of the merchants, Moors and Pagans who had been for many years trading at Hugli. The other accusations concerned private persons, they contended, and they were in possession of a document confirmed by king Jehangir and Sultan Paraves, his son, to the effect that the Bandel would never be held responsible as a body for the misdemeanours of particular individuals."†

It may be added that Asiaticus mentions as the cause of the siege of Hooghly, that "In 1632 the Portuguese committed excesses on the Imperial Mahal at Hooghly: the emperor demanded satisfaction which was denied him." It is difficult

* *Vide* Chapter IV, p. 72-73.

† Fr. Cabral, *Catholic Herald of India*, Feb. 13, 1918, p. 130.

to say what was the source of Asiaticus's information but the fact, is that as Fr. Hosten S. J. says, the Emperor never had any Imperial Mahal in Hooghly. There is also a Mughal story to the effect that the Empress who had a dislike for the Portuguese prevailed on Shāh Jahān to crush their power in Bengal. When she was in Bengal she is said to have been offended at the sight of the holy pictures and images which were in the Portuguese Churches. Manucci* says that she was enraged with the Portuguese because when she was residing near Hooghly (Burdwan) with his husband, the Portuguese seized two of her beloved slaves, which they refused to return in spite of her urging them to do so.

Of the plan and the conduct of the siege there are excellent accounts in Fr. Cabral's Letter, Abdul Hamid Lāhori's

The Siege *Bādshāhnāma* and Khāfi Khān's *Muntakhābul-lubār*. The latter repeats more

or less the *Bādshāhnāmā* and Stewart's description is chiefly based on them. The most graphic and certainly faithful description is that of Fr. Cabral S. J. who took part in the siege and was one of those who escaped. Other accounts can be found in Faria y Souza's *Asia Portuguesa*, Manucci's *Storia de Mogor*, Bernier's *Travels* and Fr. Catrou's "*General History of the Mogol Empire*." The Muhammadan historians are at great variance with the Portuguese historians, who themselves do not exactly agree in certain points.

When Kasim Khān got orders to march against Hooghly he knew it was no easy task. He postponed the attack as long as he could, till it happened that a Portuguese half-caste named Martim Affonso de Mello, whose evil doings had alienated him from the sympathy of the Portuguese, went especially to Dacca and prevailed upon him to march on Hooghly. De Mello disclosed to Kasim Khān the treasures of the Portuguese

* Manucci, *Storia de Mogor*, Irvine's Ed., Vol. I, p. 175.

and informed him that the defences were not as strong as he supposed. Being thus assured, Kasim Khān delayed no more in making preparations for the attack and ordered all his ships and his land forces to be in readiness.

Kasim Khān's son 'Ināyath-ulla was given charge of the army though Allāh Yār Khān was the real commander.

*The Forces engaged
in the Attack and in the
Defence*

Bahadur Kāmbu with five hundred horse and a large force of infantry was sent with another army making it ostensibly appear that he was going to capture some lands in Macksusaba. The object of all these forces was rumoured to be an attack against Hijili. According to Manrique the armies were commanded by fourteen Nawabs (Muraos); according to Frei Nicolau by eighteen Nawabs and according to Asiaticus by twenty-two *Omrahs* or Nawabs. A fleet consisting of five hundred ships (Manrique says 600) was sent under Khwaja Shere to operate from the river and cut off the retreat of the Portuguese. This fleet appeared on the 24th June 1632* in the river about ten leagues south of Hooghly and only two days later the army consisting of hundred and fifty thousand men† ninety castled elephants and fourteen thousand horse (Manrique) began the operations by advancing from the north within a league from the town. Captain Manoel de Azavedo‡ conducted the defence. The Portuguese

* I have followed the dates of Fr. Cabral. Various incorrect dates have been assigned to the siege. Elphinstone (*Hist. of India*) Beale (*Orient. Biog. Dict.*), Ma'āsir-ul-Umara give the date as 1631 and Faria y Souza as 1633. The *Bādshāhnāmā* relates that the first attack was made on 2nd Zil-hijja 1241. The Portuguese official account says that the siege lasted from June, 21 to Sept. 29, 1633, *Vide Danvers Records* p. 29.

† This is according to Fr. Cabral. Faria y Souza's number is 200,000.

‡ Fr. Catrou and then Asiaticus say that Michael (Miguel) Rodrigues who had refused help and insulted Shāh Jahān in 1621 was captain of the Portuguese in Hooghly at the time of the siege. This is wrong. Fr. Cabral and Manrique have a greater right to be believed.

forces consisted of only three hundred Portuguese including their descendants and about six hundred Native Christians.* According to Cabral and Manrique the Portuguese had neither a fort nor even artillery. Khafi Khān distinctly says† that the Portuguese had a strong fort with towers and embattlements furnished with artillery, but his description is only an enlargement upon the *Bādshāhnāmā*‡ which does not make any distinct mention of a fort though it says that the Portuguese had erected large substantial buildings fortified with canon and muskets and other implements of war and that the town was defended by the river on one side and on the other three sides by a ditch filled from the river. Manrique says,§ "The town was situated in an open plain along the banks of the Ganges and was exposed on all sides. It had neither wall nor rampart but only an earthen parapet which they had thrown up, a thing of little value and still lesser strength." Fr. Cabral also asserts that the Portuguese had only erected barricades and built palisades from house to house, during the siege.

The plan of the Mughals was to attack both by land and by sea. The siege began on the 24th June, 1632 when Khwaja

First Attack

Shere's fleet appeared before Hooghly advancing from the south, while on the 26th the army began to operate from the north. First of all, the Mughals captured the lands which the Portuguese possessed on both sides of the river outside the town. By July 2nd all the northern suburbs and the *Casa de Misericordia* with its

* The numbers given by Fr. Cabral are three hundred whites besides natives. Manrique gives 180 Portuguese and 600 slaves. The official version puts down the Portuguese forces to 200 Portuguese and 600 Christian slaves. Cf. *Doc. Remet. Liv. 30 fols. 281 and 288*, or see Danvers *Records etc.* p. 29.

† Elliot, *Hist. of India*, Vol. VII, p. 211.

‡ *Ibidem*, Vol. VII, pp. 31-32.

§ *Catholic Herald of India*, May 29th, 1918, p. 414.

Church was in the hands of the enemy. But the attack cost them a good deal. An Augustinian friar converted the tower of his Church into a citadel and delivered such blows from there with seven or eight Portuguese and ten or twelve natives that after the attack was over, it was found that the compound was strewn over with many corpses of the enemy. The *Bādshāh-nāmā* says that the Mughals captured or killed all the Portuguese they could get hold of before attacking the town itself and forced four thousand Bengali boatmen, who were serving the Portuguese, to join them. After playing the havoc, both sides desired for peace, and entered into negotiations. The Portuguese delivered to the Moors four vessels and ninety Christian slaves on promise that the siege would be raised. But Kasim Khān again demanded 700,000 *patacas** from the *Santa Casa de Misericordia* and the moiety of all the goods of the inhabitants. After much fruitless dallying, the fight was resumed.

The Mughal forces pressed on and the handful of Portuguese gave up the defence of Bali where all the Churches and the buildings of the Augustinians were situated and retired southwards to their main town of Hooghly. While retiring, the Portuguese set fire to their buildings and to the great Augustinian convent. The Moors who occupied Bali completed the destruction of the Portuguese buildings but spared the Jesuit College where their officers stayed. From the 31st July the Moors began to attack the main town of Hooghly and that little band of Portuguese under the command of Captain Manoel de Azavedo offered a stubborn resistance although without any defences.

The Moors hurled repeated attacks, the fleet co-operating now and then, but each time they were repulsed. Hardly a

* *Pataca* was a silver coin worth about two rupees eight annas.

day passed without fighting. The Portuguese were so few in number that they kept themselves mainly on the defensive, content to work as much havoc as possible in the enemy ranks. Meanwhile the Moors received reinforcements, artillery and ships from Rajmahal, Dacca and Burdwan. They dug up new trenches and mined the whole of the Bandel. They launched a naval and a land attack, but the Portuguese ships stood the attack bravely. Fighting continued in this way for a month and half. The Moors entered again into negotiations and the Portuguese eager to rid themselves of the scourge paid 100,000 *tangas* (rupees) to them. They however never meant to make peace but only under false promises to extort money from the Portuguese in order to pay the soldiers that were clamouring for salaries. Meanwhile Martim Affonso was preparing to bar the flight of the Portuguese down the river. He bridged the river with a pontoon of boats and also threw across the river many thick cables and iron-chains. Fire-ships were kept in readiness and trenches were dug along the banks of the river for more than five leagues.

Hostilities were again resumed and the Portuguese unable to hold the town any longer took to their vessels under cover of darkness and began their disastrous flight on the night of September 24th. About fifty or sixty Portuguese remained in Hooghly and kept on the fire to give an idea that the town was not evacuated, but on the next day the Moors launched a violent attack capturing the town*. The description of the flight down the river by Fr. Cabral, is one of the grandest pages in the history

The Flight, Sept. 24th
1632

* The town was therefore captured according to Fr. Cabral on the 25th September, 1632. The Portuguese official account fixes the date of the capture on the 29th September and the *Bādshāhnāmā* on the 14th Rabi-al-Awul 1241 (Elliot). Stewart, however, gives the date 14th Rabi-al-Awul 1042 (*Hist. of Bengal*). According to Fr. Cabral the siege lasted exactly for three months and according to the *Bādshāhnāmā* for three months and half.

of the Portuguese in the East. The bravery the Portuguese ships displayed has been seldom surpassed. In fact the defence of Hooghly can only be compared to D. João de Castro's defence of Diu, and well may Fr. Cabral say, "Ours did wonders never heard of before". Each of the Portuguese *pataches*, and there were many, contained about twenty-five or thirty Portuguese and some natives and few falconets and guns. With these they had to pass through the narrow width of the Hooghly river opposing five hundred ships, a land force of a hundred thousand strong and a hundred and twenty pieces of artillery protected by trenches extending on either side of the river for a distance of five leagues. The *pataches* commanded by Pantaleão de Seixas, Luis de Maya, Pedro de Couto and Gomes Bareiros did wonders. But the tactics of Khwaja Shere and Martim Affonso cut off all means of escape. Most of the Portuguese ships were sunk. On September 27th Pedro de Couto's boat was blown up and it went down with 60,000 *tangas* belonging to private individuals. The widow of Pedro de Couto and many Portuguese and natives jumped into the river and kept on swimming and diving until they were rescued by six boats that had managed to escape. Even these six boats met with opposition at Betor (Howrah) in the iron chains that were put across the river. The *patache* of Domingos (D^{sos}) De Seixas cut asunder an iron chain and passed proudly on leading two other boats but capsized further down. At the pass of Betor the *pataches* of Luis de Maya and of Pantaleão de Seixas were lost, after desperate and heroic fighting against both land and sea forces. Some Portuguese ships however escaped safely carrying three thousand people, a hundred and odd Portuguese, sixty or seventy Portuguese ladies (whites) the rest being country-born people and slaves. The King of Arakan sent to the Portuguese an expedition consisting of some galleys, and manned by Portuguese soldiers but the help arrived when the tragedy was over and

the town of Hooghly had passed into the hands of the Mughals.

About a hundred Portuguese were either killed or captured ; besides them four Augustinians, three Jesuits, six or seven secular priests and twenty-five married soldiers with their boys and girls lost their lives.*

The Losses on Either Side

Fr. Cabral does not give the number of the "slaves and the coloured people" lost, but the *Bādshāhnāmā* says that ten thousand Feringhis and *rayots* died. This number is probably correct if it includes all the Portuguese, their descendants and the natives who died during the siege and in course of their flight. They could not be, however, all fighting men whose number did not exceed a thousand (300 Portuguese and 600 natives) and a vast majority must have been of the civil population. In the *Batavia Dag Register 1631-1634*, it is mentioned that the Dutch heard that 1,560 Portuguese had been killed and 1,500 taken prisoners. The Mughals captured four thousand Christian prisoners and sent them to Agra. Regarding the Portuguese fleet, the *Bādshāhnāmā* says that out of 64 *Dinghas* (large vessels) 57 *grabs* and 200 *Jalies*, only one *Ghrab* and two *Jalies* escaped.†

On the Mughal side the losses were enormous. The *Bādshāhnāmā* admits that only 1,000 of the Imperial army died in the conflict. Fr. Cabral holds as probable the estimate which a Mughal gave him in Arakan, namely 4,300 dead or missing.‡ This number does not agree with the number of Faria y Souza who says§ 50,000 Mughals were killed. It may, however, be taken as the probable one. As to the vessels of the Mughals, Fr. Cabral says "they lost 32 boats in the fire

* Fr. Cabral, *Catholic Herald of India*, March 27, 1918, p. 243.

† Elliot, *Hist. of India*, Vol. VII, p. 34.

‡ *Catholic Herald of India*, March 27, 1918 p. 243.

§ *Asia Portuguesa*, Stevens's Trans., Vol. III, p. 403.

raft engagement more than 60 in the pontoon affair, and more than a hundred of their ships remained stranded on the shore, disabled for ever".*

The three thousand survivors, among whom was Fr. Cabral, fled to the Saugor Island where they took refuge, but some-
The Survivors time after a plague broke out, and those who escaped its ravages migrated to

Hijili and Banja. Meanwhile they obtained permission from the King of Arakan to build a fortress in Saugor and Manoel de Azavedo proceeded with the work. The King of Arakan who was in league with the Portuguese of Dianga granted many other concessions to them and to the survivors of Hooghly. He ordered the captains of his fleet to be always in readiness to help the Portuguese in Saugor if the Mughals attempted to do them any harm.

On the other hand the fate of the four thousand Christian prisoners taken to Agra, where they reached in July 1633, was indeed lamentable. Manrique dwells at
The Prisoners length on the martyrdom of these men and

fortunately for the historian, completes the description of Fr. Cabral. Bernier in a few words summarises the cruelties to which the prisoners were subjected in Agra.† He says, they were all made slaves; the handsome women were shut up in the seraglio, the old women and others were distributed among different *Omrahs*. The young lads were circumcised and made pages; and men of age renounced for the most part their faith, either terrified by the threatenings they heard daily, that they should be trampled upon by elephants or drawn away by fair promises. Some Friars persisted in their faith and the Missionaries of Agra, who notwithstanding all this unhappiness remained in their houses, found means after-

* *Catholic Herald of India, ut supra.*

† Bernier's *Travels* etc. Constable Ed. p. 177.

wards, partly by friends, partly by money, to get many of them away, and to have them conveyed to Goa, and to other places belonging to the Portuguese. According to the Portuguese records the Viceroy of Goa really sent an expedition to Bengal in 1643 to rescue the Portuguese survivors. *

* Danvers, *Report on the Portuguese Records* etc. p. 29.