

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

Shahabad is a colourful district of Bihar and its history from the remote ancient days has been colourful. The history of Shahabad district, the land of the *Karushas* is very much affected by the geography of the area. Here geography and history are so intimately related that a complete picture of the historical phenomena and all that goes to make up life through the ages cannot be appreciated, unless and until, the vertical and horizontal sections of the area have been thoroughly analysed and appreciated. It may be repeated that the present district of Shahabad has three natural divisions and the divisions with the specific features have had their impact on the role that the district was destined to play in the past and the present and shall play in future. It has been unfortunate that Shahabad district has had a very summary treatment so far as its history and the men of Shahabad are concerned. Foreign historians have naturally seen more of red when they come to Shahabad district which had always been the playground of big rulers and a stiff resistance of the local barons and particularly because Kuar Singh and a few other men chose to raise the standard of revolt against the British Raj in the fateful days of 1857. It is the geography of the area that has made a Shahabadi what he is, a tough specimen of the human kind, brave, liberal and chivalrous but rather impetuous and often rash in character.

The first natural division consists of the alluvial plains near the Ganga with its rich riparian area; providing a rich rice bowl and a granary, not merely to the Shahabadis, but the neighbouring areas as well. But this very fertility spread leisure and comfort with certain inherent disadvantages, encouragement of a leisure and comfort-loving class and the history of the district fully bears the disadvantages out. The fertility of the area is also liable to lapse into jungles if the habitations shrink or the population declines and there are no people to cultivate. The second natural division is also a flat country consisting more of tertiary rocks and alluvium; while the third or the last, is the Kaimur plateau. In reality, it is the extension of the Vindhya range in the lower Gangetic valley which continues up to Manbhum and Singhbhum and over which the alluvium deposits created the present Gangetic delta or West Bengal.* A major portion of this area was first covered with jungle when living

* D. N. Wadia—*Geology of India* (Section Plan).

was more precarious here than in the fertile plains. The physical features of this area were utilised in a series of small *garhs* or forts and there were a series of powerful but small village monarchs or feudal barons who used to fall back into the forests if any more powerful enemy invaded. These feudal barons would throw off their overlords whenever they got an opportunity. The physical barriers for a long time helped them to grow in some isolation and independence. The boundaries of the hills are well defined. They, however, rise abruptly, with numerous escarpments and saucer-shaped valleys, containing rich deposits of decomposed vegetal growths. There are deep gorges and ravines, made by rushing mountain torrents, through the milleniums. The Kaimur hills are still comparatively unexplored to the archacologists and the historians. It is here that a number of tribals and semi-tribals have lived for centuries and some of them are now claiming to be Rajputs. Normally they are still born in poverty and remain poor. It is only very recently that attempts have been made to give some roadways to open up this area. One who has seen Adhaura thirty years before or one who has trekked or ponied from Bhabua to Adhaura and from Adhaura to Rohtas knows what this area was before the blocks were opened just a few years back. The few passes only gave access in those days to the fringe of the tangled mass of rocks, gorges, plateaus and valleys somehow historically very well known since time immemorial. Rohtasgarh has been a landmark for centuries and it was Rohtasgarh that was the target of many ambitious rulers. It is this area that had given shelter to the peoples, races, tribes and dynasties when they had their political battles in the plains.

It is these fundamental characteristics of Shahabad district that had given a lasting impact on her people. Since time immemorial the Shahabadis have loved freedom in spite of the fact that they have often lost it. The jungles and the rockgirt valleys of Shahabad have encouraged through the ages the resistance leaders of the conquered people and also have given them a spirit which often defied their victors. The annals of the victors have often been smudged, the Shahabadis described as robbers, bandits and wild. The jungle tribes have been taken to be primitive and savage. The guerrilla tactics of the Shahabadis whether in the plains or in the country consisting of tertiary rock and alluvium or in the Kaimur plateau have seldom been appreciated. Shahabad has been one of the most strategic areas in the Eastern India from the olden days up to the battle of Chausa when the British became the masters of the greater portion of the Eastern India. This district has received waves of invasion as we shall presently see and the lords of Delhi have always had a lustful eye on Shahabad. The mighty river of Son along with a few other rivers have also had their impact on the district. Civilisation has often travelled through the waterways

when other means of communications were meagre and Shahabad is no exception to the play of this historic truth. Shahabad has enriched her culture through the rivers and has also given much in return to other areas.

Antiquity has given Shahabad a tradition. To the Jains Shahabad is an arca for pilgrimage. The inscriptions found in the district, many of which are still unedited suggest the past. To the political historians Shahabad has been a chess board for measuring the fortunes of kings and generals. Shahabad in spite of the hilly terrains and jungles has not been a *cul-de-sac* but a round about—a region on which routes converge and from where routes radiate.* The long procession of rulers and generals that made Shahabad district their playground has left their impact in various ways, both in concrete objects and on the people. Peculiarly enough, while some other districts had a square deal from the historians, archaeologists and archivists, this district has remained neglected. If only the Rohtas Fort could speak, we would have been enthralled. The history of the small barons and feudal lords that this area had nursed, the story of the Cheros and Bhuiyas, Oraons and Kharias, the great master-minds that built the Mundeshwari temple and kept up a tradition has yet to be written.

To the socio-economists Shahabad has a particular appeal being one of the most advanced districts in Bihar. In recent decades also Shahabad has been very prominent in the struggle for freedom. There are more schools in this district than elsewhere. This district has a very large number of villages with a population of more than two thousand persons. The fact that this district is politically and culturally much ahead of many other districts of Bihar should not surprise any one.

This is the district which took up the process of rejuvenation from the seventies of the last century. The leaders of the renaissance movement in India always had a great response in this district. Keshab Chandra Sen, the great Brahmo saint and preacher was lionised by the Maharaja of Dumraon in the eighties of the last century. A number of Brahmo nuclei had been set up through Keshab's efforts. Some of his meetings were presided over by Jai Prakash Lal, the Dewan of the Dumraon Raja and by Naga Baba the spiritual guru of the Maharaja. This catholicity was also shown in later years when the other Hindu preachers, theosophists and politicians had stirred up the district. People have now forgotten that the first All-India Kayastha Conference was presided over by Shri Jai Prakash Lal of Dumraon. It may be some news to the present generation that some of the Kulharia Babus had attended the first and second sessions of the Indian National Congress. The zamindars of the district, the Dumraon Raj, the Kulharia Babus and

* *Between Oxus and Jamuna* by A. J. Toynbee, page 2.

others had liberally endowed many charitable institutions, hospitals, schools, etc., and even in our own days one of them was a liberal patron of music and other fine arts. In spite of some of the zamindars being philanthropic and a large area of the district well-irrigated and fertile, this district was in the vanguard of the Kisan agitation. Swami Sahajananda Saraswati, Bhabani Dayal Sanyasi and others literally aroused the Kisans and raised a storm that gave a severe blow to the British Raj and broad-based the Congress movement which richly reaped dividends because of the Kisan agitation. The spirit of freedom that was personally seen by the editor in the thirties of this century when the Congress movement was at its height found its expression in smilingly facing severe lathi-charges and the bullets of the police. Batches after batches of volunteers used to offer themselves for arrest and physical belabouring when the Congress flag was being attempted to be torn down. Again in 1942 movement the enthusiasm knew no bounds and that found its expression in many excesses that were unfortunate. The winning of independence has brought in many problems to the district. The phase of industrialisation and the concomitant labour troubles are the present main features of this district. In order to appreciate the wide socio-economic changes in the district one has to look into the colourful history of the area as their background.

BACKGROUND.

This area was known, in early days, as the land of *Karushas*—a troubled area consisting of autonomous non-Aryan tribes. The early and later Vedic literatures do not mention them. It is in the tangled skein of the *Pauranic* traditions, that *Karushas* are mentioned. According to the *Padma Purana* (IV.274. 16-17) their earliest king, Dantavakra, was of *Chedi* lineage. His father was Vriddhasarman and mother Srutadevi. His family is reported to have had marital relations with the *Chedis*, the *Yadavas* and the *Pandavas*. Dantavakra was killed by Krishna at Mathura. The *Mahabharata* too, combines them with the *Karushas* (VI. 54.8); while *Karusha* happens to be the name of one of the nine sons of Manu. They were a gallant people. The *Bhagavata Purana* mentions that the *Karushas* were stout defenders of the faith (IX. ii. 14 ff.); and valorous fighters (IX. 29)*. Dantavakra was supposed to be an *Asura*.

ASURA PROBLEM.

Historically interpreted, this accumulation of traditions, possibly amount to the eastern expansion of the Vedic Aryans. The term.

* F. E. Pargiter—(i) *Ancient Indian Historical Trad.* page 253.

(ii) cf.—R. K. Chaudhary—*The Vratyas in Ancient India* (Banaras—1964).

Asura need not be taken as implying an ogre. King Vali, the husband of Sudeshna, who obtained five sons from the Aryan sage Dirghatamas by the *Niyogu* or *Kshetrāja* system, was neither a giant nor an ogre.* *Asura* was probably an ethnic term for a particular race of the original inhabitants of *Bharatavarsha*. The *Asura*† problem, is yet to be properly studied. There is an overwhelming majority of instances in which the word '*Asura*' is used in a good sense, the bad sense being in a minority. The probability lies in the conclusion, that bitter hostility existed between the Aryans and the *Asuras*. In the *Satapatha-Brahmana* (XIII. viii. 1-5) there is a passage which states that, one *Asura* race was the *Prachyas*, which we know, was the term to designate the people of Eastern India, particularly Magadha.‡ Dr. A. Banerji Sastri, has dealt with this problem, no doubt in his work—*Asura India*; but, he does not appear to have touched the Indian evidence about the *Asuras*. *Asuras* are also mentioned by Panini, the grammarian, and according to him spoke probably a *Mlechcha* language. Thus it is evident that the whole area of Shahabad, south of the Ganga had been inhabited by a set of people who were pronouncedly anti-vedic in the beginning and they were gradually brought under the Aryan fold.

Location and extent.

F. E. Pargleiter placed *Karusha-desa* as extending from Rewa to Bihar**. According to Panini (IV. i. 178) this is the area. Dr. B. C. Law thinks that, they had four different settlements. First at Rewa, the second was in Shahabad as stated in the *Balakanda* of *Ramayana* (XXVIII. 18-23); the third was in Pundra-desa (*Bhagavata Purana*, X. Chap. 66) and the last was in the *Vindhyas* (*Vayu*, Chap. 45 : *Matsya*, Chap. 114.54 and *Markandaya*, Chap. 57.53-5).

From an analysis of the *Pauranic* data the earliest home of the *Karushas* seems to have been near Rewa and the adjoining Mirzapur hills, on the *Vindhyas* (*Vindhyaprishta nivasinah*) as recorded in (*Vayu*, Chap. 45; *Matsya* Chap. 114.54 and *Markandaya* Chap. 57.53-5). From there they possibly migrated in two directions. One party proceeding towards Malava then known as *Dasarna* and *Avanti*, as mentioned in the *Bramhanda Purana*; while the second party following the *Bhojas* settled from Mirzapur-Shahabad to Palamau and Singhbhum as stated in the *Balakanda* of *Ramayana*. It was here that, geographers of *Vishnu Purana* locate them,

* D. R. Patel—*Cultural History of the Vayu Purana*, Poona, 1946, pages 45 ff.

† cf.—A. Banerji Sastri—*Asura India* (Putna—1926).

‡ *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XII, p. 108 ff.

** *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1895, page 259.

And *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1914, page 271.

For geographical description, cf.—Dr. B. C. Law—*Historical Geography of Ancient India*.

associated with the *Matsyas*, *Kasis*, *Chedis*, the *Panchalas* and *Bhojas*. When these territories were conquered, they probably migrated to *Pundra* (North Bengal). Here, misfortune drove them through the maize of hills and jungles of *Sumhadesa* (modern Midnapore, Singhbhum, etc.), later known as *Atavidesa* or *Mahakantara* to the peninsular region, where *Markandeya Purana* locates them. While the branch that had settled near *Dasarna* and *Avanti*, probably due to the emigration of the *Malava* tribe from the Punjab, settled near *Arbuda* hill (modern Mount Abu). It is here that *Vishnu Purana* (BK. II. Chap. 3) locates them. It is probable that the descendants of those people who stayed on in *Shahabad*, came to be known as *Bhars*, *Cheros*, who according to the local tradition, were the earliest occupants of the country.

Mythology.

The mythological tales commence with an *Asura* in *Shahabad* in general and *Sasaram* (*Sahasaram*) in particular. We are informed that, *Sahasrarjuna*, having been defeated by *Parasurama*, fled to *Sasaram* and died there. Over his mortal remains memorials are reported to have been erected. Beginning from this, we find, that, throughout the historical times, *Shahabad* became the refuge of the defeated peoples, whose turbulence was a source of great irritation to succeeding imperialists. Rock Edict XIII of the Emperor *Asoka*, mentions that "Nay, if any one does (him) wrong, the Beloved of the gods must bear all that can be borne. And (the people of) the forests which are in the dominions of the Beloved of the gods he conciliates and exhorts. The might of the Beloved of the gods, though he is repentant, is told them—why? In order that they may express sense of shame, and not be killed". Many *Rajputs* and unknown *Kharwar* chiefs* had revolted against the temporal power of *Hindusthan* in the jungles of *Shahabad*.

DAWN OF HISTORY.

Very little information about the palaeolithic to chalcolithic† periods of Indian history are available about *Shahabad*. This is due to the lack of systematic investigations in the area, since humanistic studies were commenced in the country. The numerous rock shelters reappropriated by the *Hindus* show that in pre-historic periods *Shahabad* had innumerable cultural stations.

MAURYAN PERIOD.

Karusha was annexed to *Magadha* and thus in 400 B.C. *Shahabad* district formed a part of *Magadh*.‡

* The series of Inscriptions at *Bandhughat* below *Kohtas* give the names of various *Kharwar* chiefs.

† Regarding the Chalcolithic age, it may be mentioned that terra-cottas recovered at *Buxar* indicate the extents of the cultural influence of the *Indus Valley* eastwards [R. C. Majumdar (ed).—*The Vedic Age*. London 1957, page 195].

‡ R. R. Diwakar, *Bihar Through the Ages*, 1950, page 52.

The first historical record, in the land of the *Karushas*, is a Minor Rock Edict of Emperor Asoka: in a rock shelter, on the Chandan Sahid's hill. V. A. Smith thought that formerly there were possibly many Hindu monuments on the top. Other Minor Rock Edicts found elsewhere, the most important of which are at Rupnath, Yerragudi, etc., were inscribed at spots, where local deities used to be and are still worshipped by the Hindus. Secondly, as the late Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar has pointed out that, these edicts are mostly found at places which separate Asoka's dominions from those of his independent and semi-independent neighbours.* And, both Rupnath and Sasaram edicts were inscribed at the western and eastern frontier of a primitive forest area, known as *Atavi* country. The edicts are very simple, and do not go into details, in clarifying the character of the imperial religion, as has been done on the rocks and pillars in more advanced areas of the empire. This is significant and suited the primitive folks who were a source of anxiety to the Emperor.

Regarding the location of the *Atavi* country it is clarified in Rock Edict XIII, which deals with the *antas* or the frontier territories. Centuries after the downfall of the Mauryan Empire, another Emperor Samudragupta, refers to this territory as 'all the kings of the forest country'. Elucidation of this 'forest country' is met with, in the Khoh Copper Plate of Maharaja Samkshoba, where, the monarch is credited as the ruler of 18 forest kingdoms. *Vana rastras* (forest states or republics), as opposed to *Vana-rajyas* (forest kingdoms), are referred to in *Brihat Samhita* (XIV, 29-30) in the north-east division of India. *Ramacharitam* of Sandhyakaranandi, a work of the 11th century A.D., mentions Lakshamisura, as the principal feudatory of the *Atavika* territory. The latest echo of these is probably preserved in *Athara-desas* (18 States) in Orissan history. Very correctly the late Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar concluded that the *Atavika* country extended from Baghelkhand to the sea coast of Orissa.†

ANCIENT PERIOD.

Then for centuries, we have no information. The empire of the Sungas, the Kanvas, the Ailas of Orissa, the Kushanas, all became 'one with Nineveh and Tyre'. Shahabad, undoubtedly, was included in the empire of the Guptas. In the 7th century of the Christian era, we start getting light from various sources. First is Udayasena of *Mundesvari*, in the present Bhabhua subdivision, whose inscription, found at that place in two pieces tells us, that in the 30th year of the Harsha era (636 A.D.), *Dandanayaka*

* D. R. Bhandarkar.—*Asoka* (edi.) page 35 ff

† Op. cit. page 42.

Gomibhata, erected the temple of God *Viniteswara*, while *Mahasamanta Mahapratihara Maharaja* Udayasena was ruling there. The Mundesvari then was known as Mandalesvari.*

Sasanka.

The next is king Sasanka, described as lord of Gauda, in Bana's *Harsha Charita*; and as king of *Karnasuvarna*, by the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen-Tsiang. Early in his life, he seems to have been a feudatory. Because, at Rohtasgarh we have his seal, inscribed on the rock, with the legend, *Mahasamanta* (महासामन्त) Sasanka.† Anarchy was then reigning in Magadha—the long contest between the Guptas and the Maukharis were about to end with the extinction of the latter dynasty. It was probably from this area that Sasanka reached Kanauj and defeated and killed Grahavarman, the husband of Rajyasri, the sister of Harsha; and later Harsha's elder brother, Rajyavardhana. It was from here that Sasanka succeeded in stabilising his power and taking advantage of the chaotic political condition, he laid the foundation of a considerably big kingdom with his headquarters at Karnasuvarna. The end of Sasanka is still unknown to history, but, it is quite possible; that he met with a natural death, after he had lost the territories in the plains, by the allied armies of Kanauj and Kamarupa kings; and retired to the jungle clad ancient *Atavika* country.

Hiuen-Tsiang.

The next, is the visit of the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen-Tsiang, who passed by the safer route along the Ganga. The pilgrim entered Shahabad, from Ghazipur-Balia side; and visited the city of Mahasara. The city was inhabited by the followers of the Brahminical faith and there were no Buddhists. This is identified with Masar, a village six miles west of Arrah town. At that time, the Ganga which now flows 10 miles north of the place had a channel near the village. The other places visited by him, have been identified by General Cunningham, with Arrah; but the passage of the itinerary is not quite clear whether the site of the stupa of taming of the demon "*Atavika*" was on the north or south side of the Ganga.

From the Shapur inscription of Adityasena, it appears that the founder of *Pax Magadhika* was the sovereign of Shahabad from the very beginning of his reign and the tradition was successfully continued by Jivitagupta II.

LATER GUPTAS OF MAGADHA.

The Deo-Varunark Inscription of Jivitagupta II, is a valuable source of information for the history of Shahabad during this dark period. Deo-Varunark is a village in the headquarters subdivision

* This inscription is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. N. G. Masumdar takes the date to be Gupta era, which does not appear to be supported by palaeography.

† Cf.—R. E. Choudhary—*Select inscriptions of Bihar*.

of Shahabad district. Jivitagupta was the son of Vishnugupta and his queen Ijjadevi. The inscription, is on two contiguous faces of a pillar, in the entrance hall of a temple, on the west side of the village, whose ancient name was Varunika (वरुनिका). Incidentally, it mentions, that the land being granted to the God was previously granted by Baladitya, Sarvavarman and Avantivarman. The two latter kings, belonged to the Maukhari dynasty of Kanauj. The last named king again, was the father of the unfortunate Grahavarman, who was defeated and killed by King Sasanka. The Maukhari dynasty was founded by Harivarman, after the decline of the Gupta Empire. But, it was Isanavarman, who established their empire. Sarvavarman was his son. Sarvavarman was the first Maukhari king to annex Magadha permanently. His imperial seal has been found at Nalanda and Asirgarh. Dr. Barnett, is of the view which may be accepted that his territory extended, from Ahichhatra (modern Ramanagar), in the Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh, to Nalanda and Asirgarh. The mention of these kings, in an inscription of a rival dynasty, proves that the fertile plains of Shahabad, if not the whole district, were probably lost to the Maukharis, after Sarvavarman, and therefore, the grant of land to the Sun Temple at Varunika (वरुनिका) had to be revived.

• *Yasovarman of Kanauj.*

The next to rule over Shahabad, was probably King Yasovarman of Kanauj; whose historicity, can no longer be denied. An uncritical but detailed history of the short lived triumph of this king, is derived from a *Prakrit Kavya* named *Gaudavaho*, composed by Vakpatiraja. He was a junior contemporary of the more famous Bhavabhuti.* *Gaudavaho* states, that after issuing from his capital at Kanauj, the king came to a hilly country where he halted during the rains. The identity of the area, is clarified by the incident of his worshipping Vindheshvari Devi led by a *Savara*.† Therefore, his retreat during the monsoon was the hill tracts of Mirzapur district. After the end of the monsoon, he pursued the retreating king of Magadha (*Magadhanutha*), identified with Jivitagupta II by the late Rama Prasad Chanda. The king of Magadha, was ultimately defeated and killed in a swampy land. Yasovarman is reported to have built a town on the site of the battlefield. This is identified with the village of Ghosrawan, in Bihar subdivision, of Parna district.

The route followed by Yasovarman is easily recognizable. The first question is the location of the capital of Magadha from where he was flying. Pataliputra was already in ruins; and covered with jungles. Therefore, it may be reasonably conjectured that there can be two places where the Magadha capital was located; either the

* Cf. *Fatna District Gazetteer*. (James).

† This deity has her shrine in Mirzapur. She is a celebrated non-Aryan deity.

ancient Vedagarbhapura (modern Buxar) or Biharsharif, in whose neighbourhood the battle took place. If, either of the alternatives, is a valid presumption, then it follows that, Yasovarman seems to have come to Shahabad, like Bajirao I; and possibly reached Ghosrawan by Sasaram, Daudnagar, Manpur and Bihar route. In any case, his conquest of Shahabad is definite.

THE SAILA DYNASTY AND LALITADITYA.

The next monarch was the Saila king of the Central Provinces. Our information is derived from a land grant: Ragholi copper plates of Jayavardhana. It informs us that, the elder brother of his great grandfather, inflicted a defeat on an unnamed or unspecified Paundra King, expert in defeating his enemies and annexed his territory. This royal family known only from this grant seems to have had a distinguished history. The family is reported to have held some territory in the Himalayan region—emigrating from which, they conquered the Gurjara country. Still later they migrated to the east; and three brothers established themselves at Kasi, Vindhya-desa (Mirzapur and Shahabad) and Paundra. It is possible that they passed through and conquered Shahabad too. The palæography of this record belongs to the 8th century A.D. The glories of Yasovarman and the Saila family were probably eclipsed by Lalitaditya—Muktapida of Kashmir. According to Kalhana Misra, his *divijaya* comprised not only the whole of northern India, but southern India as well, up to Kaveri river and Malaya mountains. Since, Kalhana credits the Kashmirian monarch with defeating Yasovarman, there can be little doubt about our assumption. The same reliance however, cannot be placed, in respect of Jayapida; except indicating possibly, that the alleged conquests of northern and southern India, by Lalitaditya, were merely temporary gains. No permanent results ensued from the campaign. Next came Vatsaraja of Bhinmal, the Gurjara monarch. All these repeated invasions created anarchy in Bihar which ended with the feudal lords ushering in the Pala dynasty.

THE PALA EMPIRE.

Gopala, the founder of the dynasty, consolidated his position in Bengal. The extension of the Pala power in northern India, was made by his more famous son Dharmapala, who was installed as an Emperor, in the presence of the chiefs of Kuru, Yadu, Avanti, Gandhara, Kira, Bhoja, Matsya and Madra countries, possibly at Ahichhatra. The mention of Bhoja clearly suggests, as C. Mark* pointed out as early as 1907, that Berar, Mirzapur and Shahabad, where Bhojpur still exists, were included in the first Pala Empire. The empire, however, disintegrated; and the finds of Pratihara

* C. Mark—*The Geographical data of Dasakumara Charitram and Raghuvamsam*. Leipzig 1907, pages 28 and 37, ff.

(Gurjara) inscriptions in Gaya, Biharsharif and Nalanda indicate that Shahabad along with major portion of south Bihar was conquered by Mahendrapala.

The Pala dynasty, however, revived in the 11th century A.D. in the time of Mahipala I; whose, bases of operation, seem to have been Anga (Bhagalpur), *Kajangala* (Santal Parganas and Purnea) and Magadha (South Bihar). The find spots of his inscriptions would support this theory. He, however, came into conflict with Rajendra the Great, Chola Emperor, and Kalachuri king Gangeyadeva. The struggle continued during the reigns of their successors. The Paikor Image Inscription in West Birbhum possibly indicates the area of the second conflict. The most rational way, to explain these seemingly conflicting and contradictory evidences, of territorial possessions, is to explain them as temporary gains, the areas changing hands repeatedly. In the wake of Kalachuri invasion came the Chalukyas under the Vikramaditya; and possibly Orissan legions, under Mahasivagupta—Yayati. The former left its back wash, in the form of Karnata dynasties of Mithila and Radha. Mahasivagupta—Yayati's claims of conquests have, however, yet to be established. What is evident is that, the fabric of the great Pala Empire was again crumbling to dust; and Shahabad was probably lost to them. The revival of the empire, for the third time, by Ramapala, probably again saw Shahabad under the Pala rulers, and it is probably to this area, that Govindapala must have turned when he lost the control of the plains.

The rock inscription discovered by Dr. D. C. Sircar at Silsila in this district indicates that in the year 1162 V.S. (c. 1105-06 A.D.) there was grant of some land within Varanasi by Vimurti as a *Siva sasana* when Nayaka Angasimha was ruling at Vanthiam-Patharapura. It is difficult to determine his exact status because Varanasi area was being ruled by Gahadavala Maharaja Madanapala (c. 1104-13 A.D.). It was his father Chandradeva seems to have extended his dominions over Kasi, Uttara Kosala, etc.* Since he was granting land within Varanasi, in all probability he had sworn fealty to the Gahadavala monarch. But in those bygone ages, feudalistic loyalties were not so clearly defined, except when reinforced by armed force.

THE GAHADVALAS.

The decay of the Pala Empire, led to the extension of the Gahadvala dominions in the east. The most important reigns for our purpose, are those of Govindachandra (1114-1152 A.D.) and his successors, who definitely annexed Gaya and Shahabad. The Maner Copper Plates of the same monarch dated in V.S. 1183 (c. 1124 A.D.) shows that, his conquests extended up to Patna district. But the *Tarachandi Rock Inscription*, near Sasaram,

* *Roma Niyogi*. The History of the Gahadavala Dynasty, page 18 ff.

clearly establishes his annexation of Shahabad. This record, which is the earliest evidence of corruption, in the civil services, in ancient and mediæval India, is of great historical importance. It was inscribed on a rock shelter (*pragbhara*), dated in V.S. 1225 (1168-69 A.D.) by *Mahanayaka* (महानायक) Pratapadhavaladeva, lord of Japila (Sic. Japla). It proclaims as fraud, the grant of the villages of Kalahandi and Badapila by the lord of Kanauj, Vijayachandra-deva, son of Govindachandradeva, to certain Brahmins, living in the villages in the neighbourhood of Kalahandi; and obtained, by bribing (*Utkochya*) Deva, an officer of the sovereign of Gadhinagara.*

One of the great moments of Indian epigraphy is the tracing of the spurious Sonhal land grant dated in V.S. 1223, by Dr. D. C. Sircar granting the villages of Badaila and Kirihihi to the Brahmins of Svarnahala (mod. Sonhal). It is this record that was declared to be a fraud by *Nayaka* Pratapadhavala of Japila (now in Palamau district) lord of Rohtasgarh, in the above mentioned Tarachandi rock inscription near Sasaram.†

Gahadvalas and Turks.

Before proceeding to describe the end of Gahadvala rule in Shahabad, it may be mentioned that it will not be correct to agree that Bihar must have felt the weight of muslim arms and zeal of muslim missionaries long before its conquest by Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar Khalji. This theory is more or less based on the discovery of the Maner Copper Plate dated in V.S. 1183, or 1126 A.D. of Gahadvala (Vulgo *Gharwar*) king, Govindchandra of Kanauj, granting lands to a Brahmin of *pargana* (*pattala*) Manihari and mentioning the levy of an obligatory tax "*turushka danda*" or "Turks' duty"——‡ This assumption does not appear to be correct. Admittedly, the "*Turushka-danda*", was a special levy to fight the Turks, who were sometimes, also referred to, in mediæval records as *Hammiras* (Amirs). But it was not Bihar merely that was involved, since, it is mentioned in many other records, not found in Bihar. The epigraphs of Gahadvala dynasty, acquaint us fully with the situation; and we find that, for generations they have been fighting successfully the Muslim encroachments from the north. An uniform and consistent claim has been made in the Gahadvala records in respect of these indecisive actions. For example, it is stated that Chandradeva protected the holy places of *Kasi* (*Varanasi*), *Kusika* (*Kanauj*), *Uttara Kosala* (*Ayodhya*) and *Indrasthana* (?) against them.** The Rehan grant *claims that a muslim king laid aside his enmity on seeing the display of valour

* *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. VI, pages 547—49.

† *Indian Archaeology*.—A Review, 1960-61, page 44.

‡ *Current Affairs* of 1951, page 5.

** *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XVIII, page 13, fn. 13.

by Govindachandra.* The Sarnath Inscription of Kumaradevi, states that "Hari, who had been commissioned by Hara to protect Varanasi from wicked *Turushkas*, as the only one who was able to protect the earth, was again born from him, his name was Govindachandra".† As long as Govindachandra ruled over Uttar Pradesh, no Turks could advance up to Bihar; and we shall have again occasion to note that, even after Chandawar, they continued the struggle, of which no mention has been made by the Muslim historiographers.

Pratapadhavala.

The *Nayaka* (नायक) Pratapadhavala of Japila (modern Japla), evidently, was the *Durgaswamin* of Rohitasva (Rohtasgarh). He is mentioned in several inscriptions found at Rohtasgarh and the adjoining territories.‡ His earliest record is that found near Tutla (Sic. Tutrahi) falls dated in V.S. 1214 (1157-58 A.D.). Unfortunately, the inscription has never been edited. Phulwari, which according to Kielhorn, is the name of a part of Rohtasgarh, better known as Khané Bagh or flower garden, has supplied another inscription, which is now missing. It was also dated in 1225 V.S. (1168-69 A.D.); recording the construction of a road at Phulwari. The next inscription is dated in V.S. 1279 (Sunday, the 5th March, 1223 A.D.) about 30 years after the battle of Chandawar. Significant changes are met with in this record. First, Pratapa (dhavala) is no longer described as *Muhanayaka* (General) but *Kshitindra* (lord of the earth); and was filling the earth with great fame, having in mere sport cut up the *Yavanas*** . The last inscription was found at a place called Lal-Darwaza near Rohtasgarh.

Tutla also known as Tutrahi is five miles west of Tilothu, where the neighbouring ranges of hills form a knee. High upon the rocks, on a terrace, is a small sculpture of *Mahishamarddini*. Amongst many miscellaneous records and around the crude rock cut figure of a female divinity, there is an inscription, which according to Block, has a date corresponding to Saturday the 9th April, 1158 A.D. belonging to *Mahanayaka* (महानायक) Pratapadhavala Deva. He appears to have made a pilgrimage, accompanied by Sulhi, his brother's wife; Tribhuvanadhavala (possibly his brother);

* *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. IX, page 324, ff.

† *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. IX, page 324, ff.

‡ Pratapadhavala belonged to the Khayarvala dynasty which ruled in the Shahabad district in the 12th Century A.D. From epigraphic evidence, he appears to have ruled at least for about 11 years from V. S. 1214/1168 A.D. to V. S. 1215/1169 A.D. The Khayarvala dynasty is probably represented today by the Kharwar tribe, which still occupies the region round Rohtasgarh and claims descent from the sun.

** *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. IV, page 311, ff.

Somali, Lakshmaditya; his sons: Satrughana, Viradhana and Sahasadhavala; five concubines: Laduma, Layaka, Alhi, Puttriki and Ekali; his treasurer—Devaraja; his door-keeper—Vimala; and his court Pandit—Visvarupa.*

ADVENT OF THE TURKS.

The conquest of Koil, in 1194 A.D., had opened the gates of the Upper Gangetic Valley, as well as of the east, to the Turkish converts to Islam. Koil was given as fief to Hisham-ud-din Aghulbak by Sultan of Ghor. The muslim analysts are silent about the extent of Hisham-ud-din's domain; but, it was he, who bestowed Bhiuli and Bhagwat, to Malik Ikhtyar-ud-din Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar Khalji. The grant has a great significance for the historian. First: with the pre-historic Chunar, as his base of operations, the Khalj Malik with the unprepossessing appearance, carried fire and sword in the neighbouring district. The whole of Magadha went out in flames. Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, who wrote, half a century after the death of the conqueror, tells us that, on hearing of the Turkish occupation of Magadha, for a year, the better and wealthier classes were migrating to East Bengal (East Pakistan). The background of this emigration is not difficult to imagine. Populous habitations must have been destroyed and burnt and the long columns of refugees had to fly for life. Then it was a move from the west to the east and not from east to the west as in our own times.

But it cannot be said that Hindu resistance had completely collapsed, as borne out by some epigraphic finds during the last half a century. The first of these was the discovery of a copper plate at Machlishahr dated in 1253 and 1257 V.S. which states that *Paramesvara-Maharajadhiraja-Paramabhattaraka-Parama Mahesvara-Asvapati-Gajapati-Narapati-rajatrayadhipati*, etc. (परमेश्वर-महाराजाधिराज-परम भट्टारक=परम महेश्वर अश्वपति-गजपति-नरपति-राजत्रय-धिपति). Sri Harischandra, mediating at the feet of Sri Jaichandra-deva, granted the land to certain Brahmins.† This Harishchandra was born in V.S. 1232 on the 8th day of *Bhadra*, equivalent to 10th August, 1175 A.D. because; on account of his *jatakarman* ceremony and cutting of his navel, a Brahmin was granted a village by his father, Jaichandra.‡ It is quite evident, that Harishchandra, maintained his independence, after the battle of Chandawar, when, muslim historiographers seem to indicate the extinction of the dynasty, after the death of Jaichandra.

* *Annual Progress Report of the Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Bengal Circle, 1902, pages 20-21.*

† *Epigraphia Indica, Vol. X, page 93.*

‡ *Ibid.* Vol IV, page 127.

MACHLISHIAHR GRANT AND BELKHARA PILLAR INSCRIPTION.

Next is the Belkhara Inscription, noticed by Cunningham and discussed by R. D. Banerji and Dr. R. S. Tripathi. Belkhara is a village, 15 miles to the south of Ahraura Road Station, on the Mughalsarai-Mirzapur-Allahabad Section, of the Northern Railway; and is situated about two miles from the big village of Ahraura in the Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh. At this place, there is a stone pillar, engraved with two inscriptions, one of which has become very much defaced. The other's object, was to record, the erection of this very pillar, by a person named *Rauta Sakaruka*, son of *Rauta Ananda*, when *Ranaka* (रानक) *Vijayakarna*, was the ruler of Belasara, or modern Belkhara. But, the incidental information that it furnishes is of considerable importance.* The name of the sovereign has been very unfortunately lost, but significantly enough, it starts with "*Parama Bhattarakatyedi*" (परमभट्टारकायादि) and ends in "*Vachaspati*" so that it is not difficult to determine the lacuna. The date is 1253, but the era is referred to as commencing from the conquest of Kanyakubja, which is to be equated with the Vikrama Samvat, and the year comes to 1196-97 A.D.; that it, two years after the death of Jaichandra; when a king of Kanauj was briefly mentioned. It appears, therefore, plausible, that *Ranaka* (रानक) *Vijayakarna*, was originally a feudatory of the Gahadvala kingdom; and after the dynasty, had met with its Waterloo at Chandawar, continued to maintain himself independently, in the fastness of the Vindhya hills. He probably declared his independence, but merely showed lip-allegiance to the fugitive Gahadvala king. Not far from him, were the two other great factors, which have to be taken into consideration. First in the jungles of Gorakhpur, Basti, Deoria, and Jaunpur was the 18-year old *dejure* monarch, fighting his battles with the help of a loyal people, to regain his kingdom. At his back, was the General or the *Marechal* of Japla, Pratapadhavala, lord of Rohtasgarh.

• *Khayaravalas or Kharwars.*

Bakhtyar's appointment at Chunar was a necessity. The new Muslim power, in the Doab and Ayodhya, had been imperilled, by the 18-year old boy of Jaichandra, at one hand and the loyal feudatories of the former Gahadvala kings in ancient Karushadesa. It also appears that the displaced persons in groups came to Shahabad. This information has been gathered from a later work; *Tarikh-i-Ujjainia*, in Urdu, and *Udwant Prakasa* by Mauli Kavi, written in the 18th century A.D.; and the last, but not the least, the manuscript of Bodharaja, a native Pugal, in Bikaner, composed in

**Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (N. S.) Vol. VII, 1911, page 757, ff. R. S. Tripathi, History of Kanauj. Some inscriptions have recently been discovered from the district and they are yet unpublished. These inscriptions are said to be in possession of Dr. D. C. Sircar and Shri S. V. Sohoni, Commissioner of Patna Division.

1719 V.S. (1662-63 A.D.). Bodharaja had come to Bihar and stayed at the historically important village Jagdishpur, for six months; and visited many other places to collect information about the scattered 'communes' of the Paramara Rajputs (vulgo. *Puar Rajputs*). In fact, not only were his journeys, very scientific; but, the information supplied by him, when checked with other sources, have always been found to be correct. Even the dates of the rival Muslim kings are accurate. Mauli Kavi's *Udwant Prakasa* is a historical *Kavya* in Bhojpuri; and it has all the defects of a work, where poetic imagination has been allowed free play. The *Tarikhi-i-Ujjainia* in four volumes, published by the Nawal Kishore Press, is very uncritical and does not discriminate between fiction and historical facts. In Bihar, these *emigre* Rajputs are known as "*Ujjainia*" and are now divided into several branches, residing at Bhojpur, Dumraon, Buxar and Jagdishpur.

Khalj Maliks of Lakhnawatt.

With Chunar (Sk. *Charanudri चरनाद्री*) as his base of operations, Bakhtyar Khalji put ancient Vedagarbhapura (Buxar), Mahasara (Masarh), etc., to flames. From Chunar, after accumulating men and money the Khalj Malik conquered Udandapura (Adwand Bihar or modern Bihar Sharif). During the intervening period between the fall of Adwand Bihar and the conquest of West Bengal, the Khalj Malik gave up the whole of Magadha, Anga, Kajangala to the swords and flames. When the aged ruler of Bengal, surrendered easily, he proceeded to Deokot, in the Dinajpore district, from which place, he planned the China campaign; the failure of which, sent him to a premature grave.

R. D. Banerji in his monumental *History of Bengal* (Vol. II) discusses the question if Bihar passed silently within the sphere of Sultan Qutb-ud-din Aibak or not. Before the Muslim conquest, Bihar was divided at least in four distinct divisions. Magadha or South Bihar, Anga or East Bihar, Kajangala or the modern districts of Santhal Parganas, portions of Bhagalpur beyond the Ghogha and part of Purnea district and Mithila or Tirhut or Northern Bihar (ancient *Tirabhukti*). Of these, the Rohtas Valley remained independent. Sheltered by inaccessible natural fortresses of forests or mountains, the minor chieftains and the landholders were with difficulty made to acknowledge Islamic sovereignty. Others, less favourably situated, were driven from their lands and lived the life of outlaws, until their continued harassing tactics drove the proud conquerors to come to terms. Muslim arms practically did not touch Palamau or the whole of Chotanagpur Division or the sub-mountain region of Monghyr, Santal Parganas, etc. Their hold was probably on the fertile crescent in Shahabad, Patna, Gaya, Bhagalpur to Sakrigali and possibly portions of Mithila.

It is also not known what arrangements were made for Bihar by the Khalj Malik. Most probably it became an appanage of Lakhnawati. The rulership of Bengal and Bihar was not bestowed by the Sultan of Ghor or his Viceroy at Delhi; but, was won at the initiative of the leader of the Muslim expansion in the east. Significantly enough, the Khalj Malik elected Mohammad Shiran in 1207 A.D., and he did not acknowledge it, as a gift, either from Sultan of Ghor or Qutub-ud-din.

INDEPENDENT SHAHABAD.

This period again was distinguished by an effort on the part of the Hindu feudal lords in Bihar, to throw off the Muslim yoke, and a considerable change in the population, due to the replacement of massacred or converted sections by the *emigre* Rajputs. Foremost of these, were the Paramara and the Chauhan Rajputs. They took shelter with the ruling *aborigine* Chero and Kharwar chiefs of Rohtas. These Rajputs, soon replaced in the jungle covered plains of Shahabad, the Chero and other aboriginal tribes. The pre-historic Rohtas, however, continued to remain in the hands of the Kharwars. Nevertheless, neither the Cheros, nor the Kharwars were sufficiently powerful to resist the muslim invaders; and in course of time, portions of the district merged with that of the muslim state. Bihar was then not a *Subah*; for which it had to wait for Sher Shah. With the accession of Iltutmish, on the throne of Delhi, this *status quo* was disturbed. Minhaj-ud-din Siraj states that, it was he (Iltutmish) who sent forces on several occasions to Lakhnawati; and on one of these occasions, he separated Bihar and put Izzuddin Malik Jani in separate charge of Bihar.* But, as soon as Iltutmish had returned to Delhi, Hisham-ud-din Iwaz came and occupied Bihar. Displaced from Bihar, Izzuddin Jani took shelter with Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the Crown Prince who had been left as Governor in Oudh by Iltutmish. In 1226 Nasir-ud-din, along with Izzuddin, occupied Bihar when Hissamuddin was engaged in invading Kamrupa and East Bengal. In the subsequent war Iwaz lost his life.

While the slave kings, the Tughluqs and Khaljis, spent themselves in serving their avarice and ambition, Shahabad appears to have continued to enjoy comparative peace and limited autonomy. There was a strong tradition in the 19th century Bihar, mentioned by Dalton and Blockmann, that Malik Ibrahim Bayyu ibn Abubakr, whose tomb, on the lonely hill of Biharsharif, is a prominent landmark, was connected with Muhammad Tughluq. They credited him for fighting with many warlike tribes successfully capturing the fort of Chaichampa, in Hazaribagh district, the stronghold of Jhangra, the chief of the Santhals; defeating Hamsa Kumara, Raja

* *Tabakat-i-Nasiri* (Raverty's Text and Translation).

of Ramgarh,* at Bargaon, near Suraj Pokhar in Nalanda; and finally pursued him up to Rohtas valley, where he killed the Indian chief. Ultimately, during the return journey, he fell a victim to an ambush, led by the dead Hindu princes' followers and was killed.

TURKO-AFGHANS.

The affairs of Bihar and specially that of Shahabad took a new turn, when Malik Sarwar, later ennobled as Khwaja Jehan—*Malik-us-Sharq* (the lord of the east), established himself at Jaunpur, in 1393 A.D. He appreciated the weakness of Bihar and was able to extend his sway towards east. *Feristha* informs us, that Sultan Ghyas-ud-din of Bengal in order to cultivate friendly relations with the Jaunpur monarch, presented him with elephants and other gifts. It is at this juncture, that the least known historical researches of Bodharaja, comes to our aid and render valuable assistance. He records that, in V.S. 1450 (1393-94 A.D.), Khwaja Sarwar's troops, on their way through Bihar, encamped at Chaunsa. Some of them seems to have clashed with Raghu Brahmins, and a riot ensued, when some followers of Kumara Gajaraj, son of the Paramara chief of Bhojpur, were passing that way. The muslims were reinforced by other contingents from the Jaunpur army. Gajaraj too, receiving news of the trouble rushed to the scene. In the clash that followed, many muslims were reported to have been killed. The defeated army had to beat a hasty retreat to Jaunpur, and it was impossible for the Islamic state to condone such an offence on the part of the *Kafirs*. A punitive expedition was sent by the Tughluq *marechal* of the East. Since the date agrees with the first year of the Khwaja Jehan's reign, when we know that, he sent an expedition to Bihar; we may accept the account to be authentic.†

SHARQIS AND PARAMARA RAJPUTS.

The punitive expedition reached the jungles of Bhojpur. Hararaj died in action; and his two sons: Gajaraj and Devaraj, escaped with their families. Bhojpur, was sacked and burnt. The followers of Gajaraj, retired to the forests and mountains; and carried on guerrilla warfare from their hilly retreat. Malik-us-Sharq, was unable to humble them, till his death in 1399 A.D.; when Ujjanias returned to a place called Karur. Gajaraj died in 1470 V.S. (1415 A.D.). Khwaja Jehan was succeeded by Malik Quarantul his adopted son, entitled Mubarak Shah and died in 1402 A.D. He was followed by his younger brother, who took the name Shams-ud-din Ibrahim. Gajaraj having died intestate, was succeeded by his younger brother Jagdeva in 1473 V.S. (1416-17 A.D.). Ibrahim Shah Sharqi occupied Karur. Jagdeva, left Karur and took shelter in the Rohtas valley, dying in 1423-24 A.D. Sangramadeva ascended the *gadi* of Bhojpur

* Ramgarh is a village in Shahabad. A prince named Hamsa Kumara is mentioned in the BANDHUGHAT Inscriptions.

† Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLI, page 121.

which was then lying in desolation. His accession ceremonies were actually performed in the caves of Rehand hill. He took a vow, and made his followers take the oath, not to cease from endeavouring to re-occupy Bhojpur, till the last drop of their blood. For 12 years, the struggle was carried on, from the heart of the Rohtas valley. Shams-ud-din Ibrahim died in 1346 A.D., and was succeeded by Muhammad Shah.

This prince had inherited the vain glory of his predecessors, without their intelligence and ability. Unjustifiably, he clashed with the rising power of Bahlul Lodi; and possibly neglected his eastern dominions, because, we are informed by Bodharaja that the muslims evacuated Bhojpur, when Sangramadeva regained its possession and made Dava his capital. He died in 1510 V.S. (1453-54 A.D.). His eldest son—Ishwari Singh was a voluptuary. In 1454 A.D. after a crushing defeat by Bahlul Lodi—Mahmud Shah decided to pay attention to the Chunar area. It was at this time probably, in 1454, that the Jaunpur army occupied Dawa. Ishwari Singh fled to the jungles, but was relentlessly pursued and killed in 1455 A.D. The Hindu resistance party was then led by Onkardeva, who ultimately succeeded Ishwari Singh. According to Bodharaja, Mahmud Shah died in 1573 V.S. (1456-57 A.D.) which is a fact, and therefore, stamps his work as a dependable historical account of no mean value. The death of Mahmud Shah, was the signal for more intensive activity by the people of Shahabad; and the Jaunpur army had again to evacuate Bhojpur area. His successor Hussain Shah, inherited a crown of thorns, from his would be murderer. The power of Sharqi had reached the lowest ebb and the star of the Lodis was rising. He had little opportunity to pay attention to the mediæval *Atavi* country. Onkardeva died in 1545 V.S. (1488-89 A.D.). But before that, the Sharqi dynasty of Jaunpur had ceased to exist; and Hussain was a refugee. Durlabhadeva succeeded Onkardeva and it was in his time, that Jamal Khan Sarangkani, of Hissar Firoza, the patron of Hassan Khan Sur, was appointed Governor of Jaunpur, by Sikandar Lodi.

THE SURS OF BIHAR.

Hassan Khan, belonged to the Sur section (Qabilah) of Marî clan (*taifa*) according to *Makhzan-i-Afghana*. Hussain's father, Ibrahim, was an ordinary Afghan of Roh. They had no connection with the Sultans of Ghor, because the Sultans of Ghor were Turks, originally Hindus or Buddhists, but converted to Islam when the Caliphate occupied Afghanistan. The alleged royal connection, arises out of an inaccurate statement, made by the author of *Feristha*. Their ancestral home, stood on the rugged hill side called Surgurgai, a detached ridge of the celebrated Takht-i-Suliman, on the southern bank of the Upper Gumal river, in the neighbourhood of Gumal Pass. In the reign of Sultan Bahlul Lodi, Ibrahim, with his young

son, Hassan, started seeking fortune, in Hindustan. Farid, his first child, was born at Hissar-Firoza; but the family finally settled at Narnol.* Farid, later known as Sher Shah, was, therefore, not a native of Bihar. Jamal Khan conferred Sasaram and Khawaspur in the neighbourhood of Rohtasgarh; to Hasan Khan Sur, for reasons which are obvious. Rohtas, that famous hill fort with 24 miles of fortifications, remained unconquered by the muslims where the descendants of Pratapadhaladeva, or some succeeding dynasties, continued to rule. In its neighbourhood was the Rehand hill, where, the Rajputs had repeatedly taken shelter, whenever attacked by the Jaunpur army. Significantly enough, Hassan Khan was given this strategic *jaigir*, for the maintenance of 500 horsemen, on behalf of the Lodi Sultans of Delhi.

According to Bodhraj, after consolidating his position at Jaunpur, Jamal Khan sent a force into Bihar and naturally came into conflict with the Ujjainias or the Paramar Rajputs. Durlabhadeva was defeated; and following the age old custom of his race, retired into the jungles; and the province of Bihar passed to the Sultans of Delhi. Hassan Khan, was a diplomat as well as an administrator. Instead of fighting the Rajputs, he tried to win their affection and came to terms with Durlabhadeva, who returned from the jungles and settled down at Bhojpur. There was a peculiar affinity of family life between Hassan Khan Sur and Durlabhadeva.

Hassan Sur's Jaigir.

There is dearth of accurate information regarding the area and boundaries of Hassan Khan's *jaigir*. Prof. K. R. Qanungo in his book "Sher Shah" has not come to any definite finding.

On the southern side of muslim Bihar, lay the Rohtas valley, then inhabited by non-Aryan autonomous tribes, whom even the Indian genius, since the time of Emperor Asoka, had failed to curb. Further south, were the possessions of the independent Hindu lords of Rohtas, who had never submitted to any Muslim rulers. On the east, was the Son river. On the west, was situated *pargana* Chaund, wrongly called 'Jaund' by Abul Fazl and Nizam-ud-din; and written as Sant by Rennell. On the north, probably it was bounded by a line from Hariharganj 'on the eastern bank of the Son river (opposite Daudnagar) along Rennell's boundary line of the Rohtas district up to some 15 miles west.' It comprises roughly Barong, Sasaram and Tilothu thanas.† From Tilothu, westwards the whole of Rohtas valley was inhabited by the Cheros, Savaras, Kharwars and the ancestors of modern Dhangars and Bhuiyas. It is from the Chero Raja, Mukundadeva, that the Rajputs had seized the fertile crescent below the foot hills. The northern part was inhabited by

* Narnol of Badaoni?

† K. R. Qanungo—*Sher Shah*, pages 11-12.

the Hindu peasantry and middle classes, such as Ahirs, Brahmins, Bhuinhars, Koiris, Jolahas, etc. The country was covered with dense jungle, the result of anarchy, arson and looting over hundred of years. An area like this would naturally have unruly people.

One must fall back on the character of early Muslim rule in India to assess the causes. A seemingly endless procession of alien rulers, belonging to a fanatical creed, administered an area, whose contributions to human civilization and culture had been great in the bygone ages. The whole countryside was smothered in the iron grip of Afghan feudalism, to whom it was parcelled out. The condition of the masses can easily be inferred. With no sanctity of hearth and home, with no personal rights, no religious liberty under an Islamic State, not because Islam was not liberal, but, because the tenets and theories of Islamic monarchy, were being interpreted in their own way by the converted Turko-Afghans. Their homes and fields were not secure, neither from the brigands, nor from the rulers. Under such circumstances it was natural that the poor people should gather themselves in bands; and secure by force of arms, what would have been their peacefully. In such circumstances, predatory habits were natural; and the blind degenerate society, lacking the ability and catholicity of the earlier days, dubbed them as the low caste people. When sympathy, humanity, kindness and charity had become unknown qualities in social behaviours during the centuries; the people were bound to develop rough manners, incivility and a certain amount of propensity to take the law into one's own hands.

THE TAX GATHERERS.

The other classes, who contributed to this nation-wide anarchy and insecurity of tenure and private rights, were the traditional curse of Indian people, the unscrupulous tax collectors; who, always stood between the sons of the soil and their liege-lords—the *Juigirdars*, *Talukadars*, etc.; and who, cheated both the people and the landlords, as they have done throughout the existence of the zamindari system, before its abolition, at the expense, not merely of the both, but of the State and the society, enriching themselves only. The feudal lords, busy with their military schemes, their dancing girls, concubines and wives; were deliberately kept in ignorance of the area actually under cultivation, of the total produce of the land, the assessed revenue and the actual collections possible or received. The ignorant and down-trodden peasantry, were cruelly exacted, with fictitious claims, non-payment of dues, by the *muqaddams*. The peasantry were merely born to toil and suffer. Therefore, the only means for emancipation was robbery, plundering and carrying on the life of thieves and brigands. Generations of unaccounted for oppressions, persecutions, injustice and miseries made them what they were as found by the early Britishers at the beginning of the 19th century.

FARID KHAN.

Prof. K. R. Qanungo is correct that something of this sort must have faced Sher Khan, or Farid Khan as he was then known, when he returned from his self-chosen exile, at Jaunpur to his father; and he employed himself in carrying out the much needed reforms to stabilise the tottering supremacy of the Turko-Afghans over India. This phase of Farid Khan's life and this period during which Lodi Sultans dominated over Bihar, is most important for the history of India. Just as the future conqueror of Waterloo tried to solve the supply problems and strategy, in a devastated country, in fighting the Marathas; so Farid Khan carried on successful experiments of his technique of administration, war and strategy; in this jungle-clad Shahabad, when he was engaged in administering the *jaigir* of his father. He was probably the first Muslim sovereign, to realise that, India was admittedly an agricultural country; and revenue was the basic source of income of the State. His reforms, both revenue and administrative were to be continued by the mughals, even though they might have been his dynasty's conquerors. Abbas-Sarwani in his *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* quotes probably the fundamental truths of fiscal and revenue administrations when he states that "the cultivators are the source of property" "I shall always watch over their condition so that no one may oppress and injure them; for if a ruler cannot protect the humble peasantry from the lawless it is tyranny to exact revenue from them."*

His problems.

The problems that were facing Farid Khan were manifold. Refractory Hindu Zamindars and the non-Aryan tribes, inhabiting the hilly region had to be dealt with; the reform of the civil service, in a small way, had become imperative. He informed the soldiers and Amils that the oppressions and cruelties they had committed were condoned. But, if they were repeated, he would make the culprits examples to their fellow beings. He threatened even punishment to his guilty relatives, so that others may be warned. Next, he appealed to the peasants; and asked them to choose the method of payment of rent. Farid Khan obtained written *Kabuliats*, signed by the *rai-yats*; and fixed the rate of payment, and the direct connection was established between the tillers of the soil and the *mansabdars* and *jagirdars*. Later in life, we will find, Farid Khan, then grown into Sher Shah, Emperor of India employed this policy throughout the empire; but, it is a credit to Shahabad and Bihar that his first experiments were made here.

Farid Khan and Shahabad.

The next success to be obtained by Farid Khan, was in dealing with the refractory zamindars. In this respect, fate was favourable

* Elliot and Dowson.—*History of India as told by Historians*, Vol. IV, page 914.
 8 10 Rev.

to him. First, his lot of an unhappy home, due to an unkind father, acting under the jealous influence of a step-mother, was shared by an illustrious Rajput prince, with whom he came accidentally into contact; and thereby paved the way for faithful and loyal services by a section of the people who had proved themselves thorns on the side of the early Muslim rulers. This was Maharaj Kumar Badal, son of Raja Durlabha. Just like Farid Khan, the Maharaj Kumar had left his paternal home and took shelter in the jungles, with a few faithful companions; and it was in this period that he met Farid Khan on his way to Jaunpur. The woes common to them, bound these two young men together and the races which were so long antagonistic were allied by the bond of friendship. Bodhraj gives the date of Farid's taking over administration as 1567 V.S. (=1510-11 A.D.). Farid, persuaded Maharaj Durlabhadeva, to react favourably towards Maharaj Kumar Badal.

Farid deals with rebels.

He next turned his attention to some urgent tasks. There were two classes of persons in the population of Shahabad to be punished. The first were the disobedient *muqaddams*, who had withheld payments. The second were the Zamindars, or feudal lords like Maharatha Chero, who, would pay nothing except under compulsion. Farid with his militia swooped upon the villages of the disobedient *muqaddams*. The cattle, the goods, the wives and children were seized. All the booty were distributed to his men, but the families of the villagers, significantly enough, were kept in his personal custody, so that they would not be violated by the soldiers. Crestfallen *muqaddams* had to submit, disgorge the arrears of rents; and what is more, gave security for their future good behaviour.

Next came the turn of the feudal lords. His preparations were thorough and detailed. He supplemented his regular cavalry, with local auxiliaries, drawn from the Hindu peasantry, whose hearts he had won. He took with him, half of the volunteers; and the rest were left to cultivate the fields and to protect their homes, in case of any treachery or diversion by the rebel lords. With this extemporised army, he marched cautiously towards the rebel citadels. He asked the infantry to clear the jungle around the villages, on completion of which, the cavalry were ordered to place a cordon around the villages, with orders to kill every male and capture the women and children, drive in the cattle; and to destroy the crops thereby establishing complete blockade. The *zamindars* realising that their nemesis had come offered submission, but, Farid refused to accept at this late stage, stormed their mud forts, killed all the rebels and sold their wives and children into slavery. The devastated villages were re-peopled. In about 1519 A.D., Hassan Sur decided to take over the control of the *jaigirs* from Farid Khan who proceeded to Agra. Simultaneously, the good treatment that the Paramara

Maharaj Kumar Badal was receiving from Durlabhadeva ceased; and the Maharaj Kumar left Behea for Jagdishpur, from where he continued to perform his duties. The subsequent history of Farid Khan *alias* Sher Khan or Sher Shah has been dealt with by Smith, Qanungo and others.

In 1578, Babar came to Bihar, in pursuit of the unfortunate Afghan Princes Biban Bayazid and Masruf, and visited Chaunsa near Buxar, when he restored to Sher Shah his *parganas*. Babar was unable to take interest in the affairs of Bihar and war went on between Sultans of Delhi on one side and Lohanis and Surs of Bihar on the other. While a struggle between the two Afghan factions had become inevitable, and culminated in the battle of Surajgarha, in March 1534 A.D., in the meantime, events of history marched on inexorably in the jungles of Bhojpur, Jagdishpur and Behea. On the death of Maharaja Durlabhadeva, the Ujjainias split up into three groups. Badal was killed and his queen escaped with her two infant sons, Gajapati and Bairisal into jungles, where she spent 12 years in rearing them up. In 1531 A.D., when Sher Khan was the Deputy Governor of Bihar she sent her two sons to Sasaram. They were affectionately received by Farid Khan, with whose help and encouragement Gajapati ascended the *gadi* of Bhojpur and Jagdishpur in 1533 A.D. In the battlefield of Surajgarha, Farid Khan was ably supported by the two sons of his deceased friend, Maharaj Kumar Badal; and they distinguished themselves in action against the Bengal army. Sher Khan allowed Gajapati and Bairisal to retain their portion of the spoils and tied his own jewelled sword to the former's loins and presented a jewelled armlet, necklace and a *sarpanch*. Bairisal was given a horse and a sword and Buxar was allotted to him as his *jagir*.

In 1537-38 A.D., when Humayun reached Chunar, then the other Ujjainia faction made its appearance. When Badal's step-brother Mahipata was killed by Sheorama Singh his *Rani*, too, had fled to her brother named Birman, who lived at a place called Arail, near Naini junction, in the neighbourhood of Allahabad. On arrival of Humayun at Chunar, Birman placed his nephew, Dalpat at the foot of Humayun; and secured from him a *Farman* for Bhojpur. When Humayun, after capturing Chunar, in the circumstances which are well known, proceeded towards the fort of Baharkunda, situated at a distance of 50 miles from Chunar, where Sher Shah had removed his family on the eve of the siege of Chunar, he gave some troops to Dalpat and sent him to take possession of Bhojpur. Gajapati after being defeated turned to Sher Shah who was not in a position to help him. So Dalpat having made himself master of Buxar and Bhojpur proceeded to Jagdishpur. Gajapati and his brother had again to retire to the jungles. In the meantime Sher Khan, however, did not remain idle at Baharkunda, where, he formed a plan to occupy Rohtas. He therefore, persuaded the Raja,

to give protection to the female members of his family, who were to be sent there in *dolis*. But actually the major portions of the *dolis* were occupied by armed Afghans; and by treachery Rohtas, which had so long remained in Hindu hands, fell into the hands of the last Afghan monarch of India. In the battle of Chaunsa (1539 A.D.), Humayun lost to Farid Khan, who now assumed the name of Sher Shah. He built a Grand Trunk Road from Gaur to Rohtak in the Punjab. He died on the 2nd May, 1545.

LATER SURS.

At the time of Sher Shah's death at Kalanjara, none of his sons were present, the Afghan *Amirs*, elected Jalal Khan, the ablest of his sons, on the 25th of May, 1545. He took the name of Islam Shah. Islam Shah died in 1553 A.D. and his 12-year old son Firoz Shah was placed on the throne. Three days later, Muvarez, the son of Sher Shah's younger brother Nizam, murdered Firoz Shah, and ascended the throne at Delhi as Mohammad Shah Adil. On receipt of this news Mohammad Khan Sur, Governor of Bengal, assumed independence; and the vast empire built by the genius of Sher Shah began to disintegrate. The opportunist Humayun returned, and in the second battle of Panipat, Akbar with the help of Bairam Khan, reestablished the fallen fortunes of the Barlas Turks. Bengal and Bihar gradually passed into the sphere of Sulaiman Karrani, and after him his sons Bayazid and Daud Shah; the last independent Afghan king of Bihar and Bengal.

THE MUGHALS.

Humayun had to leave his life's work incomplete; and was succeeded by Jalaluddin Akbar in 1556 A.D. The position of the Mughals, at the time of Akbar's accession, had been admirably summed up by V. Smith "When Akbar ascended the throne in January, 1556 he possessed no definite territory. Five years later he held the Punjab formally, with the Multan district; the basin of the Ganges and Yamuna as far east as Prayaga (later known as Allahabad) and also Gwalior in Central India, and Ajmer in Rajasthan. The Kabul territory (excluding Kandahar with its dependencies, then in Persian hands) was governed in practical independence by the guardians of Akbar's half brother, Mirza Mohammad Hakim. The various Himalayan states, including Kashmir were completely independent. Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were under the government of an Afghan prince, Sulaiman Karrani. Orissa then meant the modern Midnapur, Puri, Kattak and Balasore districts."**

THE KARRANIS.

In 1564-65 Fateh Khan Batani and his elder brother Hussain Khan, of Rohtas, as well as Sulaiman Karrani, were approached by

* V. Smith. *Akbar, the Great Mughal*, Oxford, 1917, page 56,

the hard pressed Afghans. Fateh Khan Batani and his brother accompanied by Mallu Khan, descended from Rohtas hill; and occupied Biharsharif and the adjoining territories, placing Awais Khan, son of Salim Sur on the make-shift throne. Khan Zaman, Maznun Khan, etc., proceeded against them. Due to the numerical strength of the Afghans, Khan Zaman was unable to give them battle and took shelter in the fort of Andaribari on the Sonc. At this psychological moment luck favoured the Mughals. Sulaiman Karrani decided to acknowledge Akbar as his sovereign (*Akbarnama*, Vol. II, page 335 ff). Akbar sent Hazi Mohammad Khan Seistani as plenipotentiary to Sulaiman to persuade him not to join the Afghans. When the envoy had reached Rohtas, some Afghans failing to convert him, took him to Ali Quli Khan and detained him. The result of this foolish move was that, Ali Quli Khan was prevented from giving any effective help to his fellow Afghans; and what is more, ultimately, his prisoner's eloquence, persuaded Ali Quli to proceed to Akbar. Later on, Ali Quli Khan succeeded in winning over Fateh Khan Batani, who was being hard pressed by Sulaiman Karrani. Realising, however, the lukewarm loyalty of Fateh Khan, Ali Quli Khan returned to Jaunpur. In 1572-73 A.D. Sulaiman Karrani died; and was succeeded by his eldest son Bayazid who was murdered according to *Makhzan-i-Afghana* by a man named Hasu, his first cousin and brother-in-law, a son of Immat Khan Karrani.* Two half days later, Daud, younger brother of Bayazid, ascended the throne of Bengal, by murdering Hasu, but, he committed the blunder of antagonizing Akbar. Accordingly, Khankhanan Munim Khan was sent with Lashkar Khan and Paramanand, a relation of Todarmal, as adjutants, against Daud. According to *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, Lodi Khan was dispatched to attack Jaunpur, who actually attacked and sacked Zamaniya. In the meantime Daud Khan, having arrived at Monghyr, murdered Yusuf Khan, son of Taj Khan Karrani and son-in-law of Lodi Khan. Lodi Khan sought refuge in Rohtas (*Akbarnama* Vol. III, page 97). Daud, after fortifying Garhi with the help of Qatlu Khan Lohani, Guzar Khan and Shams Khan Musazai, sent a contingent to occupy Rohtas. Lodi in his despair sought the help of Munim Khan. Khan-i-Khanan, despatched Hashim Khan, Tengri Quli Khan, etc., to help Lodi Khan (*Ibid* pages 96-97).

DAUD KHAN.

Akbar now sent Raja Todarmal, to inflict the final *coup de grace* on the Afghans, who joined Munim Khan at Tirmohini, a place where Ganga, Sarayu and Yamuna met. Lodi Khan, with Afghan reinforcements reached the bank of Sone in the Shahabad district. *Feristha*, however, places it at the confluence of Sone and the Ganga (Nawal Kishore Press Edition, p. 262). Luck favoured Akbar again. The degenerate Turko-Afghans, could not give up

* Dorn—*History of the Afghans*, Part I, page 188.

treachery and mutual suspicion; Lodi Khan was murdered by Daud Khan at the instance of Shri Hari, son of Bhavananda, father of the celebrated Pratapaditya of Jessore, Ismail, the infant son of Lodi Khan, sought sanctuary with Munim Khan. The murder of Lodi Khan created further dissensions in the ranks of the Afghans; and Daud Khan took shelter within the fort of Patna. According to *Tabakat-i-Akbari* Akbar left Agra, by boat, in 1574 A.D. and reached Patna. On his arrival there, Raja Gajapati of Dumraon, whose history after the battle of Surajgarha, we had not been able to trace, met Akbar; and was placed under Khan-i-Alam. After the fall of Patna, Akbar on his return journey decided to recapture Rohtas. Abul Fazl gives a very accurate and fine description of Rohtas which it is necessary to quote in full. "This fort has no equal for strength and solidity. There are several villages (*dih*) on its plateau, and there are various kinds of cultivation, and these yield sufficient provision for the garrison. There are abundant springs of good water, and though the fort is on the top of a hill which neighbours the sky, and on the sites of which well-water is found at a great depth, yet inside the fort sweet water pours out on a little digging. Haibat Khan Karrani and his son Bahadur Khan had strengthened the fort, and then gone to sleep in insouciance. Farhat Khan was nominated for this enterprise, and Muzaffar Khan who on the day, when the Bengal Officers went off, had in a shame-faced manner joined the main camp and had not had the bliss of doing homage, was appointed to accompany him. His pride and vanity were cured in this way. Hazi Khan Seistani, Fath Khan Maidani, Khudadad Barlas, Khwaja Shams-ud-din Khwafi, Baqu Khan Kulabi and other war-like men were appointed to assist him. This army was sent off after it had received salutary counsels".

RAJA GAJAPATI AND BAIRISAL.

Muzaffar Khan was sent to assist Farhat Khan feoffee of Arrah and took possession of Chaund and Sasaram. When Bahadur, the son of Haibat Khan, descended from Rohtas, he was suitably mauled. On the arrival of Farhat Khan their combined forces beset Rohtas, which defied human prowess. So Muzaffar Khan attempted to liquidate the remnants of the Afghan rebels in Bihar. In the 21st year (1576 A.D.) of Akbar's reign, Raja Gajapati made his appearance again. He had revolted. This time Shahbaz Khan Kambu was sent against him. The reasons of this *volte face* are not quite clear. He was present at the fall of Patna; but, he had not accompanied Khan-i-Khanan in the Bengal campaign. He raided the environs of Arrah. In fear, Farhat Khan, the Mughal feoffee, shut himself up in the *Garh*. Gajapati, therefore, tried to cut off the supplies of Mughal armies in Bengal, captured Peshraw Khan. Farhat Khan and his son Qartalaq Khan fell fighting against him. When the news of Gajapati's successes reached the Imperial Court,

Said Khan and Makhsus Khan, were ordered to join Kambu.* But by that time, Gajapati had made himself the master, of all the territories between Buxar and Benares, on the both banks of Ganga; and was about to invest the ancient town of Ghazipur. On the arrival of the Imperial army Gajapati first retired to the jungles of Bhojpur, to which the Mughal army was guided by Raja Sangram of Khargpur (in the Monghyr district). Defeated at Bhojpur, Gajapati retreated to famous Jagdishpur. The dense jungles proved a great obstacle to the progress of the imperial army. The Palamau campaign, of Daud Khan Qureshi, was anticipated; and for two months the vanguard of Shahbaz Khan were encouraged in cutting down trees, when the fort fell into the hands of the Mughals, with Gajapati's family. It was possibly on this occasion that his daughter, or one of his daughters, was married to Prince Daniyal as noted by Abul Fazl in *Akbarnama*.

Gajapati, with his brother Bairisal, retired to the Rohtas valley. The army of Shahbaz Khan Kambu, followed them relentlessly; and in some unknown corner of Shahabad, Bairisal died in action. Sri Rama, the son of Gajapati, with a few devoted followers shut himself up in Shergarh which Shahbaz did not hesitate to besiege. When Junaid Karrani, had occupied Rohtas, over the shambles of the short lived Sur Empire, the fort of Rohtas, had been entrusted to an officer of his named Said Muhammad. He surrendered the fort to Shahbaz Khan in 984 A. H. Soon after this Sri Rama had also to surrender.

AKBAR AND DALPAT.

Emperor Akbar ordered that the fort of Rohtas should be handed over to Muhibb Ali Khan. He founded a place called Muhibb Alipur near Rohtas. In 996 A.H. Bihar was given to the Kachhawah prince; and Man Singh selected, Rohtasgarh, as his headquarters. The present buildings on the top of Rohtas were erected at his instance. There is an inscription on the arched entrance of the *Kathautiya* gate which confirms the tradition. It also states that the fortifications were completed during the *Shiqdari* of Purohit Sridhara and Gopala Dasa under the supervision of Bahai Khan Israili and Daroga Balabhandra, a Brahmin. The architect was Ustad Mubarak. It is dated in 1015 A.H. (1607 A.D.), that is, early in the reign of Jehangir.

Akbar's troubles in the Rohtas valley, were not however, over. When Durlabhadeva breathed his last, a fratricidal struggle had ensued between his sons; and Mahipat's widow had retired to her father's place. Her brother had placed Dalpat under the protection of Humayun. After the exit of Gajapati, his cousin Dalpat decided to step in; and revolted. He detained Kokal-tash an Imperial noble.

* There is a fine portrait of Shahbaz Khan Kambu seated on a terrace in the National Museum at New Delhi.

Shahbaz Khan and Khana Jahan's troops were able to plunder Jagdishpur; but forests and mud of the monsoon, bogged down the imperial forces. Ultimately in 1599 Dalpat came and submitted to prince Daniyal but decided to fly. He was, however, re-arrested and imprisoned. Later on almost after a decade he was released. The other important incident of Akbar's reign is the revolt of Prince Salim and his ultimate reconciliation. Akbar died on October 16th, 1605. During his reign Rohtas marked the south-western boundary of Bihar and had 18 mahals, an area of 4,73,340 bighas and a revenue of 40,819,493 *dams*.

JEHANGIR—THE CONNOISSEUR.

On accession to the throne, prince Salim or Jehangir, found Asaf Khan or Mirza Jafar Beg Qazwini as the Governor of Bihar. He was replaced by Lala Beg *alias* Baz Bahadur in 1605 A.D. It was in his time, that the Mughals had to face the revolt of Raja Sangrama. There were two Sangramas at this time in Bihar, one was the Raja of Kharagpur and the other an Ujjainia Rajput. This Sangramā Singh seems to be the son of Bairisal. He had revolted shortly after Khasru's flight. His area seems to have been near Rohtas, but he was defeated and fatally wounded by a gun-shot.* For this successful campaign Baz Bahadur received the title of 'Jehangir Quli Khan' and was ultimately promoted as a *mansabdar* of 5,000 horses. It was at this time that Ibrahim Kishwar Khan, son of Qutub-ud-din Khan Koka, was the Commandant of Rohtas.

Allauddin Islam Khan, a grandson of Sheikh Salim Chisti, was appointed a *Subahdar* of Bihar, and held his office for a year merely. The next Mughal Viceroy of Bihar was Abdur Rahman, son of the celebrated Abul Fazl. He held the post from 1606 to 1612 A.D. and received Kharagpur, whose last Hindu king had been converted to Islam, as *jaigir*. In 1611 A.D. Kishwar Khan was raised to the rank of 2,000 horses and was appointed to be the Faujdar of the country of Ujjainias, which corresponded probably to the modern Buxar and Sasaram subdivisions.

At this time, the Ujjainias turned their attention to Patna area. Qutb of Uch, a pretender, succeeded in gaining the support of Raja Madhukar and captured Patna, when Abdur Rahman was away to Kharagpur. The son of Abul Fazl returned, defeated and killed Qutb. *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* records a tradition that Abdur Rahman and Iradat Khan led an expedition against Ananta Chero possibly some unknown Chero chief of Rohtas in 1612 A.D. Shakrulla, entitled Jafar Khan, son of Zain Khan Koka, and a brother-in-law of the Emperor; became the Governor of Bihar, to be succeeded by Ibrahim Khan, a brother of Noorjehan. In 1621, *Shahzada* Parwez became Governor of Bihar, and it was in his reign that the rebellion of prince Khurram took place.

* Beni Prasad—*Life of Jehangir*, Vol. I, page 152.

Revolt of Khurram.

The revolt of *Shahzada Khurram*, was not against an affectionate father, but, the petticoat government of the Empress Noorjehan. Having failed in the Punjab, Golkonda and Telingana, the prince successfully occupied Bengal and Orissa. Raja Bhim of Mewar, that valiant Guhilot, by forced marches reached Patna, where, the Dewan, Mukhalish Khan, etc., immediately fled to Allahabad. Khurram arrived a few days later; and proceeded to regulate the administration. Raja Narain Mall Ujjainia, son of Hols Shah and brother of Rudrapratap-Shah gave him help. Sayed Mubarak, Commandant of Rohtas, surrendered the key of the fortress to the prince. Plans were now made for the conquest of Awadh; and Darya Khan was left in charge of Bihar. In the battle of Kampat on the Tons, the army of Khurram suffered a signal defeat, and the prince escaped with his bare life to Rohtas.

It was at this place, that his younger son Murad Baksh was born. Khurram remained at Rohtas for three days only; and, leaving his wife Arjumand Banu Begam, to recoup her health after the delivery, started for Garhi or Teliyagarhi. Bihar was reconquered by the imperialists; and Khurram deserted, by Darya Khan, returned to Deccan. Ultimately, a truce was sought and Noorjehan in the name of Jehangir, demanded the surrender of Rohtas and Asir, as well as Dara and Aurangzeb as hostages.

SHAHJEHAN—THE MAGNIFICENT.

On February 4, 1628; *Shahzada Khurram*, ascended the throne of Delhi, as Abul Muzaffar Shihabuddin Muhammad Saheb Qiran Sani;* and his wife Arjumand Banu Begam became *Mumtazmahal*. The first Governor of Bihar, appointed by Shahjehan was Mirza Barkhurdar *alias Khan-i-Alam*. He was the son of Abdur Rahman Dulday, who died in action in Shahabad, against Dalpat Singh Ujjainia. In order to avenge his father's death he tried to murder Dalpat, when he was released from confinement in Delhi, unsuccessfully. Akbar was so annoyed, that his imprisonment was ordered. He was released by Jehangir who appointed him *Qush begi* or the Imperial Falconer or the 'Superintendent of the Aviary'. He was made *Khan-i-Alam* in the fourth regnal year of Jehangir; and later led a mission to Iran. On Shahjehan's accession, he was made a Commander of 6,000 horses and sent to succeed Mirza Rustam Safavi. He made Pratap Rudra Singh Ujjainia a *mansabdar* of 1,500 infantry and 1,000 horses. He was removed due to addiction to opium.

Abdullah Khan Bahadur-Firoz Jang, was appointed to succeed him, in 1632 A.D. It was during his proconsulship, that Raja Pratapa Rudra Singh of Bhojpur revolted. Due to lack of detailed

* B. P. Saxena—*History of Shahjehan*, page 68.

information the causes of his revolt, immediately after his appointment as an Imperial *mansabdar* are not quite clear. Several possible causes point to the defection. The first was the arrears of revenue, secondly enmity of the collaterals and the powerful *Kayastha* family of Bakhra. Lastly, a great change in the home policy of the mughal empire had taken place. When Shahjehan ascended the throne, he departed from the tolerant principles of his grandfather and father; and gave orders that, all the Hindu temples in course of construction should be destroyed. This was in 1634 A.D. Pratapa Rudra was an orthodox Hindu, who had erected some lofty temples in Bhojpur. He must have been extremely successful as a rebel, because, the Imperial government, ordered Abdullah Khan and Baqar Khan Najam Sani, governors of Bihar and Allahabad respectively, to proceed against him. They were joined by Fidaï Khan, a feoffee of Gorakhpur and Mukhtar Khan of Monghyr. Raja Pratapa Rudra was unable to oppose such vast resources. But he proved himself a worthy scion of an illustrious family; and fought valiantly. Bhojpur was severely attacked and the siege lasted for six months. Heavy casualties were suffered by the Mughals in taking the fort of Tribhag. The fort of Kallanpur was also occupied, after a siege lasting one month by Zabardast Khan and Sufi. Ten other *garhs* were also successively occupied, when the Raja finally retired, to the recently built citadel, within the fort of Bhojpur to make a last stand. Muzaffar and Faridul Khans, two sons of Zabardast Khan, approached the wall of the last fort, but, they were defeated by the Ujjainias. On the other hand all efforts of the besieged to escape, by sallying out, were thwarted. Pratapa suffered a crushing defeat, on a Monday, in a sanguinary contest, which lasted till the morning of Tuesday. He along with his wife surrendered to the mercy of Firoz Jung. Pratapa Rudra had not thought of the consequences. Abdullah Khan according to Peter Mundi, was a sadist. Pratapa was executed. There may be some truth in Stewart's version that the Subedar wanted to pardon the Raja; but, bewitched by the beauty of the Rani, changed his mind. The Rani was converted to Islam, and married to the grandson of the old Governor.

It was in Abdullah's time, that Ikhlas Khan was appointed Commandant of Rohtas, according to *Shahjehan-nama*, which is confirmed by a Persian inscription of *Chardiwari* mosque, which even now exists, between Akbarpur and Mandraghat, at the foot of Rohtas. It mentions that Nawab Ikhlas Khan was the *Killadar* of Rohtas, *Faujdar* of the territory extending from Makrain, parganas Siri and Katamba to Benares and Jagirdar of Khawand (Chaund-, Mangror, Tilothu, Akbarpur, Belonja, Nazibnagar and Japla. These areas are now included in the districts of Shahabad, Gaya, Palamau and Benares. The *daroga* of the fort was Mallik Wisal, whose family tomb was close to the hill. The enclosure and the *baoli* were finished in 1638 A.D. During 1556-57, Mirzafar, a nephew of

a Sultan (Itmaddud-daula) of Iran, was appointed the Faujdar of Chainpur and Ikhlas Khan became the Governor of Bihar, under Shahjehan. But, it was in the regime of Allah Vardi Khan, a noble man of alleged Seljuk extraction, that the fratricidal struggle between the sons of Shahjehan commenced.

The war of succession.

Prince Shuja, took the Governor of Bihar on his side, loaded him with honours, but, was not convinced either about his loyalty or his gratitude. The feeling was reciprocal. After the battle of Bahadurpur, on the 15th February, 1658; Allah Vardi Khan had to beat a hasty retreat to Patna, by the land route *via* Sasaram and Arwal. After the battle of Samugarh, Shuja received the whole of Bihar in addition to Bengal and Orissa; and Dara asked his loyal officers at Allahabad, Benares, Chunar, Jaunpur and Rohtas to hand over their charges to Shuja. According to Aquil Khan, Nurul was made the Deputy of Bihar by Shuja. Shuja visited Rohtas, Benares, Jaunpur; and then proceeded to Kora near Allahabad. The subsequent tragic history is too well known and need not detain us. During the flight of Shuja, Raja Kokalat Shah of Bhojpur was appointed the *thanadar* of Lodh jungle, Rangamati and Garhi. Kokalat Shah was the son of Hardat Shah, and grandson of Chitbar Shah, a younger son of Sangram Shah. He had been recognised as the Raja of Bhojpur, by the mughals, with his headquarters at Basodha and Jagdishpur; after the execution of Pratapa Rudra Singh.

AURANGZEB.

In 1663, Bahadur Khan was the Faujdar of Chainpur and Rohtas. Shahuli Khan was succeeded by Hizabar Khan who was followed by Khwaja Nazir, on whose death Habu Muslim *alias* Nekanam Khan received the custodianship of Rohtas. Since he died three or four months later, Wali Beg Gulabi, succeeded him. On 1st September, 1666, Marhamat Khan was appointed Faujdar of Arrah in succession to Sadaat Khan. In 1681, Rudra Singh who had succeeded Kokalat Shah was dismissed from his fief. He was the son of Raja Amar Singh; and grandson of famous Raja Narayanamal. On the imposition of *Ziziya* by Aurangzeb, he had made common cause with Kubar Dhir or Kunwar Dhira Singh. His patriotism was, however, lukewarm. He was ultimately *weaned* over to Mughal side; and aided and abetted in the final defeat of the "Robinhood" of Shahabad in the 17th century. In the same year, Hamid Qureshi, son of Daud Khan Qureshi, Faujdar of Shahabad, was dismissed from office and was replaced by Sheikh Ibrahim, Faujdar of Sasaram. On 25th February, 1702 A.D., Abul Qadir was appointed to Rohtas in place of Mir Inayatullah. At this time the fortress of Rohtas sometimes used to serve, as detention camp for many undesirables.

Kuvar Dhir.

The most important event in the reign of Aurangzeb, as far as Shahabad is concerned, was the rebellion of Kunwar Dhira Singh Ujjainia, of Baranwan, referred to as "Kuvar Dhir" in Persian histories. The most valuable source of our information is, *Akhabart-Darbara-i-Mualla*. Dhira Singh was a member of the family of Santanu Singh, descended from Dalip Shahi, founder of Dalippur and step brother of Gajapati Singh. His father, was Vikram Shahi, who had been allotted the *zamindari* of Baranwan in *pargana* Pero. The revenue having fallen in arrears, Dhira Singh was taken to Delhi, as a hostage when he was a boy; and later on released. On his return, he collected troops, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his father; and earned the undying enmity of the Imperial Government by killing in action Zia-ud-din, the local *faujdar*, whose tomb even now exists at Pero. That he was eminently successful, when the orthodoxy of Aurangzeb was shattering the fabric of the Mughal empire, established on the integrated loyalties of the Hindus and Muslims, is undeniable. He is reported to have reduced many *zamindars* in Saran, Champaran, and Gaya; while in the west he reached up to Allahabad. With the limited sources at his disposal for 20 long years he kept the Mughals at bay.

Amongst the ousted *zamindars*, was Nand Shahi Jaithra of Bettiah, who, persuaded the *Nazim* of Bihar to take action. After a hotly contested fight at an unidentified place called Martand, Dhira Singh retired to Nagra, a village in the Balia district, sacking and laying waste everything. From this place, he retired to Mau, now a station, in the North-Eastern Railway, on the Banaras-Bhatni section. He fought with the Raja of Majhauili, and built a strong fort at Barhaj in the Gorakhpur district. In many respects, he shared the fate of Kunwar Singh. Ultimately, during the governorship of Prince Azim-us-Shan, he seems to have been defeated by Shamsher Khan who captured the fort of Baranwan.

Aurangzeb put the 18 Mahals of the original Sarkar between two new units. Rohtas contained seven and the newly created Sarkar of Bhojpur contained eleven Mahals. This was an important change in the Sarkar of Rohtas as constituted by Akbar.

Successors of Aurangzeb.

The death of Aurangzeb, however, let loose a civil war, which ultimately, led to the decline of the Imperial prestige. Two of his sons, Azam Shah and Muazzam Shah, declared themselves as Emperors, simultaneously. In the battle that followed, the younger was worsted and Muazzam Shah ascended the throne as Bahadur Shah—Shah Alam I. Trouble overtook the hapless Imperial family, immediately after the death of Bahadur Shah; and his elder son Muezzuddin, ascended the throne of Delhi, as Jahandar Shah, after

defeating Azim-us-Shan. But Azim-us-Shan had left a son, in Bengal, known as Farruck-Siyar, who marched from Bengal to Patna; and ultimately to Allahabad, to secure the help of two Said brothers, to fight Jahandar Shah, in which he succeeded admirably and placed himself on the *takht-i-taus*. It was when he was at Patna, attempting to secure the alliance, that an incident, relating to Rohtas, is noticed by Ghulam Hussain Khan, the Bihar historian. We are informed, that an officer, named Mohammad Raza arrived in Bihar and succeeded in taking possession of Rohtas, by a forged order of the Emperor. It was necessary to reoccupy Rohtas. At Patna there was a person named Dilachin Beg, a *Kalmuk*, who had killed Mohammad Raza and occupied the fort. On his return to Patna he was suitably rewarded by the prince. Farruck-Siyar's reign was shortlived; and the Sayyed brothers murdered him and placed on the throne successively their nominees. Ultimately, Mohammad Shah ascended the throne of Delhi, and put an end to the ambitions of the Sayyed brothers.

MUGHAL FAINEANTS.

It was Mohammad Shah, who appointed Fakraddaulah as Governor of Bihar, in 1727 A.D. in succession to Nasarat Yar Khan. But Fakraddaulah was an ill-educated, haughty and arrogant person. He was soon replaced by the order of *Khan-i-Dauran*, and Bihar was attached to the dominions of Nawab Suja-ud-din of Bengal. Independent existence of Bihar, created by Sher Shah, and continued by the Imperial Mughals, had come to an end; and it had to wait till 1912, to become again self-governing province. Nawab Suja-ud-din, appointed Alivardi Khan, as his 'Deputy' in Bihar.

Very little information about Shahabad is available, when crowns had become cheap in Delhi and even when that Imperial City was sacked, looted and burnt by Nadir Shah; but, we have information, that one Udwant Singh, son of Sujan Singh Ujjainia had become very prominent. He came into conflict with Nawab Fakhraddaulah, the last Mughal Governor of Bihar. Assisted by Tribhuan Singh of Tekari, Pahalwan Singh of Nokha and Horil Singh of Mithila; Nawab's officers led a punitive expedition, against Udwant Singh; and captured the strongholds of Dawa and Jagdishpur, which were razed to the ground. At first, Udwant Singh retreated and sought shelter, with Nawab Abdullah of Ghazipur, who was an old friend of his. In company of a body of horsemen from the Nawab, Udwant Singh returned to Jagdishpur; and captured and beheaded the officers of Fakhraddaulah. Then he presented himself before the Governor of Patna, and was pardoned. In the meantime, Suja-ud-din died and was followed by Sarfaraz, who was defeated and killed by Alivardi Khan at the battle of Giryia. With the formal approval of the puppet Emperor, Alivardi Khan became the virtual master of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and appointed his nephew and son-in-law Zainnuddin Haibat-Jang, his Deputy in

Bihar. Zainnuddin was a talented man and engaged himself in establishing the authority of the new government in Bihar with the help of few chosen and loyal officers, like Rai Chintaman Das, Hedait Ali Khan, the father of historian Ghulam Hussain, etc.; while Alivardi Khan was busy in raiding Orissa. Zainnuddin had to lead an expedition against the ever restless and refractory inhabitants of Bhojpur, because, Iloril Singh of Dumraon and Udwant Singh of Jagdishpur did not prove themselves amenable to Zainnuddin's authority. It was at this time, that Zainnuddin murdered a valiant *Pathan*, named Roshan Khan Tarhi, *Faujdar* of Shahabad, on the ground of his being in league with the Ujjainias. Mustafa Khan, the Afghan, joined Udwant Singh, but, all this did not dishearten Zainnuddin; and after two sieges Mustafa Khan was killed near Jagdishpur and Haibat-Jung successfully stormed the fort of Jagdishpur. This Udwant Singh was the grandfather of Babu Kunwar Singh.

The Marhatha inroads left Shahabad comparatively untouched except the march of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao, in 1743, on the invitation of the Emperor Mohammad Shah. The exact point at which the Peshwa entered the Bihar territory is uncertain, but the fact that the historian Ghulam Hussain mentions him, in connection with Ahmad Khan, son of Daud Khan Qureshi, shows that he must have entered Bihar from Mirzapur side. Ghauspur and the town of Daudnagar were sacked and burnt. Balaji Baji Rao bypassed Patna and marched through Tikari, Gaya, Manpur, Bihar and reached Bhagalpur. With the death of Alivardi Khan, on the 10th April, 1756, at the age of 80, the best period of late Mughal history in eastern India comes to an end. Alivardi Khan was succeeded by his grandson, who lost the crown of Bengal and Bihar, to the British and their stooge Mirzafar. What normally happens to the traitors, also happened to Mirzafar and the British set him aside for a short time in favour of Mir Qasim. Before this, however, Prince Ali Ghaubar, who had been granted the viceroyalty of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa by his father passed with a large army in 1758. His activities were mainly confined in Patna district. He raided Patna, but failed to achieve his object. From Patna the Sahzada moved his camp to Durgawati, where he was joined by Pahalwan Singh, already referred to. Soon afterwards, he crossed the Karmanasa. It was at this time that the victor of Plassey seems to have visited Shahabad against Pahalwan Singh, but the chieftain was too wise to clash with the British and a compromise was effected.

On accession to the *masnad* of Bengal, Mir Qasim's first endeavour was to establish his supremacy over the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; and as Dr. N. L. Chatterji has pointed out, his activities in Shahabad are significant. They were links of his comprehensive policy of subjugating the distracted province of Bihar and establishing his authority over the hostile and rebellious

border and barons of the frontier district between his territory and that of Wazir of Awadh. They had taken full advantage of the disintegration of the Mughal empire, to benefit themselves by exploiting the non-existence of any central authority and struggle for power after the death of Alivardi. The historians, unfortunately, have not done justice to the Bhojpuriah *zamindars*. The verdict has been always onesided. They have been condemned for making things difficult for the usurpers, regicides and quislings of the East India Company. It has never been pointed out that neither Murshid Quli II. Sujauddaulah, Sarfaraz or Alivardi Khan, were the *de jure* sovereigns of eastern India. They were the usurpers, who robbed the Mughal empire of its unity, of its strength and brought economic ruin over the whole countryside. It was, probably, not unlawful, to revolt against those provincial governors, who themselves were rebels against their natural sovereign. Non-payment of revenue was not merely the concern of Bhojpur *zamindars* but also that of the independent provincial governors like *Nizam-ul-Mulk* or *Safadar Jang*, etc. Otherwise why should the 'Emperor of India' go on selling their palace's furniture, if they had not been robbed of the tributes from the provinces. The real fact was that Mir Qasim wanted to avenge himself on the support of Ram Narain, one of the greatest of Indian traitors, in the 18th century.

Mir Qasim left Patna in November, 1761. Pahalwan Singh and others were impressed and convinced that all the oppositions would be futile. And, they fled to the territory of Wazir of Awadh. Mr. Qasim remained sometime in Sasaram, visited Rohtasgarh and put Shamal, the Dewan of Rohtasgarh in chains, imprisoned the commandant of the garrison and left the loyal officers and troops in various parts of the district. One officer was placed in command of Sasaram and Chainpur, another at Bhojpur with a brigade of horse and foot, while Sombre (*sic*. Reinhardt), the German adventurer popularly known as Somru, was placed in charge of Buxar with a couple of regiments of sepoys and some guns.

After the fateful battle of Udhuanala and the capture of Patna in 1763, Mir Qasim retreated to Tilothu, where, he was joined by his ladies; who brought with them, the treasures he had left at Rohtasgarh and he fled to the Wazir of Awadh *via* Sasaram. On his return in 1764, Shahabad was first to suffer, since the invading army burnt and plundered to a distance of 10 or 12 miles in every direction. After his defeat at Patna, Sujauddaulah fell back to Buxar, where he strongly entrenched himself; and it was here in October, 1764, that Major Munro laid the foundations of a momentous change and made the British the masters of Eastern India. During Chait Singh's rebellion, in 1781, Shahabad was dragged into it, because, Chait Singh's domain included a large tract in Shahabad; since his father, the hero of *Bahwanatanama*, seized the north-western portion of the district, in order to consolidate his position; and established strategic

bases, on the south of the Ganga. With this object in view, the large *pargana* of Mangror and the fort of Seringah, four miles south of Chaunsa, were annexed after expelling the Ujjainia chief. The English garrison was practically confined to the walls of Buxar fort which is now the Subdivisional Officer's residence. When Chait Singh rose in revolt there was actually little fighting in Shahabad proper. Major Crawford marched from Sherghati to Akbarpur, where, he met a road, and dragged his gun up the Kaimur plateau. He was joined by Vikramajit Singh, Raja of Bhojpur and Bhupnarin of Jagdishpur. The allied army succeeded in reaching Bijayagarh in Mirzapur district. The battle of Buxar proclaimed the defeat of the great power of Oudh and the submission of Shah Alam II, the titular Mughal Emperor. Thence forward, till 1857 Shahabad had an uneventful history.

SHAHABAD IN 1857.

Mutiny in Shahabad has a special character and significance, due to its leaders Babu Kunwar Singh and Babu Amar Singh. That Shahabad, as the foregoing pages have shown, have always specialised in revolts, against the temporal and secular authorities in India, since Mauryan times, is undeniable. Babus Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh belonged to the family of Hararaj, Gajapati Singh, Durlabhadeva, Narayan Mall, Pratapa Rudra, Kunwar Dhira Singh and Udwant Singh. The spirit of revolt and a fierce love for independence was in the very marrow of their bones, veins and blood. In that respect, nobody can deny, that it was the first attempt on the part of Indians to throw off an alien yoke, by taking advantage of the weaknesses in our national character; and of the rulers, on whom the responsibility of governing the country fell. Nevertheless, it has got to be admitted, that from the very beginning both the leaders had failed to rouse the masses for action. At the same time, there was no understanding or even attempt at collaborating with the leaders of the first freedom struggle, like Nana Saheb, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and the blind Emperor of Delhi. No efforts seem to have been made, to ally themselves with the forces which were fighting further north. Convincing evidence has not been adduced about a consolidated policy and military action, with the people at Banaras, Kanpur and Delhi. Nonetheless, we cannot but admire, the selfless devotion, which led them to sacrifice their all. It is unfortunate that a school of modern historians should try to forget what Kunwar Singh really was and to give him a borrowed glamour by connecting him up with others.

The regiments which had revolted at Dinapore made straight for Shahabad and was joined by Kunwar Singh and his levies. Arrah was destined to be the scene of a grim struggle put forth by

few determined men. Whatever might have been their faults, in not realising their responsibilities no historian would be ever able to deny to the memory of those Englishmen, who shut themselves up in the Arrah house and defended it successfully against heavy odds. Whatever might be our feelings, and the resultant reaction which it had on the fate of India's first freedom movement, it cannot be denied, that these people had fought successfully for their own people, their own country and won their cause ultimately. The relieving party under Dunbar failed, because of lack of insight and leadership in the Commanding Officer; and on the 3rd August, the besieged officers were released by Major Vincent Eyre. The troops of the East India Company decided then to pursue Babu Kunwar Singh and his followers to Jagdishpur, where, so many generations of Ujjainia Rajputs had made their last stand. In spite of the best efforts of the defenders Jagdishpur was given up to loot, arson, and plunder. The principal buildings were blown up. Babu Kunwar Singh, retreated towards Sasaram and ultimately moved towards Uttar Pradesh. In April, 1858, having been defeated at Azamgarh, he returned to Shahabad; and while recrossing the river to enter Shahabad was mortally wounded. While the British forces sent from Arrah, suffered a disaster like Dunbar, in the jungles of Bhojpur and Jagdishpur, Kunwar Singh breathed his last probably on the 26th April, 1858.

Taylor's successor, Samuell wrote on September 25, 1858, "There is no doubt that Kunwar Singh had determined on rebellion for sometime before the actual outbreak took place". In his 75th year, he gathered round him a band of faithful fighters of about ten thousand men and inspired them of tremendous zeal and bravery. The Raja of Dumraon was with him. It is significant to note that no European was killed at Arrah by the party of Kunwar Singh and even those who fell in his hand were fairly treated. Arrah passed under the control of Kunwar Singh who set up his own machinery of administration. Amar Singh and his followers maintained their control in Arrah. They had established a parallel Government. After the retreat of Nana Sahib in Nepal, Amar Singh went to the *terai* region to assume leadership of Nana's troops and death ultimately saved Nana from trial and prosecution at the hands of the imperialist masters. His lieutenants, Amar Singh and others, though hopeless of ultimate success and thereby rendered more desperate, aided by their position in dense jungles, as well as by tropical climate, held their ground for a long time. Marauding bands scoured the countryside, and the Company's establishment at Arrah had to be removed to Buxar. Sasaram due to disloyalty to the Company was attacked and plundered and the remnants of the defeated forces found shelter in the immortal Rohtas valley and jungles of Bhojpur. Just as in the 13th century, the Rajputs and Kharwar lords had successfully defied the Muslims, so in the jungles of Bhojpur and Jagdishpur the sepoys and their leaders found a safe

refuge, maintained their position and obtained supplies. On hearing the news of the defeat of the Arrah force near Jagdishpur, General Sir Edward Lugard, the British General Officer Commanding at Azamgarh, hastened to Shahabad, to subdue the resistance parties, but, the thick jungles of the Karusha-desa stood in his way. The sepoys could easily tread their way through this jungle; while it offered an insurmountable obstacle to the unwieldy British troops and their heavy artillery. Therefore, the British historian mournfully tells us that, soldiers working like 'coolies' had to cut through the tangled mass. In fact, the policy that Daud Khan Qureshi had followed in his Palamau campaign, had to be repeated by the British. Often the working parties brought the rebels in action but they successfully withdrew in the density of the jungles. By the middle of June the British General was exhausted, by the hardship, fatigue and worries which he had undergone in fighting these 'niggers' in the jungle of Shahabad; and he resigned his command and returned to England. All through the sweltering summer months, the struggle continued. Douglas, who had succeeded Lugard, had 7,000 trained British and Sikh regiments under him, but, all that he could do was to keep them under some check, where monsoon with its heavy downpour stopped all activities on the part of the British. Yet, the weary soldiers of the Company received no rest; for the Grand Trunk Road built by Sher Shah, passed through portions of the jungle and had to be guarded. Notwithstanding the inclements of weather and adverse fighting conditions, punitive expeditions had to be despatched, to maintain communications with Calcutta. Meanwhile, Babu Amar Singh and his followers continued their depredations in portions of Shahabad. Following the lesson taught by their ancestors in fighting the Turks, they organised themselves into small bands, roamed the countryside and lived on it, inflicting salutary lessons on all who were short-sighted enough not to support the freedom struggle. The quislings and the fifth column of the 19th century had to be dealt with. One party raided Gaya, occupied the jail, released the prisoners; while another swept on to Arrah and burnt a number of bungalows. Circulars were issued placing a prize on the head of English officials. With the end of monsoon Douglas started his campaign. Aided by Major Sir Henry Havelock he started wiping out the rebels, who then retired to the Kaimur hills. The hills were covered with impenetrable jungles and huge boulders which greatly impeded their progress. But by that time the sepoys had become demoralised and dispirited. The leaders had to fly, while the masses of the revolting troops skulked off by two or three, returning to their villages or their relatives, to be mercilessly hunted down by the British and their stooges.

A history of Shahabad district after the insurrection of 1857, is more or less, on the same pattern as in the other parts of the country. The suppression of the movement had its aftermath. It was fully realised that the suppression was done more by military measures and

that it had to be followed up by a policy of reconciliation of the people and consolidation of the British administration. It is true that there were a number of loyalists within the district and some of them and particularly the Shah Saheb of Sasaram who earned for the town of Sasaram the title of "Sasaram-Nasirul Hukkam"* were made the rallying points for the process of reconciliation of the people and consolidation of the administration. These loyalists were fully rewarded by the British administration and Kabiruddin Ahmad, the Shah Saheb was given a lot of presents to make an example to the families of the insurrectionists. A few loyalists whether they were zamindars or planters or big cultivators were given various concessions and leases so that they could be completely won over.

One of the first results of the suppression of the insurrection was a realisation that the countryside must be opened up with better arteries of communications so that the administration could move quickly at times of stress. With this view the jungles were cut and a large number of roads were laid. Vast jungles from Behea to Jagdishpur were cut down. The railways were extended. It was also realised that there must be more of administrators in the subdivisions and the outskirts. The Police organisations and the Magisterial staff were strengthened. The number of thanas was increased.

The British administrators also realised that there must be a spread of more education and with that view schools were opened at different places of the district. The big *zamindars* were encouraged to sponsor schools and other institutions. With the spread of English education and the want of other type of employment facilities, the educated people naturally turned more to Government services and in this way the administration came to exercise more hold on the educated classes. Various coveted jobs were thrown open to the educated classes, and getting the posts in gazetted services almost became the aim of every graduate.

The Calcutta University continued to be the only University for Bihar till the Patna University was opened in the twenties of this century. The Calcutta University and the Directorate of Education were very keen to impart a liberal type of education based more on the western model and emphasising the importance of English language, arts and sciences. The teaching of science was encouraged and higher education was made possible in the Medical and Engineering Colleges. Oriental education through the old system came to have a low premium and this was due to the fact the people came to realise that unless they go through the schools and colleges where education was imparted through English at the higher stages, there could be no chance for entering into any Government jobs. Higher jobs in the private sectors were also earmarked for college graduates.

* "Inside Bihar" by P. C. Roy Choudhury (Booklands, Calcutta, 1962).

The decades that followed the suppression of the 1857 insurrection saw a gradual erosion of the old moorings of the society. The type of education through English and the spread of the knowledge of sciences had an insidious effect on the various concepts that stood as the moorings of the old society. The doors of the West were thrown open by the knowledge of English and the West started influencing India. Ideas like social equality, emancipation of women, education of ladies, love for democracy, etc., came to play on the oriental mind. The English educated youths drank deep at history, politics, philosophy and sciences and slowly came to imbibe a love for ideas of democracy and social freedom. The evils of caste system, the rigours imposed on the women and particularly the widows, the seemingly unjust restrictions on going abroad, food, drink, dress, etc., became an eye-sore to them. A few youngmen made bold to strike against them and the social ostracism imposed on them made the English-educated youths all the more restive. Some of the Kayastha boys (and one of them was the late Sachchidananda Sinha) was a pioneer of leading a silent but effective war against the rigidities of a caste and tradition-ridden Hindu society in Shahabad district. The student movement was another potent factor.

Bihar was a part of Bengal and naturally the movement of *Swadeshi* in the first decade of the 20th century had a tremendous effect on Bihar and Shahabad district was no exception. The best students of Bihar normally used to go to Calcutta for higher studies before the Patna University was started. Some of those best boys who had actively participated in the agitation in Calcutta started the Students' movement in Bihar. Rajendra Prasad along with a few others was a pioneer for this. Srikrishna Sinha, Anugraha Narayan Sinha, the two men who had shaped Bihar after Independence was won had been active participants of the Students' Movement. The journalists of Calcutta including some Bihari journalists had a great influence on Bihar. "*Bihar Bandhu*", a fearless Hindi paper of Calcutta, was a bold exponent of ideas of nationalism in the *Swadeshi* days. The influence of the nationalists, poets and philosophers of Bengal had, to some extent, helped the growth of ideas of democracy in Bihar. Once the start was there, Bihar youths took up the work on their shoulders and prepared Bihar for the great Non-Co-operation Movement. The great social progress that had come in due to Western education had created in Bihar like the other parts of India a thirst for political freedom. A series of administrative reforms had been sponsored by the British administrators to satisfy the growing aspirations like the creation of the District Boards, institution of Honorary Magistrates, conferring titles and decorations twice a year (New Year's Day and the Emperor's Birth Day), holding of *Darbars*, liberalisation of the franchise for the Provincial and Imperial Legislatures, patronage of earmarked loyalists in the districts, etc., etc. Higher jobs were thrown open to the educated youngmen and some were selected even to be associated with the highest Judiciary and

Executive. Quite a number of men of Shahabad district had earned high distinctions in various walks of life through their merits. But all this did not satisfy the thirst for a political emancipation. The British administration was based on the principle of "Divide and Rule" and on the continuation of sharply distinguished social gradations. It has to be remembered that this district had seen some of the worst communal disturbances in India. All this had happened in spite of thousands of Muslims and Hindus living happily at other villages of the district and the province. The educative influence of the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Ramkrishna Mission and the Christian Missions, etc., had helped the spread of liberal ideas towards life and society. The principles of "Divide and Rule", the distinction between the Zamindar and Kisan, the educated and the illiterate, the evils of the backwardness of the bulk of the people and the almost total blackout so far as female education was concerned were thought to be so many halts round the neck. The restlessness of the people and their dissatisfaction with the administration and their own kith and kin were at the background which made the next political outburst possible.

A particular mention has to be made regarding the contribution of the educated middle classes in the formative decades prior to the launching of Non-Co-operation Movement. It has to be underlined that the leadership came from the middle classes. The *zamindars*, the lawyers, the doctors, the teachers, etc., formed the main components of the middle classes. The Bar in the Shahabad district, as elsewhere, did offer a certain degree of leadership. Many of the *zamindars* who were liberal patrons of the educational institution and culture helped the nationalist movements by giving liberal money contribution. It remains a fact that some of the big *zamindars* of this district had secretly helped the nationalist movement while openly allying themselves with the British administration. The big and small cultivators and the *Kisans* along with the labourers formed the base of the social pyramid. It is a historic truth that the base consisting of the millions which really paid for the running of the administration was left rather uncared for by the administrators. Most of the laws that were passed for the improvement of the *raiya*s were rather belated measures and hence were the results of a certain amount of agitation. There was a big gap between the *zamindars* and the *raiya*s and not much was done by the administrators to bridge this gap. The spread of education had brought in an incidence of unemployment in the educated middle class families. But this spread of education had created more havoc in the families of the village *raiya*s and the labourers. In an educated middle class family one or two unemployed educated men did not matter much as they could be easily absorbed in various affairs of the family and particularly in looking after the cultivation of the lands. But when a farmer stakes a lot and deprives himself of various necessities to get his son educated and the son does not get a suitable employment and

at the top of it, will not take to farming thinking it to be an insult to his education, the distress is much more acute. It is a fact that the type of Western education that was evolved had encouraged a certain amount of reaction on the administration. There was more of the teaching of arts and less of science and still less of technical subjects whereby one could easily earn his livelihood. The result was the creation of a disconsolate army of unemployed, semi-educated or educated youngmen who were all clamouring for white-collared jobs. In case of the grade of higher education, there was no screening of students entering the portals of the university and the bulk of students that got into the university was neither mentally developed nor temperamentally suited for the university education. The type of education as imparted by the university as mentioned before added to the problem. Acute mental unrest due to a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the existing conditions can always be a potent factor for bringing in an upheaval. Shahabad which had a tradition of love for freedom was in a receptive mood when came Gandhiji on the scene of India.

Gandhiji's first struggle in India was on the soil of Champaran district. He was invited to look into the oppressions of the European Indigo Planters. He had just come back to India from South Africa and was a stranger to Bihar. He came, he saw and he literally conquered the hearts of the *Kisans* of North Bihar by fighting against the European Planters.* It has to be mentioned that before Gandhiji's visit to Champaran in 1917, there was another agrarian outburst in connection with the oppressions of the Indigo Planters in Champaran district in the first decade of the 20th century and this movement was entirely led by the *Kisans* themselves. The Calcutta Press particularly the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Bengali*, *Hindu Patriot*, and the *Pratap* of Allahabad gave unstinted support to the popular movement. Repressive forces were let loose and the movement was crushed through the police and the magistracy. But that event followed by Gandhiji's singular victory in Champaran in 1917 had its repercussions throughout Bihar and Shahabad district was no exception. Gandhiji had a large number of followers from Bihar and some of them were Rajendra Prasad, Mazrul Haque, Ram Navami Prasad, Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Dharni Dhar, Braj Kishore Prasad and others. Some of them in later life rose to great prominence. A detailed study of Gandhiji's work in Champaran district in this connection will be found in the Re-written *District Gazetteer of Champaran*. Although Shahabad district had followed more or less a moderate policy in politics and was very much *zamindar*-ridden, the current events did have some impact. In this connection, it may be mentioned that Guru Prosanna Sen, an eminent Advocate of Patna, was the first man from Bihar to attend

* 'Gandhiji's First Struggle in India' by P. C. Roy Choudhury (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, Second Edition, 1968).

the Indian National Congress and two of the prominent Kulaharia zamindars were the next. Journalism both in Bihar and Bengal had also prepared the ground for the receptivity towards the Non-Co-operation Movement to a great extent. It was in this district that the *Khilafat* Movement based on Hindu-Muslim unity had a tremendous success. Gandhiji had visited Sasaram four times on his great mission of forging ahead the *Khilafat* Movement. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan of the North-West Frontier had also visited Sasaram in this connection.

The next wave of nationalism came in the wake of Non-Co-operation Movement in 1921. The Non-Co-operation Movement had a wide impact in the district. As a result of the meeting held at Piru, a *Panchayat* was established to try cases (both civil and criminal) and similar *Panchayats* were established in different parts of the districts. A national school was started at Koath and a *Swaraj Sabha* was started at Darigaon. Messrs. Shiva Pujan Sahaya, Suraj Prasad Tewari, Bindhavasini Prasad, Ramdeo Tewari and others joined the Arrah national school after giving up their lucrative professions. Anti-liquor Movement was started at Dumraon and gradually gained momentum in the district. On February 17, 1921, Shri Rajendra Prasad addressed a meeting at Arrah where Jagat Narain Lal and Arjun Sahay Varma, (ex-Army Doctor) were also present. They also addressed the gathering and called upon the people to join the Movement launched by the Indian National Congress. Similar meetings were organised at different places in the district and were addressed by Rajendra Prasad, Swami Sahajanand, Saraswati, Bindhavasini Prasad, Ganga Prasad, Jaya Prakash Lal, Mahfuz Alam and others. The Government got alarmed at the rapidity of the national movement. National Schools at Ganghat and Buxar were becoming more and more popular. Laxmi Narayan Mishra, Shah Baheruddin and Neazuddin were touring the district and propagating the ideals of Non-Co-operation. Village *Panchayats* and *Seva Samities* were started in a number of villages and *mutthiya* was collected to run these organisations on sound lines. Mahatma Gandhi also visited Buxar, Sasaram, Dumraon, Koath, Bikramganj, and other places in the district.

Between 1920 and 1930, there was a good deal of Congress activity in Shahabad where it was very popular since its inception. The nationalist background of the district was responsible for the rapid growth of the Indian National Congress. Subdivisional Congress Committee and District Congress Committee were formed. Purushottam Lal Agrawal was one of the founder secretaries of the movement. The Aryasamajists were also taking active part in the Congress and the contemporary political movement. Bhawani Dayal Sanyasi advocated the cause of Civil Disobedience Movement. At that time Pandit Moti Lal Nehru used to visit Arrah in connection with a protracted civil suit and in his spare time he used to inspire

the local Congress leaders. In course of time Bhawani Dayal Sanyasi was elected President of the District Congress Committee. He addressed several meetings in the district and was also convicted by the British Government. At a number of places in this district attempt was made to stop the payment of Choukidari and land revenue. Bindhyachal Prasad was arrested in 1930. Throughout the district, national flags were hoisted on the Local Board and District Board buildings and Government took a very serious view of it and ultimately the national flags over those buildings were removed by the Government. When insistence on *khadi* was made, the people of the district popularised *Charkha* and *Takli* in which competitions were organised throughout the district and all walks of people enthusiastically participated. Boycott of foreign clothes formed the basis of a district-wide agitation.

In 1931 Rajendra Prasad visited Arrah and his visit was followed by increased activity in regard to the picketting of foreign clothes, and also for the formation of the Panchayats. On August 30, 1931, he opened a *khadi* exhibition at Arrah and later on addressed meetings at Buxar, Jagdishpur, Dumraon, Burhampur and other places. That was followed by another visit of a team consisting of Rajendra Prasad, Baldeo Sahay, Shrikrishna Sinha. On that occasion the national flag was hoisted. In December, 1931, Shrikrishna Sinha delivered an inspiring speech containing a reference to Kunwar Singh and he was served with a notice under section 144 not to deliver any more speech in the district. The *Searchlight* commented..... "it is a declaration of war by the Government against legitimate national activity". On the basis of Agrarian Enquiry Committee Report, Rajendra Prasad wrote to the Chief Secretary on the canal rates in Shahabad and requested for the early reduction of canal rates. Signatures were later on collected. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, Kashinath, Dudhnath Pandey (retired D. S. P.) and others organised meetings and agitated for the reductions in canal rates. A *hartal* was organised at Dehri at the news of Mahatma Gandhi's arrest. The Kisan Sabha later on took up the issue of the reduction in canal rates. Bihar had become the most important centre of Kisan Sabha under Swami Sahajanand Saraswati by then. Numerous meetings were held in different parts of the district and the agrarian trouble was increasing. The situation came under control after the establishment of the First Congress Ministry in 1937.

The sequence of events and the general pattern of various phases of the fight for freedom in Shahabad district were on the same lines as in the other districts of Bihar. As in some other *District Gazetteers* they have been described at some length we need not repeat them here. Throughout the decade from 1930 onwards there were unrest and agitational activities at various fronts. The Salt Satyagrah Movement in 1930, the Forward Block activities in

1941, the Students' Movement in 1941-42, the Labour Problems in the Dalmianagar area, the Kisan Sabha activities, are some of the features that predominated, the local history of the district in this decade.*

The 1942 Movement was very chequered in this district as in some other districts. Fuller details are not being repeated as they are available elsewhere.† As in the other districts here also several public institutions were damaged or burnt, railway lines were tampered with and a general sense of lawlessness prevailed for some time. Some of the local leaders went underground while a number of them were tried and convicted. Students went completely out of hands although at that time the number was much smaller there being no colleges.

The outbreak of the Second World War sounded the death-knell of the newly-formed Congress Ministry in the State. The Second World War broke out in 1939. The Indian National Congress was opposed to this imperialist war and it had its impact on the country as a whole. Anti-war demonstrations were organised all over the district and that was followed by the Individual Satyagraha in 1940-41. On November 8, 1941, the District Depressed Class Conference was held. Shri Prithvi Singh Azad presided over the Conference and Shri Anugrah Narain Sinha inaugurated it. Between 1930 and 1940, Congress Socialist Party, Communist Party, Forward Bloc and other small parties were organised and founded in the district. During August Revolution of 1942, Arrah played a prominent part and kept up the high tradition of the district. The American and the British Forces committed unprecedented activities in the district. Shri Jagjiwan Ram, Sardar Harihar Singh, Ramanand Tewari, Ambica Sharan Singh and a host of other persons led the district during these difficult days. The people of Arrah, in certain villages, had practically declared independence. The national movement in the district has always been inspired by the memories of Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh and in 1942, they proved worthy of the same. Villages were taxed and the people were harassed beyond imagination and these trials and tribulations continued till 1947 when on August 15, the country attained independence.

* For details see K. K. Datta—*History of the Freedom Movement in Bihar*, Vol. II, 1957, pages 65, 105, 106, 107, 408, 409 and 414.

† K. K. Datta—*History of the Freedom Movement in Bihar*, Vol. III, 1958, pages 95—101.