

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

CENTRAL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY

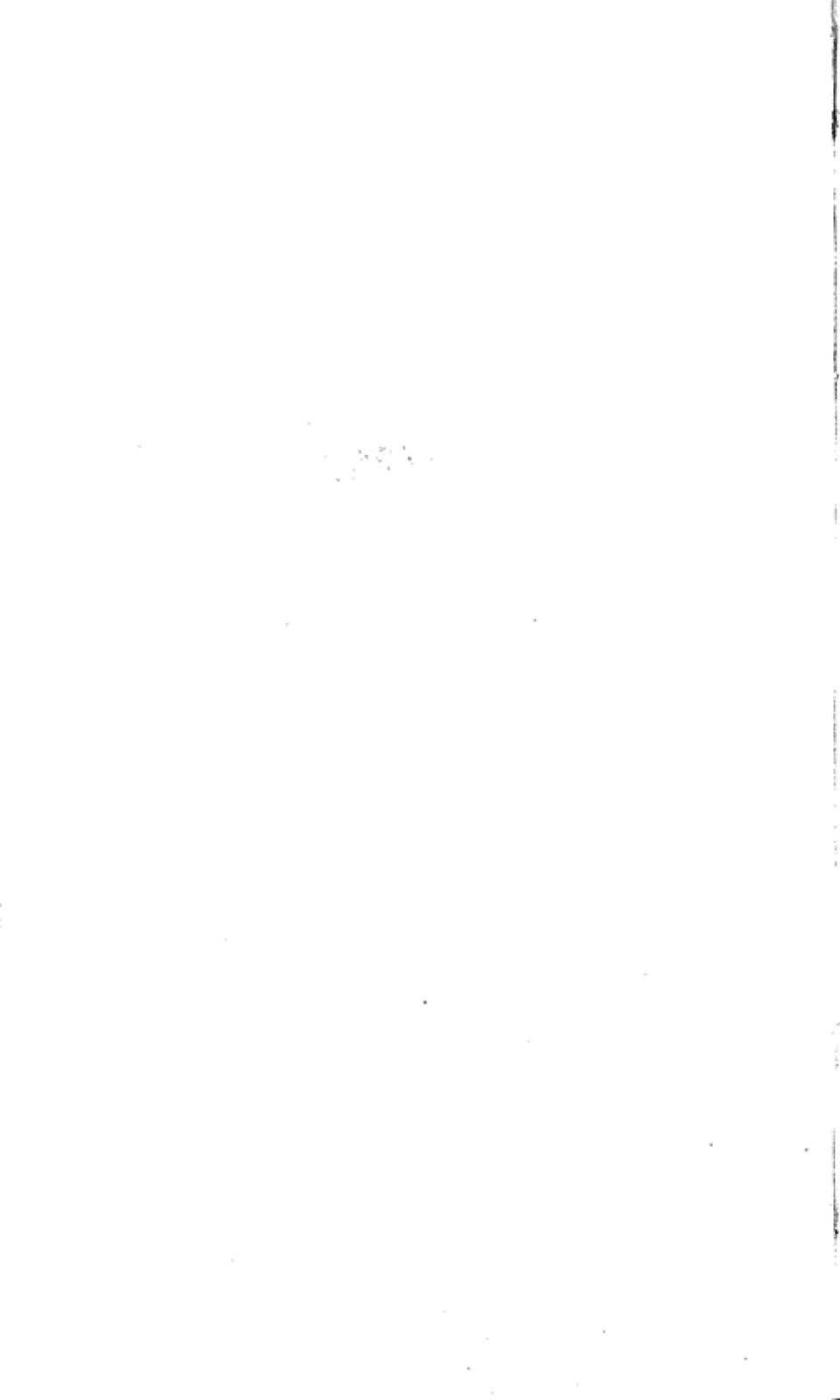
ACCESSION NO. 42062

CALL No. 572.65416/22a

D.G.A. 79



THE KOL INSURRECTION
OF
CHOTA-NAGPUR



THE KOL INSURRECTION OF CHOTA-NAGPUR

42062

Dr. JAGDISH CHANDRA JHA
M.A. (Gold Medallist) (Pat.), Ph. D. (London).
Professor, Department of History,
Patna University

572.65416

Jha



THACKER, SPINK & CO. (1933) PRIVATE LTD.

MUNSHI RAM MANOHAR LAL
Oriental & Foreign Book-Sellers,
P. B. 1165, Nai Sarak, DELHI-6

Published by

Nagendra Mishra, M.A.

Thacker, Spink & Co., (1933) Private Ltd.

3, Esplanade East, Calcutta-1.

First Edition—1964

Price : Rs. 14

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY, NEW DELHI.

Acc. No. 42062

Date..... 3.12. 64

Call No. 572.65416/Sha

Printed by

Ranajit Kumar Dutta

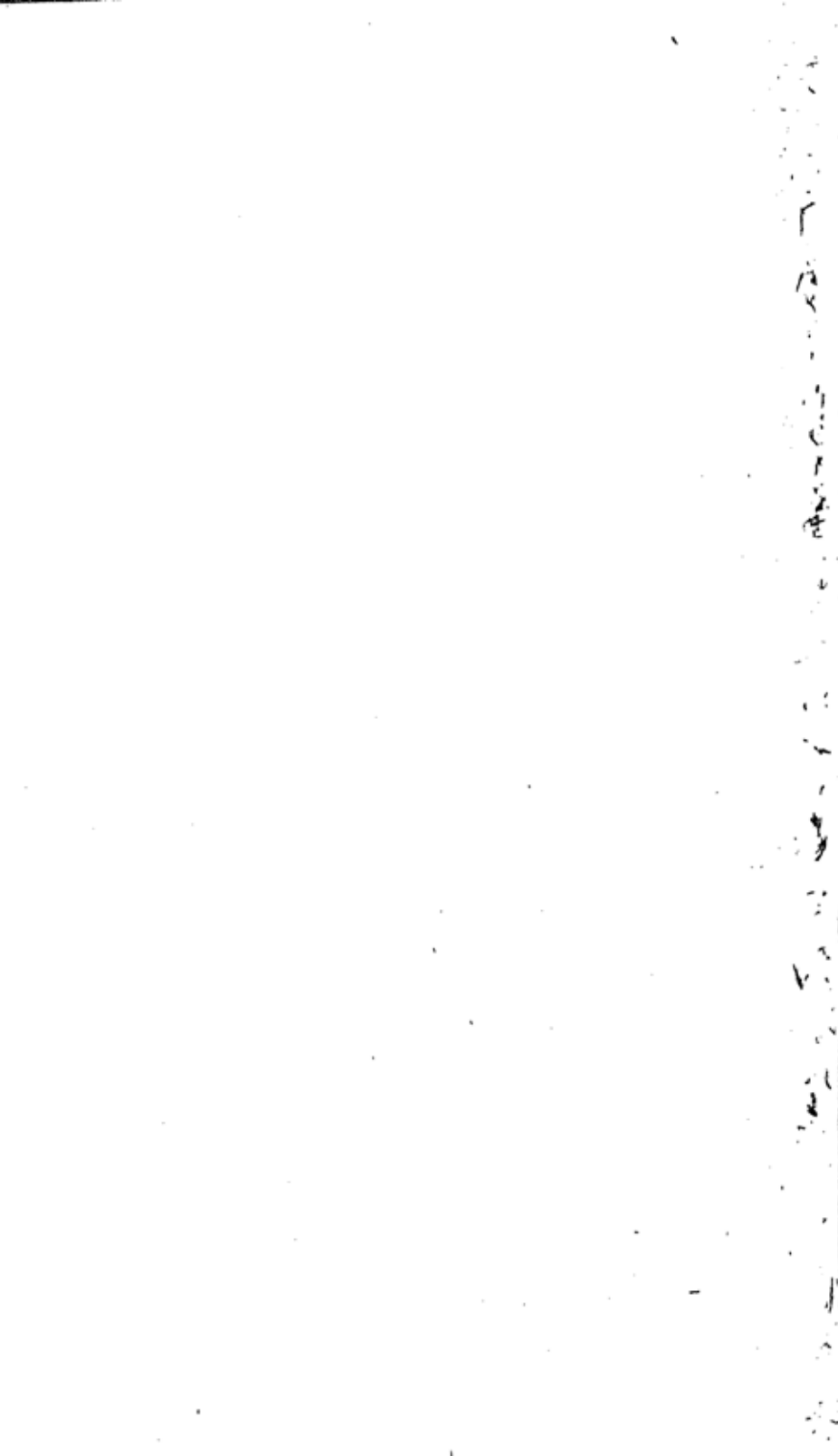
Nabasakti Press

123, Acharya Jagadish Bose Road,

Calcutta-14.

Received of Mrs. Memphis Tenn. Co. 20th 21st 1877

To
MY PARENTS



CONTENTS

			Page
PREFACE			
Introduction	1
CHAPTER	I	Palamau and Chota-Nagpur in the Early British Period ...	7
CHAPTER	II	The Outbreak of Unrest : Its Progress and Suppression, December 1831 to May 1832 ..	60
CHAPTER	III	The Origins of the Unrest ...	119
CHAPTER	IV	Nature of the Unrest—Its Victims ...	172
CHAPTER	V	The Aftermath of the Unrest : I. ...	186
CHAPTER	VI	Aftermath—II. The reorganisation of the Administration of the tribal areas ...	207
		Conclusion ...	240
		Abbreviations ...	i
		Bibliography ...	iii
		Glossary ...	ix
		Index ...	xv
		Maps	



PREFACE

The present study has emerged from a thesis for which I was granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of London in August 1961. Originally the thesis was a study of the tribal unrest of 1831-1833 on the south-west frontier of Bengal. But the present book deals only with its first phase known as the Kol Insurrection, which spread among the Mundas, the Oraons and other tribal people of Chota-Nagpur, and eventually among the Bhumijes of Patkum in the east, and among the Cheros and the Kharwars of Palamau in the west; the second phase among the Bhumijes of the Jungle Mahals and of Dhalbhum in the Midnapur district will form the subject-matter of another book.

The book deals with the British connection with the Ramgarh (present Ranchi and Palamau) district with reference to its geography, anthropology and political history, examining the effects of a complex alien administration upon a tribal society. It describes the outbreak, progress and suppression of the unrest, and discusses the causes, the nature and the aftermath of the rising which led to revolutionary changes in the administration of this region. Since very little work has been done in the tribal history of India, it is hoped that this book will stimulate further studies on the subject.

This book owes much to several people. First, I should express my sense of gratitude to the authorities of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, who awarded me the Central Overseas Scholarship (1959-1961) for higher studies in London, and to Dr. Balbhadra Prasad, the then Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University (now of the Allahabad University), who sponsored my candidature for this scholarship and eventually granted me leave of absence for two years. Next, I should thank Dr. G. Jacob, the present Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University, for having granted me a subsidy to meet a part of the cost of printing of this book. To my two teachers—Dr.

K. K. Datta (lately Principal, Patna College, and now Vice-Chancellor, Magadh University) and Dr. R. S. Sharma (University Professor and Head of the Department of History, Patna University)—I would record my grateful thanks for occasional encouragement and advice.

I have to acknowledge my grateful obligations to my supervisor, Dr. K. A. Ballhatchet of the school of Oriental and African studies (now of the University of Oxford), for his criticisms and suggestions. I would also like to record my deep sense of obligation to Major J. B. Harrison for his many valuable suggestions and guidance ungrudgingly offered to me. I would be failing in my duty if I do not thank Professors A. L. Basham and C. von Furer Haimendorf for valuable suggestions and Dr. B. N. Pandey for occasional encouragement.

I am indebted to the members of the staff of the India Office Library (Commonwealth Relations Office, London), British Museum, the Nottingham University Library, London University Library, the School of Oriental and African studies Library and the Patna Archives for providing me all possible facilities. Mrs. M. Poulter, Miss Jacqueline, Miss Sugden and others of the India Office Library put me under special obligation through their courtsey and goodwill.

I may add a word of thanks to Dr. U. Thakur, Bagish, Ashutosh, Yogakar, Satish, Shyam and others for helping me in reading the proofs and preparing the index and to Mr. V. K. Joshi of the Thacker, Spink & Co. for expediting the printing.

Above all, I owe a profound debt of gratitude to my mother who has been a constant source of encouragement to me. My wife, who cheerfully accompanied me to London and looked after me and our child with devotion, has helped me in various ways.

Department of History,
Patna University, Patna-5.
April 1964

J. C. JHA

INTRODUCTION

This book presents a case study of the evil consequences of introducing into an undeveloped tribal area a complex, legalistic administrative system. That system was the regulation-bound Cornwallis system developed for the plains areas of the Bengal presidency. The political, social and economic impact upon the Kols of that system, introduced without discrimination and without due supervision, forms the major part of this study. Tribal society was already feeling the unhappy effects of the hinduization and alienation of the tribal rajas and zamindars of the area, when the British penetration began. Both impacts were therefore felt at once, and both introduced foreign notions and foreign people into the area, in an influx which led eventually to the economic ruin of the people. The tribal unrest of 1831-1832 was a crude form of protest against these changes and these outside influences. It was a gesture of despair.

In the course of their risings the tribal people were guilty of most heinous crimes, of banditry, murder and arson. But they knew no other method of effective social protest. "Social banditry, a universal and virtually unchanging phenomenon, is little more than endemic peasant protest against oppression and poverty : a cry for vengeance on the rich and the oppressors, a vague dream of some curb upon them, a righting of individual wrongs. Its ambitions are modest : a traditional world in which men are justly dealt with."¹ O'Malley wrote in 1917 that "one of the most fascinating but least known chapters in the history of British rule in this part [Bengal Presidency] of India is the pacification of semi-savage races and the conversion of restless marauders into quiet cultivators."² O'Malley's unspoken assumption was that the exasperating phenomenon of recurrent unrest in the area was due merely to some inherent tendency in the Kols and other tribal people to be marauders and semi-

1. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, 13.

2. O'Malley, *Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, sikkim*, 154. Also see his *History of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa under British rule*, 668.

savage. He failed to realize that the tribal leaders, whose actions punctuated the otherwise smooth story of the development of British India, were in their own society the equivalent of Robinhood or Rob Roy, rebels against landlords, bailiffs, merchants and usurers who were exploiting the tribal people. If their movements were "blind and groping" that was because they were the movements of peasant protestants, extremely inarticulate, not knowing how to express their legitimate grievances.

But there was such a force in their protest that the whole machinery of government in this area had to be overhauled. It is this force, ferment or turmoil which makes this study significant and interesting.

Not much literature has so far been produced on this subject. Most of the 19th century British historians did not even touch upon it in their books. They invariably painted Lord Bentinck's Governor-Generalship as a peaceful regime.¹ Those who did mention it were either professional historians or the servants of the East India Company and later of the Crown. Naturally enough, though they had spent a considerable time in India, and unlike Mill, knew some of India's languages and peoples, they were concerned more with what the British did to civilise these so-called 'marauders' and 'bandits' who, they thought, put obstacles in the path of *Pax Britannica* than to show how their own culture was destroyed by British pressures.

Thus, Edward Thornton, who devotes less than three pages to the Kol Insurrection in the fifth volume of his book, written in 1843, describes these tribal people as rioters.² "These disturbances themselves," he asserts, "would scarcely deserve notice, were it not that they afford additional evidence of the constant tendency of the wilder portion of the subjects of the British government in India to break loose from the restraints of law

-
1. Cf. Lyall, *Rise and Expansion of British dominion in India*.
Boulger, *Lord William Bentinck*.
Beveridge, *Comprehensive History of India*, 1862.
Campbell, *Modern India*, 1852.
Gleig, *History of the British Empire*, 1830-1835.
 2. *History of British India*. V, 203.

and order, and to return to a state where the hand of every man is against his neighbour".¹

Horace Hayman Wilson, the great orientalist who had spent a quarter of a century in the Company's service in India, dealt with this subject in about a dozen pages in his edition of Mill's *History of British India*.² He also, in a typical imperialist's or administrator's tone, mentions this demonstration "of turbulence and disaffection" "as characteristic of the temper and feelings of the people."³ He admits that the causes of this episode are "not easy to trace", and yet he thinks that "when the powers of the [Political] agent were curtailed, and the troops on the frontier reduced, the barbarous tribes relapsed into the indulgence of their former propensities..."⁴ He does not take into account any legitimate grievance of these tribal people.

True, between 1868 and 1917 E. T. Dalton, W. W. Hunter, H. H. Risley, Bradley-Birt and O'Malley did take an interest in the tribal problem. Dalton, Risley and Bradley-Birt had served in Chota-Nagpur. But most of them were interested in the ethnographical and anthropological aspects only. They did not consult the original sources, because they had no wish to present an historical account of the area. Even Sir W. W. Hunter, who compiled the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* and the *Statistical Account of Bengal* and O'Malley who prepared some of the *Bengal District Gazetteers* did not devote more than a few pages to this subject.

None of them went to the primary sources, not even to the contemporary newspapers. They had administrator's prejudices against the tribal people who had occasionally revolted. Moreover, they had only the British readers in mind. Since they also looked at things with western standards and values, they lacked the sympathy towards the tribal agitators.

Even the *Cambridge History of India*, "the most solid work of British historical scholarship on India", and V. A. Smith's

1. *Ibid.*, 203

2. He extended the work of Mill beyond 1805.

3. Wilson, *History of British India*, 5th Ed., IX, 220-221.

4. *Ibid.* 231-232.

first "adequate textbook on history of India," paid attention only to the political, diplomatic and administrative problems.¹ They were concerned only with what the British were doing there, and the problem as seen from the tribal side is conspicuous by its absence.

Some Indian writers, such as S. C. Roy, have tried to present the tribal point of view. Their greatest limitation, however, has been the lack of access to the original records. Thus Roy either quotes from secondary sources or relies on folk-lore and hearsay, which, though a guide to sentiment, is not a safe guide to actual events.

After Independence, and especially in the wake of the Centenary celebrations of the Indian mutiny of 1857, several Indian writers have tried to discuss this subject.² But they have invariably treated it as a political movement, and as a part of the general freedom struggle against the British. None of them treat the tribal versus non-tribal aspect of this unrest, and by emphasizing the anti-British aspect of the struggle, they produce a lop-sided view of the unrest. None of them have consulted the original records and contemporary newspapers. Moreover, some of these, being Government-sponsored works, do not give adequate space to this subject.

S. B. Chaudhury has described this unrest in a few pages as part of the civil disturbances against the British rule. He draws analogies between the *Pax Britannica* and *Pax Romana*.³ He makes sweeping remarks ; for example, "the British occupation of Singhbhum naturally generated tensions and fears which eventually merged with the Kol rebellion of 1831-32".⁴ But he never cares to distinguish between the tribal and non-tribal sentiments. He completely ignores the hinduization of the tribal

1. Philips, C. H., 'British Historical Writing on India', *Listener*, 8 Dec. 1955.

2. Chaudhury, S. B., *Civil Disturbances during the British rule*, 1955.

Datta, K. K., *Unrest against British rule*, 1957.

„ *History of Freedom Movement in Bihar*, Vol. I, 1957.

Diwakar, R. R. (ed.), *Bihar through the Ages*, 1958.

Roychoudhury, P. C., *Eighteen Fiftyseven in Bihar (Chota Nagpur)*, 1957.

3. Chaudhury, *Civil disturbances* 'Approach to the subject'.

4. *Ibid*, 98.

chiefs and its repercussions. Moreover, he does not take into account the moods and tendencies of these simple tribal folk, preferring to follow purely Marxist lines.

In a word, no objective and complete treatment of the subject has been undertaken so far. This book aims to present a more exact and balanced picture, in a complete form. It is hoped that both the extremes of derision and over-patriotism will be avoided: in the British historical writing on the subject words like 'marauder', 'lower order', 'bandit', etc., vie with one another, while in the recent Indian works 'gallant story', 'hero', etc., are frequently used.

It is perhaps unusual, but not necessarily improper, to add here a personal note. My interest in the tribal unrest was aroused very early in my childhood, because my village has been a storm-centre of such a struggle between the tribal (Santhal and Oraon) tillers of the soil and the non-tribal landlords.¹ Later in my college days I became interested in the 'Jharkhand'² and the 'Tana Bhagat'³ movements of Chota-Nagpur. Then during the preparation of the *History of Freedom Movement in Bihar*, I came across materials dealing with the area and in 1957-1959 I published three papers.

The period chosen, as will be seen, does not lack for materials: it also does not lack importance or a coherent unity of theme. In 1831 what is now Chota-Nagpur did not exist as an administrative unit, its territories were parcelled out among half a dozen jurisdictions—and in all of them received but scant attention. Yet by 1831 the grievances of the tribal people in all the districts were approaching flash point—a casual incident might lead to an explosion. In the next two years, the explosion having taken place first in Chota-Nagpur and then in the

1. In 1939 several non-tribal people were killed in a clash with the Santhals.

2. A separatist movement under Jaipal Singh, demanding a separate state.

3. It has a religious background. Another recent movement is the Kharwar movement. Only a few years back one Phetal Singh of the Palamau district, with an idea of forming a separate Kharwar pocket, created terror in the area before he was arrested and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Jungle Mahals, the Bengal administration was compelled not only to take action to restore order, but also to think about the causes of the unrest. In 1834, with order restored, a radical administrative reorganization took place, by which a new unit, the South-West Frontier Agency, was created from previously scattered districts, and a new Non-Regulation, paternalist government was installed. Thereafter for some twenty years the area knew a hitherto unaccustomed peace under a sympathetic administration. Had that care for tribal interests been maintained, had the lessons of the outbreak been truly learnt, the agrarian disturbances of the second half of the 19th century might well have been avoided.

The use of words like 'aboriginal', 'scheduled tribes', etc. has been purposely avoided, because some of them are words of derision, while others have been recently coined, and cannot be applied to the people who rose in 1831-1832.

For the sake of an independent, critical and complete study, the Government records, private papers, newspapers and magazines have been used in combination, and it is hoped that a complete and satisfactory picture and a revaluation of the policies and events of this period may have emerged. It may in course of time, lead to the treatment of the subject in a larger perspective.

Chapter

I

Palamau and Chota-Nagpur in the early British Period

Chota-Nagpur is a high, rolling, well-wooded tableland, in parts very fertile, and well peopled. Its ancient gateway, Palamau, to its west and north, consists of the lower spurs of the Chota-Nagpur-Hazaribagh plateau, where it borders them, and further west still of "a tangled mass of isolated peaks and long irregular stretches of broken hills."¹ The valleys of two rivers, the North Koel and the Amánat, which run northward to join the Són, provide the only level stretches of any great extent, and the main line of approach.

With Japla, Belaunja and Tori, Palamau district was 65 miles in length² and nearly 5,000 square miles in area,³ most of it involved hill ranges, often of sharp and irregular outline, rising at their highest to some 3,000 feet. Hunter said of Palamau, "The face of the country is wilder and more broken by rock and jungle than in Chutiá Nágpur."⁴ Its south-western corner, the Chechari valley, is an almost complete basin, but for the narrow outlet carved by the river on its way north. "On the south it is overlooked by the range of hills in parganá Barwá ; on the west the Jamirá pāt, a high plateau in the tributary Mahal of Sargújá, rises like a wall to a height of nearly 4,000 feet, confronted on the eastern side of the valley by the Nethur-hát pāt, of 3,600 feet ; while a lofty spur from the Jamirá Pāt, crowned by the natural fortress of Támolegarh, overhangs the valley to the north,"⁵

1. W. W. Hunter, *Statistical Account of Bengal*, XVI, 234.

2. W. Hamilton, *East India Gazetteer*, 359.

3. D. E. Sunder, *Palamau Settlement Report*, Paras. 1 and 3. From 1771 to 1833 Palamau was a part of the Ramgarh district, and Tori was a dependency of the Chota-Nagpur estate. Palamau proper was 100 miles long and forty broad : Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, Para. 50, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 11 May 1830 (139/51.)

4. Hunter, *op. cit.* 234.

5. *Ibid.* 236-237.

The forests, hills and rivers, admired as grand and beautiful scenery, provided security and seclusion for the tribal inhabitants of Palamau, for the approaches were covered by "many ghauts or passes of various degrees of strength."¹ The Kharwars and Cheros, the principal tribes, were always a powerful people, and as late as the 16th century were described as "a race of border robbers, chiefly known by the daring raids which they made into the open country at the foot of the hills."² None of the invasions of Palamau, whether that of Sher Shah's generals in 1538, or of the Mughals³ or of the Marathas in the 18th century ever thoroughly subjugated it.

Nevertheless, the tribals were not immune to outside influences, and the process of hinduization was well under way by the 16th century. The Chero chiefs in other areas of south Bihar, where they were found ruling till that century, erected a number of temples. From south Bihar the process spread into Palamau to the landowning Cheros there. They adopted Hindu names, borrowed Brahmanical *gotras* in support of their claims to Rajput status, and by the close of the 19th century, the Palamau Cheros were wearing the sacred thread.⁴

Their right to wear sacred thread was dubious, for their origin was almost certainly non-Aryan. The anthropologists—Dalton, Risley, Henry Elliot—agree in believing them to be the kinsmen of the Mundas and Oraons: 'convincing proof of the non-Aryan affinities of the Cheros is derived from the fact that the Chota-Nagpur members of the caste [i.e. those of Palamau], whose poverty and social insignificance have held them aloof from Hinduising influences, still retain totemistic section-names similar to those in use among the Khariás, who are beyond doubt closely akin to the Mundas.'⁵

Despite their Dravidian origin, both Cheros and Kharwars by their martial habits and pride, fully lived up to the Kshatriya status they claimed. According to Forbes, "the Cheros are a

1. *Ibid.*

2. D. G. Palamau, 18.

3. Hunter, *op. cit.* 455-468. Also see D. G. Palamau, 18.

4. Risley, *Tribes*. I, 199. Also see Dalton, *Ethnology*, 127.

5. Risley, *op. cit.* 199: Two sub-tribes of the Cheros are Barahajaria and Terah-hajaria.

proud race, and exceedingly jealous of their national honour. They have never forgotten that they were once a great people, and that their descent was an honourable one."¹

Palamau, as part of the Bihar *Subah*, passed under British administration with the rest of the province, by the grant of the *Diwani* in 1765. But if Palamau was not "the absolute *terra incognita* that further Chota Nagpore so long remained"², the difficulty of the terrain, and the reputation of the inhabitants were sufficiently discouraging to the Company. Not until a civil war broke out among the Cheros in 1770 did Captain Jacob Camac, the commander of the southern frontier detachment, think fit to enter the country. Even then he marched only after one of the claimants to the Palamau estate had negotiated with the Patna Council for aid.³

In January 1771, Camac attacked Palamau in support of the claimant's forces and by June the insurgents, who had occupied the Palamau fort, had been defeated. However, the resistance of the Bhogtas and other tribes had been so stiff that it was thought necessary to occupy the fort,⁴ and two other outposts on the Sarguja border with Company troops so as to ensure effective control of the territory. The candidate supported by the Company, one Gopal Rai, was then installed as the raja, on a promise of Rs. 12,000 revenue a year to the East India Company. Even then the precarious nature of the British control was emphasised by insurrections which broke out soon after Camac had returned to Patna. (Camac fell ill after his return and rumours spread that he was dead).⁵ The combined efforts of the Company's forces were required to save the fort and to defeat and drive off the Chero claimant, Jai Nath Singh, and the Marathas who had come to his support.⁶

Further risings in 1773, though suppressed, emphasised the

1. *Ibid.* 203.

2. Bradley-Birt, *Chota Nagpore*, 205.

3. Bridge, *Palamau Settlement report*, Para. 41

4. The light guns of Camac at first made 'no impression on the solid stone of the forts. : Hunter, *op.cit.* 469.

5. J. C. Jha, 'Early British penetration into Chota Nagpur. 1769-73' *J. B. R. S.*, XLIII, 331.

6. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 42.

power of the southern chiefs, whom "it was deemed expedient to conciliate".¹ In October Warren Hastings decided to transfer Palamau (with Ramgarh and Chota-Nagpur) from the charge of the Patna Council to that of the Presidency, and to entrust both revenue collection and the administration of justice to the zamindars. In 1774 conciliation was carried a stage further by a remission of Rs. 6,800 in the Palamau demand, on account of severe floods.²

In 1781 civil and criminal courts were established at Chatra, the officer in charge of them also being responsible for supervising the collection of revenue. But the centre for Camac's south-western frontier detachment—later the Ramgarh battalion—was Hazaribagh. In 1799 the Ramgarh magistrate strongly opposed the proposal of shifting the *Sadr* station from Chatra to Hazaribagh because of "the necessity of watching closely the people of Palamow, a more hardy and bolder race of men than the other inhabitants of this district."³ Despite the establishment of the courts, and the abolition of the posts of *thanadar* and *faujdar* in this *pargana*, however, the zamindar was allowed to retain many concurrent powers, while the *faujdari darogas* reported independently of the *adalat* through the Remembrancer of the criminal courts to the Governor-General.⁴

The policy of indirect rule through the raja or the zamindar—for such in effect was the system followed by the Company in Palamau—depended for its success upon the quality of the chiefs. Gopal Rai, however, proved an unfortunate choice. Himself hinduized, he was at odds with his tribal chieftains, whose *jagirs* he sought to resume, and with the representative of the Company, the *qanungo* Udwant Ram. There followed, inevitably, "a series of iniquities which probably have no parallel in the whole revenue history of the Company's provinces,"⁵ and which ended with the treacherous and brutal murder of Udwant

1. *Ibid.* Para, 43.

2. *Ibid.*

3. T. Palmer to Govt., 17 Aug. 1799, Para. 3, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 30 of 29 Aug. 1799 (128/47).

4. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 44.

5. *Ibid.* Para. 45.

Ram by the raja, and the latter's trial in 1776 and life-imprisonment at Patna.¹

Gopal Rai had come increasingly under the influence of Shiva Prasad Singh, a nephew of that Jai Nath Singh expelled from Palamau by Camac, and the estate was torn by the factional struggles of the supporters and opponents of Shiva Prasad Singh. During those struggles British troops had several times to be sent into Palamau to restore order. Yet, though Shiva Prasad appeared to be implicated in the death of Gopal Rai's father Raja Jai Kishan, it was to him that the guardianship of Gopal Rai's son, Churaman Rai, was given in 1786 (the year in which Gopal Rai died in Patna prison). That position he retained even after he had been proved to be the instigator of disturbances between 1800 and 1803. The Company's policy was one of pure expediency: Bridge, the settlement officer, rightly called it a "hand to mouth policy."² Shiva Prasad used his position to further his own factional interest and to destroy that of his ward. "Such was the man to whom was delivered the administration of the estate, and the care of the minor grandson of Jai Kishan, his foe. It is perhaps not to be wondered at, that the Thakuria's [the *jagirdars*] recovered all their lost property and added to it, while Churaman Rai grew up neglected and incompetent, the owner of a smaller property than many of his own principal under-tenure-holders."³

The destruction of the raja's estate thus begun by his guardian was completed by the Company's Decennial Settlement. Sheristadar John Grant in 1787 had classed Palamau with Cooch Bihar, Chota-Nagpur and Ramgarh as a Zamindari of the second class, that is, a chieftainship the exact territory and revenue of which could not be ascertained because it was so hilly and so covered with jungle.⁴ But though the Government had decided in 1789 that the settlement of this *pargana* would

1. Capt. E. Roughsedge to Govt., 6 March 1814, Para. 14, Beng. Rev. Cons. 15 of 2 April 1814 (⁵⁶/₁₅).

2. Bridge, *op.cit.* Para. 48.

3. *Ibid.*

4. J. Grant, Chief Sheristadar, to Board of Revenue, 8 March 1787, Beng. Rev. Cons. 18 March 1789 ⁵¹/₃₃ P. 355.

"continue as at present",¹ Leslie, the Ramgarh collector, who from 1789 onwards made the Decennial Settlement, proceeded to make detailed awards which ignored any doubts and difficulties. Certain old *jagirdars* were allowed by Leslie to pay their revenue through the raja, but he also confirmed many new men in estates which had been acquired in the most dubious ways. Thus Sugand Rai, who had long been refractory, was confirmed in Deogan which he had recently acquired in a doubtful way : Chhatrapati Rai, whose father Gajraj Rai, was still in jail, was confirmed in Bistrampur, while his brother, Dharni, Rai, was confirmed in Baraon *jagir* ; even Ram Baksha Singh, the son of the defeated Jai Nath, was confirmed in the tenure of all the land that he could lay his hands on.²

The result of Leslie's settlement was an abrupt fall in the income of the raja and in his prestige *vis-a-vis* his *jagirdars*. Most of the district officers over-estimated the raja's income and quite failed to realise that after meeting the cost of the police and the revenue collections he was left with very little. It was only long afterwards that it was realised that as a matter of fact he never succeeded in collecting the greater part of the *koa* [tussore silk worm cocoons] and *kath* [catechu] charges at all, nor most of the contributions from the tribes, as "they never would agree to pay it."³

In 1793 Raja Churaman Rai came of age. His position was already gravely impaired by the Decennial Settlement, and by the commutation of the rents payable by seven under-tenure holders which had been arranged by Shiva Prasad Singh. (Shiva Prasad, as a *jagirdar*, took good care not to commute the services and dues payable by others to himself and his fellow *jagirdars*.) There had also been practised upon the raja more outright frauds. Captain Roughsedge noted in 1814 that "as the Dewan and all the head servants of the Raja were them-

1. Resolution, G. G. in C, 18 Sept. 1789, Para. 38, Beng. Rev. Cons. 41 of 2 Jan. 1824 (⁵⁰/₅₁).

2. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 49.

3. Roughsedge to Govt. 6 March 1814, Para. 8, Beng. Rev. Cons. 15 of 2 April 1814 (⁵⁰/₁₅).

selves the principal jageerdars, their interest was at variance with their duty, and each took advantage of the youth and incapacity of the Rajah, to reduce the rent of his own lands, and increase their extent, whenever feasible, by placing on the list of jageers, villages that were held at will."¹ The raja, with his assets thus filched or unwisely capitalised by his guardian, found it impossible to meet government demands from his ordinary income,² and even after coming of age, had to continue the bankrupt policy of commuting rents for lump sum payments. By 1812 his annual income had sunk by some Rs. 2,564, and when on three occasions he did resume *jagirs*, the collector or the courts compelled him to restore them. His only remaining remedy was to put pressure upon the body of tribal cultivators, and to resume their lands,—and from 1789 that process was steadily tried.

The result of this shifting of the burden from the strong to the weak was a growth of general discontent. This flared up in 1800 in a revolt which needed the employment of two battalions of Company troops and of the forces of Raja Fateh Narain Singh of Deo to cope with it.³ The situation was complicated by "the intimate and immediate local connexion of Palamow with the Maratha frontiers,"⁴ and not until 1802 were the last embers of revolt stamped out.

One feature of the unrest was that the insurgents also turned against Shiva Prasad Singh, who, as *diwan*, had ruined many of them, attacking his house at Ranka, and showed their hatred of the collector's *sazawal*, too. At one time in February 1801 as many as twelve to fifteen hundred armed Cheros, with auxiliaries from Sarguja, Chota-Nagpur and Tamar, armed to the teeth, were in the field against the oppressors.⁵

The Company, alarmed for the moment by the violence of the outbreak, abolished the post of *sazawal*. But no other

1. *Ibid.* Para. 14.

2. To make matters worse, in 1795 the raja had to pay Rs. 5,000 to the Government as an investiture-fee : Ramgarh collector to Board, 23 June 1795, Hunter, *Bengal MS. Records*. No. 4855.

3. Bengal Cr. Judl. Cons. 8 of 26 Feb. 1801 (128/53).

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

measures were taken to eradicate the causes of distress. Indeed, a series of administrative changes made it less likely that remedies would be applied. The revenue jurisdiction of Palamau and other adjoining tribal areas was in 1800 transferred to the remote authority of the Collector of Bihar. The civil and criminal jurisdiction, nominally remaining in the hands of the Ramgarh magistrate, in practice, was divided between him and the commander of the Ramgarh battalion. Special officials were appointed to get in the arrears of revenue from Palamau. In 1808 the Government appointed a register [registrar] at Ramgarh to facilitate "the collection of the revenue of the hill and jungle estates on the western frontier of the provinces of Bengal and Bihar," and in 1810 R. Walpole was specially deputed to Palamau to realize arrears.¹

One officer showed an awareness of Churaman's difficulties—Parry, who succeeded Walpole early in 1811. He reported that it was Akhauri Sheo Charan Ram, the *qanungo* and a relation of the late Udwant Ram, who "was the author of the distress and misfortunes of the Raja, and the distracted state of affairs in the *pargana*"² and to restore the raja's position Parry annulled all recent settlements and took written undertakings from all the *jagirdars* to pay regularly according to the Decennial Settlement. Bikramajit Singh of Chainpur and Babu Chhatrapati Rai of Bistrampur, "two of the most wealthy but least respectable *jagirdars*," actively opposed Parry's efforts to get back to the Decennial Settlement, stirring up "the most refractory and turbulent natives."³ Their efforts Parry crushed, and he imposed his new settlement on the district. But in doing so he went far beyond his instructions, with the result that he was recalled, and his settlements were annulled.⁴

That outcome of Parry's efforts was due not only to the resistance of the local *jagirdars*, but also to the opposition of Captain Roughsedge, the Commandant of the Ramgarh batta-

1. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 57.

2. *Ibid.* Para. 58.

3. *Ibid.*

4. But in practice his settlement continued to be in force in many cases.

lion, and "the most influential adviser of [the] Government on political questions affecting this part of the country."¹ Roughsedge wished to see Raja Churaman's estate sold for arrears of revenue² partly from annoyance at the raja's failure to provide supplies for the troops engaged in operations in Palamau, partly from a wish to favour the loyal Raja of Deo, who had campaigned with him in Sambhalpur against the Pindaris, and in Nawagarh, Sarguja, Rewa and Nepal, by securing the estate for him.

The Government, rejecting Parry's attempt to save the dynasty, followed Roughsedge's advice. In 1813 Palamau was put up for sale and purchased by the Government,³ which thus put an end to the ruling Chero dynasty. Churaman Rai was described in 1820 as "a mere cipher in its management [of his estate], and nearly an idiot [sic] in understanding, dissolute, extravagant and thoughtless,"⁴ but even if that interested description of him be accepted as true, though written in justification of his deposition, it may still be asked whether any very serious efforts had been made to improve his qualities as a ruler. As a minor he had been entrusted to the care of a man of the most dubious character known to have been hostile to the young raja's family. The British Government did little to check the mismanagement practised by the *diwan*, and when the raja came of age, did nothing to help him restore his position. After his deposition the Government was ready to acknowledge the difficulties of his position, admitting that so wild was the nature of the country and so lawless the inhabitants, that 'the realisation of the revenue partook more of the nature of voluntary contribution' than of an active and punctual enforcement of the rights of the Government,⁵ but Parry's attempt to take account of those difficulties was scarcely welcomed. Certainly little atten-

1. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para.62.

2. Board to Govt., 30 Oct. 1812, Beng. Rev. Cons. 10 of 14 Nov. 1812 (⁵⁵/₅₆): Roughsedge's opinion, they said, must be given weight.

3. Board to Govt., 15 June 1813, Beng. Rev. Cons. 8 of 26 June 1813 (⁵⁶/₅).

4. W. Hamilton, *Description of Hindustan*, I, 287.

5. Bradley-Birt, *Chota-Nagpore*, 221-222.

tion was paid to tribal feelings when Roughsedge's policy was approved and the Chero's hereditary ruler sold up.¹

Churaman—and his son Ran Bahadur Rai after him—was given a life pension of Rs. 300 a month,² but when the son sought to take possession of his ancestral village Shapur, he was ejected by Cuthbert, the Collector and Magistrate of Ramgarh.³ Ran Bahadur made no other move against the Company; indeed he took part on its side against the Cheros, his own people, in the unrest of 1832.

But though Ran Bahadur thus forgot the injustice done to him and to his father, his tribal people did not. Indeed, they ascribed all their misfortunes to their raja having accepted a pension and thus wilfully renouncing his claim over the zamindari.⁴

The Company had, in fact, half anticipated that they would prove hostile. In September 1813 the Bihar Collector had warned the Government against attempting the direct management of a *pargana* with notorious inhabitants.⁵ When the Raja of Deo was installed in the estate, he was warned not to disturb the existing tenures, nor to enhance the rents, fixed so far back as the year 1789.⁶

1. In 1814 the Ramgarh assistant collector had rightly supported Raja Churaman's petition to have the estate returned to him on payment of his dues, urging that thereby "many troublesome consequences of transferring Palamau to a stranger will thus be avoided": H. Robertson to Board, 18 Dec, 1814, Beng. Rev. Cons. 55 of 29 July 1815 (⁶⁶/₃₃).

2. Board to Ramgarh Asstt. Collector, 14 June 1816, Para. 6, Beng. Rev. Cons. 48 of 31 July 1816 (⁶⁷/₄₆).

Board to Govt., 26 March 1824, Para. 2, Beng. Rev. Cons. 39 of 9 Apl. 1824 (⁶⁸/₃).

3. Cuthbert to Board, 13 Apl, 1827, Para. 50, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 54 of 14 June 1827 (¹³³/₂₂).

4. Ramgarh Magt. to Govt., 9 May 1817, Para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 4 of 16 May 1817 (¹³²/₃₃).

5. Vide Board to Govt., 26 Oct. 1813, Para. 3, Beng. Rev. Cons. 11 of 6 Nov. 1813 (⁶⁶/₉).

6. Resolution, Govt., Beng. Rev. Cons. 54 of 29 July 1815 (⁶⁶/₃₃): "It will be advisable," said the Resolution, "to instruct Major Roughsedge to

But Ghanshyam Singh, the son and successor of the Deo raja, as soon as he had been installed by Captain Roughsedge, at the head of a battalion,¹ found himself faced with Churaman's old problems of inadequate revenues and overgrown subordinates. He attempted, more vigorously than the Chero raja had dared to do, to solve these problems by protesting against the usurpations of the Palamau *jagirdars* and by resuming some 107 villages.² (Had he been able peacefully to pursue such policies, Roughsedge's prophecy that "the character of Futtch Narain [the father of Ghanshyam] will do wonders, and I expect to see Palamau from the worst, become the best managed pergunnah in your district"³ might have been proved correct). But in fact Ghanshyam Singh's vigorous action caused a great Chero rising in 1817.⁴

It was at first believed that the attack upon the non-tribal outsiders, the officers of the Deo raja, who had resumed the Chero holdings, was the work of the petty Chero tenure holders or *ijaradars* who had not been given the protection provided for the *jagirdars* in the *sanad* to the raja.⁵ But it was later discovered that the outbreak, which laid waste much of Palamau,⁶ had been mainly fostered by the very same *jagirdars* who had made Raja Churaman's position untenable.

endeavour to impress in the strongest manner on the Raja's mind, the obligation and necessity of maintaining the settlement formed with the jageerdars..."

1. Roughsedge to Govt., 6 Apl. 1816, Para. 2, Beng. Rev. Cons. 42 of 26 Apl. 1816 (¹⁶/₄₆). Raja Ghanshyam Singh had requested for such an exhibition of military support because he was "apprehensive from the extreme ignorance and foolishness of the inhabitants that unless supported by your [of the Commander of the Ramgarh battalion] presence they may resist my authority." His petition, n. d., Beng. Rev. Cons. 3 of 6 Jan. 1815 (⁵⁶/₇₆).

2. W. Blunt to Govt., 18 March 1818, Para. 17, Beng. Rev. Cons. 48 of 31 July 1818 (³¹/₄₈).

3. Roughsedge to Fleming, Magistrate, 14 Jan. 1814, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 6 of 16 May 1817 (¹³²/₅₈).

4. Board of Rev., Bihar and Benares, to W. Money, Bihar collector, 8 Sept. 1818, Para. 1, Beng. Rev. Cons. 5 of 26 Feb. 1819 (⁵⁶/₁).

5. Ramgarh Magt. to Govt., 21 Apl. 1817, Para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 16 of 2 May 1817 (¹³²/₅₈).

6. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 17-18 of 2 May 1817 (¹³²/₅₈).

Lindsay, the magistrate, who was ordered in May 1817 to investigate the grievances of the Cheros, believed that it was a people's rising. "The cheroos [cheros] and the kairwars [kharwars] are undoubtedly the persons who have perpetrated the outrages in Palamow, ...the most distant suspicion cannot be entertained for a moment against the Ex-zemeendar or jagheerdars."¹ Roughsedge and other military officers, however, suspected that the jagirdars were implicated. Lieutenant Brett, for example, reported that "the commotions in this district have been caused by the success which has uniformly attended Chutterputtee Rai in warding [off] the processes of the court of Ramghur, in the artful designing and malignant nature of the jageerdar of Chainpore Ram Buksh Sing, and his son Beckermajeet Singh; and the lawless spirit prevalent amongst the petty cheroo chiefs, the most notorious of whom are Puhlwan Singh of Chundoo, Jeet Sing of Obra, Suraj Singh of Koorka, Poorun Singh of Lohurseimee, and Aokloo Manjee of Seedook."² In the vigorous campaign to restore order such *jagirdars* as Bikramajit Singh and Ram Baksha Singh accordingly suffered much, and after the rising had been suppressed, W. Blunt, the Superintendent of Police of the Lower Provinces, was specially deputed to give a correct picture to the Government³.

Blunt proved conclusively that the late commissioner's view that the commotions were caused "principally, if not exclusively," by "the machinations and intrigues of the ex-zamindar, & certain jagirdars and others, in combination with dissaffected persons in Sirguja" to expel Raja Ghanshyam, was wrong.⁴ Now the oppressions of the raja, who wanted the

1. Lindsay to Govt., 9 May 1817, Para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 4 of 16 May 1817 (152/52).

2. J. Brett to Roughsedge, 19 May 1817, Para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 38 of 30 May 1817 (152/52).

3. The Commission formed by Lindsay and Roughsedge was dissolved on a representation made by some *jagirdars*, though Roughsedge protested against this: Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 4 of 20 Jan. 1818 (138/50).

4. Blunt to Govt., 18 March 1818, para. 2, Beng. Bev. Cons. 48 of 31 July 1818 (37/46).

landholders to execute a fresh agreement with him to pay more revenue than they had been paying since Leslie's days, were conclusively proved.¹

The experiment of entrusting the estate to the management of an outsider (Raja Ghanshyam) was therefore abruptly terminated, despite the efforts of Roughsedge to protect the interests of his friend, the Deo raja. Moreover, the properties of Bikramajit Singh of Chainpur, of Shiva Prasad Singh of Ranka, of Chhatradhari Singh of Lokeya, Gajpati Rai of Bistrampur, Jit Singh of Obra, Sheoraj Singh of Koorha, of Pahalwan Singh and Puran Singh were confiscated, "for various periods, mostly of short duration" while Seoraj Singh and Jit Singh were condemned to life imprisonment in Alipur Jail.²

The activities of the very *jagirdars* who had been protected against the Chero Raja Churaman by the Company were thus in 1818 declared to have been injurious, and many who had risen by usurpations and extortion during his minority were now deposed. But the further step, of recognising the rights and sentiments of the Chero people, was not taken. Rather loose phrases about the "vile, rebellious and intriguing" nature of the people of Palamau continued to be used.³

Nor was much attention paid to the fluctuating and inefficient pattern of the British administration, though this had contributed over many years to the mismanagement of the estate. Something has already been said about the various changes in that system. It should be noted that changes continued. From 1809 to 1816 an assistant collector, stationed alternately for six months at Chatra and six at Sherghati, acted for the collector at Bihar. From 1817 he was placed under the Board of Commissioners for Banaras and Bihar. Then in 1819, after a lapse of nineteen years, the Ramgarh collectorate was re-established, to which Palamau was attached. Such constant changes in such distant control

3. *Ibid.* Para. 4.

1. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 70. Also see Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 42 of 1 Nov. 1827, (¹³⁸/₃₁).

2. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 72.

necessarily precluded any continuity of policy and the growth of any sympathetic understanding of the problems of Palamau.

If the machinery was inadequate, the policy enforced was inappropriate. In this wild tribal area the rules and regulations of settled areas were freely introduced. Though the Raja of Palamau had protested as far back as 1793 against the introduction of a land revenue system based on measurement (*rakababandi*) and the paraphernalia of formal *pattas*, etc., into villages which, he said, were "farmed...by conjecture and ancient customs"¹, his cry went unheeded. Again, non-tribal *amlas*—*amins*, *qanungoes*, police *darogas* and the like—were freely appointed in the *pargana*, though they all too often abused their authority. Of this, the history of the *qanungoes* appointed to Palamau provided ample proof. Much of the deplorable decline in the chiefship could be attributed, as has been seen, to the activities of the first two *qanungoes*. The third one, Silwant Ram, proved as bad a bargain. His fault was complete idleness, so that in 1823, after two years in office, he had to be dismissed.² His successor, who lasted until 1832, was more active, but mainly in concocting reports whose falsity was proved in the enquiries of that year.

Differences of opinion (between successive collectors) only made matters worse. N. Smith, the Ramgarh collector, after the suppression of the rising against Ghanshyam Singh, ordered collections to be made according to Leslie's Old Decennial Settlement, but he also suggested to Government, on 23 September 1823 that the Company, as the zamindar of Palamau, should examine not only all tenures created since Leslie's Settlement [of 1197 *fasli*], but even those of earlier creation.³ He proceeded to classify all under-tenures in the estate into *jagirs* and *ijaras*, rent-free tenancies (*minhai*), mortgages, religious grants, *mukarraris* and so on, and upon that basis produced another settlement, to run for five years from 1824-25.⁴ He

1. Enclosure, Ramgarh collector to Board, 17 Aug. 1793, Beng. Rev. Cons. 82 of 27 March 1794 (²³/₁₄).

2. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 74.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.* Paras. 75-76.

also sold up Tarhasi estate, the *jagir* of Bistrampur (on the grounds that the proprietor "was always drunk with opium and notoriously incapable of managing his estates") and was only prevented by a last-minute payment of dues from attaching Ranka estate.¹

These actions and proposals of Smith were strongly objected to by his successor as collector, Cuthbert. He disapproved of the idea of an enquiry reaching as far back as 1789; he protested against the practice of selling up rather than attaching the holdings of under-tenure holders. His own view was that the *jagirdars* and others "who possess no greater rights than subordinate Talookdars and Putteedars [*patnidars*] in other parts of the country" had forfeited all their privileges when the estate was put up for sale.² But since the Government had acknowledged their rights after that sale, they could not, he thought, "with propriety depart from its former line of conduct."³ He therefore, opposed Smith's proposal of taking legal measures for the dispossession of these *jagirdars*.

In 1828, A. Prinsep, appointed special Commissioner in Palamau,⁴ raised the question of alienation of villages by *jagirdars*, and quoted several cases which had occurred since 1813. This led to a request from Government for a further report. Prinsep thereupon began more enquiries, and by 1830 most of the tenure-holders had filed lists of their properties with Prinsep—who thereupon died,⁵ and so put an end to the matter for the time being. The whole question of tenures, revenue, alienations, etc., remained in a state of flux.

The Board of Revenue had expressed in 1824 their fear that Palamau would never be peaceful until all agrarian questions had been set at rest.⁶ The changes of authority and

1. *Ibid.* Para. 76.

2. S. T. Cuthbert to Board, 13 Apl. 1827, Para. 3, Beng. Rev. Cons. 54 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

3. *Ibid.* Para. 4.

4. Vide Board to Govt., 25 Sept. 1827, Para 35, Beng. Rev. Cons. 48 of 25 Oct. 1827 (61/25).

5. Bridge, *op. cit.* Para. 80.

6. *Ibid.* Para. 81.

opinion, outlined above, made it impossible for those questions to be set at rest. The risings of 1832 followed almost inevitably.

Chota-Nagpur (Ranchi) :

To the east and south of Palamau lies Chota-Nagpur and its dependent *parganas*, a high, rather isolated table-land approached on all sides by passes (*ghats* or *pats*), which are easily defended and which in the 18th century were rarely fit even for bullock carts. Within this hill region there are two distinct plateaux, that to the north-west, on average some 2,000 feet above sea level, rising to 3,600 feet, and a lower plateau to the south-east at about 1,000 feet. Both stand high above the surrounding provinces, and as S. C. Roy has said, "remarkably refreshing is the contrast its blue hills and rugged ravines, green sal jungles and terraced fields of yellow paddy, limpid hill-streams rushing down their narrow beds of rock and sand, and picturesque waterfalls, leaping over abrupt precipices, present to the monotonous stretch upon stretch of Bengal plains, broken here and there by some muddy meandering creek or khāl or by some mighty river tardily rolling down with its load of loam and silt into the sea."¹

As with Palamau, the difficult, heavily wooded approaches to the area have made Chota-Nagpur a refuge for tribal people. Hamilton, in 1828, commented on the extensive hilly tract, "much covered with forest; formerly fostered with great care by its chiefs, as a protection against invasion from without ; indeed, the nature of the country is such as would render it extremely difficult either to penetrate or subdue, on account of the unhealthy jungles, so deleterious to troops not born on the spot."²

The tribal inhabitants of this area are called by a variety of names—Mundas, Oraons, Mahalis, etc. ,³ and early ethnologists

1. Roy, *Mundas and their country*, 354-355.

2. *East India Gazetteer*, I, 415.

3. Cuthbert, the Collector of Ramgarh, wrote in 1827 that there were three kinds of Kols—Rumeen [Kumea ?], Oorawun [Oraon] and Moonda [Munda] : S. T. Cuthbert to Govt. , 21 Apl. 1827, Para. 46, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (¹³⁸/₂₂).

such as Dalton described them all as Kolarians, distinguishing among the Kols the Munda Kols in Chota-Nagpur proper, Larka Kols in Singhbhum, and Bhumij Kols in Manbhum and Dhalbhum.¹ In fact, the word Kol is a very loose term, used by the Hindus of the plains as a word of derision. (De Meulder thus describes it as an Indian equivalent of the word 'nigger' in the United States).² A military officer, writing in 1833, reports, "the Cole is always a Cole, and a Bhumij a Bhumij, but when a Cole takes service as a labourer, he is styled 'D' 'hangar', when he takes to plundering, the Cole is called 'Lurka', and the Bhoomij 'chooar'.³ Dalton himself was forced at a later date⁴ to admit that only the Mundas and other Kols could properly be described as Kolarian,⁵ and that the Oraons, as a Dravidian race, had to be treated separately. It is clear indeed that though the Mundas and Oraons live in the same area of Chota-Nagpur and though both are cultivating classes, yet their customs and habits are quite distinct.

These tribal people were, and are, remarkable for their physical strength and hardness. Roy comments that the Oraon has a "better physique than many of his neighbours who pride themselves on their 'higher caste'. The Oraon is sturdy in his limbs and erect in his bearing."⁶ His account of their excep-

1. *Ethnology*, 152. In 'Kols of Chota-Nagpore' *J. A. S. B.* Vol. 35, Part II, 154, Dalton had also included Oraons in this definition. W. W. Hunter, however, says that "the word kol is really a generic term, including the two tribes of Munda Kol, and Larka or fighting Kol...": *Statistical Account*, XVI, 266. Those of Chota-Nagpur proper were also called Dhangar Kols. Even today the Oraons are called Dhangars.

2. *Tribal India Speaks*, 39. Dalton in 'Kols of Chota-Nagpore', *J. A. S. B.*, Vol. 35, Part II, 154, says that "this word is one of the epithets of abuse applied by the Braminical races to the aborigines of the country...."

3. A Subaltern, 'Sketch of the Campaign', *East India*, No. III (old series), 184, footnote.

4. *Ethnology*, 152.

5. Dr. Griffiths comments, "the word 'kol' was once used in a generic sense to describe 'Munda-speaking' tribes and the term 'Kolarian' is still frequently found, especially in older textbooks of Ethnology. The word was originally used by Max Müller in a linguistic sense: W. G. Griffiths, *Kol tribe of Central India*, Preface.

6. *Oraons*, 88.

tional physical endurance¹ can be matched by the much earlier comments of men like Drummond who in 1841 wrote, "They undergo with patient endurance the most incredible fatigues; extremely active, their movements are accomplished with the utmost celerity,...No obstacle, however great, is capable of subduing their utmost courage and perseverance in the attainment of any desired object."²

The reputation of some of these hardy hill folk (especially of the Mundas of Tamar) was that of a fierce barbarian crew, to be compared with Maratha or Pindari marauders—"a set of blood-thirsty yet cowardly wholesale murderers",³ Indian equivalents of "Rob Roy and his worthy fellows",⁴ criminals "prodigal in blood". But such a picture was based upon that drawn and displayed to the outer world by intruders whose presence in Chota-Nagpur was usually most justly resented, that is by the Hindu and Muslim merchant and money-lender, the alien *thikadar*, *jagirdar* or *nilamdar* (auction purchaser) who were so often "the greatest eyesores to the Mündā."⁵

With a closer acquaintance British opinion changed. Thus Dalton, while admitting that the Mundas were less truthful, manly and open than the Hos, added "but then the Mundas have lived for ages under conditions ill-calculated to develop the good qualities for which I have given the Hos credit. There has been a continued struggle to maintain what they consider their right in the land against the adverse interest of the landlord or his assigns.....They live among a people who look

1. *Ibid.* 91: "In repose an average Oraon adult can abstain from food for about twenty-four hours, and in exercise for about twelve hours without much inconvenience.... On occasions of their periodical socio-religious ceremonies, Oraon young men and women usually spend two, three or more consecutive nights in dancing and singing and indulge in very little sleep. The Oraon can bear cold very well, as well as exposure to the direct rays of the sun, with his head uncovered..... In the youth of both sexes, [there is] exuberance of health and spirits, a delight in all physical activities, and taking life easy..."

2. Drummond, MS., Statistical Account, 33-34.

3. 'Tee-to-Tum, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 8 March 1832.

4. A Subaltern, *op. cit.* 185.

5. Roy, *Mundas*, 538.

down on them as a degraded race, and one of whose favorite [sic] theories is, that the Kols were created to serve them. This, no doubt, must be as demoralising as it is aggravating..."¹ Davidson, writing in 1839,² described them as an agricultural people" deriving their subsistence from tilling the earth, either on their own account or as servants to others. They are generally a very innocent and simple race, with little proclivity to crime, except, when impelled by superstition,³ which leads to the perpetration of violent crimes, or by hunger which impells them to theft, robbery, etc.....With few exceptions, there are no people who subsist entirely by committing depredations on property, nor is there any class of hereditary thieves and robbers.....as is believed is frequently found in the more civilized parts of India." News-paper correspondents, reporting what they found in Chota-Nagpur during the risings of 1832, often commented in like manner upon the hardworking,

1. *Ethnology*, 206.

2. J. Davidson to J. R. Ousely, 14 Aug. 1839, no. 235, Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

3. "One crime to which the Kols were addicted was the murder of witches—in whose powers, as Roy says, even present-day Mundas often believe. [*Mundas*, 486]. Neave, the second judge of the Patna Court in Cornwallis' day, was surprised to find village courts in the wildest part of the Chota-Nagpur hills, condemning to death those convicted of witchcraft, generally old women. In 1809 a case was reported by Walpole, the Ramgarh magistrate, of a man killing a woman because he firmly believed that she was a witch and that her incantations had destroyed two of his children (Even the Maharaja was accused of such a crime in 1819), and similar cases were reported by Cuthbert in 1826-27. Such murders were scarcely crimes, however, but rather executions approved by the tribal society of Chota-Nagpur as they had been legally approved and put into force in tribal Scotland until the reign of George I. The murders occasionally committed by tribesmen on the orders of their rajas and chieftains may also be put in the same category of crimes "that naturally grow out of a demi-barbarous or infant state of society." Walpole for one recognised that such acts were quite acceptable to a tribal society "wherein loyalty to the chief was of paramount importance": Ramgarh Actg. Magt. to G. Dowdeswell, 15 Jan. 1810, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 5 of 2 Feb. 1810 (^{130/12}). Also see Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 62 of 29 Dec. 1809.

Also *Selection of Papers from Records at East India House*, II, 11.

peaceable nature of the Kols : "The Dunga [Dhangar] Coles are an industrious, hardworking race and by no means warlike, who would have preferred, had it been in their power, appealing to the law instead of the sword for protection against their oppressors."¹ Another report described them as pursuing "the occupation of cultivators, and when sowing time is over that of Bhangy-burdars [load-bearers], classes [*khalasis*], and bullock-drivers, to all who may give them employ.....We have seen a good deal of the Danghas [Dhangar Kols] and to us they have ever appeared a quiet, hard-working, and simple race of people, and the last in the world likely to get up a foray,"²

That the Kols were a peaceful agricultural people³ rather than marauders from the hills and jungles was again impressed upon the British during the campaign of 1832 when many officers were evidently much surprised by the fertility of Chota-Nagpur, and the high state of cultivation of many areas. Lohardagga, Pitoria, Barkagarh, Govindpur and Tamar were found to be extremely rich and fertile. One officer's journal thus records that at that time the sixteen miles of open country between Pitoria and Churia were in "the highest state of cultivation."⁴ From Tikoo to Churia again there was another great belt of cultivation, fifteen miles in breadth and fifty in length, with Lohardagga, its centre, "an extensive and populous place."⁵ Again, as one turned east there was an open view from Korambi for some fifty miles, and the country, intersected by the river Koel and smaller streams, was finely cultivated until dense jungle supervened between Armai and Maharajanj. To the south of Armai, beyond Palkote, there were again jungles and the hills which marked the southern boundary of Chota-Nagpur. Towards the western borders of Chota-Nagpur the hills and

1. Jassoos, 4 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 March 1832.

2. Govt. Gazette, Cal., quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 1 Feb. 1832.

3. The Oraons and Santhals in my own village in Purnea are most hard-working cultivators. But the former, as compared to the latter, are considered more hardworking and peaceful.

4. Topographical sketch of Chota-Nagpore, Appendix A. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

5. *Ibid.*

jungles increasingly dominated even in the river valleys, though there were further pockets of good cultivation round Jurga, in the Kasir *pargana* and in the Barwa plain.¹ A correspondent of *John Bull* summed up the unexpected situation by saying : "So far from Chota-Nagpore being so poor a *pergunnah* as he [Dawkstager, another correspondent] describes, it is the most fertile and best cultivated *pergunnah* that it has fallen to my lot to see, and there are few on this side of India through which I have not passed. It is a fine, open and flat country, with a rich, moist soil, and the cultivation extends to the very feet of the hills. Every one here is astonished at the beauty and fertility of a country which we expected to find a perfect wilderness."²

The dependant *parganas* of Chota-Nagpur—Tamar, Baranda, Rahi, Bundu, Silli and Barwa—were less well-cultivated. They had been loosely subordinate to Chota-Nagpur before British rule was imposed, and thereafter were permanently incorporated with Chota-Nagpur.³ In 1809 Roughsedge described them as mostly jungly,⁴ and the hill tract (to the east of Sonepur called the Hasda *chaurasi* of Tamar) which formed the boundary with Singhbhum to the south was only cultivated in the valley plots immediately surrounding the scattered villages. Their inhabitants, entirely Kol, were as uncivilized and lawless

1. *Ibid.*

2. 'P' to *John Bull*, camp Pitouria, 29 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 8 March 1832. Another correspondent, "A looker-on" [camp in Chota-Nagpur, 18 March, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 30 March 1832] wrote, "A rich soil, capable of the highest cultivation, well wooded and beautifully undulated with all the variety of hill, dale and rock—watered by many streams rippling from the pure spring, and may be rather called the nursery of many rivers than said to contain one of fullgrowth." Spry, (*Modern India*, I, 326-327) wrote in 1837, "The soil of Chota-Nagpur is in many parts a peculiar kind of red earth, which is extremely fertile. In this soil cotton thrives luxuriously. The declivities consist of a very rich loam, and from the circumstance of the existence of innumerable springs, a few feet below the surface throughout the whole year, rice is abundantly produced with little labour to the husbandman."

3. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 April 1832, para. 20, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (¹³⁸/₂₂).

4. Drummond, *op. cit.* 23.

as the Larka Kols of Singbhum.¹ But nearer Chota-Nagpur proper, the *parganas* on the east had a fine open well-cultivated stretch of country along the banks of the Subarnarekha. This country was cut off from Chota-Nagpur itself by a line of hills running north and south, and formed marcher lordships against neighbouring Pachet.

One other estate was linked with Chota-Nagpur—Tori, below the *ghats* to the north-west of Chota-Nagpur proper. This was a large estate of some 700 villages, the ruler of which, loosely subordinate to the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur, had been attempting to assert his independence in the late eighteenth century. However when the Tori Raja Durgavijaya Sahi died without heirs in 1804, the British came to support the claims of the Chota-Nagpur maharaja against those of Durgavijaya's widow, and in 1819 was declared escheated to him.²

It is necessary at this point to describe the land system of the area on which was based the relationship of the Chota-Nagpur maharaja with his subordinates and tribesmen. In the early years of the Munda and Oraon occupation of Chota-Nagpur, there seems to have been no individual ownership of land. The tribesmen cleared their village lands under the leadership of their headman or *munda* and village priest or *pahan*, who were responsible for re-allocating lands and collecting such dues or services as were owed to the community. In such *pargana* as Tamar, Rahi and Baranda, which were difficult of approach and strongly fortified by nature, something of this village organisation survived even into the nineteenth century. Cuthbert, the Ramgarh magistrate, described the way the headmen and village priests transacted the village business, calling the villagers together in May and distributing to those wishing to cultivate their different portions of land.³ No *patta* or written document was given; the extent of the cultivators' *jote*

1. Topographical sketch of Chota-Nagpore, Appendix A, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/5882.

2. *Ibid.*

3. S. T. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 36, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (188/22)

or field was shown before witnesses, and a piece of earth as a token of acceptance was taken from the headman or *mahto* as he was called in some areas.

Above the village was a wider tribal division, the *parha* or *patti* under a circle headman called the *manki*. The *mankis* had much influence over the tribal masses and at festival times, when the members of the *parha* assembled "to hunt, amuse themselves and decide disputes" the *mankis* exercised considerable authority.¹ Each *parha* had its distinguishing flag, "the attempt to make use of which by the Coles of another *purha* at their festivals immediately leads to serious quarrels."²

In the early middle ages there was no *raja* ruling over the country which was divided into *parhas* of 15 to 20 or even 25 villages, each under its *manki* and local *mundas*.³ These local leaders probably received no rents but only assistance in war and a *salami* at festivals. Then at some time between the 6th and 10th centuries A. D.,⁴ the *manki* of Sutiambe, Phani Mukut Roy, was chosen as chief *manki* or *raja* by all the *mankis* and *mundas*. It was said that between that installation and the year 1839 some sixtytwo *rajas* of the family had sat upon the Chota-Nagpur throne.⁵

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Chota-Nagpur—Kokrah or Coira Orissa as it was then called—attracted the attention of the northern empires of the Afghans and Mughals, who coveted its supposed riches in elephants and diamonds. In 1616 Raja Durjan Sal was seized by Mughal forces and was for some time held prisoner in Gwalior fort. This enforced contact with the Mughal empire in its heyday enlarged the pretensions of the ruling family, who changed Rai into Shāh and

1. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 3, no. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

2. *Ibid.* para. 3.

3. *Ibid.* para. 2.

4. D. G. Ranchi, 24, says 6th century A. D., while Ranchi Settlement Report, para. 28, puts it in the 10th century.

5. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 2, no. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

took the title of Maharaja.¹ At much the same time the raja and his court were converted to Hinduism. For the maharaja the Brahmans produced a hitherto unsuspected ancestral link with Pundarika, the mythological king of the *Nags* or snakes—the first raja was said to be the son of Pundarika by a Brahman girl—so that the dynasty came to be called the Nag-Vansi.² Both raja and nobles claimed Rajput or Kshatriya status, and the royal family, prospering, managed, as Davidson reported, “by force to get married to the Rajpoot families of Puchnete [Pachet] and Singhbhum, and eventually into others” and so came to pass, in Davidson’s day, “for as good Rajpoots as any in India.”³ Chota-Nagpur, in fact, provides a classic example of that process of incorporation of non-Aryan tribes into Hindu society which Risley has analysed—an example complete, as Risley put it, “with family miracle and all.”⁴ By the end of the 17th century it is clear that the dynasty had been hinduized. It had built many temples, which gave rise to large establishments of priests, and as a corollary the grant of tribal lands for their support, under the title of *brahmottar*, *debottar* and *britt* lands. “The dazzling splendour of the Muhammadan Emperor’s court, the pomp and pageantry, the wealth and power, which he had witnessed in the courts of the Hindu Rājās of Northern India whose acquaintance he had made, revolutionised the Nāgbansi Rājā’s ideal of royalty. And the Rāi Rājā, now a full-fledged ‘shāhi Mahārājā,’ soon gathered about himself a pompous retinue of Brahman priests, Rajput and pseudo-Rajput courtiers,

1. Cuthbert wrote in 1827 that the title of Maharaja Chhatradhari was obtained from the Delhi emperors ‘67 years ago.’: Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 6, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (138/11).

2. *Ibid.* para. 6, N. Smith, the Joint Magistrate for Chota-Nagpur, wrote [to Govt., 19 June 1823, para. 8, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 21 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38)] that the Maharajas “for the last two generations had “adopted the religion of the Rajpoots”, and that they worshipped Durga and Lakshmi and had a serpent temple with a flag bearing the ensign of three snakes on it.

3. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 2, no. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.’s Agent’s Office, Patna Archives.

4. *Tribes*, I, Introduction, p xvi.

and *amlahs* and place-hunters belonging to various Hindu and Hinduised castes."¹

The Mughal example of regal grandeur and Brahman assurances of social superiority worked upon the minds of the Maharajas and their courtiers, weakening the sense of tribal solidarity. By the 18th century the 'kashatriya' ruler was looking down upon the unconverted tribesmen, of whom Hamilton wrote, "the Dhanggar are still impure unconverted mlechchas or barbarians,"² and Bishop Heber (speaking of the aborigines in general), "they have no castes, care nothing for the Hindoo deities, and are even said to have no idols".³ By the late 18th and early 19th centuries the maharaja was largely alienated from the great mass of fellow tribesmen, even to the point of seeking outside assistance against them. Davidson pointed out that on the hinduization of the royal family and on their regularly intermarrying with neighbouring Hindu families "it became a great object with them to induce other Hindoos to settle in Nagpore."⁴ The royal administration came to be staffed not by Kols or Oraons but by Kayasthas from outside. Men such as Jay Kishore Roy, Sadasiva Roy, Din Dayal Nath (who was responsible for several criminal acts in the years 1807-09), Jonkiram and Basaharan were appointed *diwans*, *tahsildars*, etc. Others, such as Lachhaminath Roy and Jay Kishun Roy acted as priests (*mahanthas* or *pandas*, i.e., heads of temples and priests of places of pilgrimage respectively), and yet others such as Akhauri Bihari Lal, Akhauri Bhairo Datta, Akhauri Lal Kishan, Mohan Lal and Akhauri Basant Lal were found enjoying service villages.⁵ Some of the newcomers, Baraiks, Rajputs, Rauteas even held *jagirs* at fixed rents which were granted for the performance, as Davidson reported, of military

1. Roy, *Oraons*, 42.

2. *East India Gazetteer*, I, 415.

3. *Narrative*, I, 258 : He was speaking about the people of the hills between Sikrigali and Burdwan.

4. Davidson to R. Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 5, no. 247. Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

5. See Appendix B, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

services—services used to cow the tribal subjects of the rajas they served.¹ A no less important group of non-tribal dependants of the maharaja and subordinate rajas was formed by the Brahmans, whose influence over the new converts was very strong.² They secured very extensive grants of land, especially in the Khukhra and Doesa *parganas*, near the maharaja's residence. Davidson described the "Brahmins [sic] and individuals of other castes who have come from below the Ghauts and got grants of lands generally by purchase at fixed rents from the different Rajas, sometimes also rent-free, and also grants of rent-free lands for religious purposes, in the mode usually given by Hindoos."³

All these outsiders—including even Muslim merchants⁴ and servants of the maharaja and the dependent rajas—were provided with land at the expenses of the tribal cultivators. So were the members of the royal family who received extensive grants to support their dignity—again at the tribesmen's expense. Since this expropriation was accompanied by much disdain or even hatred of the still unconverted masses on the part of the new landowners, and much exploitation, sharp cleavages occurred in Kol Society, leading in time to violent unrest.

1. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 6, no. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.'s Agents' office, Patna Archives.

2. Gosain Jai Sree Sree Sankha Ramnath Deo, for instance, had 32 villages in Khukhra, Guru Ramdeo had 1½, *Purohit* (Priest) Maniram 13, Guru Boohram 5½, Pathak Shambhunath 2, Deogharia Maheshram 1, Pramanik Krishnaram 4, Mishra Mohan Roy 4, Pathak Anandram 1, Kalyan 1, Ramjanam Panda ½; and a hundred other Upadhyayas, Pandas, Shuklas, Tiwaris, Dubeyes, Pandeys, Mahapatras, Mishras, Chaubeys and other Brahmans from Orissa and Bihar were enjoying grants. Vide Appendix, Jt. Commissioners, to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 10, no. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G.G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

4. "These men were Mussulmans, Sikhs, and some others, who came to the country as horse-dealers and shawl and brocade merchants, fetched enormous offers for their goods from the Nagvansi chiefs, and obtained farms of villages instead of cash, of which latter the chiefs were always in want." Rakhal Das Haldar, First Special Settlement Commissioner, *Supplement to Calcutta [Govt.] Gazette*, 1 Dec. 1880.

Here and there, it is true, local conditions enabled the *mankis* and *mundas* to survive, and to protect tribal institutions—as in remote Tamar, Rahi and Baranda, or in Sonapur where the original heads of villages were strong enough to inspire fear. Elsewhere, however, the headman “were entirely dispossessed and replaced by *Suds* (foreigners) or their villages [were] resumed by the Raja himself.”¹ How far the process of alienation of originally tribal land had gone by 1832 can be seen from a table of grants prepared in November 1832 by Dent and Wilkinson, the Joint Commissioners for Chota-Nagpur.²

Description of Tenures	Total No. of Villages	Total Jama of <i>Malguzaree</i> payable to the Maharaja
1. Kunwars and Thakurs.	1156	2985—2—x
2. Diwan, Dufturea, Mutsuddies and the Jagirdars' grants to Diwans, clerks and pensions connected therewith.	122	1344—11—x
3. Thakurs for service when called upon to do so.	139½	3163—1—9
4. Jagirdars and Ghatwals or military jagirdars.	760	8842—14—x
5. Omnuk and others.	57	1371—6—x
6. Huzoor Bhiturea or Personal attendants of the Raja.	83	1157—7—x
7. Bhiturea or Personal attendants of the Raja.	66½	1168—12—6
8. <i>Dudh Bharee</i> or grants to foster brothers of the present and former Rajas.	17	224—10—x
9. Kush and Brahmans (grants to Brahmans on very moderate rents)	130½	175—3—2

1. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para 8, No. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G.G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

2. Appendix B to Jt. Commissioners to Govt. 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1002/68801. The spellings of this statement have been modernized as far as possible.

Description of Tenures	Total No. of Villages	Total Jama of <i>Malguzaree</i> payable to the Maharaja.
10. Debottar Khas	35	456—x—x
11. Jagirdars (people who received grants for services performed)	54½	2641—1—6
12. Jagirdars and Baraiks (Brittadars), hereditary jagirdars on condition of performing military service.	73½	4206—1—x
13. Bhandar Elaqa (literally, the granary from the rents being principally collected in kind, corresponding to Khalsa villages in other areas).	151	585—x—x
14. Bhandar Elaqa Kunwaran	82	304—x—x
15. Khairat villages	11½	— — —
16. For service grants held on service tenures	58	2218—11—x
17. For service	23	143—14—x
18. Brahmans and Kusha Britta grants for support of Brahmans	11½	41—x—x
19. Deori Mahal-Sree Sree Pati Mahadeo-Maharanee assignments for the support of the Ranee and other inmates of the palace	1123	1270—15—6 ¹
20. Thakurais, etc., pensions or grants for the support of the widows of the deceased members of the Raja's family	104½	— — —
21. For Musahara (allowance for support)	5	— — —
22. Khas Bhandar villages in the Raja's khas management.	24	— — —
Total	4,288½	33,877—13—3

1. Drummond (MS, Statistical Account, 20-21) asserted a decade later that the item Deoree Mahal was a glaring instance of inconsistency in this table. In Heatly's time [date not given], he said, the total revenue was discovered to be upwards of a lakh and a half of rupees, and even that sum was probably much understated. As an explanation of these items, Drummond wrote the following : The lands derived their names from the rank of the holders. A *kunwar* was the older brother of the royal family next to the raja. The younger brothers were called *Thakurwur*. The

Quite apart from such alienation of land, the maharaja imposed heavy burdens of his own upon the people. Though he received some Rs. 338, 077 from his *jagirdars* and further amounts from *Tori pargana* and from a number of *Bhandar* villages (lands of which were under his direct possession and cultivation), he also imposed a number of *abwabs* or cesses.² Whenever he bestowed a *jagir* or confirmed a *sanad* to the

raja's sons were called *Tikaits* during the father's lifetime and when the elder brother succeeded to the Rajship, the remainder became the older a *kunwar* and the other *Thakurwurs*. Thus the Raja's uncle, grand uncle, and great grand uncle, should there be one, were kunwars. The *Thakurwurs* naturally would be more numerous. So the lands called *kunwaran* and *Thakurwan* were held of these people of the Raja's family. *Ibid.* 22—23 : Nos. 3 and 20 were the subordinate branches of the family, and their dependants ; No. 5, villages given by the raja to a number of dependants, one having $\frac{1}{2}$ of a village, another a half and so on ; No. 6 villages divided amongst the immediate attendants of the raja ; No. 7, villages generally given to the attendants on the raja's family provided they lived in the same dwelling, viz, the *Rani*, the raja's sisters, etc., ; No. 8, villages given to the foster brothers accumulated from generation to generation, as it was the custom for every raja to give such grants. (This included foster sisters or *Dudh Bahin* also) ; No. 9 for the maintenance of the Brahman priests and for the performance of sacrifices, worship, etc., to remove all dangers from the raja's path [Drummond here incorrectly says that Kushi is a sect. In fact, it is a sacred grass with which the Brahmans perform sacrifices]. The raja could not put his foot into a kush Brahman village "so that if a public road lay through it, he would be obliged to go round the village till he came to the road again" ; No. 10, villages granted to Brahmans "who are attached to the native places of worship ; a tradition is current that in one of these is a large diamond of a crooked shape which, if any other but the Raja and priest see, he will die" ; No. 11 villages given for particular services, but liable to be resumed, when the services are no longer required ; No. 12, *Brittdars* differed from the *jagirdars* in as much as the latter received villages perpetually settled on them, for their own and posterity's service when required by the raja ; No. 13, villages for the raja's own cattle, stores, etc. ; No. 14, villages allotted for a like purpose, to *Kunwars* ; No. 15, villages given away by the raja as presents ; No. 18, villages bestowed much in the same principle as no. 19 ; No. 22 much the same as no. 13, but yielding no revenue.

2. Cuthbert to Govt., 21, Apl. 1827, para. 11, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 ¹²⁵/₂₂. About Rs, 80,000 came from the *bhandar* villages annually.

heirs of a deceased *jagirdar* he expected a *nazarana* of from 1,000 to 1,500 rupees. He raised other sums, as a sovereign, by the sale of titles such as a *raja*, *kunwar*, *thakur*, *manki* and so on. At the maharaja's own accession every village throughout Chota-Nagpur had to pay one rupee *shahkharch* (prince's expenditure) towards the cost of the investiture ceremony. At his marriage another cess was levied under the title of *haldiya-pan* and for his journey to the *sadr* station, for his pilgrimages to Gaya, Puri or other holy places yet another *abwabs* were imposed called *madad* (assistance) and *mangan* (gift or contribution).¹ Since the revenue officials who collected these dues certainly extorted more than was due, so as to fill their own pockets, and since the subordinate rajas also adopted similar customs, the total burden on the peasant was very heavy. Cuthbert, in 1827, even hazarded the guess that "under such a system of feudalism, giving rise and colour to every species of extortion and plunder, it is not to be wondered at that the population of the province is so limited when compared with the extent of the area."²

The chiefs, *jagirdars* and other superior tenure-holders had no right under tribal custom to increase the rent of the village lands, nor could they turn out the old cultivators so long as they paid their rent. But these age-old customs came to be frequently violated by the non-tribal farmers.³ Again, where the rent had been paid in service—three days' ploughing, three days' work with the spade, three days of rice-planting and three days of harvest work and so on—the new owners came to demand far more work than custom had permitted.⁴ *Thikadars* or revenue-farmers came to cultivate considerable areas by forced labour exacted without limit from the tribal royts. Davidson admitted in 1839, "the poor Coles have all this time

1. *Ibid.* Para. 14-16. *Haldi* or turmeric is considered auspicious; so *haldiya-pan* was probably levied on auspicious ceremonies, e.g., marriage.

2. *Ibid.* Para. 17.

3. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 14, no. 247, Misc. Dispatch Book, G. G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

4. *Ibid.* Para 15.

been submitting to be plundered, of their labour, because they did not know how to get redress."¹

The *bhuinhars* (the original clearers of the land, e.g.,) the *munda* and the *manki*) had a hereditary interest in the land, and even when they fled the village, they had a right to reclaim the land on their return. But the new farmers not only refused to recognise the right of their heirs, but also took possession of the land on their leaving the village. Not only that, but by lodging false complaints against them, they induced the *bhuinhars* to leave the village. The poor man could not go to the court, and even if he did, there was no chance of his success.²

If the new proprietors proved oppressive, so did the moneylenders, the *mahajans* or *sahus*, who advanced money at an interest of one anna per rupee [per month].³ The most degrading aspect of this moneylending business was that a borrower, when unable to repay the principal and interest, became a bondsman. There were three species of bondsmen—firstly, a borrower executing a *sewakpatta* (or *sewak-patra* or deed of slavery) that he would become the lender's bondsman or *sewak* for life—a bondage from which he could never be released though his children would not be affected by it; secondly, a person, when borrowing, stipulated by a deed to serve the lender for a specified time or until the principal and the interest were cleared; thirdly, a person who hired himself for field labour, generally from the month of *magh* (January) to the end of *Paus* (December).⁴ This usury turned many cultivators into virtual slaves. When they found cultivation unprofitable on account of exactions by the money-lender, and when they found the land slipping from their hands, they began to emigrate in large numbers to other parts of Bihar and Bengal where the indigo planters especially preferred them on account

1. *Ibid.* Para 15.

2. *Ibid.* Para 19: "In nine out of ten cases the powerful zumeendar will thereby be able to defeat the poor Bhoonyar. [sic]."

3. S. T. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, Para. 41. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (¹²⁸/₂₂)

4. *Ibid.* Para. 44.

of their performing more work and at a lower rate than other labourers.¹

Such exactions, and the grant of so much tribal land to oppressive foreigners led to conflict between the Kols of Chota-Nagpur and their maharaja. In that the people were often aided by their more warlike brethren, the Larka Kols of Singhbhum. In the 18th century the maharaja therefore attacked the Larka Kol country (Kolhan). There, however, he was defeated, and to add to his troubles the subordinate rajas of Tamar and the neighbouring *parganas* revolted, and he became involved in a feud with the raja of Ramgarh.

To strengthen his position and standing the maharaja took the opportunity provided by Camac's presence in Palamau, campaigning against the Cheros, to solicit his aid. In 1772 Camac and the maharaja exchanged turbans,² and Camac recommended to the Patna Council that they should enter into political relationship with the raja, pointing out that his estate would form an effective barrier to the incursions of the Marathas, and would give them the command of the passes into the Deccan. Since in Camac's Kharakdiha campaign of 1769-71 Raja Durpnath Sahi of Chota-Nagpur had rendered essential service and since he now offered to pay Rs. 12,000 to the Company instead of the Rs. 4,000 hitherto paid through the Ramgarh Raja, the Patna Council readily agreed to the maharaja's request to be taken under direct British protection.³ In 1771 the first direct settlement was therefore concluded for three years, at Rs. 12,000 per annum, and the raja received a *khillat* from the Company.

At one blow the maharaja had thus increased his prestige within his own country, and ended his subordination to the raja

1. *Ibid.* Para. 45.

2. *D. G. Ranchi*, 29 (footnote): There is an anecdote that the maharaja's was 'a jewelled turban of great value' which thus went to Camac. So exasperated was the maharaja that he vowed never to see any British officer again.

3. Deputy Secy. J. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para .8 B. C. 1363/54227. This maharaja Durpnath Sahi died in 1791 and his son got the *khillat* on his accession.

of Ramgarh. In 1772 he had the satisfaction of assisting the British troops in the reduction of his hated rival, the Ramgarh chief. However, his own control of Tori,¹ and the five *parganas* of Tamar, Bundu, etc., was not very complete, and he could seldom collect much revenue from them, while Chota-Nagpur was also subjected to many Maratha incursions. He, therefore, had some difficulty in making his stipulated payments to the Company. Nevertheless, after the clearance of his dues, a fresh settlement was made in 1774 for three years,² and in 1779 a further settlement was even concluded at the higher rate of 15,001 *sunat* rupees a year (Rs. 11,001 *mal* and Rs. 4,000 *nazarana*).³

Little attempt was made by Capt. Camac in these early years to interfere in the internal affairs of the estate. In 1780, it is true, a judge-magistrate and collector were appointed to the newly-formed Ramgarh district, which included Chota-Nagpur,⁴ but for all practical purposes, Chota-Nagpur owed only "a loose allegiance as a tributary Mahal, administered by its own chief."⁵

The Ramgarh collectors for their part made no very serious effort to make contact from their side. They never visited the area personally—whence such curious notions as that of Ramus that Chota-Nagpur was "an entire plain, well-peopled, and well-cultivated"⁶—and from ignorance, perhaps, were without

1. The maharaja requested Camac to restore all the districts recently seized by the Ramgarh raja, but the Patna Council, in view of conflicting claims, ordered only the *pargana* of Tori to be restored: Camac to Revenue Council, 10 Dec. 1773, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 22 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

2. The revenue was not increased because Chota-Nagpur being a frontier country, the maharaja might "be prompted to wish a change" in suzerainty. Camac, to Revenue Council, 10 Dec. 1773 and Revenue Council to Camac, May 1774, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 22 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

3. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, paras. 10-11, B. C. 1363/54227.

4. Regulations passed on 6 April and 5 July specifically placed Chota-Nagpur in the zilla of Chatra for the administration of civil justice.

5. Hunter. *Statistical Account*, XVI, 19.

6. Reid, *Ranchi Settlement Report*, para. 32.

understanding or sympathy. Twice, therefore, they suggested that the maharaja be deposed.¹

However the maharaja was not deposed, but, unvisited, virtually independent, continued to administer "justice and the police under the feudal system that had previously prevailed, working through his vassals, some of whom were Rajas like himself of the old race, holding extensive estates, some of whom were brethren of his own in possession of maintenance grants, and some, persons on whom he had conferred jagirs on condition of their supporting him."² By the *kabuliat* or agreement of 1787 the maharaja had agreed to maintain law and order, and to desist from exactions, and in 1790 he was even granted a reduction, at the Decennial Settlement, in his revenue payments, on the grounds that certain old cesses had since 1787 been given up,³ but we have already seen how lightly such promises sat upon the maharaja and his hinduised chiefs. In fact, the British overlordship, since it was never effective in practice within the estate, acted as a cloak to the encroachments upon tribal life made by the chiefs and *jagirdars*. Even in Bengal proper the Permanent Settlement of Cornwallis had the effect of defining, even creating, the powers of the zamindars, but of blurring or destroying those of under-tenure holders. In Chota-Nagpur, where the collector never set foot within the maharaja's territories—and where, even if he had, he would have been too ignorant of the language and customs of the people to understand their problems—the growth of the zamindar's power at the expense of the tribal headman and ryots was even more marked.

In fact, as an anonymous contributor to the *Calcutta Review*⁴ later pointed out, the English could not think in terms

1. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para 13, B. C 1363/54227. Also, Hunter, *Bengal MS. Records*, Nos. 1009, 1136.

2. Reid, *op. cit.* Para. 35. There were six dependent rajas in Chota-Nagpur, rulers of the estates of Tamar, Bundu, Baranda, Silli, Rahi, Barwa and Tori.

3. Copy of the *Kabuliat* and the *patta*, 1790, Beng. Rev. Cons. 43 and 44 of 2 Jan. 1824. (⁶⁰/₆₁).

4. 'The Kols of Chota-Nagpore', *Calcutta Review*, 1869, XLIX, 124.

of peasant proprietorship, the right of the original clearers of the land and so on : "Feudalism so pervades English opinion and the English constitution since the Norman Conquest, that it is very difficult for an ordinary Englishman to understand what is familiar to other parts of the world." The Cornwallis system, with its zamindari bias, its standardized administrative forms, and its code of regulations was therefore applied to Chota-Nagpur, with little questioning of its suitability.

Isolated attempts were made by some British officers to exempt this area from the general application of the regulations. But even these attempts were thwarted either by their successors in office, by their superiors or more often still by the subordinate non-tribal civil servants. Leslie, for example, on 20 June 1789, opposing the extension of the Permanent Settlement into this area, expressed an apprehension that "extending these Regulations to this district [Chota-Nagpur] will be attended with very bad consequences."¹ John Shore concurred with his argument that "the people who are jealous and uncivilized, may suppose the taking an account of their villages, and sending a person to collect the sayer duties, is a prelude to some more serious innovations, and may therefore be induced to make a resistance in the first instance, by which a very heavy expense may be incurred, but no advantage reaped."²

So the Resolution of the Bengal Government, 18 September 1789, which confirmed the Decennial Settlement in Bihar, precisely mentioned "that the Regulations do not extend to this district [Chota-Nagpur], but that the Settlement be continued on the present footing and be extended to a period of ten years."³ But though the Permanent Settlement and the regulations were not formally extended to this estate, the Government, whenever asked on this question, later on, decided that they should be held applicable to this estate."⁴

1. J. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para. 14, B. C 1363/54227.

2. Firminger, *Fifth Report*, II, 498.

3. Resolution, 18 Sept, 1789, Enclosure. Beng. Cr, Judl, Cons. 22 of 26 Jan. 1826 (187/25).

4. In 1799 and 1823.

Consequently, all the pernicious effects of the Permanent Settlement—rack-renting, resumption, sub-letting—were felt by the tribal peasantry. Their ancient tillage rights were merged in the “all devouring recognition of the zamindar’s permanent property in the soil”, which left the zamindar free to make settlements at his will.¹

Shore’s warning about innovations in this area was totally forgotten, and non-tribal subordinate officers and laws were blindly introduced in this area. Some of the innovations were opposed by the maharaja as well as by the people. Thus when the revenue official, the *patwari*, was introduced, the maharaja protested violently against their activities, such as land measurement, the issue of revenue demand agreements and receipts, and so on. “The people”, he wrote, “take the ground unmeasured, the extent of which is known only by its name.....Pottahs particularizing the quantity of ground cannot be given.”² On this occasion the Ramgarh collector, Hunter, took note of the complaint. He wrote to the Board of Revenue, testifying to “the simplicity of character and ignorance of the generality of the people,” and pointing out that no *pattas* had ever been granted and no *patwaris* ever employed here,³ and in 1794, by section two of Regulation VI a modification was introduced to meet the needs of the Bihar portion of the Ramgarh district. It was recognised that the ryots were “unable to read or write” and were “accustomed to cultivate the lands under verbal agreements, and terms entirely dissimilar to those which prevail in other parts of the provinces.”⁴ In 1800, Regulation X similarly modified the rule of inheritance to suit the special needs of the chiefs of the area.

In these two cases, however, the government had yielded to the combined opposition of chiefs and people. Where the ill-understood interests of the tribal people alone were con-

1. ‘Zamindar and the Bengal Ryot’, *Calcutta Review*, VI, 319.

2. Petition, Maharaja Deonath Sahi Deo, n. d., Beng. Rev. Cons. 82 of 27 March 1794. (³³/₁₄)

3. Hunter to Board, 17 Aug. 1793, paras. 6-8. Beng. Rev. Cons. 82 of 27 March 1794. (³³/₁₄)

4. *Extracts from Harington’s Analysis of the Bengal Regulations*, 315, Footnote.

cerned, the British did nothing. So the traders, settlers, and alien administrators were permitted to push forward their frontiers, encroaching steadily upon what had been the tribal people's sanctuary of custom. And when the people rose in protest¹ they were treated as marauders or rebels and hunted down by the troops.

On such occasions the non-tribal subordinate officers would exaggerate the criminality of the tribesmen,² the British officers usually were quite out of touch with the tribal rebels, and so hundreds of tribal people were killed. Even when the Chatra collector felt that this unrest resulted "more particularly from the universal oppression, mismanagement and want of method which prevails throughout Naugpore [Chota-Nagpur]"³ he could find no means of getting in touch with the rebels, still less of finding a solution to their problems.

In 1937, when the Tamar rebels were joined by their brethren from Patkum, Silli and Singhbhum, the situation called for the employment of troops under Major Farmer for about a year.⁴ Farmer, at the end of the campaigns, admitted that "on an

1. There were revolts in Tamar in 1783 (crushed by Crawford) and others in 1789 which went on until 1795. In 1789 about three thousand insurgents assembled: M. Leslie, Ramgarh collector to Board, 20 June 1789, Beng. Rev. Cons. of 1 July 1789 (⁵¹/₃₀), p. 496.

2. Chiragh Ali, who led the troops against Bishnu Manki and Mangi Manki, the tribal leaders of Tamar, reported, for example, that the rebels had ordered the heads of the sepoys killed by them, to be cut off and affixed at the corners of the village: Leslie to Board, 12 June 1789, Beng. Rev. Cons., 24 June 1789 (⁵¹/₃₀), p. 152.

The *sazawal* in Chota-Nagpur (Bhola Nath Singh), the *nazir* of the Chatra court (Amar Singh), the *hurkaras* (peons) of the Court (Shakurulla Khan, Rahimulla Khan and others) and the hinduized Raja of Tamar (Govind Sahi) and his new non-tribal farmers represented to the Ramgarh magistrate that these *bhuinhars* (tribal rebel leaders) were very turbulent and rude, and not amenable to reason: Beng. Rev. Cons., 19 Aug. 1789, Part III, (⁵¹/₄₄) pp. 1731-1741.

3. Leslie to Board, 14 July 1789, Beng. Rev. Cons., 19 Aug. 1789, Part III, (⁵¹/₄₄) p. 1724

4. Beng. Rev. Cons. 15 of 29 March 1793 (⁵²/₁); and 16 of 24 May 1793 (⁵²/₁).

attentive investigation into the causes of the general disaffection, he had had to change his opinion formed "from the insidious representations of the *zémindar* of Nagpore's *vakeel*."¹ "So rapacious and unrelenting" had been the conduct of the revenue collectors of the maharaja, "that the resistance charged upon them as a crime", Farmer came to see as "the natural consequence of licentious power exerted beyond human sufferance."² He proved that the young zamindar of Chota-Nagpur, fallen under the guidance of selfish and very profligate non-tribal servants (*vakils* or *diwan*, etc., who claimed that the maharaja had a right to collect his revenue direct from the people of Tamar in any way he liked), wanted to cow the *bhuinhars* of Tamar into paying much more than was stipulated by custom.³ Setting aside the authority of the raja of Tamar, these rapacious servants of the maharaja had seized the tenants' cattle, burnt their villages, and even threatened them with further vengeance.⁴ As soon as Farmer had become aware of the real causes of the unrest, and had taken to conciliatory methods, exempting the people "from arbitrary exactions"⁵, he was able quickly to bring the campaign to an end, the tribal people tamely submitting.

Moreover, once Farmer began to question the correctness of the reports and to pursue his own investigations, he uncovered a whole series of other outrages and abuses. Thus in Rahi he found that the servants of the maharaja had set aside the authority of Narendra Sahi, the raja of the *pargana*, and had robbed the ryots of their cattle.⁶ The murder of

1. S. Farmer to Ramgarh collector, 15 May 1793, Beng. Rev. Cons. 38 of 9 Aug. 1793 (⁵³/₆).

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. Farmer to M. Leslie, 27 May 1793, Beng. Rev. Cons. 26 of 18 Oct. 1793 (⁵²/₇)

5. Beng. Rev. Cons. 38 of 9 Aug. 1793 (⁵²/₆)

6. Beng. Rev. Cons. 26 of 18 Oct. 1793 (⁵²/₇): Des Lal Munda, one of the rebel leaders, paid his dues and said that the only crime committed by his family was the saving of "a little money" which "the Nagpoor collector (*vakil*) wanted to rob."

twenty people by the raja of Bundu had been hushed up by bribes to the maharaja and his officials. In the subordinate rajadom of Silli, bribes to the servants of the maharaja had enabled an uncle to oust the real heir to the *pargana* and seize it for himself.¹

The policy of indirect rule through the hinduized maharaja and his chiefs, it is clear, had proved to be a curse for the tribal people of this area. The *sadr* station of the district was situated far away at Chatra, and the magistrate seldom visited the area personally because of the unhealthiness of the climate and the turbulence of the people. The state of affairs was very well described later: "no police had been hitherto established in Chootah Nagpore and the authority of the Courts was very imperfectly maintained." Whatever power the Magistrate could exercise was made use of by the Rajah [Maharaja] to oppress any who opposed his will, whilst his creatures and dependants [rajas, *jagirdars* and *diwans*] were upheld in any act of oppression they might commit and protected from the consequences."² Even when the Ramgarh authorities proposed some action against the maharaja, the Government rejected it on the ground that he was "only nominally subject to their authority", and that the situation of that part of the country was peculiar.³ The proposals⁴ to move the *sadr* station from distant Chatra to Hazaribagh was similarly turned down. No wonder, therefore, that Chota-Nagpur became "a receptacle for murderers, robbers, and all breakers of peace, vagabonds, &ca."⁵

1. *Ibid.* Also, Petition, Narain Singh, heir of Silli raja. Beng. Rev. Cons. 57 of 11 Apl. 1794 (43/15).

2. Thomason's note, 12 April 1832, para. 21, B. C. 1363/54227. In 1794 the maharaja justified the action of the raja of Bundu as a retaliation by 'blood for blood' and he showed his inability to apprehend him: Petition, Deonath Sahi, n. d., Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 6 June 1794. (128/12).

3. Resolution, Govt., Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 28 of 6 June 1794 (128/12).

4. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 12 of 20 June 1794 (128/12); 6 of 8 Aug. 1794 (128/13); 30 of 29 Aug. 1799 (128/42); Beng. Rev. Cons. 20 of 20 May 1799 (54/3).

5. W. Hunter to Govt. 13 July 1793, para. 3, Beng. Rev. Cons. 24 of 18 Oct. 1793 (53/7).

The oppressed tribal peasantry, therefore had no other means of ventilating their grievances than through unrest. But every time the people revolted the maharaja and his non-tribal henchmen gave to the Chatra authorities an exaggerated account of the trouble, and every time troops were marched against the rebels.¹ In Silli, Hajam Banta and Palma, Tamar, Rahi, Barwa and other disturbed pockets between 1797 and 1799 the loss of life and property was considerable.² In the first the unrest was primarily due to a family feud, in the second to the imposition of an outsider (Radhanath, probably the *diwan* of the maharaja) as its auction-purchaser, and in others to the different types of oppressions we have described. The disturbances in *Pachet*, *Patkum* and other neighbouring *parganas* against the salelaws of the Government gave encouragement to these tribal protesters, but their real grievances were local in origin, the oppressions and injustices perpetrated by Radhanath and Basantlal, the managers of the maharaja. Even when these oppressions were proved (as in the case of Dukin Sahay munda in Barwa) the Ramgarh authorities could not take any action because the maharaja had "absolute authority with respect to the internal Regulation of his own country",³ and he had "never seen an European" and declared "his determination of never doing it."⁴

After 1800, with the abolition of the Ramgarh collectorship, and the removal of the *sazawal* from Chota-Nagpur, things became worse. Now, the *diwan*, the *sheristadar*, the *mohurir* and other non-tribal subordinate officers of the maharaja and

1. cf. Capt. R. Simond to R. Abercrombey, C. in C., 31 March 1795, Beng. Rev. Cons. 21 of 17 Apl. 1795 (53/29).

2. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 4 of 24 Nov. 1797 (128/34); 6 of 8 Dec. 1797 (128/34); 6 and 7 of 6 Feb. 1798 (128/36); 16 of 25 July 1799 (128/42). In Barwa detachments of troops were repeatedly sent to cow the *jagirdars* into submitting to the maharaja, but without success: Ramgarh collector to Board, 31 Dec. 1799, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 22 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38.)

3. J. Miller, Ramgarh magistrate, to Govt., 18 Oct. 1799, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 19 of 24 Oct. 1799 (128/44).

4. W. Hunter, Ramgarh collector, to Board, 26 Sept. 1798, para. 15, Beng. Rev. Cons. 2 of 12 Oct. 1798 (53/58).

of the Chatra court connived to oppress the tribal people and did so with impunity.

In 1801 the maharaja and his agents effected the treacherous and cruel murder of the Raja of Barwa, thus rendering ineffectual "the protection accorded to this person by the chief local officers of Government (Col. Jones of the Ramgarh battalion and Magistrate Smith).¹ After 1804 Tori also was disturbed because of the interference of the maharaja. In 1806 the widow of the late raja of Tori was attacked, and a crisis was only averted by the timely march of troops, and the reference of the matter to the court.²

The weaker tribal peasants, however, could not even go to the court. Those who did, were disillusioned at Chatra. Blunt the Acting magistrate of Ramgarh, rightly pointed out in 1806, "All persons, therefore, having any complaints to prefer are compelled however great the distance to repair to Chittra [Chatra] for redress [;] and it must frequently happen that the peon deputed by the court for the apprehension of the persons complained against returns without having been successful. The prosecutor is [thus] reduced to the necessity, [either] of foregoing any further attempt to obtain redress or to incur the expense of using a second time the same process with no better prospect of success. On the other hand should the peon deputed by the court have succeeded in apprehending the persons complained against, it is [as] frequently happens that the prosecutor wearied out with attendance, has previously returned to his home, and is not forthcoming."³

Indeed, the coming of the British rule over this area, with its courts to enforce complex regulations, its magistrates ignorant of the local language and custom, and its non-tribal *amlas* (subordinate staff) open to corruption, meant the wholesale ruin of the tribal peasantry. "The poor man in the prosecution of a suit having no presents to give, and worn out by litigation and

1. Capt. Roughsedge's report, quoted in Reid, *Ranchi Settlement Report*, para. 38.

2. J. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para. 21, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. W. Blunt to Register, Nizamut Adalat, 8 Apl. 1806, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 25 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

chicanery, at length became obliged to yield it up ; there was in fact no law at all for him ; and the Omla being well practised in their vocation had all their proceedings veiled, as at the present day, in profound secrecy.”¹

To improve the law and order situation in Chota-Nagpur, the Government, at the request of Blunt, sanctioned the introduction of the zamindari police under Regulation XVIII, 1805, and a *sanad* was offered to the maharaja for his acceptance.² He wavered for some time, but even when he accepted it in July 1807, nothing could be done for some time, probably due to the family feud between the maharaja and his brothers.³

The feud not only did delay the introduction of the new police system, but also became the occasion of various crimes and acts of oppression. The original feud was over the division of the inheritance, the making of maintenance grants to the younger brothers,⁴ etc., but it was complicated by the maharaja's taking part in a similar dispute over the *pargana* of Udaipur to which there were two claimants, one of them, Dukhan (Dukani ?) Sahi being supported by the maharaja, the other by the maharaja's brothers. The prime mover in these disputes and in the resulting violence was the maharaja's *diwan*, Dindayal Nath, a Kayastha.⁵ There was almost universal complaint

1. Drummond, *op. cit.* 83.

2. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para. 22, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. *Ibid.* Para. 21. In March 1806 Maharaja Deonath Sahi died, and was succeeded by his son Govind nath Sahi, a young man of 25 who got a *khillat* from the commandant of the Ramgarh battalion on the occasion of his installation.

4. In his petition [recd. 2 May 1808, Beng. Rev. Cons. 11 of 22 July 1808 (55/13) Maharaja Govind nath Sahi stated that after the death of Maharaja Deonath Sahi, he, being the eldest born, succeeded to the estate, and “in conformity to the usage of the family,” his younger brothers Gopinath Sahi and Mangee Lal got some *parganas* as *jagir* ; but they were not ready to pay the revenue fixed at Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 3,000 respectively. Moreover, Gopinath, while trying to “take forcible possession” of five more *parganas*, had collected a large force, attacked Numda *pargana*, imprisoned and harassed the renters, beat the *sazawal* and other officials of the maharaja and driven them away.

5. Both these cases went to the Chatra Court, and Radhanath, the dismissed *diwan*, worked against the maharaja in both.

about the man's undue influence over the maharaja, but as Thomason records, "in accordance with the oath of the family [not to see any British officer] the Rajah [maharaja] continued to preserve his invisibility and thus there was little check upon Deen Dial who affixed his master's seal to whatever orders it suited his purpose to issue."¹

Whenever any reference was made to the Government, they advised the Ramgarh authorities to maintain the party in possession and to refer the complaint to the civil court. But the maharaja, by his own power and authority, dispossessed any party opposed to himself or his *diwan*, and then referred the injured party to the civil court, knowing full well that the process of redress there was tardy, and out of the reach of the simple tribal folk. (If perchance the decision was adverse to his claims, he looked to circumstances and chance for his revenge.) An injured party could not prove possession, but when they pleaded previous possession and the recent outrage on them, their opponents, supported by the *diwan*, totally rejected these claims. Very often, indeed, the defendants refused to appear in the court, and derided the attempts of the magistrate to enforce the civil process against them.²

While the *diwan's* power was unchallenged there could be no hope of redress. Worse still, the failure of the Company's court to ascertain the truth, or if ascertained, to act upon it and enforce their decision led to a hatred of that court by those whom it had failed to protect. In the winter of 1808-09 it was decided therefore to end an intolerable situation, and Roughsedge marched into Chota-Nagpur with his troops. Din Dayal fled to Calcutta where he was apprehended and put on his trial, and the maharaja, when detached from his evil genius, paid his arrears and submitted his disputes to arbitration.³

The zamindari police were now introduced in this area on 4 June 1809 after the declaration of a general amnesty.⁴ But from

1. J. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para. 25, B. C. 1363/59227.

2. *Ibid.* para. 25.

3. *Ibid.* paras. 27-28.

4. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 5 of 2 Feb. 1810 (130/12). Din Dayal also was released: vide Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 14 and 15 of 5 July 1814 (131/41).

the start it seemed unlikely to succeed. The maharaja was totally averse to a measure which involved him in the expense of five *thanas*, later six, an expense of Rs. 5,400 and one which tended to keep him continually embroiled with the magistrate if their pay was not punctually discharged or his orders readily enforced.¹ Moreover, while Regulation XVIII of 1805 contemplated the employment of no other than the indigenous village police (e. g. *ghatwals*, *goraits*, etc.) under the *mundas* and *mankis* "here was introduced a new and very expensive machinery, the very titles of which would not be acceptable to the people, and which could not be otherwise than offensive to the Rajah."² In the words of Drummond, "here was an extensive establishment of Darogahs, Jemadars and Mohurirs with all the other paraphernalia attached to this licensed banditti."³

Naturally, therefore, neither were oppressions checked nor disturbances averted. In 1810 Barwa⁴ and Tamar⁵ were seriously disturbed. Between 1811 and 1813, the tribal people of Nawagarh under Buktour Sahi and Mandal Singh threw such a challenge to the authorities that even the Ramgarh battalion

1. Thomason's note, 12 Apl. 1832, para. 29, B. C. 1363/54227 : Radhanath Panda, his former *diwan*, was instigating the maharaja to thwart it.

2. *Ibid.* para. 32.

3. Drummond, *op. cit.* 96.

4. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 10 of 23 May 1817. Roughsedge admitted the inefficiency of the police in this *pargana* : Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 79 of 19 Jan. 1810 (130/11).

5. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 8 of 14 Sept. 1810 (130/21) ; 28, 29 and 30 of 13 Nov. 1810 (130/23) ;

3 of 24 Oct. 1810 (130/22) ; 1, 2 and 4 of 24 Oct. 1810 (130/22).

The leader of the Tamar revolt, Raghunath Singh, was imprisoned for life. The following episode connected with his conviction is worth noting : When the officer commanding in Tamar reported to the Ramgarh magistrate that the disturbances which had occurred were entirely due to the oppression of the Tamar raja on his vassal, "Raghunath went to the Court then sitting at Chatra. 'The evidence kept in readiness against him by the Tamarh zamindar caused his committal to the court of circuit, and the result was his condemnation to transportation or imprisonment for life.' " Vide Dalton, *Ethnology*, 170.

had to suffer a defeat.¹ Even though the Ramgarh authorities realized that these disturbances were due to the continued oppressions perpetrated on the peasantry by their chiefs,² they persisted in employing troops, presumably for the sake of prestige.

The new police of Chota-Nagpur, which so evidently failed to bring order, was invariably criticised in this period.³ But strangely enough, it was never realized that their inefficiency was due to the employment of outsiders as police officers. The mixture of the *daroga* system and the zamindari system of police had made the situation anomalous. The tribal watchmen (e. g. the *goraits* and *ghatwals*), who had always obeyed their own chiefs, did not feel inclined to obey the non-tribal, greedy and corrupt *darogas* and *jamadars*. They had, moreover, a particular hatred against the *barkandazes* attached to the *thanas*.

It was never realized by the authorities that "a man ought to know the turnings, windings and intricacies of his own house better than a stranger to it" and that "the peculiarities of any country must be much better known to those who have been born and reared on it than to strangers or those of recent importation."⁴ Drummond rightly points out, "It is also obvious that the village and indigenous people by the possession of such knowledge, would be enabled to overcome physical obstacles and avoid impediments which to strangers might seem impossible."⁵

The only step taken to improve the situation was the annual

1. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 20 of 27 Jan. 1812 (130/44); 39 of 21 March 1812 (130/47)

2. cf. Acting Magt., Ramgarh, to Govt., 5 Sept. 1810, para. 4, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 6 of 14 Sept. 1810 (130/21); The Tamar raja attempted to raise the quit-rent, "and even endeavoured to dispossess some of the Mankees and Moondas, who have been obliged to have recourse to arms in defence of their possessions."

3. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 5 of 4 Apl. 1812 (130/48); 2 of 3 March 1812 (130/46); 9 and 38 of 23 May 1817 (132/58); 39 of 29 July 1817 (132/61).

4. Drummond, *op. cit.* Chapter V.

5. *Ibid.*

tour in Chota-Nagpur and other jungle *parganas* to be undertaken by the Ramgarh magistrate from 1817.¹ But this casual visit, with a large establishment, did not check the oppressive conduct of the landholders and subordinate officers, nor did it secure discipline and effectiveness in the zamindari police.

Late in 1818, a woman named Adhar Dai and her family were murdered by the *barkandazes* of the Chota-Nagpur maharaja on the suspicion that she was a witch and that she had harmed the children of the maharaja. Though the fact of murder was proved early in 1819, no one came forward to depose against the maharaja.²

Soon after this, the Mundas of Tamar rose *en masse* under their two leaders, the two mundas, Rudun and Kunta.³ Troops were employed for several months,⁴ but the leaders, who first took refuge in the jungle and then in Singhbhum, could only be apprehended with the help of the Singhbhum chiefs. Colvin,

1. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 9 and 11 of 23 May 1817 (132/58); 34 of 2 Dec. 1817 (133/3).

It was laid down that there should be an annual tour. But the main reason for avoiding the constant presence of an European officer in Chota-Nagpur was the fear of an unhealthy climate: G. French, Ramgarh magistrate, to H. Douglas and others, Judges of the Court of Circuit, 10 Apl. 1817, para. 11, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 9 of 23 May 1817 (132/58).

2. B. C. 746/20327: Reports of Jan. to Apl. 1819: The maharaja's son and daughter died of fever and small pox in July 1818, and in August or September the murder was committed. But the Ramgarh magistrate only began investigations in January 1819.

3. E. Roughsedge to G. French, Magistrate of Ramgarh, 2 Nov. 1819, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 35 of 10 March 1820 (134/18).

4. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 28 of 24 March 1820 (134/18); the inaccessibility of this area was proved beyond doubt: "the only paths from village to village in this wonderfully strong country, hinder it in marching impossible to avoid Ghauts or passes which are keys to some man's possessions and he at once resists or flies to his Coora, on the appearance of an armed body": Roughsedge to Colvin, 2 March 1820, *Ibid*.

Moreover, most of the insurgents were found to be "solely actuated by the blind obedience which the lower classes of the inhabitants of the pergunna are in the habit of paying to their immediate superiors [the *mundas* and *mankis*]" : Colvin to Roughsedge, 29 Feb. 1820, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 36 of 10 March 1820 (134/18).

the Magistrate of the jungle Mahals, and Roughsedge remained busy in Tamar for several months. The immediate cause of the rising was found to be the superstition of the people and their desire to lay hold of one Tribhuvan Manjhi and others whom they accused of preventing the rainfall through their magical powers.¹ But the insurgents were also found to be conniving with the brother of Raghunath Singh of Sindri, the leader of 1810 rising, whose family had been dispossessed of its *jagir* of Chaurasi.²

In the affrays that took place, several people were killed, and many houses were burnt. At last Dukhit, Sugun and other leaders, who surrendered, were pardoned.³ Rudun and Kunta, after their apprehension, suffered imprisonment.

These two events—the murder in Chota-Nagpur proper and the Tamar disturbance—proved beyond doubt that the control of the British authorities over these areas was only nominal. Now it was realized that a closer supervision was necessary. Colvin⁴, who had been specially deputed to investigate the causes

1. Colvin to Govt., 16 Jan. 1820, para. 7, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 39 of 4 Feb. 1820 (134/16).

2. *Ibid.* para. 10.

Raghunath, a mahto (a superior manki) was still in jail, and his brother, for whose apprehension a reward had been offered by the magistrate in 1813, was still at large : Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 9 of 8 Feb. 1820 (134/16) ; Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 16 of 8 June 1821 (134/53). Though an *amin* had investigated the claims of the raja and the mahto, and the *diwani adalat* had decided the matter in former's favour in Jan. 1817, the tribal people were not satisfied.

3. Govt. to Colvin, 4 Feb. 1820, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 43 of 4 Feb. 1820 (134/16).

4. In his long report to the Govt. of 10 Apl. 1821, paras. 53 to 63 (Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 16 of 8 June 1821, 134/53) he discussed the nature of the tribal people and the control of the maharaja and his subordinate rajas over them. He criticised the levy of Rs. 300 on these rajas by the maharaja for the maintenance of a *tahsildar* and the mismanagement of the police at his hands. Still he admitted "no thana Establishment, however large, would be sufficient to inforce [sic] the processes of the Magistrate in many parts of the Pergunnah (for instance the southern and western parts of Tamar) or even to effect the apprehensions of common offenders amongst the hills and jungles to which they have resort and.....

of the Tamar disturbances and Fleming, the magistrate, both put forward the same view.¹ In April 1821, therefore, S. T. Cuthbert was appointed the Judge and Magistrate of Ramgarh, and in June W. Smith was appointed the Register of the district and Joint magistrate and Assistant collector in Chota-Nagpur.² It was expected that Smith would visit the area once a year in a favourable season, would establish a more vigilant superintendence over its affairs, and would submit to Government some proposals for the improvement of the police.³ As ill luck could have it, W. Smith died a few months later in October 1821, and N. Smith took his office.

In the decade 1821 to 1831 N. Smith and later Cuthbert, both of whom had a knack of making experiments, tried by various methods to secure the full enforcement of the regulations in Chota-Nagpur. Thus in 1822, during a tour of Chota-Nagpur, Smith chanced to see some stills, and he recommended that the excise tax should be extended to the area.⁴ Next year he wrote to the Government that the road cess (*rahdari*) should be collected. The Government agreed to introduce the excise system, but abolished *rahdari* altogether.

There was much opposition to the new excise duties, both from the maharaja and the people. But Smith made light of it :

the only police which is adapted for that part of the country is the *zemeen-daree*." Like the *mundas* and *markis* of Patkum and Bagmundi, in the Jungle Mahals, he wanted their counterparts in Chota-Nagpur also to be responsible for law and order. At the same time he was in favour of the overall control of the maharaja and the rajas with a closer supervision of the district authorities over them.

1. Resolution of Govt., Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 18 of 8 June 1821 (134/53).

2. By Regulation I of 1817 the authority of the Commissioner of Bihar and Banaras had already been extended to this area. The maharaja of Chota-Nagpur had also been divested of his police power and a native superintendent of police appointed in Chota-Nagpur in 1819. Moreover, the collectorship of Ramgarh had been revived.

3. Memorandum of Judl. Secy. Shakespear, 20 Jan. 1826, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 31 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

4. Reid, *Ranchi Settlement Report*, para. 43; Also see S. T. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 25 May 1830 (61/60)

"it may be necessary to premise that the same farce will be acted over again as on a former occasion. We shall be told that the kols are going back to Rohitasgarh; that the pargana will fall into decay; that the public revenue will likely be endangered, nay, more than this, thousands of kols will probably at the last extremity appear at Chatra, peaceably to *gubrau* [mislead] and *dumkau* [*Dhamkau* or threaten] the authorities"¹. Accordingly official distilleries were set up, operated by non-tribal farmers of the excise. These distilleries, which spread the use of spirits, brought degradation among the tribal people, and the influx of the non-tribal excise-farmers led to their harassment. Moreover, this prepared the ground for a tax on the milder, much less injurious and more nutritious *pachai* or *hanria* (rice-beer) brewed by the tribal people for their own consumption.

The tribal people felt the innovation very keenly, the more so because of the oppressions of the excise-farmer. In 1825 they arrived in large bodies at the *sadr* station and lodged numerous complaints against Karam Ali, the *thikadar* of *abkari* in Chota-Nagpur. On enquiry, Cuthbert found that the *thikadar* had "sent his Myrmidons into every part of the *pergunnah*, making the people enter into engagements with him, wholly disproportionate to their means, thereby threatening the *pergunnah* with general misery and distress."² The greedy foreigners, who took excise farms, associated the non-tribal police *daroga* and the *munsif* of the *pargana* in the lease to get their support in the act of extortion. Cuthbert very aptly remarked, "It must come home to the mind of a child, that farming out the *Abkarry* to a stranger in such a *Pergunnah* must necessarily give rise to abuses which the strictest surveillance on the part of the collector will not altogether prevent."³

1. Reid, *op. cit.* praa. 43.

2. S. T. Cuthbert to Board, C. P., 11 Jan. 1826, Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 7 Sept. 1826 (61/1): In 1825 the *thikadar* let the pargana of Busea (84 villages) to Lohar Singh Baraik at Rs. 300, but in 1826 he himself collected more than Rs. 1,200 from 36 villages. Now he was coercing the *mahto* and *pahan* of the villages to pay him at the rate of one rupee per home, and on their not agreeing to this, he maltreated them.

3. *Ibid.*

Soon W. R. Gilbert, the political Agent of the Governor-General on the south-west frontier, was reporting that as a result of the tax on *hanria*, a flourishing hamlet in Barwa had become a jungle with a herd of wild buffaloes and tigers in the course of only two or three years. The tribal people of several villages had emigrated to a man, and large tracts of fertile land were now lying waste.¹ The *nazir* of Ramgarh also found many houses deserted in Chota-Nagpur as a result of this taxation.² In 1826 Cuthbert strongly recommended the abolition of this tax.³ Now it became clear how far from the mark had been Smith's scoffing remark of 1822. At last, at the recommendation of the Board of Revenue⁴ this tax was abolished.⁵

For a few years, only the general *Abkari* was levied in

1. Gilbert to Cuthbert, 20 July 1826, Beng. Rev. Cons. 47 of 7 Sept., 1826 (61/1) : "Three-fourths of the cultivators of Chota-Nagpore are of that tribe of Coles called Dhanghars [sic], and that it is on these industrious people alone [that] the Handee [sic] tax falls."

2. Cuthbert to Board, 29 July 1826, Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 7 Sept. 1826 (61/1) : Method of preparing *hanria* :—"Roots of certain trees were "mixed with rice, and then steeped in water and this mixture by being exposed a certain number of days to the sun produces a beverage of a spiritous quality ; it is manufactured by the Dhangers and Coles in their own houses, and [may] be termed a kind of domestic brewery necessary for the health and support of the lower orders in a climate uncongenial even to the natives."

3. *Ibid.* : Method of Settlement and oppression :—"On a person receiving a lease from the Thecadar he sends his Peadas into the different villages within his division, these his people immediately summon before them, the Mahtoon or head Ryott, get from him the number of houses in the village, and the number of residents in each house when they make the settlement of the village by laying a tax on every home varying from 8 annas to one Rupee 8 annas ; a putta is then furnished to the Mahtoon and a Kubooleat taken from him and the inhabitants are called upon to pay down one half years' rent which they have generally been compelled to do, and in many instances without receiving receipts ; moreover independent of the tax, money is extorted from them in the shape of Tulbana, salary &ca &ca, besides which they have to provide entertainment for the Peadas. Some of the Kutkenadars have in this manner, put into their pockets four times the amount of what they have paid for their lease."

4. Beng. Rev. Cons. 45 of 7 Sept. 1826 (61/1)

5. Beng. Rev. Cons. 47 of 7 Sept. 1826 (61/1)

Chota-Nagpur.¹ Then in 1830 Cuthbert proposed that a house tax on account of the home brewing of these tribal people should be levied. He saw "no reason why the people of Chota Nagpore should be exempt from it, indeed I am of opinion that even the lower orders should be made to pay, for they are great drunkards, and cases have not been unfrequent lately in which people have lost their lives in drunken brawls."² Thus was introduced the house tax which nullified the salutary effect of the abolition of the *hanria* tax.

Another grave mistake of Cuthbert was the introduction of poppy cultivation. In 1827 he complained that this had not yet been attempted by the opium agent, "though there are many parts of the Pergunnah in which it might perhaps be successfully introduced."³ Later, in 1830, he reported with pleasure that since 1828 he had doubled the yield of opium in the district.⁴ There was opposition to the new crop, but he dismissed it. The unwillingness of the peasantry was described by him in the following words almost as lightly as Smith had dismissed their opposition to the excise tax: "The introduction of a new branch of agriculture amongst the natives is always attended with infinite trouble and it will be some time before the husbandry [sic] of Chotanagpore will be spirited enough to convert any great proportion of land to this valuable cultivation."⁵ He admitted at the same time that the rural economy of the *pargana* and the lack of irrigation facilities were the two

1. Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 25 May 1830 (61/60): Rs. 9,122-10 in that year.

2. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, para. 34, Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 25 May 1830 (61/60): He proposed that 404, 584 houses in 2,636 villages of Chota-Nagpur should be assessed at five annas per annum, yielding 12,663 rupees, an excess of about three thousand rupees on the existing returns from the stills.

3. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 49, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (138/22): He also wanted the management of opium production of the district in his hands.

4. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, para. 37, Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 25 May 1830 (61/60).

5. *Ibid.*

factors responsible for the opposition of the people to this cultivation.¹

Some useful points were no doubt made in this period by both Smith and Cuthbert. The former on 19 June 1823 wrote that the turbulence of the people in this area was sufficiently indicative of the hostility of the people to the judicial system by which they were governed : "It is upon the system itself, as inapplicable to these parts, that I would cast all the odium implied in my position."²

Cuthbert, adverting to the "distinct and uncivilized race of people" inhabiting this area—"a people differing in manners, customs and language from the inhabitants of other parts of the country", urged that they should be governed by "a system of jurisprudence adapted to their actual condition and circumstances."³ All the tribal hilly areas here, he suggested, might be placed under the management and superintendence of an able and experienced commissioner, assisted by about four assistants, possibly military gentlemen, acquainted with this area.⁴

About the police also some useful suggestions were made. On 17 July 1824 Cuthbert had opposed the idea of re-introducing the zamindari police system. But on 21 April 1827 he admitted that the non-tribal police officers had to face serious physical obstacles in this area.⁵ Again, in 1830 he emphasized these difficulties and admitted that the non-tribal police officers "who had no natural tie to bind them to the interests of the people, who are little acquainted with the country, who go into [Chota] Nagpoor with a full conviction of the climate disagreeing with them, and of their being obliged to fly from the purgunna on the approach of the rainy season," were most

1. *Ibid.*

2. N. Smith to Govt., 19 June 1823, para. 10, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 21 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

3. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Feb. 1823, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 19 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

4. *Ibid.*

5. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 76, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (138/22) : He admitted that no European officer had visited the *pargana* for a period of about seven years.

unsuitable to the tasks with which they were beset.¹ But without realizing the real problem, he decided to invest all the *jagirdars* with police powers, and at the same time to retain a part of the official police.

Though Cuthbert admitted in 1827 that *ghatwals* still collected *rahdari* (road-cess) from the traders, though it had been prohibited, he added, "A personal experience of the length and steepness of these defiles convinced me that no regular police could possibly afford protection to people travelling through passes which give such facility to robbers and whose escape is so easy and detection so difficult."² He was convinced that the *ghatwals* were "the natural and indeed the only effectual guardians of travellers in such places," and that if they were "deprived of the customary remuneration, instead of being the guardians of the public peace, they might become its assailers."³ Still the Government did not do any thing to restore the legality of the road-cess or to abolish the official police altogether.

Another useful proposal turned down by the Government was to move the *sadr* station nearer to Chota-Nagpur from Chatra to Hazaribagh.⁴ The Board of revenue was also in favour of Hazaribagh, but the Government preferred the view of the Patna Provincial Court and the *sadr* station was fixed at Sherghati (in the modern Gaya district), further still from Chota-Nagpur. Thus this area was left all the more at the mercy of rapacious non-tribal adventurers, subordinate officers and others, and the faggots were ready for lighting in 1831.

1. Drummond, *op. cit.* chapter VI.

2. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 92, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

3. *Ibid.* para. 92.

4. Both Smith and Cuthbert made this proposal. Courts were held alternately at Chatra and Sherghati: Cuthbert to Govt., 6 March 1824, Beng. Rev. Cons. 12 of 2 Apl. 1824 (60/5).

Chapter II

The Outbreak of unrest, Its Progress and Suppression-December 1831 to May 1832.

The year 1831 saw trouble in eastern and central Bengal, but to the south-west all seemed calm. The local authorities were busy with routine matters: Cuthbert, Magistrate-Judge and Collector for Ramgarh, was settling revenue details in Palamau,¹ his assistant, Neave, was at headquarters; Lambert, the commissioner of the Patna division, was trying cases at Sherghati.² Both Neave and Lambert were looking forward to the leave for which they had applied.³ There were some disturbances in neighbouring Sambhalpur, but Chota-Nagpur seemed peaceful.

Then, at the very end of the year the tribal people—the Dhangar and the Larka Kols—broke into unprecedentedly widespread rebellion, shaking Government abruptly from its complacent slumber. The disturbances started on 11 December 1831 in Sonapur “when a party of Coles from Roochang [Kochang] and Jamoor carried off from the village of Koomung [Kumang] which was held in Tiekka or farm by Mahomedally (Naik) two hundred head of cattle without however inflicting bodily injury, plundering or burning other property.”⁴

Such cattle raiding was not uncommon—though the scale was unusually large. But the attack on Kumang was soon followed up on 20 December by a raid on four other villages in the Sonapur *pargana* by a body of some 700 men. These

1. Cuthbert to Wilkinson, 11 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223.

2. W. Lambert to Govt., 2 Apl. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. *Ibid.* Also see Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 8 and 9 of 17 Jan. 1832 (140/3) and Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 17 of 31 Jan. 1832 (140/3).

4. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58891. Bindrai Manki stated later that a few days before this he and other tribesmen had assembled at Lanka, in Tamar, and decided to begin at once “to cut, plunder, murder and eat”: Bindrai’s statement to Bahadur Dubhasia, Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

villages were plundered and burnt, and two men—both Sikhs—were wounded.¹

The importance of both the attacks was that they were attacks upon outsiders, a Muslim at Kumang and a Sikh, Hari Singh, who had taken the farm of the four villages. Because of the widespread tribal discontent at their loss of land and influence to outsiders, these two attacks found popular support—the arrow of war circulated, says Dalton, like the fiery Cross²—and more and more tribal people joined the insurrection. Some, as in the mutiny of 1857, may have joined from fear of social ostracism, others were glad of a chance to plunder, but many followed because their natural tribal leaders called them to assert tribal authority. In the second attack there took part Sui, a *munda* or village headman, Topa Munda and Bindrai of Singhbhum, Singrai, a *manki* or circle headman of Sudgaon, another Singrai of Kochang in Tamar, and several other *mankis* and *mundas* of Sonepur and Anandipur.³ Their attack was directed against the outsider who had taken over the villages of Singrai Manki when he was dispossessed by Kunwar Harnath Shahi of Govindpur.

These attacks were quite unexpected, and found the authorities totally unprepared. Troops there were none for the strength of the Ramgarh battalion had been reduced⁴ during Bentinck's economy campaign, and many of the police stations had been abandoned. The police who went to investigate the second outrage were only a handful of men—the Jamadar of Govindpur *thana*, and two of his *barkandazes*, supported by thirty armed men of the *Kunwar* of Govindpur—and though they

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ethnology*, 171. "An arrow passed from village to village is the summons to arms": *Ibid.* footnote.

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58891. Also see Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

4. Metcalfe wrote to Bentinck on 29 January 1832, "We must I conceive hereafter, as a permanent arrangement for that quarter, either increase the strength of the Ramgarh Battalion, or post other corps there : " Bentinck MS., Box 17.

completed their investigation, they were pursued and attacked during their return and suffered heavy casualties—one of the *barkandazes* was killed, fourteen of the Kunwar's men were wounded.¹

The discomfiture of the police force only encouraged the insurgents, for on Christmas Day, 300 tribal people attacked, plundered and burnt the villages of Gassu [?] and Ramji [Ramjeri], the former held in farm by Kale Khan and the latter by Saif-ullah Khan (both of Deo, now in the Gaya district). One man was killed and thrown into the fire and another wounded, and Saif-ullah Khan only saved his life "by defending himself in the upper storey of his house, which the Coles set fire to, but on approach of assistance they fled before it was consumed."²

On 2 January they returned to plunder and burn Kumang and attacked a neighbouring village Koru Buru. On the 3rd, they thoroughly plundered Gangira, and murdered the *thikadar* or farmer Jafar Ali, the Kol woman whom he kept as his concubine, their two children, and several others of his dependants.² (Had he not heeded the assurances of Moti Ram Rautia, of Bamhani, from whom he had taken the farm of Gangira, he might have escaped to Deo). About one thousand insurgents took part in the attack.

So far little attempt had been made to check the outrages. The poor *daroga*, Karam Ali, had applied for aid to all the zamindars of the southern *parganas*, and to the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur without result. The *Nazir* of the Sherghati court was but little more successful. He went to Khunti and called in the *thana barkandazes* of Barkagarh, Jhikuchatti, and Govindpur and found but one zamindar, the kunwar of Govindpur, who was ready to supply armed assistance. He reached Gangira with this force, inspected the damage, ordered Karam Ali to bury the dead and returned to Khunti.³

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.* para. 4

3. *Ibid.* para. 4.

No sooner had he gone than the Kols returned, and Karam Ali fled for his life.¹

Nor were his attempts at negotiation successful. On 5 January he had offered immediately to restore their lands to the *mankis* of Sonapur, if they would halt the depredations. At the suggestions of Ghasi Manjhi, the Ilaqadar of Khunti, he had also appealed to them to come in to him, offering the necessary assurances.² The only response he received was the audacious statement that they "would not attend to the Hakim, the Kooar of Sonapoor nor to Ghassie Manjee, that they would not leave a single Teekadar alive and that they would destroy every village of the Sonapore pergunnah and even Govindpore itself and would wash their weapons in the river (the Karroo) which flows past it."³

The *nazir* thus acted to the best of his capacity. In the words of the Joint Commissioners for Chota-Nagpur, he "conducted himself with great judgment and firmness and had the zemindars come forward with assistance, we are of opinion that the progress of insurrection might have been arrested at this stage."⁴ But this arrest of Baijnath Manki added oil to the fire,⁵ and his withdrawal to Govindpur on the 9th morning further heartened the insurgents. By the 11th, the Kols were mustering in force (about 4,000), to attack Govindpur itself. The Kunwar of Govindpur made a piteous appeal to his *mundas* and *mankis* to protect and assist him. None paid any heed, and the Kunwar fled with his family to Dorea, his *guru's* (preceptor's) place.⁶ The *daroga* and the *thana* employees fled towards Jhikuchatti. On 12 January, Govindpur and almost the whole of the *pargana* of Belkudra were plundered and burned, especially the houses of the non-tribal people. The *kunwar*, at Dorea, was compelled, by a body of insurgents, to

1. *Ibid.* para. 5.

2. *Ibid.* para. 6. On 5 January Katunga and on the 7th Maringada had been burned.

3. *Ibid.* para. 8, B. C. 1502/58891.

4. *Ibid.* para. 9. But the causes were so deeprooted that it seems hardly possible that it could have been checked at this stage.

5. *Ibid.* para. 7.

6. Kunwar Harnath Sahi to Singrai Manki and others, 14 *Pus* 1888 *Sumbat*, B. C. 1363/54227.

write an *amalnama* for the villages of Turpa patti, making them over to Kamal Singh and Samode Baraik.¹

The insurrection had now become universal, and the tribal insurgents indiscriminately attacked "the Hindoos, Mahomedans, and other foreigners, who were settled in their villages engaged in commercial, or agricultural pursuits, drove them almost universally from their homes and property, which were burnt or plundered; and sacrificed numbers of those who fell into their hands, to their excited passions, of revenge and hatred."² The disposable force of the police in Ramgarh, as Neave said, was "wholly inadequate to repel these marauders."³ Since Cuthbert, the district officer, was away in Palamau, Neave called on Captain Wilkinson, the Acting Political Agent to the Governor-General on the southwest frontier and Temporary Commandant of the Ramgarh battalion, to provide "a sufficient force for the protection of the district."⁴

The reports of the Govindpur *daroga* indicated that the insurgents were already a thousand strong, and their number was growing.⁵ But at the headquarters of the Ramgarh battalion the whole disposable force only consisted of one subadar, two jamadars, six havildars, six naiks, 100 sepoy, and a six-pounder. Nevertheless Wilkinson acted quickly. All the available force was marched direct to Barkagarh on 12 January. He also directed a party of the Ramgarh battalion, on the march from Sambhalpur, to proceed to Govindpur.⁶

Wilkinson also urged Neave to apply for further military forces, pointing out the inadequacy of his own force now that

1. Statement of Kunwar Harnath Sahi, 28 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.* Also Harnath Sahi to the *mundas* of Turpapatti, 13 *Pus* 1888 *Sumbut*, *Ibid.* An *amalnama* was an authority to take possession of a property or an order for possession. These cultivators had been dispossessed of this village a few years back.

2. *Bengal & Agra Annual Guide & Gazetteer*, 1841, II, 35.

3. R. Neave to Wilkinson, 9 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1503/58896.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Neave to Govt., 9 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223.

6. Wilkinson to Govt. 11 Jan. 1832,
B. C. 1503/58896.

the Dhangar Kols of Chota-Nagpur were joining the Larka Kols of Singhbhum.¹ From the Raja of Ramgarh he asked the loan of two elephants with cavalry escort to carry his guns across the *ghats* and to Cuthbert he wrote saying "your presence in the pergunnah would be of great advantage to the speedy restoration of tranquility."²

Wilkinson's estimate of the situation was approved by Neave, who asked for reinforcements from Dinapur,³ while Cuthbert under orders from Lambert, the Commissioner of the Patna division, hurried to the headquarters of the Ramgarh battalion at Hazaribagh.⁴ Thus, "although the Government of Bengal acknowledged no obligation to protect the zemindars of Chota-Nagpore against each other or their subjects ; yet even its cold and selfish policy was roused to the necessity of interference by the impossibility of confining the outrages perpetrated to the estates of the dependent chiefs, and their menaced extension to the British districts on the one hand, and those of the Raja of Nagpore on the other".⁵

Meanwhile the insurrection continued to spread like wild-fire. On 13 January, all the villages of *thana* Govindpur (including the town itself), the Barkagarh *pargana* and *thana*, and several villages within the Jhikuchatti *thana* (to the north-west of Sonepur) were burned and plundered. Those foreigners or *suds*, who had not made good their escape, were murdered in cold blood. The ravages extended to the river Koel near Basia in the south, and to the ancient village of Chutia about ten miles south of Pitoria.⁶

By then, the *nazir* had reached Churia. There he tried to get Mukund Singh Baraik to resist the insurgents, but when he

1. Wilkinson to Neave, 11 Jan. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1503/58896.

2. Wilkinson to Cuthbert, 12 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223.

3. Neave to Major Penny, Brigade Major, Dinapur, 12 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Cuthbert to Lambert, Patna Commissioner, 13 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*

Also see Govt. to Lambert, 19 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

5. Wilson, *Mill's History of British India*, IX, 234.

6. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 10, B.C. 1502/58891. Now the number of insurgents was stated to be fourteen thousand : Neave to Govt., 14 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223.

found that even the tribesmen of his own estate were wavering, he fled with his family into the jungle while the *nazir* pushed on to Sherghati.¹ The huge wealth in Churia was thus left to be seized.

What had happened in Sonapur, Govindpur and Barkagarh was soon repeated in the other *thanas*. Some hundred villages in Jhikuchatti were burned or plundered, and by the 14th, the rebels were within a *kos* of the *thana* itself. On the 16th, the nerves of the *thana* staff broke, Jhikuchatti was abandoned, and they made their way, with those of Govindpur, to Lohardugga and thence to Palamau.²

The Armai *thana* was also overrun, the *amlas* and peaceful inhabitants fleeing to Palamau or Jashpur. Those who stayed behind lost their lives, and by January 24, almost all the villages of the area had been utterly destroyed. The *daroga* had fled to Leslienganj in Palamau. The insurrection then spread into Barwa and the raja of that *pargana*, his employees and all the 'respectable' inhabitants sought refuge in the state of Jashpur. Acts of plunder, arson and murder went on unabated.³

Thus by 26 January, the tribal insurgents had "complete possession of the whole of [Chota] Nagpore, with the exception of some of the jungly tracts to the south of Palkote—Palkote khas (the residence of the Maharaja) and the villages of that Pergunnah, Bussea, the zemindary of Lohar Sing Barrack [Baraik] (forming part of the jageer of Gopeenauth Sahi uncle of the present Rajah [Maharaja]), also to the south, and Peethowreah and the adjoining villages in the north-east corner."⁴

The first check to the very rapid spread of the disturbances was imposed by Captain Wilkinson and his small force. They reached Rara (Rarah),⁵ about half-way between Doesa and

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 10, B.C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* para. 11.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.* para. 27. See the enclosed map, 'Sketch of Chuta Nagpore and its dependencies.' There is a hill chain between Pitoria and Rarah. According to A Subaltern, 'Sketch of the Campaign', *East India Journal*,

Ramgarh and a few miles short of Pitoria, on 14 January 1832 : A small party was pushed forward to safeguard Pitoria, while the gun bullocks, completely knocked up by the ascent of the *ghats*, recovered. Smoke and flames from the nearby villages indicated the presence of the insurgents, and on arrival at Pitoria (on 16 January) Wilkinson immediately sallied out to attack them at Kharkatta. News of his little victory there encouraged Lal Jit Nath Sahi of Gujnu (Gujnoo),¹ ten miles south-west of Pitoria, to oppose the insurgents. On the 18th he faced some six hundred of them, charging them with three followers, killing six and routing the rest.² A few days later Wilkinson came up with a party of seventy insurgents near Borea, his ten horsemen charged them with such force that they could not escape, and one was killed and thirty taken prisoner.³

These three minor successes, and the arrival of the magistrate Cuthbert with a considerable body of irregular foot and horse, turned the tide locally. The tribal *mundas* and *pahans* of 56 villages submitted,⁴ and the *suds* on the northern borders of Chota-Nagpur were induced to stand firm in their villages. But the country in other quarters (especially in the south) was entirely in the hands of the insurgents.

The presence of Wilkinson's detachment, and their minor successes thus gave heart to the districts round and to the north of Pitoria. But any further success was obviously dependent upon his timely reinforcement. Neave, the acting magistrate, had already asked Ghanshyam Singh, the Deo raja, to supply horsemen and matchlock men,⁵ and twice advanced him Rs. 1,000 for expenses. The 50th Native Infantry, marching from Gorakhpur for Dinapur, was now diverted via Gaya to the

III, 185, Rorah was "a small village, or rather hamlet, situated between two ranges of hills."

1. *Ibid.* Also see Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 28, B.C. 1502/58891.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 29, B. C. 1502/58891. Also see Wilkinson to Neave, 20 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

3. Wilkinson to Neave, 22 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. Neave to Govt., 14 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223 ; Also see Neave to Govt., 23 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

Ramgarh district.¹ But Neave and Wilkinson felt this was still quite inadequate. "This force is wholly unequal to the task," wrote Neave², and accordingly put in an urgent demand for a cavalry force from Banaras. Wilkinson for his part felt that even these troops would be inadequate: "As it may not be practicable to furnish more than a battalion and a squadron of cavalry, I should deem it very advisable that at least five or six hundred Burkundazes and from 50 to 100 horsemen well armed should be employed under Gunsham Sing, who has volunteered his services and the sooner they reach my camp the better."³ A new difficulty was also making itself felt—a shortage of supplies, most of which had been carried off or destroyed by the insurgents.⁴ Neave had, therefore, to appoint an active officer to create a depot at Hazaribagh. He sent the *nazir* to collect supplies at Chatra, while Mitrabhan Singh, son of the Raja of Deo, also brought in provisions as well as troops.

Thus supplied and reinforced, Wilkinson was able to rout a force of some 3,000 insurgents advancing upon Pitoria.⁵ But meanwhile rebellion had spread to the five *parganas*, below the *ghats*—Tamar, Rahi, Bundu, Silli, and Baranda⁶—the dependencies of the Chota-Nagpur maharaja, on the immediate borders of the Jungle Mahals and Singhbhum. The Sonepur insurgents had entered this area on 16 January, and had since been joined by several villages and circle tribal leaders: Lakhi Das of Kachi, Dasai Manki and their followers. They first threatened the Raja of Bundu, who lost heart when he found that his *mundas* and *mankis* under Lakhi Das had deserted. He fled with his family to Jhalda in the Jungle Mahals. On

1. Military Deptt. to Judl. Deptt., 18 Jan. 1832, para. 2, *Ibid.*

2. Neave to Govt., 18 Jan. 1832, para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 67 of 31 Jan. 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₃)

3. Wilkinson to Neave, 20 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

4. Neave to Govt., 23 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*

5. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 30, B. C. 1502/58891.

6. *Ibid.* para. 13. Also see the enclosed map, 'Sketch of Chuta Nagpore and its dependencies.'

18 January the insurgents captured the rich town of Bundunagar. For four days they plundered the enormous wealth of the *mahajans* and then burned it down.¹ Three Pathans and two other foreigners were done to death, and within a few days the houses of all the non-tribal people of the whole *pargana* had been destroyed.² Strangely enough, they spared the raja's house, presumably as a token of respect to their recently hinduized chief.

When the Raja of Rahi heard about the burning of Bundu and found his own *mundas* and *mankis* hostile to him, he also fled with his family to Bagankodar in the Jungle Mahals. On the 17th, the tribal people of the area plundered the houses of all the non-tribal people in the villages of Baranda and Rahi. The houses of the raja, and of the *tikait* or guardian of the pass, who had fled with the raja, were, however, spared. In the adjoining *pargana* of Khas Silli the story was the same : all the houses of the *suds* were plundered and destroyed, the tribal people of Silli, Banta Hajam, Bundu, Rahi and Baranda all taking part. The Raja of Silli had already taken shelter in Kulma in Jhalda. Once again the house of the raja was spared and by the 23rd, when the insurgents from outside the *pargana* had moved on, he was able to return to it. In the 12 villages of Banta Hajam, belonging to the Pachet raja, the same scenes were enacted on January 17. The houses of Prayag Sahu and other wealthy inhabitants, who fortunately had escaped, were plundered and burned.

Only a week after these events, Tori *pargana* on the north-west borders of Chota-Nagpur proper, and Tamar on the south-east were disturbed. On 24 January the Bhogta and Ghasi tribes of Tori, 'imitating the example of the Coles of Nagpore who had joined them³, rose in arms. They took possession of the Hutap *ghat* and plundered and burned many villages below that pass. Those who tried to pass the *ghat* were plundered and killed. The *daroga* of Udaiganj *thana* had already

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 13, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, para 12.

fled and many peaceful inhabitants were now flying for shelter and safety.

Soon Tamar, *khas* and the villages of the *pargana* were attacked, plundered and burned. The Tribesmen of this hilly area under their *mankis* and *mundas*, who had deserted the rani, took part in the devastation. At the outset the rani resisted the insurgents with 300 men of Thakur Chetan Singh of Kharsawan and Lachhuman Singh of Tarai. The assailants were repelled and some of them were killed. But ultimately the rani left her residence which was burned. "This forms a solitary instance of the house of a Rajah being destroyed and is thus accounted for, namely, that the other Rajahs left people to protect their houses while the Tamar Rannie was alone deserted by all."¹ The main booty was secured from the town of Tamar and the *bhandar* (*khas*) villages. One *mahajan* in the town of Tamar and some three of Janampuri, the estate of Tribhuvan Manki, were murdered. Surjandihi, the estate of Thakur Borhan Singh, who had not deserted the rani, was also plundered and burned. Lachhuman Singh, who had also openly assisted the rani, was able, however, to protect his villages.

Though Singhbhum itself, to the south-east corner of Chota-Nagpur proper, was not disturbed in this period the Larka Kols of this area, famous for their martial spirit, were the chief supporters of the Dhangar Kols of Chota-Nagpur. The latter purposely circulated rumours that more and more Larkas were arriving² so that the people might be overawed. The Larkas of Bandgaon under Bindrai Manki, a man of daring character, and Sui Munda of Godarpiri and several others of Singhbhum first came to the aid of their brethren of Sonepur. Moreover, the tribesmen of Kochang and Jamur had participated in the outrages, probably at the behest of Dasai Manki and Katik Sardar, the heads of these villages. Other leaders were Mohan Manki, Sagar Manki, Sarga Manki, and Nagu Pahan, a daring man of Saradkel.³ The Rautias in general in Sonepur,

1. *Ibid.* para. 17.

2. Wilkinson to Neave, 20 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 21, B. C. 1502/58891.

Basia and other southern parts of Chota-Nagpur first gave them moral support, but later took an active part in the plundering excursions. Of these Kāmal Singh Baraik of Turpa patti, and a landholder of Singhbhum too, who had harassed Kunwar Harnath Sahi at the very beginning of the disturbances,¹ was the most prominent. All the *mankis* and *mundas* of the five *parganas* except Lachhuman Singh and Borhan Singh, were actively concerned in the perpetration of heinous crimes.

Thus from mid-January almost the whole of Chota-Nagpur proper and its five dependencies were at the mercy of the insurgents and so remained till the arrival of sufficient troops from outside. Wilkinson at Pitoria could not do much, at least he could not act offensively.² As the Acting Magistrate of Ramgarh reported, "Notwithstanding what that officer has effected in his own immediate neighbourhood, the general state of the *pergunnah* remains much the same."³ He further reported, "The insurgents are in several large bodies and commit their horrid outrages in various parts of the country, at the same time. The respectable parts of the inhabitants have fled into the jungles, and the police have come for protection below the ghauts."⁴

By the end of January the first troops from outside Chota-Nagpur began to arrive. Captain Maltby with 100 men of the 2nd Infantry from Dinapur and a body of horsemen and *barkandazes*, which had been recruited by Neave at Sherghati, entered Tori on 28 January and reached Tikoo, just above the *ghats*, on the 30th. Captain Wilkinson had already been reinforced by 200 matchlockmen and 50 horses under the command

1. Statement, Kunwar Harnath Sahi, 28 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

2. *Bengal Hurkaru*, 23 Jan. 1832.

3. Neave to Patna Commissioner, 25 Jan. 1832. para. 1, Bengal Cr. Judl. Cons. 4 of 7 Feb. 1832 (140/3).

4. *Ibid.* He wrote in another letter, "From absence of troops and the great distance of the stations whence they are procurable, the *Pergunnah* of Chota Nagpore has been for one month in the hands of the Insurgents, and no resistance has been made": Neave to Lambert, 27 Jan. 1832, Bengal Cr. Judl. Cons. 76 of 31 Jan. 1832 (140/3).

of Mitrabhan Singh of Deo on 25 January. Moreover Maharaja Mitrajit Singh of Tekari in the district of Bihar (now in Gaya) supplied 300 *barkandazes* with 200 cavalry, his nephew Bishun Singh supplied 70 cavalry and 150 *barkandazes*, and his illegitimate son, Raja Khan Bahadur Khan, also came forward with his 300 men.¹

To meet Wilkinson's urgent need for supplies Neave made further advances to the police officers and to 'respectable' landholders. An establishment of two hundred and fifty oxen with their drivers for the conveyance of these supplies was kept ready. At Chatra the collector's *nazir* was posted to superintend the collection of grain, etc.² He also arranged supplies for the cavalry contingent coming from Banaras, establishing *chaukis*, or depots, at Nabinagar, Aurangabad, Daudnagar, Gaya and Chatra so that sufficient necessities (e. g. grains like gram, *Dal*, *ghee*, salt, etc.) might be collected from the neighbouring bazars and forwarded to camp by bullocks.³

By now the Bengal Government had realized the gravity of the situation, and accordingly it directed the following detachments to march towards the disturbed areas: "From Barrackpore, a Regiment of Native Infantry (the 34th Regiment) proceeded on duty joined by a brigade of horse Artillery from Dum Dum. From Midnapore, a detachment of 300 men of the 38th Regiment Native Infantry stationed at that place could furnish one of that strength, if not, the Detachment to be as strong as the Regiment could supply. The detachment actually sent consisted of 2 companies."⁴ These reinforcements had been ordered because news had arrived of the spread

1. *Reformer*, quoted in Bengal Hurkaru, 12 March 1832 :

The *Reformer* commented that while the Muslims had risen against the British at Baraset, these Hindu gentlemen (One of them was partly Muslim) willingly and promptly came forward in support of the Government, thus maintaining the tradition of Jagat Seth and others who had aided the British in the battle of Plassey.

2. Neave to Lambert, 25 Jan. 1832, B.C. 1362/54224.

3. Neave to Lambert, 29 Jan. 1832, B.C. 1362/54223.

4. Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para. 12, *Ibid.* Also see *Bengal Hurkaru*, 1 Feb. 1832 : Col. Bowen was commanding the troops from Barrackpur.

of the insurrection to Tori and Palamau *parganas* on the north-western borders of Chota-Nagpur. By 27 January the whole of the Tori *pargana* was in revolt.¹ The *daroga* of Armai had been compelled to flee into Palamau for asylum. The *pargana* of Barwa had been plundered and burnt, and thereafter the insurgents had moved towards Palamau.² Then on 28 January the Government was further informed about an extension of the outrages to Lohardugga and Tikoo on the one hand, and to the five dependent *parganas* (Tamar, Bundu, Rahi, Baranda and Silli) on the other.³ The Barrackpur detachment was thereupon ordered to communicate immediately with the joint commissioners and to act in cooperation with them, and the Midnapur detachment to communicate, in the first instance, with the magistrate of Bankura. Moreover, to ensure cooperation and combination of movement on the part of all the forces proceeding to the disturbed areas, the Government ordered on 1 February that the commanding officers were to communicate with the commissioners and to proceed as they might point out. The seniormost military officer would, of course, assume the command of actual military operations, but in other respects, he and all other officers were to be guided by the commissioners.⁴

The hands of the Joint Commissioners had already been strengthened by the grant of special powers "to apprehend, try and bring to immediate punishment without further reference to Government all persons whom you may find in open resistance to the civil power."⁵ To guide them in the exercise of these emergency powers, they were instructed that "when the emergency might appear to them such as to render necessary or expedient the employment of prompt and vigorous measures,

1. Lambert to Govt., 29 Jan. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 75 of 31 Jan. 1832 (140/3)
2. Neave to Lambert, 30 Jan. 1832, para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 10 of 1 Feb. 1832 (140/3).
3. Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para. 12, B.C. 1362/54223.
4. *Ibid.* para. 13.
5. Govt. to Cuthbert, 24 Jan. 1832, para. 1, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 61 of 24 Jan. 1832, (140/3). Cuthbert and Wilkinson formed the special commission in this period.

they might avail themselves of the special powers, but when they might be of opinion that the offenders could, without detriment to the public interests, be left to be disposed of under the ordinary rules for the administration of criminal justice, they should proceed against them according to established form."¹ Neave, however, was not given any extraordinary powers, and when he urged that the deplorable state of Tori required a proclamation of martial law—and seemed inclined to make such a proclamation on his own responsibility—he was told not to exercise such powers without the express sanction of the Government.²

Patkum, Bagmundi, Hasla and Jhalda :

While Wilkinson, from Pitoria, was attempting to check the revolt in Ramgarh, and troops were on the move to deal with the outbreak in Tori, Palamau and the five dependent *parganas*, unrest had flared up in Patkum, the *pargana* which formed the most south-westerly part of the Jungle Mahals district. It was in this *pargana* that the refugees from Chota-Nagpur, and then from Tamar, Bundu and Rahi, which lay immediately to the west of Patkum, had sought asylum. Russell, the Jungle Mahals magistrate, had been warned of the approach of the insurgents by the zamindars of his district's western borders³, and on 23 January two messengers arrived from the Rani of Patkum to report to her husband, who was with Russell at headquarters at Bankura, that insurgents had invaded Patkum and burnt down three villages.⁴ On the 24th, Russell wrote to Midnapur, 55 miles south of Bankura, for military assistance. He requested the authorities there to forward whatever disposable force they had at their command into *pargana* Patkum, through Bara-

1. Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para, 9, B.C. 1362/54224.
2. Lambert to Govt., 29 Jan 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 75 of 31 Jan. 1832 (140/3). Also see Govt. to Lambert, 31 Jan. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 77 of 31 Jan. 1832 (140/3).
3. Hasla, Jhalda, Bagankodar, Bagmundi and Jaipur.
4. Russell, Magistrate, Jungle Mahals, to Govt., 23 Jan. 1832, B C, 1363/54226.

bhum so that they might cooperate with Captain Wilkinson and oppose any extensive descent of the insurgents into Bankura.¹

The Bengal Government, however, obviously thought Russell alarmist and told him that his requisition was unnecessary as sufficient military force had already been placed at the disposal of the civil authorities. They cancelled the leave of Martin, Russell's assistant, and ordered him to proceed by *dak* to the Jungle Mahals headquarters.² They told Russell that he should call upon the zamindars of Patkum, Jhalda and the other bordering estates to summon all the retainers and to aid him in opposing the insurgents, and maintaining the peace of the district.³ If the disturbances continued, Russell was to hand over the charge of his office at the headquarters to Martin and was to proceed himself to the spot. He was further directed to consult for his guidance the proceedings of the years 1806 to 1808 under Blunt⁴ when similar disturbances had occurred in this area.

Thus reproved by Bengal Government, Russell wrote to the officer commanding at Midnapur to stop the march of any military force.⁵ However, it remained his firm conviction that the military force in Ramgarh was insufficient to meet the situation. He had at his command at Bankura, besides the *ghatwals*, only the *barkandazes* who had belonged to the late provincial battalion. He thought that his proceeding to the disturbed area with only these indifferent men, and unaided by

-
1. Russell to officer commanding at Midnapur, 24 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.* He also wrote to the Ramgarh magistrate and to the political Agent at Hazaribagh, 120 miles northwest from Bankura, asking the latter to send a party of sepoys to preserve the lives and property of the inhabitants :

Russell to Wilkinson, 23 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.* At the same time he sent a *daroga* to Jhalda and another to Patkum with instructions to the zamindars of that area to stand against the insurgents.

2. Govt. to Martin, 24 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*
3. Govt. to Russell, 24 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*
4. Blunt, the third member of the Governor-General's Council at this time, was the Magistrate of the Jungle Mahals in 1806—1810.
5. Russell to Govt., 26 Jan. 1832, B.C. 1363/54226.

some military force, would be of no avail. He proposed, however, to place a sufficient number of hired men for the protection of the Bankura jail in case he had to go to Patkum with the matchlockmen.¹

Russell's forebodings soon began to seem justified. The houses of those who were in the employ of the Patkum zamindar were burnt in several villages. Four more villages in western Patkum, on the other side of the Subarnarekha river, were destroyed, and on 23 January Elu, the chief village of the Hasla *pargana*, 14 miles from Patkum, was devastated. Between Wilkinson with his little force at Pitoria and Patkum, fifty hilly, difficult miles to the south-east, the insurgents were sweeping through the *parganas* of Bundu, Baranda and Silli. Though Russell had sent *parwanas* to the zamindars of the area to take courage and to arm their *paiks* for resistance,² most of them were in a state of great alarm and preparing to flee. Out of the zamindars of Patkum, Torang, Bagmundi, Hasla and Jhalda, the bordering *parganas* of the district, he found only the zamindar of Jhalda ready to act, aided by the chiefs of Jaipur and Bagankodar. The zamindar of Pachet was in a deplorable state of mind, and nothing could be expected from him.³

On 29 January Russell wrote again to Midnapur for military assistance. This time he had the support of the Burdwan commissioner, who expressed his willingness to proceed to Bankura. Accordingly two companies of the 38th N. I. set out under Captain Horsburgh from Midnapur, via Bishnupur and Bankura.⁴ Russell had also learnt from Dent that a regiment had been ordered to Ramgarh from Barrackpur⁵ and the Bengal Government, confirming its despatch, asked Russell to provide the requisite supplies for the regiment when it passed through his district.⁶ It was therefore with some confidence that he

1. *Ibid.*

2. Russel to Govt., 29 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1363/54226.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.* Also see W. Braddon, Burdwan Commissioner, to Govt., 27 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1363/54226.

5. Russell to Govt., 31 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*

6. Govt. to Russell, 30 Jan. 1832, *Ibid.*

joined Horsburgh's detachment and marched with it to Patkum, where they arrived on 12 February.¹ (Wilkinson, urging that great caution should be exercised in any further advance towards him, suggested that for the time being the two companies should be held at Patkum for the protection of the Jungle Mahals.)²

With the arrival of the troops the disturbances rapidly subsided, and Russell threw himself heart and soul into the task of restoring order, investigating the out-breaks and preparing a report upon them. This work took more than two months, and his assistant Martin remained in charge of the Bankura civil station in this period. Russell assembled a considerable force of armed men from the interior of the district, consisting of *barkandazes* and others, and he was authorized by the Bengal Government to give them diet allowances and suitable remuneration. But his requisition of elephants and tents from the zamindars was not approved.

On 22 March Russell reported that he had completed his investigation, that he had recovered more than 1,200 head of cattle and about 6,000 maunds of grain, and that he had taken more than 650 prisoners, eighty of them for the attack on Elu alone.³ The most important of these prisoners was the zamindar of Jhalda, whom Russell had arrested as a principal fomentor of the disturbance at Elu. Russell's investigations also implicated the *Diwan* of the Patkum zamindar, and his dependent chiefs and *ghatwals*, and in Bagmundi *pargana* the brother of the late zamindar.

It seems certain that the disturbance ceased so quickly in this area because of the decisive action taken by Russell. As Russell reported, "if it had not been for the rumour of troops marching through the district, the disturbances would have also spread into other pergunnahs [of the Jungle Mahals], where the police is invested in the landholders and where there are no regular police Thannahs."⁴

1. Russell to Govt., 13 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

2. Ramgarh Magt. to Russell, 1 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

3. Russell to Govt., 22 March 1832, *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.* para. 16.

Palamau and Tori :

When in January 1832 the tribal people of Chota-Nagpur and its dependencies were carrying fire and sword against the non-tribal people the Company's officials attempted to check their progress by using against them their kinsmen in Palamau, the Cheros and Kharwars who "had ever been celebrated as good fighters."¹ But no sooner had the *jagirdars* of Palamau assembled their tribal militia at Leslieganj than news came (on 26 January) that the Kols were planning an incursion into Palamau as well. So the *jagirdars* were asked to defend their own *ghats* instead of marching for the protection of the neighbouring *parganas*.

The *ghats* at which the insurgent Kols were said to be aiming were those of Tissa and Rania, and many of the peaceable settlers, fearing that Chechari to the south of Palamau would be attacked from the south, began to flee northwards. Neave, the Assistant Magistrate of Ramgarh, attempted to prevent any such attack by calling on the raja and *jagirdars* of the area as well as the *darogas* of Leslieganj and Tarhasi to defend the *ghats*. The *jagirdars* of Chechari and Sima accordingly proceeded to close the approaches to their *jagirs* effectively. The *daroga* of Leslieganj also collected a hundred Cheros with matchlocks and took them to protect the defiles leading from the Tissa *ghat* on 28 January. Moreover at the suggestion of many dependable persons in Palamau, Neave advanced a sum of five hundred rupees for hiring *barkandazes* to Raja Ran Bahadur Rai, whose family, though disposed of its zamindari in 1813, still possessed some influence.²

1. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 3A, B. C. 1363/54228 : *Parwanas* were issued to the principal *jagirdars* of Palamau to assemble their men at Leslieganj and then to set out to Chota-Nagpur via Chatra.
2. Neave to Lambetr, 30 Jan. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 10 of 7 Feb. 1832 (140/3). This action of Neave was criticised by Major Sutherland as 'dangerous' probably because relying on the false report from the *qanungo*, Sutherland thought that Raja Ran Bahadur might himself rebel after getting the money. See Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

The attempt to halt the Chota-Nagpur insurgents failed : The first breach occurred at the Tissa *ghat*, through which Thakur Udainath Singh and Lal Maninath Sahi of Jugi were pursued. The *ghatwal* at Tissa, Chamar Sahi, held his ground for a while against the insurgents, but eventually under heavy pressure had to yield. Once he had done so, perhaps feeling compromised, he proceeded to join the rebels, and became one of their most active leaders.¹ His example proved infectious. After a week on the borders of Palamau, awaiting a suitable moment for attack, the insurgents had won over a number of the Kharwar leaders and other tribal chiefs who had entertained them. Soon all the tribal people came to terms with them, and on 7 February the attack on Palamau began, led by the Kol Bhutnath of Sazardi and the Cheros, Kharwars and Poliards of Palamau under Dakbin Sahi, a relation of Chamar Sahi, the Tissa *ghatwal*.² On that day the villages of Ichak, Bari and Mankiari were all burnt and the force of Raja Ran Bahadur driven back with much loss. The attempt to use tribal people to oppose tribal insurgents had thus broken down, and Neave had to report to Patna that the Chota-Nagpur Kols were busy trying to excite the lower to rise against the higher orders.³

Fortunately, at this time the detachment from Banaras, for which Neave had put in a requisition in the middle of January, was in the neighbourhood of Palamau in the north in the Shahabad district. Therefore, as a preventive measure, Neave directed the march of two companies of the 54th regiment direct to Palamau, though the remainder of the 3rd regiment of Light Infantry had to be directed to halt at Sasaram, 75 miles north of Palamau, due to the shortage of supplies.⁴

1. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 3C, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Neave to Lambert, 4 Feb. 1832, para. 1, B. C. 1362/54224 ; Lambert to Govt., 6 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

Also see Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para. 26, B. C. 1362/54223.

4. Neave to Lambert, 4 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 22 of 14 Feb. 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₄)

The disturbances in Palamau thereafter spread like wild-fire. The Kols had entered the area in two places. Most of the *jagirdars*, who were holding land on condition of performing military service, shirked from hazarding a fight.¹ Neave, therefore, recommended that their lands should be confiscated.² Unable to expect any assistance locally, Neave asked Captain Angelo, commanding the 3rd Light Cavalry on way to Chota-Nagpur from the West to detach a small force into Palamau *pargana* to prevent the further spread of the unrest.³ Angelo replied that as he had guns with him he could not divide his force. He added that he had the Chota-Nagpur special commissioner's request to proceed to Pitoria with all speed. Neave's request was, therefore, not attended to.

Neave was not satisfied with this refusal, and wrote to Lambert to express his fear that without a military force Palamau would go the way of Chota-Nagpur. Because of the hill barrier between Chota-Nagpur and Palamau any British activity in the former area had little effect in the latter : success in Chota-Nagpur would do little to encourage the *jagirdars* of Palamau—certainly not as much as the presence of a detachment of troops. If the *jagirdars* persisted in their cowardice and the *pargana* was overrun then the supplies for the troops in Chota-Nagpur would be endangered, and there would also be a great loss of revenue.⁴ Why then when a regiment and guns from Calcutta and a detachment from Midnapur were on their way should a detachment not be spared for Palamau ?

However, the approach of the troops had a good moral effect. The large-scale work of destruction stopped, though one more village was burnt. Raja Ran Bahadur, provided with ammunition by Neave, and the *jagirdars* now began to

-
1. Neave to Lambert, 5 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 14 Feb. 1832 (140/4). (Only two of them had come forward to check the progress of the insurgents.)
 2. *Ibid.* He was asked by Commissioner Lambert to submit a further report on this to the Government : Lambert to Govt., 7 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 26 of 14 Feb. 1832 (140/4).
 3. See Neave to Govt., 27 Feb. 1832, para. 9, B.C. 1362/54224.
 4. Neave to Lambert, 7 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

exert themselves. The raja marched to the burnt village immediately.

But the more favourable turn of events was short-lived, for the withdrawal of troops from Tori was followed by further disturbances. "The lower classes," Neave reported, "have evidently entered into a combination with the Coles and immediately on the departure of troops, they recommence the old system of burning, plundering and killing."¹ The police, temporarily re-established by military force at Udaiganj, was again dislocated and could afford no protection to the people against the crimes being perpetrated. Neave, therefore, wrote to the commissioner about his helplessness in the absence of any troops at his command. Lambert did on this occasion sanction a request to Captain Wilkinson to detach a party of troops for the protection of that *pargana*.²

The worsening of the situation of Palamau, just when the *jagirdars* had begun to make headway against the insurgents, was more directly due, however, to the intrigues of subordinate officials of the collector's office posted at Leslieganj, "to which may be said to have been sacrificed the peace of the country."³ The *qanungo*, Gauri Charan, and the *sheristadar*, Alam Chand, contrary to Neave's orders, did not allow the *jagirdars*, who had assembled at Leslieganj, to blockade the advancing rebel armies at the *ghats*. Moreover, they continued to send false reports to Neave from 31 January till the middle of February. The forces of the *jagirdars* were divided because of this duplicity of the subordinate staff.

Nevertheless, Raja Ran Bahadur did march to the Jhabe Ghat and thence to Chechari with about 300 Chero and Kharwar *barkandazes*, some fifty Pathans and a few Brahmans. He was joined by the Leslieganj *daroga* and some *barkandazes* as well. But the *sheristadar* and the *qanungo* did not allow most of the *barkandazes* at Leslieganj to join the raja in spite

1. Neave to Lambert, 10 Feb. 1832, para. 3, B.C. 1362/54225.

2. Lambert to Govt., 11 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.

3. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 3E, B.C. 1363/54228.

of his repeated requests. Still the raja followed up the insurgents. Even when on 8 February the tribal followers of the raja deserted him to join the rebel army, the raja did not lose heart and with Babu Chhatradhari Singh, Jagmohan Singh and Bhawani Baksha Rai, and with his Pathans and Brahmans, "rushed on the enemy and fought most bravely until they actually put to flight the Coles."¹ However when the victors were taking their meal at ease, the united body of Cheros, Kharwars and others fell on them and slew fourteen men. Again the raja requested the *nazir* and *sheristadar* at Leslienganj to send the *barkandazes*, but once again they would not pay any heed. Thereupon the raja, in utter disgust, left for his home at Shahpur.

The sympathy of the subordinate staff with the rebels was not at once discovered, for they concealed their misconduct by producing on 13 February a slanderous and alarming report, accusing the raja of complicity in the insurgent's crimes. They even denied that he had ever fought a battle at all, stating rather that he had run away with all his men. It was not till some time later that the report was exposed as false and the two officials were punished, and meanwhile their treachery had led to disaster, for with the raja's withdrawal, and that of the other aggrieved *jagirdars*, the Kols were left at liberty to plunder and burn without check,² while the *sheristadar* and other officials abandoned their posts to save the official papers.

Lambert, on receipt of the alarming reports, asked Neave to send an express requisition to the Brigadier General commanding at Banaras, for such additional military force as could be spared. He also informed Neave that he had ordered a direct *dak* to be established for immediate communication with Sherghati.³ Lambert also wrote directly to the Brigadier General commanding at Dinapur to ask whether there was any military force there for the protection of the disturbed areas.⁴

1. Ibid.

2. Neave to Lambert, 14 Feb. 1832, para. 3, B.C. 13 62/54225.

3. Lambert to Neave, 14 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Lambert to Govt., 14 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

Meanwhile the insurgents were reported to be in force near Satbarwa, 10 miles from Leslieganj, and the inhabitants of Palamau, failing completely to live up to their fighting reputation, began to flee. Their flight had naturally a demoralising effect on the people of the neighbouring *pargana* of Tori, which had already been devastated twice. The insurgents had approached Chiteri, Barahatu and Jabera, and the shopkeepers were ready to flee away. Since Chiteri was a depot for supplies for the troops, its desertion would be a severe calamity.¹

Neave's idea of employing the 3rd Light Cavalry in Palamau was now supported by Wilkinson.² One of the squadrons, Neave wrote on 14 February, had already moved into Palamau on 10 February, and the second under Colonel Hawtrey, he thought, might be kept at Sherghati to protect the areas of Bihar north of Palamau. True, thousands of *barkandazes* could be recruited, but Neave had little confidence in such a corps, especially after Captain Maltby's experience of their conduct, and after their desertion while fighting on the raja's side. The tribal levy of the raja had first refused to fire and then fled, and the non-tribal followers were surprised by a body of 5,000 insurgents, including 1,000 *Ashrafs* (respectable men or small *jagirdars*), armed with matchlocks, and 25 horsemen with spears.³

At such a critical juncture, Lambert learnt with dismay that there was no disposable force at Dinapur and that the 64th N.I. was only due to arrive there after a fortnight.⁴ So from Gaya he went to Sherghati and conferred with Neave and Lt. Col. Hawtrey of the 3rd Light Cavalry on 16 February. It was then decided that Hawtrey should march with the remaining squadron of his regiment to *pargana* Tori. This squadron would

1. Neave to Lambert, 11 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 9 of 21 Feb. 1832 (140/1).

2. Neave took a certain pleasure in pointing out that had his request for the aid of Captain Angelo's forces been met, the danger could already have been averted : Neave to Lambert, 12 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. Neave to Lambert, 14 Feb. 1832, postscript, *Ibid.*

4. Brigadier General O'Halloran to Lambert, 16 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

then remain there and that under Lt. Drummond would stay in Palamau until instructions came from the special commissioners. It was hoped that the road to Tikoo from Sherghati, a distance of 56 miles to the south, could thus be kept open for carrying supplies for Impey's detachment at Tikoo and Wilkinson's headquarters at Pitoria.¹ Lambert, moreover, requested the Government to sanction the further requisition of troops from Banaras and Dinapur.

On 16 February the special (joint) commissioners at Pitoria instructed the officer commanding the 3rd Light cavalry that the squadron under Drummond, which had proceeded to Palamau, should remain as near to the Tissa Ghat as possible so that he could easily join the right column of the force at Lohardugga.² But when that very day they heard from Neave that the insurgents had further penetrated into Palamau, they asked Hawtrey to proceed to Palamau to "attack and slay the insurgents."³

On the basis of these instructions from the Patna commissioner and the joint commissioners, Neave requested Hawtrey to proceed first to Tori where the conditions were worst.

When Hawtrey with his squadron left Sherghati for Tori, Neave realized that the protection of the former place and of the areas adjoining it was also necessary, and he wrote to the Commissioner asking for some further aid.⁴ He stated further that Tori was in turmoil, while Palamau was tranquil, but he was not sure whether the tranquillity in Palamau would last: "There has been nothing so prominent in the whole of this business as the singular variation of affairs daily, nay hourly, so that it has happened, that I was signing a letter of congratulation on the apparent approach of tranquillity I have received intelligence of reverses and fresh disturbances. We must not therefore too highly estimate this peaceful state of Palamow."⁵ This was to prove a truly prophetic utterance!

1. Lambert to Govt., 16 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

2. Jt. Commissioners to Hawtrey, 16 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* postscript.

4. Neave to Lambert, 17 Feb. 1832, para. 2, *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.* para. 5.

On 18 February, Hawtrey and his squadron entered Tori *pargana*, leaving Drummond to ensure the continued tranquillity of Palamau. Three days later Neave was told by the Raja of Kunda, twelve miles west of Chatra, that a body of insurgents was at the foot of the *ghats* leading from his estate to Palamau on the west.¹ But neither he nor Drummond was able to secure further information as the 'scoundrelly' *sheristadar* at Leslieganj had set Drummond and the *jagirdars* at odds and had prevented any news getting through to him.² Neave was thus still reporting Palamau calm when insurgents had entered the *pargana* and driven Drummond's forces back.

The check to Drummond's squadron had occurred on the 22nd. The previous evening he had received information of insurgents plundering Satbarwa, ten miles south of Leslieganj, and six miles east of Palamau, and had despatched a body of troops under Lieutenant Marsh against them. On the morning of the 22nd, Marsh found them in the open, and charging, easily dispersed them.³ But during the pursuit a further body of insurgents, this time six or seven thousand strong, was discovered, and it was soon seen that they were heading for the Chitma pass with the obvious intention of cutting off the retreat of the troops to camp. As the troops were entrapped in a hollow surrounded by immense hills and impenetrable jungle, they were obliged to force the *ghat*. The cavalry found itself helpless, faced with a shower of arrows, matchlocks and other missiles from all sides against which the troops could do nothing in reply because all their ammunitions had been spent. Consequently one *jamadar*, one *sepo*y and two horses were killed and one *Naik*, three *sepo*ys and six horses wounded.⁴

1. Neave to Lambert, 21 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225. Also see Lambert to Neave, 22 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.

2. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 3i, B. C. 1363/54228.

3. H. Drummond to Neave, 22 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225. According to 'A loyal *jageerdar*' close to the camp, 28 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 13 March 1832, this encounter took place on 21 February and the number of the insurgents was 8 to 10,000 in *Goles* of 15,000 to 2,000 each.

4. Drummond to Neave, 22 Feb. 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

Drummond hurried from Leslieganj with the remaining forces as soon as he heard about the reverse and covered the advanced party in its retreat. Back in camp the officers unanimously decided in a council that the *ghat* on the road to Sherghati should be instantly passed to prevent a similar ambush and to secure communications with Sherghati. Drummond wrote to Neave that as it was impossible to contend against such a superior insurgent force, he thought it useless to remain at Leslieganj. He, therefore, requested immediate reinforcements so that he could proceed to Sherghati with his cavalry. If the relief did not come, he warned, he would proceed in forced marches without it.¹

Neave's response was to set out next day, 24 February, from Sherghati with 50 men of the late Patna Provincial battalion and about 200 men armed with matchlocks. He joined Drummond's detachment at Manatu, 16 *kos* south of Sherghati and 8 north of Leslieganj.² That same day Lathurna and other villages south of Leslieganj were destroyed, and then Leslieganj itself. On the 25th the squadron pushed on as far as the burning villages near Turhasi, but found nobody.³ On the 27th a further 50 provincial sepoy and irregular *barkandazes* arrived from Sherghati.

The reverse suffered by Marsh had shown that cavalry could not with safety operate alone—Hawtrey, when moving into Tori, had asked for a small detachment of infantry to be placed at his disposal⁴—and also suggested that the Bengal Government's expressed dislike of the splitting up of the cavalry forces into small detachments was well founded.⁵ But more important

1. *Ibid.*

2. Lambert to Govt., 25 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. Lambert to Govt., 27 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Lt. Col. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 18 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

5. The Bengal Government had disliked the splitting of Captain Angelo's 3rd Light cavalry into two, and they had demanded an explanation from Neave: Govt. to Neave, 14 Feb. 1832, Bengal Cr. Judl. Cons. 37 of 14 Feb. 1832 (140/1). When they got the detailed explanation from Neave (Neave to Govt., 27 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224) they thanked him for his exertions, and cleared him from the charge of having misguidedly directed

still, the reverse emphasized the necessity for carrying the *jagirdars* with the Company and so securing timely intelligence and the cooperation of those who knew the countryside. The most important service rendered by Neave was to expose the folly of the *sheristadar* and *ganungo* of Leslieganj, to get rid of them, and so to secure the cooperation of the jagirdar once more. That done the Palamau insurrection came speedily to an end.

The second phase of unrest in Palamau had been largely confined to the Mankiari and Manka *parganas*, where the local tribesmen had been led by Chamar Singh of Bariatu, Hukum Singh and Haril Singh of Jër and a few others.¹ After Neave's junction with Drummond the Kols from outside the area returned to Chota-Nagpur, declaring that they had borne the brunt of the two battles at Chitma and Latehar and that at Leslieganj the Cheros and Kharwars, the local tribesmen, alone had perpetrated the depredations. So long as the Kols were in the area, the local tribesmen were encouraged to action and felt free to enact any ghastly scene in their name. After the withdrawal of the Kols, however, that support and that alibi were alike lost, while most of the leaders, who were the brains behind these outrages, were captured by the troops.

The return of Colonel Hawtrey to the support of Drummond on 27 February and the arrival of the advance guard of the 64th, and then of Lt. Col. Hamilton with the other five companies of the 64th on 5 March,² completed the covering and pacification of Palamau.

The strengthening of Neave's hand in Palamau in part had been achieved by a weakening of control over Tori. Before the

Captain Maltby's change of route, but he was found to have frustrated, though not wilfully, the intention of the Government to effect an early junction of troops. (Govt. to Neave, 6 March 1832, *Ibid.*) (Already on 27 February they had drawn the attention of the Joint Commissioners to "the cavalry in Palamau and Tori being without Infantry, and the Infantry in Tamar without cavalry : " B. C. 1362/54225).

1. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 3E, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. Lambert to Govt., 6 March 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

arrival of Hawtrey's squadron Tori had been "in a state of complete disorganisation"¹ with villages burned, roads blocked, and all travellers without exception plundered. "All the well-affected inhabitants south of this [camp Bariatu] had fled, and their villages were destroyed".² Col. Hawtrey, on his arrival in the *pargana* on 25 February, had achieved one notable success by surprising the insurgents at Balunagar where, having plundered the villages of Charu and Bora the night before, they were celebrating with a feast of two fine bullocks. As a correspondent of the *Bengal Hurkaru* put it "The cavalry dropped in 'quite promiscuously' which so astonished 'my host' and his friends [...], that they completely lost all etiquette of politeness."³ About 40 or 50 of the insurgents were cut up in the attack.⁴ "The only casualties on our side in this affair," wrote Hawtrey, "were two horses wounded and it is with great regret I add, that one of our spies was killed, and another severely wounded, having been mistaken for enemies by our own men."⁵ But the good effect of this vigorous action was largely undone by Hawtrey's return to Palamau, after the defeat of Marsh's detachment. Two companies of the 50th N. I. with one six-pounder, which had joined Hawtrey, stayed on at Jalera after his withdrawal,⁶ but their presence was not enough to overawe the insurgents after the cavalry had withdrawn. Consequently before Lt. Col. Hamilton who arrived at Sherghati on 5 March with the remaining five companies of the 64th N. I. and two six-pounders from outside,⁷ reached Tori early in March, the mischief in that *pargana* was over. Several hundred villages were laid waste, and the major portion of the *pargana* fell a prey to the insurgents' wrath.⁸

With the main bodies of insurgents dispersed, troops arriving

-
1. Neave to Lambert, 23 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*
 2. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 23 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*
 3. 'A loyal Jageerdar', 28 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 13 March 1832.
 4. Hawtrey to Wilkinson, 25 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.
 5. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 26 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*
 6. Jt. Commissioners to Hawtrey, 3 March 1832, *Ibid.*
 7. Lambert to Govt., 6 March 1832, *Ibid.*
 8. R. Trotter to Lambert, 7 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

in considerable numbers, and the inhabitants of Palamau and Tori thereby reassured, the next task was to re-establish the civil administration and to enquire into the causes of the disturbance. It was not easy for the Calcutta authorities to decide how best this might be done. Neave had already impressed upon them, in a report of 14 February, that the Special Commissioners in Chota-Nagpur had not the means to deal with the situation in Palamau. They had, therefore, authorised Lambert, the Patna commissioner, "to exercise with regard to that tract and to confide to Mr. Neave at your discretion, the same powers that have been entrusted to these officers [Cuthbert and Wilkinson] in suspension of the ordinary Regulations."¹ To that course the joint commissioners had agreed, asking Lambert either himself to exercise or to depute some other person to exercise special civil powers in Palamau.² Accordingly Lambert asked the Government to appoint Robert Trotter as register (registrar) of the Ramgarh court with special powers, and to sanction his acting as Magistrate of Ramgarh if Neave had to go to Palamau.³

It seemed likely at the end of February that Neave's presence would be required in Palamau, for despite the steady assembly of troops there, to restore the situation after Marsh's retreat, great alarm had been raised in Kunda, Nabinagar and Chechari of more insurgent attacks impending.⁴ On 6 March the Bengal Government appointed Trotter as register with special powers,⁵ while Lambert directed Neave that "in the event of the disturbances again breaking out in the pergunnah, you will proceed thither, and exercise there the same powers that have been

1. Govt. to Lambert, 20 (incorrectly written as 29) Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 12 of 21 Feb. 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₄).
2. Jt. Commissioners to Lambert, 29 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.
3. Lambert to Govt., 28 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225 ;
Lambert to Govt., 29 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.* and
Lambert to Govt., 5 March 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.
4. Lambert to Govt., 1 March 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.
Khiroddar Sahi, jagirdar of Chechari, to Ramgarh Magt.,
n. d., Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 84 of 13 March 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₅).
5. Govt. to Lambert, 6 March 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

entrusted to the special commissioners in suspension of the ordinary Regulations."¹ He made it clear, of course, that according to the orders of the Government of 13 February the direction of the military force in the whole of the disturbed parts of Ramgarh would be retained by the joint commissioners.

Neave, however, objected to the instructions that he should take charge of Palamau only if a fresh outbreak should occur, for he held that it was essential to hold a prompt enquiry and enforce immediate punishment upon those found guilty.² Lambert put his case to the joint commissioners, asking that in the event of their being unable to conduct the necessary enquiries in Palamau, Neave might be authorized to make them.³ The Patna commissioner was the readier to press this because the alternative seemed likely to be that he himself would have to conduct the enquiry, whereas his own plan was to return to Patna and go on a month's leave. When, therefore, he received the Government's sanction for Trotter's acting magistracy, Lambert lost no time in asking Neave to proceed without delay to Palamau and there to conduct the necessary enquiries into the outbreak, reminding him that his special powers should only be exercised "in cases in which persons may be found in open resistance to the civil power, and in which the emergency may be such as to render necessary the employment of prompt and vigorous measures, but not in cases in which the offenders may without detriment to the public interests be left to be disposed of under the ordinary rules for the administration of justice."⁴ Towards the end of March then Neave set off for Palamau and Lambert for Patna, the latter sending to Calcutta a long explanation of the good reasons for his returning there and the zeal which prompted him to do so.⁵

1. Lambert to Neave, 5 March 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. Neave to Lambert, 7 March 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

3. Lambert to Jt. Commissioners, 8 March 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 93 of 13 March 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₅).

4. Lambert to Neave, 15 March 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

5. Lambert to Govt., 2 Apl. 1832, paras. 2 to 9, B. C. 1362/54225.

It did not save him from Government's reproof for not having delayed his departure from Sherghati till the troops' return indicated the restoration

While these complicated manœuvres were taking place among the civil officials, in preparation for an enquiry into the disturbances and restoration of the administration, there were further military alarms. Four companies of infantry with one field piece had been despatched from the right column operating from Tikoo, and two other companies came up from Patna to Sherghati to join Hawtrey's cavalry. The joint commissioners rightly held that this should be sufficient to deal with the insurrection in Palamau.¹ But alarming reports now came in from Raja Khirodar Sahi of Chechari, near Barwa *pargana*, stating that he was surrounded by insurgents in imminent danger of attack.² The *thanadar* of Guran, in Palamau, also reported that three hundred Kharwars and Cheros, calling themselves Kols, had plundered the *malik* (proprietor) of Sipua [Supa ?] near Udaipur.³ Col. Hawtrey also reported several thousand insurgents assembled near Barwa.⁴ These reports seem, if not false, to have been much exaggerated—Major Blackall wrote that he thought the raja had "not yet recovered from the panic with which he was seized on the insurrection first breaking out."⁵ Certainly when Hawtrey set out on 17 March with infantry of the 64th to try and surprise the insurgents they failed to make contact and reported that no further operations at Barwa and Chechari were necessary.⁶ By that date, too, Tori was quiet, and the communications between Tikoo and Sherghati via Tori had been completely restored.

When, therefore, Neave reached Latchar in Palamau at the end of March he was able to proceed with his investigation of the causes of the outbreak. He showed, however, very firm

of complete tranquillity, and till he had obtained their permission : Govt. to Lambert., 17 Apl. 1832, para. 2, *Ibid.*

1. Jt. Commissioners to Hawtrey, commanding in Palamau, 27 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

2. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 18 March 1832, and its enclosure, *Ibid.*

3. Lambert to Govt., 12 March 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 9 [or 8] March 1832, *Ibid.*

5. Major Blackall to Jt. Commissioners, 22 March 1832, *Ibid.*

6. Lt. Col. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 18 March 1832, *Ibid.*

pre-conceived notions of what ought to be done with the insurgents. Thus on 29 March, almost as soon as he had arrived, he wrote to the Government to express his opinion that the tribal people of this area had become reckless because they had been treated with levity after their previous risings in 1801 and 1817. He thought that "until some of the insurgents especially those who have been actively engaged in bloodshed, suffer on the spot, no sufficiently effectual example for the purpose of prevention can be made."¹ He suggested, therefore, that Col. Hawtrey might be joined with him "in a commission to punish at discretion, save extending to life and death, all persons who may have been proved to have been concerned in the rising, and extending to life and death where the person may be proved to have been a leader or to have committed murder."²

Such attitudes did not meet with any support from the Bengal Government—their main concern was with the re-establishment of tranquillity. They, therefore, recommended lenience and the pardoning as far as possible of all offences committed in the heat of the insurrection. All plundered property had, of course, to be restored to its rightful owners, but the trial of the ringleaders and those accused of murder should take place according to the normal regulation procedure. "It is not deemed necessary", they told Neave, "to form any special Commission, or to confer any extraordinary powers for this purpose."³

This check to any vengeful spirit in the civilian officials was paralleled, it may be noted, by one given to the military by the joint commissioners, a little earlier in the month. The occasion for their rebuke had been an attack upon a village near Bariatu in Tori by Lt. Burt, in which he had taken ten persons, seventy-three bows, seven goats and a quantity of grain.⁴ The commissioners, pointing out that now that the area was peaceful such actions were the responsibility of the police, ordered Burt

1. Neave to Govt., 29 March 1832, para. 4, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. *Ibid.* para. 5.

3. Govt. to Neave, 7 Apl. 1832, para. 6, B. C. 1363/54228.

4. Lt. Burt to Jt. Commissioners, 22 March 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

to release the persons forthwith and to restore their cattle and grain.¹ Trotter later repeated their censure of Burt, pointing out that the action was quite contrary to established regulations.²

Early in April it became clear that Palamau and the surrounding areas had been pacified. Naturally therefore consultations began between the civil and the military authorities for the withdrawal of the majority of troops which had been employed there. Lt. Col. Hawtrey wrote to the joint commissioners on 6 April, suggesting that two companies of infantry would be sufficient to prevent the recurrence of any disturbances in Palamau.³ As Neave also thought they would be sufficient the joint commissioners agreed to retain two companies of the 64th and directed Hawtrey to return his forces to cantonment.

Neave's proposal that some troops should be stationed at Satbarwa and Latehar, though reluctantly agreed to by Wilkinson,⁴ was turned down by the Government, and for the very reason which had made Wilkinson hesitate—a conviction that "regular troops ought not to be frittered away in the manner proposed by Mr. Neave."⁵ A civil force, they thought, might be stationed at Leslieganj and other places in Palamau. They had already informed Neave that he had to look to the joint commissioners for guidance.⁶

From the middle of April Lt. Col. Hamilton, commanding the 64th Regt. N. I., began to press hard for the early withdrawal of the troops under him.⁷ As Neave also thought that Palamau did not require troops any longer,⁸ Wilkinson raised no objection to the move, particularly as sickness had broken

1. Jt. Commissioners to Burt, 27 March 1832, *Ibid.*

2. Trotter to Burt, 9 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

3. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 6 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Jt. Commissioners to Hawtrey, 10 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

Also see Wilkinson to Neave, 20 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

5. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners (Dent and Wilkinson), 1 May 1832, *Ibid.*

6. Govt. to Neave, 12 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

7. Lt. Col. Hamilton to Jt. Commissioners, 15 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

8. Neave to Hamilton, 15 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

out in the detachment.¹ But about Tori there was a difference of opinion. Though it was apparently tranquil, both Trotter and Lt. Col. Burt saw signs of intrigues by the landholders and some of the police officers.² On the other hand, both Wilkinson and Neave saw no reason why Lt. Burt's detachment should be continued there.³ However, when early in May Captain Maltby moved with his detachment from Tori to Chatra on his way to Sherghati,⁴ reports came through the joint commissioners about the assembling of armed bodies of men in Tori. Trotter also learnt about this development from a respectable person of the area named Radha Krishna Chaudhuri.⁵ This was really an alarming report, and it was conveyed forthwith to the Patna Commissioner and through him to the Government. Maltby's further progress was halted at Chatra. Maltby's thorough enquiries showed, however, that the reports of unrest were a hoax, and had been occasioned by a private feud.⁶

The Government, therefore, on Lambert's recommendation, sanctioned the maintenance of an extra police force in Tori and asked the special commissioners to take charge of the *pargana*.⁷ When that had been done Maltby set off again with his detachment from Chatra, thus completing the withdrawal of the military force from the area, to the great satisfaction of the Government.⁸

-
1. Wilkinson to Hamilton, 28 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*
Also see Lt. Col. Hamilton to Neave, 28 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*
 2. Trotter to Burt, 12 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*
 3. Wilkinson to Trotter, 15 Apl. and 20 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*
Also see Neave to Hamilton, 15 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*
and Hamilton to Neave, 28 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*
 4. Trotter to Lambert, 7 May 1832, *Ibid.*
 5. Trotter to Capt. Maltby, 6 May 1832, *Ibid.*
 6. Maltby to Trotter, 10 May 1832, *Ibid.*
Trotter to Maltby, 11 May 1832, *Ibid.*
Lambert to Govt., 13 May 1832, *Ibid.*
 7. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 15 May 1832, *Ibid.*
 8. Lambert to Govt., 17 May 1832, *Ibid.*
Also see Govt. to Lambert, 22 May 1832, *Ibid.*

Chota-Nagpur :

It is time now to turn again to the situation in Chota-Nagpur proper, where in January Wilkinson's force had checked but certainly not ended the disorders. As an account in the *East India Magazine* put it, Wilkinson's force was "too weak to enable him to act offensively, and he could only maintain his position at a place named Pathoraeh [Pitoria]".¹

At the end of January 1832 the first reinforcements reached Chota-Nagpur—a company of the 2nd N. I., a hundred strong, under Capt. Maltby from Dinapur, together with a body of horsemen and *barkandazes* recruited by Neave, who went from Tori up the ghats to Tikoo, where they arrived on the 30th. From their arrival in the hills skirmishes began. On 1 February Maltby's camp was surrounded by some four thousand insurgents. They fled out of range when he moved out of camp, but the cavalry—an army with which they were unfamiliar—overtook and cut down 50 or 60 of them. After this the troops advanced unopposed to Churia. Their baggage *hackeries* (carts) were set upon, however, and it required another attack to get them through. Only on 4 February did the whole force join Wilkinson at Pitoria.²

Cuthbert had meanwhile joined Wilkinson and had been dismayed to find how circumscribed was the area under the Company's control. Wilkinson's force held the town of Pitoria, and a few neighbouring villages. Lal Jit Nath Sahi of Gujnu, with some *barkandazes* from Pitoria, held his own villages in the *pargana* of Amaidanda to the north-east and had beaten off several attacks—and further reinforced was to repel yet another on 8 February—while his relation Kapil Nath of Salgi had also done well.³ But all the rest of the countryside was in the hands of the insurgents.

1. *East India Magazine*, July 1832.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 31, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. *Ibid.* para. 32: The Joint Commissioners spoke highly of the two zamindars: "They are the only Jageerdars of all Nagpoor proper who made a manful stand against the Insurgents. The latter of the two after

The arrival of cavalry quickly produced a change in that situation. Regular infantry had proved ineffective—as Maltby wrote to Neave, “without some good cavalry, we can make but little of the Coles. They run faster than we can.”¹ When the ground was suitable, however, cavalry were able to inflict heavy losses. On 2 February the cavalry caught a large body of Kols in the open at Tikoo and cut them up most effectively. Maltby reported, “a few of the suwars behaved also in the noblest manner, and it is to them chiefly that the loss which the insurgents received is due.”² Next day irregular cavalry with Wilkinson at Pitoria did similar execution. Wilkinson had heard of the insurgents’ advance from Chutia, and had moved out against them: The Kols fled from his infantry but were pursued by the irregular horse commanded by Mitra Bhan Singh, and suffered at least a score killed.³

Wilkinson thereupon wrote to the Adjutant-General to point the moral—that without more cavalry or irregular horse it would be impossible “to make any very severe example” of the insurgents.⁴ It must be confessed that the cavalry he had with him did not always come up to scratch. On 5 February Maltby wrote impatiently of the failure of the *sawars* to use their opportunities: “We could at different times have killed hundreds

maintaining his ground for two or three days was at last overpowered by numbers and had three of his brothers and several of his followers killed only two days previous to Captain Maltby’s arrival at Teekoo.”

1. Maltby to Neave, 2 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.
2. Maltby to Captain Penny, Adj. General, 2 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.
3. Cuthbert to Govt., 3 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.
4. Wilkinson to Adj. General, 4 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.

A letter from ‘A Khol Killer’ in the *Bengal Hurkaru*, 29 Feb. 1832, emphasised the value of cavalry: “The cavalry (we had with us a troop of the 3d Light cavalry) proved far more serviceable than Infantry, as the poor wretches trust more to their heels than to their bows and battle-axes; they indeed run with surprising swiftness; I have known a body of 1500 or 2000 men come down within a few hundred yards of the camp, flourishing their swords and battle-axes and cutting the most extraordinary capers; but on a small party of cavalry and a company of Infantry being sent to meet them, they made off at a rate which set all pursuit at defiance.”

of them if our cavalry had dared to advance, but they are afraid to go near to Kholes, who [when] they are in bodies they drive readily enough at the stragglers, but never when there is any chance of opposition."¹ But Captain Impey at Tikoo was anxious for more cavalry, and the Bengal Government also struck the same note in their instructions to the joint commissioners. "It is the opinion of the Vice President-in-Council that Cavalry, if they can be fed, will be of the greatest use in subduing the insurrection."²

The possibility of securing more cavalry depended, however, not so much upon the willingness of the Adjutant-General to furnish them as upon the power of the Chota-Nagpur authorities to keep them supplied. The arrival of the 50th N. I. at Sherghati—less two companies directed by Neave to Chass³—had cleared the great Banaras road and had so re-opened the communications with Calcutta—but this did little to improve the supply position. That had so far deteriorated, indeed, that on 4 February Neave had to request the commander of the 3rd Light Cavalry to halt at Sasaram, in Shahabad district. "Although I do not doubt that your presence here would materially tend to suppress the insurrection", Neave explained, "yet the extreme difficulty there is and will be of furnishing so large a body of cavalry with necessaries (for every article must be sent from here [Sherghati] in consequence of the rebels having completely ravaged the country) induce me to refrain from calling into this country more troops than are absolutely necessary."⁴ Wilkinson, too, was experiencing great difficulty in obtaining

1. Maltby to Acting Magt., Ramgarh, 5 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

2. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 10 Feb. 1832, para. 2, B. C. 1362/54224.

3. The Bengal Government objected to this dispersion of forces: "A military force when ordered on a duty of this nature should not be weakened and rendered inefficient by being broken up into small and detached bodies." (Govt. to Lambert, 7 Feb. 1832, para. 3, *Ibid.*) But they recognized Neave's zeal, and blamed Lambert, the Patna Commissioner, for not supervising that young and inexperienced officer. Lambert, they said, had not "taken the lead which was to have been expected from the high office" which he held. (*Ibid.* para. 5).

4. Neave to Col. Hawtrey, 4 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

supplies of any kind at Pitoria because all the supplies had fallen into the possession of or had been destroyed by the insurgents.¹ Neave had been spending heavily to secure supplies for Wilkinson—he reported to Lambert on 29 January the advancing of Rs. 3,500 to the *Chaudharies* and other officials for this purpose. Subsequently, when defending the halting of the 3rd Cavalry at Sasaram, Neave wrote, “The providing of grain and other food for so large a body of men and horses formed another objection to the employing of this force, unless in a case of necessity, when it is considered that at present I have been obliged to entertain an establishment solely for the conveyance of grain and other supplies into Nagpore, costing several thousand rupees monthly, the increase necessary for the virtually three more squadrons of cavalry with their followers may be imagined.”²

Meanwhile the road between Chass and Hazaribagh was still infested by insurgents and there was great alarm, especially after the *daroga* of Chass had reported large numbers assembling on the Patkum frontiers.³ In the Churia area, again, the Kols were very active. Their population in that area was very dense, so that large numbers could be assembled at a moment's notice, and they had in Budhu Bhagat of Silligaon a leader with very great influence over them.⁴ Moreover they knew intimately a countryside which was very well adapted to guerilla warfare, while the officers of the Company's forces, without adequate maps, and no previous knowledge of the passes and jungle, were often completely at a loss: “so little was known of its topography that when the troops marched out of the beaten path scarcely a soul knew where he was...In consequence of the want of this necessary knowledge, the troops...were

1. Neave to Govt., 28 Jan. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 68 of 31 Jan. 1832 (140/3).

2. Neave to Lambert, 9 Feb. 1832, para. 5, B. C. 1362/54224.

3. Capt. Angelo to Neave, 6 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.* Also see Martin, Asstt. Magt., Jungle Mahals, to Neave, 8 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Jt. Commissioners to officer commanding 50th N. I., 8 Feb. 1832, para. 3, *Ibid.*: It was confidently expected that his death or seizure would soon lead to the pacification of the area.

frequently marched and counter-marched very unnecessarily."¹ The result was that even when the Kols were engaged it was often impossible to close with them effectively.

Troops continued to arrive, however. From Banaras the six companies of the 50th N. I. marched in under Captain Impey and a troop of the 3rd Light Cavalry reached Tikoo.² On 11 February two companies of the 54th N. I. and a brigade of guns arrived and Col. Bowen of the 34th N. I. was directed on 9 February to turn aside from his march from Barrackpur to Bankura into Tamar, Bundu and the other dependent *parganas* of Chota-Nagpur bordering on the Jungle Mahals.

With these re-inforcements it was possible to restore order in the northern and central *parganas*.³ After Captain Impey had inflicted heavy losses on the insurgents near Tikoo, a body of some 4,000 of them threw down their arms and surrendered to him on 10 February. (They had been promised mercy if they did so.)⁴ The prisoners taken on the 10th were nearly all lost on the march to Churia during a hail-storm so violent as to throw the 3rd Cavalry into complete confusion,⁵ but on the 13th that loss was more than made good by a successful attack on Buddhu Bhagat at Silligaon. Impey surrounded the village with four companies of infantry and his troop of cavalry, and then attacked the village. The insurgents made a stubborn resistance. "We here found", wrote a newspaper correspondent, "a set of men very different from our Tikoo friends."⁶ In the face of bullets they stood firm like a rock. As Major Sutherland noted, "The Buggut's [Bhagat's] family and followers stood up like men round their aged chief; but what chance has

1. Spry, *Modern India*, 1837, I, 117.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 34, B. C.1502/58891.

3. But, as Metcalfe admitted in his private letter to Bentinck, 19 Feb. 1832, "no impression has yet been made on the insurrection in Chota-Nagpoor": Bentinck MS., Box 17. He further referred to "the helplessness and dismay in all places without troops": *Ibid*.

4. An officer, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 25 Feb. 1832. Also see Capt. Impey to Neave, 11 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

5. Capt. Impey to Jt. Commissioners, 12 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.

6. A 'Khol-Killer', *Bengal Hurkaru*, 29 Feb. 1832.

the bow and arrow against a round of musketry or the Cole battle-axe against the pistol and sabres of our troopers!"¹ The old leader thus perished with his brother, sons and a hundred followers.² As two other attacks were made the same day by Captain Maltby's forces on the villages of Deori Nagri³ and Gari, 17 miles south-west and 12 miles south-east of Pitoria, in which despite a stubborn resistance⁴ by the Kols, considerable losses were inflicted upon them, the insurgents' spirit was for the moment broken: "The good effects arising from Buddoo Buggut's death are already visible, as the chiefs of many Khole [Kol] villages have come in and tendered their submission to the Commissioners."⁵ According to an eye-witness account, the people for 20 miles round Churia submitted.⁶ They tendered their submissions through their *pahans* and *mahtos* in great numbers. The only British failure at this period was at Basia. Sahib Singh, a subadar of the Ramgarh battalion, with a party

-
1. Major Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.
 2. Some accounts put it at 200 and 350: Impey to Jt. Commissioners, 18 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224; A 'Khol-killer', *Bengal Hurkaru*, 29 Feb. 1832. The death of Buddhu Bhagat was described by a correspondent in Pitoria camp in his letters to the *Bengal Hurkaru*, 21 Feb. 1832. He wrote with rather unpleasant satisfaction of the "jolly good drubbing" given to the Kols, though a close inspection of the results seems to have been less agreeable: "I have to [at] this instant seen the heads of Boodo Bhuggut and his brother and his nephew which have been brought in to the Commissioners; how horrid it is to see such sights." *Ibid.*
 3. Dalton in 1872 described Nagri as "a very primitive Oraon village" where "songs are sung that remind the young men how their fathers 'went out' in 1832": *Ethnology*, 172. According to A Subaltern (*East Indian Journal*, I, No. 3, old series, 189) Deori and Nagri were two villages about twenty miles from Pitoria.)
 4. Maltby reported of the engagement at Gari that there was hand to hand fighting and the Kols with their battle-axes fought desperately: Captain Maltby to Capt. Pasmore, Adj. General, 16 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.
 5. A 'Khol-killer', *Bengal Hurkaru*, 29 Feb. 1832.
 6. Spry, *op. cit.* 122. The troops got Rs. 1,000 as reward for the Bhagat's head which was divided among the non-commissioned officers and privates: *Ibid.* 121.

of 42 sepoys, who had reached Basia on 9 February, remained an inactive spectator of the Kol atrocities in that area, and the only action in which he engaged was a skirmish at Palkote, the residence of the maharaja on the 12th in which some 4 or 5 Kols were killed.¹

The British success in the north of Chota-Nagpur, however, did not lead to a surrender by the tribal people of the western and southern *parganas*; indeed they showed, said Major Sutherland, a "power of endurance beyond that which exists in most other countries."² Resistance continued, particularly in Tamar, Sonapur and Barwa, where the inhabitants had carried their corn and cattle into the hills, and where the proximity of Singhbhum gave promise of Larka help, or of safe refuge in case of a crisis. Against such people isolated successes were not enough. The Dhangar Kols, with their extraordinary power of concerted action when summoned by their *manki*, *munda* or *bhagat*, were formidable fighters. Moreover, as they became familiar with the destructive capacity of firearms and more wary of cavalry attack, it became more difficult to inflict any considerable defeat. Their scouts and spies quickly passed news of the plans of the authorities from circle to circle so that surprise was difficult.

To deal with such enemies required patience and endurance, and closely co-ordinated action. That coordination was for a while made impossible by the outbreak in Palamau, already described, and the consequent division of Hawtrey's forces into Palamau and Tori. By 17 February, however, the joint commissioners had laid their plans for a concerted sweep into the dangerous southern *parganas*. They divided the troops into three columns, the right column being posted at Tikoo, the centre at Churia, a village to the eastward of Tikoo and between that place and Pitoria, and the left at Pitoria.³ The right was

1. Translated letter, Sahib Singh, 12 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

2. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., *Ibid.*

3. Jt. Commissioners to Maltby, 17 Feb. 1832, para. 2, B. C. 1362/54224. Also see the enclosed map 'Sketch of Chuta Nagpore and its dependencies.'

to move to Palkote, the centre to Basia, to the east of Palkote, and the left into the Sonepur tract of villages. The officer commanding the right column was asked to open communications with the troops in Palamau and the left, with which the commissioners themselves proceeded, was to operate to the eastward as far as the boundaries of Tamar and Bundu into which Col. Bowen's force had been directed.¹ The object underlying this plan was either to punish or to conciliate the insurgents as might be necessary. In case of resistance the example of Silligaon might be repeated.

On 17 February, Captain Johnson of the 50th N. I., who had been detached to Chass to keep open the great Banaras military road, reached Pitoria with two companies of his corps and on the day following marched to Churia with his detachment and the brigade of guns which had arrived on the 11th. Then in conformity to the general plan of operations mentioned above, Captain Johnson with a wing of the 50th, one six-pounder, some *barkandazes* and the horses of Mitrajit Singh's contingent, proceeded to Tikoo on 19 February. The Midnapur detachment under Captain Horsburgh was placed under the general command of Col. Bowen, so as to concert their action in Tamar.²

While these movements of troops were taking place ready for intensive operations in the last week of February, important consultations were being held between the Bengal Government and the joint commissioners about the treatment of offenders. In case of continued resistance, the Government thought, bloodshed was unavoidable. But those who submitted without resistance, although guilty in the past, were either to be reserved for trial or dismissed with or without security for their future good behaviour. The Government totally prohibited the practice of offering rewards for delivering the insurgent leaders

-
1. Jt. Commissioners to Capt. Maltby, 17 Feb. 1832, para. 5, B. C. 1362/54224.
 2. Govt. to Asstt. Quarter Master General of the Army, 17 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 1 of 21 Feb. 1832 (240/4).

dead or alive, as had been done in the case of Buddhu Bhagat.¹ They also issued instructions to the commissioners to guide them in exercising the powers of summary trial and punishment with which they had been invested. On 23 February they wrote to them to ask whether they had issued proclamations which would encourage the people to return to their allegiance, and thereby save any further and unnecessary effusion of blood.² Later they authorized them to offer a full pardon to all concerned in the unrest excepting those who had been the principal instigators or the main perpetrators of crimes. Last, but not least, they ordered the commissioners to assure the peaceful inhabitants that they were prepared to investigate any well-founded complaints.

Already on 20 February, however, the joint commissioners had issued the following proclamation from Tikoo : "To all the Moondas, Pahrís [sic] &c in the neighbourhood of Teekoo and Lohardugga. Know you, all those who wish to submit to the Sirkar come to the officer in command of Teekoo, and write down your names, or if you come within one or two days, come to the Huzoor and write your names. Those who do not come in will take the consequences on themselves ; those who consult their good-will come in & restore the property to those from whom they have taken it ; come in without fear."³ Another such proclamation was issued from Churia on the same day : "To all Coles who are assembled and [were] assembled near the Hurryharpore Ghat, know you. If your intention be to submit, and be obedient, come to the presence immediately on the receipt of this perwanah. If you do not intend to submit, but continue in rebellion, you will certainly be

1. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 23 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

They thought that the tone of some of the passages in the letters of instructions of the commissioners to Captain Impey and Col. Bowen was of an objectionable harshness and severity :

Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para. 22, B. C. 1362/54223.

2. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 23 Feb. 1832, para. 8, B. C. 1362/54224.

3. Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 26 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54229.

punished and killed. If you consult your good by all means, come to the Huzoor quickly. Lall Gokul Sahy has spoken in your behalf. Therefore come quickly to the Huzoor."¹

These proclamations did not result in any immediate flow of surrenders; so several small attacks were made by the assembled troops. Impey forced his way into the small but difficult range of hills near Gajnu (14 miles southwest of Churia) where the Kols under the influence of their leader Suru Bhagat had refused to submit. In a night attack some fifteen of them were killed and others captured.² The unexpected blow was followed by the surrender of Suru Bhagat and of the *pahans* and *mahtos* of all the insurgent villages of this area on 26 February at Tikoo. Some 151 village heads came after this, and made their submission.

Col. Bowen, at Pitoria, set out in similar fashion for Sonahatu on 22 February. He caught up with a number of insurgents there, inflicted considerable losses, and thereafter was able to reinstate the Raja of Rahi *pargana*, who established a police *thana*, and to restore to the *mahajans* and other dispossessed persons their property and possessions.³

This success was followed up by an advance into Bundu *pargana*. Two parties, directed by the Raja of Bundu, surprised the insurgents at Kumta Induhotri and Kachri, inflicting a few casualties, and a major success was scored at Buruhatu, 4 miles or so from Bundu. There the guns were used for the first time, and some 60 insurgents were killed, and much surprise and terror caused.⁴

In central Chota-Nagpur there were other successful attacks, which led to the submission of over a hundred Kol villages

-
1. *Ibid.*
 2. Capt. Impey to Capt. Penny, Deputy Adjutant General, 24 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.
 3. Col. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 26 Feb. 1832, paras. 1 and 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 47 of 6 March 1832 (140/4). Also see Report from Camp Bundu, 26 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 3 March 1832.
 4. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 26 Feb. 1832, para. 5, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 47 of 6 March 1832 (140/4). Also see Col. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 27 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

through their *mundas*, *pahans*, etc. At the same time the joint commissioners received the sworn allegiance of 300 influential Kols at their camp at Pitoria.¹

The joint commissioners also adopted various constructive measures at this time. They did not merely threaten, they proclaimed to the *mankis*, *mundas*, etc, whom they urged to come in, that "it is the object of the Sirkar to benefit its subjects." This they demonstrated by hearing the legitimate complaints of the Kols against their zamindars, and ordering the officers commanding the detachments at Tikoo and Churia to collect information about any oppression by the zamindars and renters, so that offenders might be brought to book². As a result of such action, and of the direct appeals to the insurgents which, since the audience was illiterate, were intimated "through their brethren who have already come in, and through their zamindars,"³ large numbers did come in. By early March a correspondent could report, "one of the chief proofs that the insurgents are coming to their senses is that both they and the zamindars are daily bringing complaints against each other before the commissioners."⁴

It was from pacified north, east and central Chota-Nagpur that on 5 March the three columns set out for the still rebellious south-west. From their bases at Bundu, Churia and Tikoo the troops undertook frequent *dours* or drives against the insurgent strongholds. Herds of cattle, bags of grain, salt, etc., were seized and carried off. All too often little discrimination was exercised and the villages of peaceable Muslims and *mahajans* were burnt (perhaps to vent the personal spite of those who acted as guides) and their property seized.⁵ The troops

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 27 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 45 of 6 March 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₄).
2. Jt. Commissioners to officers commanding at Tikoo and Churia, 2 March 1832, B.C; 1362/54224.
3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 3 March 1832, *Ibid*.
4. 'P', Camp Pitoria, 5 March 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 13 March 1832.
5. Letter from Churia camp, 24 Feb. 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 2 March 1832.

might perhaps be excused—the work was quite unfamiliar, very arduous, often fruitless—as on the occasion reported in the *John Bull* when the troops abandoned their pantaloons the better to pursue the Kols, marched ten *kos* at night through paddy fields and along miserable paths, climbed a thousand foot hill of enormous dark granite rocks, piled one upon another and then found the whole expedition “a most abominable hoax practised upon the Commissioner by one of his own spies.”¹ But when their irritation was vented upon an innocent village the joint commissioners were hard put to it to make amends, and there was some adverse criticism in the press. A letter from Churia camp to the *John Bull* declared, “Men stare at each other, and ask how long this state of affairs is to continue ; and what is the cause of this assemblage of troops to fight an enemy who is not in existence.....What has been going on against the Coles will bear a strict parallel with some of the persecutions against the Waldenses, or the sufferings of the Huguenots in France, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, by Louis XIV.”² The writer went on to agree, however, that since many of the Kols had been misled by their leaders the whole retribution exacted was unjust and oppressive, and he painted an “unhappy picture” of the joint commissioners, exasperated by the insolence of rebel chiefs bent upon “making an example” and of “women and children in the midst of dead bodies holding out their infants and screaming” after the attack on Silligaon.³

By the end of February the operations in central and northern Chota-Nagpur were at an end. Those in the eastern *parganas* such as Tamar and Bundu were still, however, in full swing. There were stockades being built at Guruhatu and Kotonagar in Tamar and several thousand Kols in arms under eight leaders.⁴ In March there were reports from Kera, in

1. *ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. Jt. Commissioners to Bowen, 28 Feb. 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 49 of 6 March 1832 (140/4).

Singhbhum, of five more villages in revolt, and ready to join the Tamar insurgents.¹ Against these Col. Bowen's force advanced, in a series of raids and skirmishes, such as that against the hill stronghold of Kota on the ridge above Surgia, where a large granary was found and destroyed : "everyman of the detachment took what he wanted of the grain etc. and the remainder and the village were afterwards destroyed."² The 34th next entered Tamar, a considerable town but almost completely destroyed by the insurgents, and thence pushed on to Bugai, driving the Kols before them. A report in the *Bengal Hurkaru* noted, "Had the Kholis stood, we must have sustained a heavy loss, as we were absolutely pinned in a defile full two miles in length and between two ranges of high hills covered with a heavy jungle".³

Where they did stand, as on 8 March at Arki, a strong position approached by defiles which had been blocked by felled trees, ditches and bamboo stockades, the British forces were in fact beaten off,⁴ though not before they had inflicted considerable losses. Col. Bowen was so impressed, indeed, by the strength of the position that he declined to attack a second time without re-inforcements.⁵ However, the enemy had been even more impressed by the 34th N. I., and on 10 March Arki was found abandoned. "A quantity of grain was brought into camp from their granary, and what could not be carried off was destroyed in addition to all the huts, etc., on the brink of the hills in the neighbourhood, that had not previously been burnt down."⁶

1. Wilkinson to Bowen, 2 March 1832, B.C. 1503/58896.

2. Report from Tamar, 4 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 19 March 1832. Also see Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 3 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

3. Report from Tamar, 6 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 19 March 1832. Also see Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 9 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

4. *Ibid.* One sepoy was killed and Ensign McLeod fatally wounded.

5. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 9 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

6. Report from Tamar, 11 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 23 March 1832.

Meanwhile, some of the insurgent leaders were submitting in this area. On 6 March eight *mundas* came to the camp and gave written *muchalkas* (securities) for their future good behaviour, and for the restoration to the rightful owners of all the plundered property.¹ According to a newspaper report, many more were hourly expected, and there was "some prospect of a termination of this warm campaign" in this area.² Bowen's report of 11 March confirmed the report of a strengthening disposition to submit—a disposition which he had encouraged through letters sent to the chiefs, and by the circulation of the joint commissioners' proclamation. He wrote to the joint commissioners, "I trust that these measures of conciliation (now that punishment has been so repeatedly inflicted) will be crowned with success, and that the insurrection in these pergunnahs will be [die]".³ In the same letter he forwarded a list of thirteen insurgent chiefs who had submitted with the usual securities.⁴

It was high time for peace to be restored, for thanks to the operations of both the Kols and the Company's forces, the country had become one scene of desolation. There was no prospect of any harvest, and famine was impending. The situation was such that Col. Bowen felt compelled to take action to restore stolen working cattle to the owners so that the work of

1. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 9 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225 : From Tamar : Bahadur Singh Munda of Sundari, Dhun Singh Munda of Kaparia (Kasaria ?), Lal Singh Munda of Mankidi, Boran Singh Munda of Prassi, Kandi Singh of Kandihi and Mochi Rai of Kundula ;
From Banta Hajam : Mohan Singh Munda of Putrahatu.
2. Report from Tamar, 6 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 19 March 1832 (140/5).
3. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, n.d., Bengal Cr. Judl. Cons. 55 of 20 March 1832 (140/5).
4. *Ibid.* They were from Bundu *pargana* : Baya Ram Munda of Buchuhatu, Hindu Munda of Humpta, Gundul Munda of Amadi, Borhan Singh Munda of Sungu [Tungu], Gokul Munda of Baradi, Jit Rai Munda of Hadimat Kema, Mochi Rai Munda of Kadi, Narain Munda of Karama, Sahari Munda of Kulma, Kadi Rai Munda of Chitudes, Gunsa Munda of Kailadi and Kaisa Munda of Teli Murcha.

cultivation could continue. About 4,000 head of cattle had been seized by the Kols in Tamar alone, and these the *diwans* of Tamar, Bundu and other *parganas* were now reclaiming (the captains of the various military detachments naturally claimed them as booty), but, as Col. Bowen wrote, it was impossible to see "how this country is again to be cultivated if the bullocks plundered by the Coles are not restored to the owners, when they fall into our hands."¹ He, therefore, issued the following order : ² "The commanding officer desires that all cattle (including bullocks, cows, horses or tattoos) which have been taken in the insurgent villages of Solakotee, Sergee and Kotah shall be delivered over to the custody of the local constituted authorities of the *pergunnah* (the *Dewans*) in which such villages are situated, in order to their being identified and claimed by the *Mahajans*, and other respectable inhabitants from whom they are generally known to have been plundered. Receipt will be taken by the commanding officer for the number given over...This order [is] to be considered applicable to such of the insurgent villages as may hereafter be visited or attacked by any portion of this force."

With Tikoo, Churia, Palamau and Tamar pacified, the joint commissioners ordered a further general move to the south.³ The troops of the rajas and zamindars were deputed to hold the area already subdued and to keep open communications with the troops operating below the *ghats*. Supplies were arranged for a campaign of a month and a half, with a few days' supply of rice always in camp. An assistant commissary-general was appointed to regulate the distribution of the supplies forwarded by Neave, and to report to him the details of sales, proceeds, etc.⁴ Still other supplies were arranged from Calcutta via Jhalda.

-
1. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 11 March 1832, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 57 of 20 March 1832 (¹⁴⁰/₅).
 2. Extract, Detachment order, *Ibid*.
 3. Jt. Commissioners to Major Blackall, 4 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.
 4. Jt. Commissioners to Asstt. Commissary General, 4 and 5 March 1832, *Ibid*.

The columns then set out for Lohardugga, Tikudiga¹ and Barkagarh.

The joint commissioners were anxious for an opportunity to strike some telling blow—there was to be no manœuvring, no diplomacy. But there was, in fact, little chance of any major engagement—the Kols occasionally displayed individual bravery; more often they took to their heels, vanished into the jungles and fitfully harassed the sepoy.

In any case the right and centre columns² met with no opposition. *Mahtos* and *pahans* regularly came in and tendered their submission. At Maharajganj and Armai submissions began almost as soon as the troops arrived, and every encouragement was given by proclamation to the tribal people calling for no more violence and a return to their peaceful occupations. Near Barkagarh the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur and his uncle, the Kunwar of Basia, joined the joint commissioners with a small number of their retainers.³ They reported some Kols still defiant at Nawagarh and Barwa, but on Major Blackall's approach with the right column the *mahtos* and *pahans* came in as readily as they already had done round Armai and in Mokha (Mokhatu) *pargana*. His march to Palkote, which he reached on 20 March, was thus uneventful.

For some days the advance of the left column, which the joint commissioners accompanied, was just as quiet, with the villages along the route all tendering their submission. But on reaching Sonapur, where the insurrection had originally broken out, signs of resistance were discovered. The Kols had deserted all the villages south and east of Khunti and had carried off their grain and cattle into the hills and jungles where they were reported in force. The only submissive villages were those of the Rautias. Only two of the *mankis* came in.

1. Capt. Johnson to Lt. Saunders, Detachment staff, 14 March 1832, *Ibid.*

2. Major Blackall to Jt. Commissioners, 13 March 1832, *Ibid.*

3. 'P', 10 March 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 17 March 1832.

Also see Jt. Commissioners to Blackall, 12 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

There now began a war of attrition in a country of great difficulty and strength. On 20 March Captain Maltby attacked the village of Ranidih, destroying grain stores, carrying off a hundred head of cattle.¹ Then Johnson of the centre column closed in, driving off yet another large body of insurgents, while Ewart, with the 54th, killed others, and destroyed many grain stores.² Col. Bowen was ordered to advance from Tamar to Saradkel (or Saradkeli),³ and the zamindars of Saraikela, Kera and Karaikela (all in Singhbhum) were ordered to cooperate from the south.⁴ On 22 March Maltby with three companies of the 50th, two of the 54th, a hundred men of the Ramgarh battalion, a company of the 2nd N. I., a troop and a half of the 3rd cavalry, one six-pounder and the *barkandazes* and retainers of the maharaja burned more villages, destroyed further grain-stores and captured some hundreds of cattle.⁵ The objective had indeed become not the elusive Kol forces, but their supplies and their families. Captain Maltby put this quite plainly : "I hope to succeed in attacking them, and destroying the remainder of the grain, and I shall, if possible, capture their wives and families as being one of the surest means of bringing them a sense of their duty to Government."⁶

The process of starving the rebels into submission, and of harassing them continually was made more tedious and difficult by the onset of bad weather, and by the intrigues of the supposedly loyal zamindars, or their periodic bursts of panic. Col. Bowen's march from Tamar was delayed by pressing appeals

1. Jt. Commissioners to Maltby, 20 March 1832, *Ibid.* ; Capt. Maltby to Capt. Pasmore, 21 March 1832, *Ibid.*
Also see an eye-witness account in Spry, *Modern India*, I, 122.
2. Maltby to Pasmore, 21 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.
Report from Camp Demujurda, 25 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 7 April 1832.
3. Jt. Commissioners to Bowen, 23 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.
4. Jt. Commissioners to the chiefs of Singhbhum, Enclosure,
Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 23 March 1832, *Ibid.*
5. Maltby to Pasmore, 22 March 1832, *Ibid.* 13 sepoy and several horses were killed at Ranidih. Also see Report from Sujna Nadi camp, 23 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 31 March 1832.
6. Maltby to Pasmore, 21 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

from the Rajas of Silli and Banta Hajam, and by the panic which his departure induced in the Rani of Tamar. The Raja of Silli even went so far as to seek to convince Col. Bowen that "without the total extermination of Coles in this quarter there will be no security for the lives and property of the well affected."¹ Yet the newspaper correspondents in Tamar were very doubtful about the loyalty of "the well-affected" and denied that there ever had been serious danger in Silli and Banta Hajam: "private squabbles, in which we have no right to interfere, there have undoubtedly been, but there has been no insurrection,"² or even more forthright, "our good friend the Sillie Raja still keeps up the joke of pretending that a body of insurgents is in our neighbourhood, but whether he will give it up as a bad job on finding that he cannot employ the force to be sent...on some wild goose chase merely to save appearances has not as yet been determined."³ When the rebel Mohan Munda (of Putrahatu in Banta Hajam) was taken he boldly asserted that the Silli raja was accusing him because of a quarrel for the possession of some property,⁴ and a correspondent of the *Bengal Hurkaru* evidently believed that the Silli raja's story of the *munda's* rebellious activity was all humbug, designed to secure the destruction of Mohan's village by the British troops.⁵ In another instance the zamindar of Kharsawan, Thakur Chetan Singh, was suspected rather of sheltering the rebel *manki* of Gamharia, of concealing the granaries of the insurgents for a bribe, and of "filling his pocket at the expense of both parties."⁶

Such suspicion of their allies and of those whose interests they were supposed to be protecting did not sweeten the temper

1. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 15 March 1832, *Ibid.*

2. Report from Camp Banta Hajam, 16 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 23 March 1832.

Also see Report from Silli, 17 March 1832, *Ibid.*

3. Report from Silli, 17 March 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 16 March 1832, B.C. 1362/54225.

5. Report from Banta Hajam, 16 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 23 March 1832.

6. Report from Arki, 28 March 1832. *Bengal Hurkaru*, 7 Apl. 1832.

of the officers and their troops. Nor did the appalling weather, the drenching rain which made the jungle warfare doubly depressing, at times even halting all operations, and the swollen rivers which made it still more difficult to get up supplies. "The weather here is dreadful," wrote one correspondent, "incessant storms of wind, hail and rain. The cold is at times intense, and the thunder and lighting far exceeded anything I have hitherto experienced in India. In fact this is positively 'the land of storms'.¹

Moreover, though the Kols rarely stood their ground before an attack of the British forces,² and though they were being steadily driven back, they were capable at all times of inflicting losses. The country was unfavourable for cavalry action, and when it pressed too close into the hills—as on 22 March when Maltby launched his biggest attack—it suffered unpleasant losses: "Information having been brought that the grass-cutters had been attacked, they [the cavalry] charged forward to protect them and some found themselves in the midst of an almost invisible enemy, who were hidden in the surrounding jungle, but who made themselves felt by pouring in showers of arrows upon our unfortunate men who were perfectly helpless. Their horses could not charge into the wood and up the hills and they could see no one to fire their pistols at..... They [the Kols] are extremely watchful, and woe to the man who strays from his companions; they instantly make a dart on him and annihilate him, and we are often extremely delayed and inconvenienced by waiting to protect that infernal crowd of camp followers."³ Those who were cut off were invariably done to death, the bodies being completely stripped, horribly mutilated and "dreadfully hacked".⁴ The British forces were obviously

1. Report from 'P', Camp Tujna (Sajna) Nadi, 26 March 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 3 Apl. 1832.

2. "The insurgents never opposed the infantry en masse, but contented themselves with cutting off every one who straggled from the column of attack": *Ibid.*

3. Letter from Camp Sajna Nadi, 23 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 31 March 1832.

4. Report from Kundipatti, 30 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 9 Apl. 1832.

handicapped by their ignorance of the jungle, which the Kols used so well, and their military training was often of little use in the unfamiliar conditions: "From their knowledge of the localities of the hills and superior personal activity, together with the circumstances of the black and crouching Coles being with difficulty seen in the dark jungle, whilst our red coats and erect attitude render us always a conspicuous mark, I conceive they are more than a match for our muskets in jungle fighting. Many an arrow glanced by our men, without our being able to espy the hands that directed it."¹

Both sides had by this time good cause to wish the struggle ended. When therefore the joint commissioners were told by the *vakil* of the Chota-Nagpur raja that if they wrote to the *man-kis mundas* and other Kols of Sonapur still in arms, they would submit forthwith,² they readily agreed to suspend Maltby's operations, and offer an amnesty. On 29 March they accordingly issued a proclamation.³ This implied—though it did not say so in so many words—that the headmen as well as their followers would be pardoned. It had been realised that tribal loyalties were such that peace could only be secured by the promise of pardon for *manki*, *munda*, and villager alike.

For a day or two there was no response, and Col. Bowen's column advancing from Tamar ran into heavily stockaded jungle near the Arkighat in which he lost three Europeans of the Horse Artillery, who, straying from the column, were cut off and terribly hacked.⁴ Moreover, when he still sent out a proclamation of free pardon, he received back the uncompromising reply that "they preferred being killed in fighting against their

1. Report from the banks of the Sajna Nullah (Nadi), 21 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 29 March 1832.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 7 Apl. 1832. para. 2, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. *arwana*, 29 March 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 30 March 1832, para. 2, *Ibid.* Also see Report from Camp Kundi, 29 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832, and Letter from Kundipatti, 30 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 9 Apl. 1832.

oppressors to being hanged by the judge."¹ This defiance was replied to by the burning down of the villages from which those who killed the Europeans had sallied forth, as an act of deliberate vengeance.²

But though the country was formidable and easy to defend, the Kols could not hope to resist for long. "They must", wrote a correspondent, "ere long, give way before us, for we are about to be joined by Colonel Bowen, from Tamar, on the East, and the Singboom chiefs are coming from the south, so that they will be completely hemmed in, and if they do not give up speedily, will inevitably be starved, if a more speedy death does not overtake them, from the hands of our soldiers; for in the first place, we have destroyed large quantities of the grain they had laid up in store, and continue to do so, wherever we can find it—and in the second place, they will be unable to sow their seed for the next year's crop, the time for which process is fast approaching: as we are in full possession of the plains, which were already ploughed for the purpose, before we entered them."³ On 3 April, few days after Col. Bowen's arrival at Saradkel, the surrenders began in response to yet another proclamation—Singrai Manki, Mohan Manki, Sagar Manki and a few others submitting to the joint commissioners. Next day they brought the whole population of Kandupatti to yield. Contrary to expectations, some of the ringleaders of Tamar also submitted. Only one ringleader of this area now remained at large.⁴

There was still evidently some apprehension among the Kols—that they would be put in irons, be held responsible for all property destroyed or looted and so on—but it was becoming more and more apparent that they could not resist much longer.

1. Report from Camp Kundi, 29 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832.

2. Report from Kandu Patti, 30 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832.

3. Report from Sajna Nadi, 30 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 9 Apl. 1832.

4. Report from Camp Sarad Kel, 4 Apl. 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832.

Wilkinson, therefore, redoubled his "soothing system"¹. He sent messengers to Bindrai Manki and Sui Munda of Bandgaon in Singhbhum, the most noted leaders of the area. A few leaders of Tamar and Sonapet were in the same way tackled by Cuthbert and Col. Bowen.² On 8 April Bahadur Singh and others, who had been sent by Wilkinson to contact the Kols of Singhbhum, brought the news that their submission was rather doubtful, though they had asked for ten days' time.³ So Col. Bowen's march to Tamar was deferred, and the whole force marched to Bamhani in the neighbourhood of Bangaon.⁴ Major Blackall was also approaching the area with the right hand column, having already received the submission of all the insurgent leaders of Barwa and restored the Barwa raja to his estate.⁵ On his approaching Bamhani, on 13 April, the Bandgaon insurgents were deserted by Dasai Munda, and Rati [Katik ?] Sardar of Kochang.⁶ On 19 April, Bindrai and Sui surrendered, and on the 25th Dasai Manki of Kochang, accompanied by Khandu Pater of Karaikela and the *Mukhtar* of the zamindar of Kera, also submitted.⁷ When they had come in all the rebel chiefs had been accounted for.

1. Report from a fine open plain, Injra Nadi, 1 April 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 7 Apl. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 8 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. Letter from Barwanagar, 2 Apl. 1832, *India Gazette*, 19 Apl. 1832. Also see Letter from Camp Armai, 9 Apl. 1832, *India Gazette*, 19 Apl. 1832.

6. Jt. Commissioners to Bowen, 13 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

7. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 26 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

S. C. Roy, (*Mundas*, 207) says, "The Mundas still commemorate in their songs the delusive victories of the Larkas in their struggles with the British troops." One such song, in translation, is the following :

"Within Pithouria [Pitoria's] bounds,

The soldiers mustered strong.

Balanga Goa saw

The fighting Larkas throng.

At Jiki lata then

The Larkas' arrows flew.

At Dombaghat Ich'rung,

Their foes the Hos shot through.

Ah ! then, on Jik' lata field

The soldiers vanquish'd lay.

At Dombaghat Ich'rung

The Larkas won the day".

It was now possible to disband the punitive columns, and they began the return to cantonments. There was great rejoicing by officers and men, all of whom were fed up with the campaigns, even to the point of believing that Wilkinson was prolonging the affair for the sake of his special salary of Rs. 3,000.¹

The first to leave were the Barrackpur detachment under Col. Bowen who set out on 15 April for Tamar accompanied by the senior commissioner, Cuthbert. "Thank God", wrote one of the men, "we have at last turned our backs upon the Ramghurees and Bhuddoo Buggut's pickled head...I am precisely sick of the business....."² As sickness was breaking out in the contingent, Cuthbert, on arriving at Tamar, authorised their further march for Barrackpur. Wilkinson, after receiving the later surrenders, and arranging for a wing of the 50th N. I. and the Ramgarh battalion to go into cantonment for the rains in Hazaribagh,³ released the other troops. On 27 April the troops for Dinapur and Banaras marched under Capt. Maltby. Major Blackall with the rest of the force marched from Bamhani on 29 April, reached Barkagarh on 1 May⁴ and on the 2nd the right wing of the 50th proceeded via Tamar and the Jungle Mahals towards Barrackpur.

The two thousand men of the 2nd, 38th, 50th, 54th Regiments, N. I., the squadron of light cavalry, the horse artillery, foot-artillery, the Ramgarh battalion, the matchlockmen and irregulars, who had closed on Bamhani to reduce perhaps three hundred active insurgents in Singhbhum, thus dispersed. The campaign was declared successfully closed. Yet, as will be seen in my next book, fresh operations were very soon to be necessary in the neighbouring tribal areas. Perhaps the writer

1. Letter from Sajna Nadi, 8 Apl. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 18 Apl. 1832.

Also see a letter from 'Delay', n. d., *Bengal Hurkaru*, 9 May 1832.

2. Letter from Kandu Patti, 15 Apl. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 24 Apl. 1832.

3. Capt. Wilkinson to Blackall, 25 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

4. Letter from Barkagah, 1 May 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 9 May 1832.

in the *India Gazette*, who used the pen-name *Miles*, was not far off the mark when he wrote of the campaign, "What a ridiculous episode it will make in the history of British India ! How the future historian will laugh as he tells the tale of the worse than useless Cole hunt ! Oh for the genius of a Gibbon to describe 'with solemn sneer' the magnanimous exploit ! Oh shade of Napoleon ! if I knew of any dāk that could convey a parcel in safety to thy present habitation in Elysium, most assuredly would I send thee an account of the late events in the perturbed territory, which might perchance amuse an idle hour and make thee 'wreath a smile' at the operations of that mighty Indo-British power, which it was thy fondest ambition to overthrow."¹

1. 'Miles', *India Gazette*, 23 Nov. 1832.

Chapter 3

The Origins of the Unrest

Our study of the early impact of British rule in Chota-Nagpur and Palamau has made it clear that this undeveloped tribal area suffered much from the introduction of the Cornwallis system, more so because of the ignorance of tribal language and lack of respect for tribal customs on the part of the British officers who administered it. An anonymous writer in the *Calcutta Review* in 1869 made the point that Englishmen who has fought in New Zealand against the aborigines trying to preserve their ancient tribal rights, and who had encroached unthinkingly upon the tribal rights in land in Ireland, recognised by the Brehon laws, were scarcely likely to understand or sympathise with the tribal peasantry in Chota-Nagpur.¹ As Hutton has said, "In Chota-Nagpur the establishment of British authority led to a more general and more thorough victimization" of the tribal people of this area.² The 'economic freedom' brought by British rule, and the indiscriminate enforcement of contracts by the courts of law attracted a large number of Hindu; Muslim and Sikh land-grabbers, jobbers, traders and usurers into this area.³ They seized the land, the very basis of the tribal society, and so inevitably set in motion the "break-up of tribal solidarity and the disintegration of the village community."⁴

It has already been seen that by the time this calamity befell the tribal people, their maharaja (and many lesser rajas) had been hinduized and that he had been bringing in "crowds of hangers-on of all kinds, whose services he rewarded, or whose

1. "Kols of Chota-Nagpur," *Calcutta Review*, XLIX, 124.

2. J. H. Hutton, 'Primitive Tribes', *Modern India and the West*, 419.

3. *Ibid.* 730.

4. *Ibid.* 430.

goods he paid for, by the transfer of his rights over various villages."¹ This inevitably led to the ruin of the tribesmen, the original clearers of the land, who could not compete with the plainsmen in cunning or prestige.

The maharaja's primary concern was to imitate the pomp and grandeur of Hindu and Muslim zamindars, and he looked down upon his tribal ryots as marauders and savages. Thus, Govind Nath Sahi, who succeeded to the estate in 1808, described the inhabitants of Chota-Nagpur as "wild mountaineers and robbers, who are incapable of understanding any order and will not listen to reason", and as "nothing but a set of lawless mountaineers".² The next maharaja, Jagannath Sahi, who succeeded to the estate in 1822, had a positive hatred for his fellow-tribesmen. In his petition to Government during the unrest of 1832 he described them as low caste, turbulent wretches who "in person resemble man, but in mind wild beasts."³

This attitude of derision was encouraged by the large number of his non-tribal advisers and servants from the plains of Bihar and Orissa—the priests, the *diwans*, the *tahsildars*, adventurers and fortune-seekers. Thus, in 1818 a certain Narainbhatta Brahmachari (a religious mendicant) persuaded Maharaja Govind Nath Sahi to believe that an old woman, Adhar-Dai, had destroyed his children by witchcraft, saying that this had been revealed to him by the image of God Kapil Nath at Doesa before which he had fasted for nine days.⁴ The *bar-kandazes*, who were suspected of having committed the murder of this woman and her family were, with a few exceptions, all non-tribal adventurers who had found service at the maharaja's court.⁵

The maharaja, being of an "indecisive and procrastinating

-
1. S. C. Roy, *Mundas*, Introduction by E.A. Gait.
 2. Petition, Raja Govind Nath, Recd. 2 May 1808, para. 3, Beng. Rev. Cons. 11 of 22 July 1808 (55/13).
 3. Petition, Raja Jagannath, 25 March 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.
 4. Ramgarh magistrate to Govt., 6 Apl. 1819, para. 12, B.C. 746/20327.
 5. Ramgarh magistrate to Govt., 6 Apl. 1819, para. 12, B.C. 746/20327. See chapter II.

character"¹, could not assert his authority, and the non-tribal adventurers in his service made him a non-entity. He was "wholly immersed in religious ceremonies and observances" and left "the entire management of his estate to a set of worthless and corrupt Amlah", who took "every advantage of his supineness with regard to worldly affairs."²

Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, who succeeded his father at the young age of 19, was not expected to acquit himself better than his father, and in his time the grip of the non-tribal adventurers upon the administration became still firmer. Cuthbert, the officiating collector, rightly predicted, on his accession, that "the young Rajah probably like his father will be a mere cypher in his Raj and everything as formerly will be conducted by the Aumlah."³

A report of 1823 shows that his main interest, like his father's, was the upkeep of temples (especially the snake temple), the worship of Hindu goddesses and the celebration of *Dashahara* festival on a lavish scale.⁴ In the maintenance of the pomp and grandeur of his court too, he did not lag behind his forefathers: more than a year after his succession, he was still pressing the political agent on this frontier to attend the installation ceremony and to present him with a *Khillat*, as had been done in the case of his father and grandfather.⁵ He had an unhappy knack of buying costly horses and clothes on credit from foreign merchants: several Pathans (popularly called Moghuls), Sikhs, and others who came to him as horse-dealers and shawl and brocade merchants, secured enormous sums for their goods and even obtained land from the maharaja in exchange for their luxury goods.⁶

1. W. Smith, Joint magistrate, Chota-Nagpur, and officiating collector, Ramgarh, to Board, 4 March 1820, Beng.

Rev. Cons. 17 of 22 June 1821 (58/60).

2. W. Smith to Board, 28 Sept. 1819, *Ibid.*

3. Cuthbert to Govt., 1 Aug. 1822, Beng. Rev. Cons. 28 of 8 Aug. 1822 (59/21).

4. N. Smith, Joint magistrate, Chota-Nagpur, to Govt., para 8, 19 June 1823, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 21 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

5. Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 2 Jan. 1824 (59/61).

Supplement, Calcutta (Govt) Gazette, 1 Dec. 1880.

Such a chief could not have any interest in the welfare of his tribal subjects. So while the tribal peasants were ousted by the non-tribal settlers, the whole business of revenue collection and internal management was left in the hands of the unscrupulous Hindu *diwan* and his foreign subordinates. One such *diwan* was a Brahman named Joaram, whose zeal by 1827 had degenerated "into rapacity and extortion, thereby producing ruin to the people and consequently depopulation to the province."¹ The maharaja, who evinced, "neither talent nor inclination for business",² had given this new *diwan* a free hand, and the *diwan*, to please his master, sought to increase the income of the estate by all possible means. Thus, in 1827 he set up a claim to recover a great part of the *jagirs* on the plea that the *jagirdars* were mere mortgagees, and that their money had been more than paid through the yields of the *jagirs*.³ These unprecedented claims were, however, rejected by the Ramgarh magistrate, who enjoined him not to dispossess any of the existing occupants from their lands, nor to do any act contrary to the Regulations of Government or the customs of the Pergunnah.⁴ Such an undertaking, however, in the absence of close supervision, was meaningless.

Indeed, every species of oppression was perpetrated on the tribal peasantry. According to Cuthbert, the desertion of many villages could "chiefly be imputed to the conduct of the principal landholders towards their ryots, and their not granting receipts for the payment of rents, which alone opens a wide door to abuse: add to this the effects of the feudal system, which, under the most favourable circumstances, must ever act as a check to the increase of population, by damping the industry and independence of the people."⁵ The maharaja and the lesser rajas exacted *begari* (forced labour) from the tenants.⁶

1. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 9, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

2. *Ibid.* para 8.

3. *Ibid.* para 13.

4. *Ibid.* para. 10.

5. *Ibid.* para. 27.

6. *Ibid.* para. 29.

Moreover, several duties known as *rasum*, *gangit*, *mutfurka*, etc., were levied.¹ The rapacious non-tribal servants of the chiefs fleeced the tribal peasants whenever they visited the villages.

Under a fully tribal system, custom remained a powerful barrier to excess, and the feudal system had been fairly tolerable. But the non-tribal servants of the hinduized chiefs made it an instrument of oppression and extortion. If rent fell in arrears, a *jamadar* at eight annas a day *talbana* (subsistence allowance) or sometimes two at the same rate, accompanied by three or four *barkandazes* at one and a half annas a day, were sent from Palkote, the maharaja's *cutchery* to collect the dues. They stayed in the village, were fed at the expense of the ryots, sometimes for several months, and in the end their subsistence allowance for the whole period of stay was realized from the poor villagers.² Even when most of the ryots had paid their dues, these servants were retained in the villages on the excuse that a trifling amount was still due. The main motive of the maharaja, and the lesser zamindars, was to keep up their revenue and police establishments on a small pay, the balance being made up by *talbana*.³ Sometimes the manager of the farmer of a village also assessed the ryots separately on the pretext that he had to pay a part of the *talbana* of the maharaja's servants and had to feed them.⁴

No doubt some of the *abwabs*, e.g. the *Dashahara salami* (contribution towards the celebration of the *Dashahara* festival), were paid willingly, because they would add to the grandeur of the maharaja's court, but the high-handedness of the peons, the *tahsildars* and other non-tribal servants of the maharaja was felt very severely by the tribesmen. These servants not only seized goats and buffaloes for sacrifice at the altar of the goddess, but also took bribes to leave some of the villagers untouched.⁵

1. *Ibid.* para. 48. See Glossary.

2. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 37, Misc. Despatch Book, no. 247, G. G.'s Agent's Office, Patna Archives.

3. *Ibid.* para. 38.

4. *Ibid.* para. 39.

5. *Ibid.* para. 42.

All these oppressions and extortions might have been checked had there been a closer control by the Ramgarh authorities. But unfortunately the civil station was far removed from the *pargana*, even though several officers in the past had emphasised the necessity of moving it to a nearer place.¹ Even when heavy mortality at the Sherghati jail in 1827 suggested that a move to more healthy Hazaribagh was necessary the Government still made no move.²

While the civil station thus remained remote from Chota-Nagpur, nothing was done to post any European officer in the tribal area. The argument, here, was that Chota-Nagpur was most unhealthy. French, the Ramgarh magistrate, for example, thought in 1817 that the constant residence of a joint magistrate in this area "would almost certainly be attended with the destruction of the person appointed."³ The most that was considered feasible was an annual visit by the magistrate.⁴ But though in 1821 the Joint Magistrate and Assistant Collector for Chota-Nagpur was specially directed to visit the *pargana* during a favourable season and to establish a more vigilant superintendence over its affairs⁵, Cuthbert in 1827 and again in 1830 admitted that no superior officer had visited the area for several years⁶ due to the pressure of work at the civil station. More-

1. cf. Roughsedge to Ramgarh magistrate, 5 May 1809, para. 12, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 25 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38). Also see Beng. Rev. Cons. 19 of 28 May 1824 (60/7).

2. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 14 of 18 Oct. 1827 (138/31). Till 1825 courts were held alternately at Chatra and Sherghati. But in January 1826 the civil station was fixed at Sherghati, a place more distant from Chota-Nagpur than Chatra: Resolution, Govt., 26 Jan. 1826, para. 15, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 32 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

3. Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 9 of 23 May 1817 (132/58).

4. As far back as 1809 Roughsedge had laid emphasis on such a tour: Roughsedge to Ramgarh magistrate, 5 May 1809, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 25 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

5. Memorandum, Shakespear, 20 Jan. 1826, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 31 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

6. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl 1827, para. 76, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

Also see Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, para. 14, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 11 May 1830 (139/51).

over, he reported in 1830, "the great distance of the Magistrate's residence from the pergunna renders the journey to the Sudder station expensive and inconvenient to prosecutors and witnesses, and this of itself naturally tends to the concealment of crime".¹

The district was not altogether fortunate in the officers appointed to it. Nathaniel Smith² who, as has been seen, was responsible for the introduction of the *abkari* and abolition of *rahdari* dues, was formally charged by the *Nizamat Adalat* with "eccentricity of character."³ His order of 10 February 1822 that the maharaja should appoint a police *daroga* who should be "respectable and very humble and very foolish (*Nihayut bewuquf*) and who may not possess any knowledge of his duty towards the Company,"⁴ certainly supports the charge. So does his order to the thanadars to report only cases of highway robbery, theft, burglary, affrays and no other [thus murder and dacoity were excluded.]⁵ Again, he ordered in one of his public proceedings that a proclamation should be issued declaring that no zamindar or talukdar should exact the *sayer* duties from merchants; but in the event of the demand being made, the merchants might beat the person making such demand with their sticks or even swords.⁶ The *Nizamat Adalat* called this

1. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, para. 8, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 11 May 1830 (139/51). He admitted that whenever cases came before him "of people having neglected to report trivial thefts in Chota-Nagpoor, I fully enter their feelings, make allowance for the great distance they have to come and act as mildly towards them as circumstances will permit."

2. He was in charge of Chota-Nagpur from February 1821 to November 1825 with a few short breaks. He also officiated as the Magistrate and Collector of Ramgarh for some time in this period: *Register of E. I. Co.'s Bengal Civil Servants*, 350.

3. Register, *Nizamat Adalat*, to Govt., 5 Sept. 1823, para. 2, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 23 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

4. J. B. Elliot, 4th Judge, Patna Court of Circuit, to Register, *Nizamat Adalat*, 2 July 1823, *Ibid*.

5. *Ibid*.

6. Proceedings of Smith, 9 Feb. 1822, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 23 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

proceeding "strange and irregular, and likely to operate perniciously."¹ Similarly with regard to his peculiar letter to the superintendent of police,² the *Adalat* hoped "that Mr. Nathaniel Smith will in future exercise a more rigid control over his feelings, his imagination, and his pen."³

Fortunately Smith did not stay for long⁴, but Cuthbert, who remained in this district for more than a decade from 1821 onwards was no better choice.⁵ In his case it was not eccentricity but an unimaginative zeal that made him an unwise choice. It was he, as has been seen, who introduced the tax on rice beer, and pressed for the cultivation of the opium poppy. It was at his suggestion that a non-tribal Indian officer was appointed as *munsif* in Chota Nagpur⁶ in 1825, though this "was vehemently objected to" and the maharaja and the landholders "used every means to dissuade the ryots from resorting

1. Register, Nizamat Adalat, to Patna Court of Circuit, 15 Sept. 1823, *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* This was the letter of 21 April 1822 in which Smith had discussed a criminal case of Chota-Nagpur in a peculiar style.

3. *Ibid.*

4. This area was saved from the innovations resulting from his "favourite idea" that the *jagirdars* of Chota-Nagpur were similar to the *talukdars* of Bengal. That was why he had pressed the Board of Revenue that they should be freed from subordination to the maharaja. Moreover, he had wanted the introduction of partition laws (which had been prohibited in 1800) into this area—a suggestion which, according to Cuthbert, would have tended "to disseminate poverty and misery than to promote prosperity and happiness." : Cuthbert to Govt., 17 July 1824, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 36 of 26 Aug. 1824 (136/31).

5. He had served as an officiating district magistrate in Saharanpur and Meerut before being appointed Judge-Magistrate of Ramgarh on 13 April 1821. In October he took charge of the collectorship for some time. After that he continued to serve in the district till April 1832, with a break of a few months in 1825: *Register of E. I. Co.'s Bengal Civil Servants*, 82-83. From January 1826 he was the Magistrate-Judge and Collector of Ramgarh with a special salary of Rs. 3,000 and a travelling allowance of Rs. 300: Resolution, Govt., 26 Jan. 1826, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 31 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

6. By 1830 there were two *munsifs* in this area, one at Lohardugga and the other at Bundu: Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 11 May 1830 (139/31).

to such a tribunal."¹ Instead of realizing that such a tribunal encroached upon the powers of the tribal *panchayats* under the tribal chiefs, he dismissed the protests as originating "in the most sordid and interested motives" and he thought that "the arrangement might promote a more intimate knowledge of the Regulations amongst this rude people and thereby tend to their civilization and improvement."² Indeed, he was obsessed with the idea of civilizing these people—questioning them in their villages as to their peculiar customs, their rights, profits from different trades, and "more particularly on their superstitions", e.g., witchcraft.³ He went to the length of threatening them with severe punishment if witches were punished by the *panchayat*.

Cuthbert also offended the hinduized maharaja and other zamindars by interfering with *sati*⁴ and by introducing the zamindari *dak*⁵. In fact, he was over-ambitious in seeking vast powers for himself to eradicate by administrative edict all the evils of a backward society: "In Ramghur where the people are for the most part rude and uncivilized, the greatest political advantages may be expected from the general inspection, care, consideration and exertions of officers vested with consolidated powers."⁶ At the same time he was over-optimistic. In 1827 he thought that the constant feuds and predatory habits, which had affected the crops and property of the people here in the past, had been stopped, that the "human sacrifices" which "were annually offered up by the Rajah" had been prohibited, that the "practices of putting persons to death for sorcery" was "now hardly to be heard of", and that "the demoralizing custom of compounding punishment" no longer existed.⁷ He dreamt of changing the habits of the tribal

1. Cuthbert to Govt., 21 Apl. 1827, para. 55, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 53 of 14 June 1827 (¹²⁸/₂₂).

2. *Ibid.* para. 56.

3. *Ibid.* para. 98.

4. *Ibid.* para. 95.

5. *Ibid.* para. 101.

6. *Ibid.* para. 105. He wanted the powers of supervising the salt-agent, opium production, etc.

7. *Ibid.* Paras. 107-108.

people by a miracle, as it were. "The people," he wrote, "are simple, obedient and willing and can be moulded at [to] anything by a zealous and accessible officer, who impresses on their minds that he is working for their benefit. It is to these annual tours then, that I chiefly look to reform the manners of the people, emancipate them from the thralldom of their superiors, to develop the capacities of the country and encourage industry and the extension of agriculture and to remedy the inveterate abuses of the feudal system."¹

It was with such adventurous and grandiose ideas that Cuthbert, like Smith, used to toy. Like Smith, too, he never mentioned the real malady—the infiltration of non-tribal elements in the tribal society—in his long reports. Only a few months before the unrest broke out he stated, after his tour, that Chota-Nagpur was as fruitful as a garden. No wonder, therefore, that he was charged with having "misled the government by prophesying smooth things."² He was particularly censured by Blunt, the third member of the Calcutta Council, because "on the very eve of a general insurrection" he represented "the country and the people to be in a state of prosperity, content and happiness."³ "...The ends for which Mr. Cuthbert was entrusted with enlarged powers [in 1826]," remarked Blunt, "have been utterly defeated."⁴ Had those

1. *Ibid.* para. 108.

2. 'Kols of Chota Nagpur', *Calcutta Review*, XLIX. Also Blunt, *Minute*, 4 Apl. 1832, paras. 11-12, B.C. 1363/54227.

3. *Ibid.* para. 42.

4. On 26 January 1826 he was vested with the united powers of Judge, Magistrate and Collector under Regulation V, 1825, in view of the peculiar circumstances of the district: Resolution, Govt., 26 Jan. 1826, para. 9, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 32 of 26 Jan. 1826 (187/30). The secretary of the Judicial department, while recommending this measure, had remarked that on the transfer of Cuthbert, "who has been in charge of the district for the last five years," the district "would be in new hands, Government deprived of services of an officer who has shown himself eminently qualified by his disposition and talents to conduct the duties of a situation which he has so long held." He had further observed, "There are few situations under Government in which a mild and conciliatory line of conduct is so much required as in the management of the rude and

powers been exercised efficiently, had Mr. Cuthbert duly informed himself of the state of the district committed to his charge, and had he exercised a due control over the subordinate native officers of Government and others subject to his authority, I am compelled to declare my firm belief that this insurrection would never have occurred."¹

Cuthbert's total want of information about Chota-Nagpur, Blunt thought, could only be accounted for in one of two ways—"either his native officers had the means of keeping back complaints from him ; or the parties aggrieved had no hope of obtaining redress by complaining."² Of these the former seems the more likely, for though Cuthbert was many years in the tribal area he never learnt the local language, and so had to rely entirely upon his subordinates. (Dent, his successor, was a good linguist.) But even more important, Cuthbert was not a sympathetic administrator or in his idealism under-estimated the magnitude of the task of transforming a whole society and the need for safeguards at every step. What was needed was the imaginative sympathy of a Cleveland, an Outram, a Wilkinson, a Dixon, an Ovans or a Macpherson, who had laboured in the cause of humanity "without the stimulating and sustaining aid of a single note of popular applause."³ A newspaper correspondent rightly remarked, "Call to mind, Mr. Editor, a case in times gone by—of one Cleveland at Boglepoor [Bhagalpur]—

half civilized people who inhabit the remote parts of the district. By an indulgent consideration of their character and circumstances they may be easily brought to co-operate with their rulers in any plans for ameliorating their condition whereas, harsh and coercive measures, or any exaction of the observance of unnecessary forms, must always have a directly opposite tendency and prove in the end wholly unsuccessful and injurious :"

Memorandum, Shakespear, 20 Jan. 1826, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 31 of 26 Jan. 1826.(137/39).

1. Blunt, Minute, 4 Apl. 1832, para. 39, B. C. 1363/54227.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Kaye, *Administration of the East India Company*, 465. Sir J. Outram worked among the Gonds and Cleveland among the Santhals in the Raj Mahal Hills in Bihar : 'Kole of Chota Nagpur,' *Calcutta Review*, XLIX.

send a Mr. Cleveland to the Coles and you will have no occasion to augment the Ramghur Battalion."¹

The official apathy and ignorance may, therefore, be considered an important cause of the unrest. Professor Haimendorf has said that all tribal rebellions "were defensive movements : they are the last resort of tribesmen driven to despair by the encroachments of outsiders on their land or economic resources. As such they could have all been avoided had the authorities recognized the aborigines' grievances and taken steps to remedy them not, as it happened in most cases, after the rising, but before the pressure on the tribesmen had made an attack unavoidable."² This is certainly true of the unrest of December 1831. When it began, "so utterly ignorant were the civil functionaries in that part of the country of the causes which occasioned it, of the grounds which the people had for discontent, or of what was really going on, that it was for some time looked upon as some petty disturbance or robbery, which a few extra police officers would soon effectually suppress."³ The Court of Directors laid due emphasis on this fact : "With regard to the causes to which the insurrection, first in Chota Nagpore and subsequently in the Jungle Estates, is to be attributed, we have to remark generally that the local officers seem to have been very imperfectly and incorrectly informed as to the real condition of that part of the country."⁴

A natural corollary to this official ignorance, apathy or incompetence, at whatever level displayed, was the reduction in the number of the Ramgarh battalion which for about half a

1. 'U. N. S.', *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832.

2. 'The Aboriginal Rebellions of the Deccan', *Man in India*, Rebellion Number, XXV, No. 4, Dec. 1945.

3. F. J. Shore, *Notes on Indian Affairs*, II, 112, footnote.

4. Court of Directors to Bengal Govt., 16 Sept. 1835, para. 6, *India and Bengal Despatches*, vol. 6, pp. 370-371. The views of the Directors may have been true, but one may add that they were scarcely blameless themselves. They expected from officers left in sole charge of vast districts an understanding of local languages and customs which a modern anthropologist only feels able to acquire (working within the confines of a single village) by a year or two years' undivided study.

century had been stationed at Hazaribagh to deal with such emergencies. True, some people in 1832 thought that the putting of this battalion on its former footing "would be aiding and abetting and assisting the very cause of the present disturbances."¹ But the general consensus of opinion in the Government circle was that an adequate force must have acted as a deterrent. "The great mistake committed," said a correspondent of a Government sponsored Calcutta paper, "was the reduction of the Ramghur Battalion, without sending other troops."² Another correspondent expressed the opinion that "...the reduction of the strength of the Ramghur Battalion alone would have been the signal for warfare and confusion."³ This view was supported in the editorial column of that day: "The reduced strength of the Ramghur Battalion permitted the insurgents to gain head and is a strong witness against the penny wise and pound foolish system of military clipping." Beveridge struck the same note in 1862 when he wrote that "these insurrections were doubtless encouraged by the extent to which government, in its anxiety to meet the wishes of the directors on the subject of retrenchment, had carried the reduction of its military establishments."⁴ Wilson also criticised this "mistaken economy of reducing its military strength below the amount required to awe and control the barbarous border tribes."⁵ He further wrote, "As long as a strong curb was maintained upon the Koles and Dangas of Sambhalpur and Singbhum by the superintendence of a political Agent, who was empowered to interfere authoritatively for the preservation of internal peace, and had at his disposal a military force sufficient to overawe the refractory, some degree of order was maintained. When the powers of the Agent were curtailed, and the troops on the frontier reduced, the barbarous tribes relapsed into the

1. 'U. N. S., *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Apl. 1832.

2. 'Old Grundy', 6 March 1832, *India Gazette*, 16 March 1832.

3. Report from Banta Hajam, 16 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 23 March 1832.

4. *Comprehensive History of India*, II, 207.

5. *Mill's History of British India*, 1858, IX, 231.

indulgence of their former propensities.”¹ Shore in 1837 went to the length of saying that “it is universally acknowledged, that the constant presence of our troops alone prevents disturbances, or, in plain English, insurrection.”²

One may not agree that the presence of an adequate force at hand would have prevented the outbreak, nor agree with the writer's assumption that force was a cure-all, but that the absence of such a force negatively helped the unrest cannot be denied. The risings certainly would not have assumed such proportions if the authorities had been alert with sufficient force. The Patna divisional commissioner rightly pointed out that the disturbances would readily have been checked, or prevented from spreading if Captain Wilkinson had had at his disposal a considerable force.³ As it was, the insurrection went on gaining momentum because the authorities were helpless till the arrival of troops.⁴ According to a newspaper correspondent, “it was not until after the insurgents had discovered how totally unable the authorities on the spot were to meet force by force, that they extended the scene of their operations, increased their adherents, and finally concocted the wildest schemes.”⁵ He further posed a very sane query, “Will rich coffers and an overflowing treasury in consequences of reduced establishments, civil and military, compensate for all this misery?”⁶

In spite of the absence of an adequate military force, an efficient police could have faced the situation. “Had the police of the country been properly organized,” said a correspondent, “these disturbances could not possibly have taken place, and our officers and men would not have been obliged to enter upon a service, which promises neither honour to their arms, nor brilliancy to their reputation.”⁷ We have already seen how several attempts had been made since 1809 to supplement the zamindari (or *ghatwali*)

1. *Ibid.* 231-232.

2. *Notes*, I, 158.

3. Lambert to Govt., 14 Feb. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1362/54224.

4. Towards the end of January. See Chapter II.

5. ‘Jasoos’, 4 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 March 1832.

6. *Ibid.*

7. ‘An Officer’, 29 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 12 March 1832.

police of the maharaja with a regular police, and how those attempts had failed mainly because of the employment of outsiders as police *darogas*. Colvin in 1821 reported that only a purely zamindari police could succeed in this area.¹ Only two years after this the Magistrate of Ramgarh reported that the police of this area had been "long considered 'zamindaree' whereas substantially it differs in nothing from that of regular districts except that, independent of the avowed and notorious defects of the Regular Thannadaree system, another most grievous evil has been added in the uncertainty of payment of which the police officers in Nagpore have but too much reason to complain..."² N. Smith wrote in very similar terms to the *Nizamat Adalat* a few months after this.³ Cuthbert, however, was not at first in favour of the zamindari police, though by 1830 he admitted the unpopularity and inefficiency of the regular police, and he invested the subordinate rajas with police powers. However, the continued presence of the non-tribal *darogas* and *barkandazes* thwarted the whole plan.

How very obnoxious these *darogas* had become was proved in the course of the investigation in 1832. The burning of several *thanas* with their records early in 1832⁴ showed the wrath of the people towards the official police system. Blunt lamented that the maharaja had not been left in charge of a purely zamindari police as had happened in most of the Jungle Mahals where "most of the stipendary police establishments before existing on the part of Government were withdrawn."⁵ The six police *thanas* of Maharajganj, Jhikochatti, Barwa, Barkagarh, Tamar and Tori with a *daroga*, a *jamadar*, a *mohurir*, and a small number of *barkandazes*—all from out-

1. Colvin to Govt., 10 Apl. 1821, paras. 29-59: Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 16 of June 1821 (130/53). He deplored the neglect of the *ghatwals*.

2. Magistrate to Superintendent of Police, Lower Provinces, 8 Aug. 1823, para. 3, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 25 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

3. N. Smith to Register, Nizamat Adalat, 17 Nov. 1823, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 24 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

4. One such *thana* was at Jhikochatti: J. Master to Nizamat Adalat, 22 Oct. 1832, Trial no. 18, B. C. 1502/58893.

5. Blunt, Minute, 28 Jan. 1832, para. 3, B.C. 1363/54227.

side—were an eyesore to the vast number of *ghatwals*, *chaukidars* and others. Drummond commented in 1841 that the zamindari police was “surely the most desirable that could be established and tenfold more effectual than any other which could be substituted by the Government.”¹

Like the police *thanas*, the civil, judicial, revenue, excise and salt establishments of the Government in this area were manned by plains people whose sole motive was to fleece the poor tribal cultivators. Worse still, the *nazir*, the *kanungo*, the salt-*daroga* and the peons of the different departments were not only corrupt, they also invariably sided with the tribal farmers of land who were dispossessing the tribal landholders of their lands.

At the same time, the permanent settlement of revenue and the civil and criminal laws had also helped the zamindars and the outsiders in dispossessing the tribal tenants. The ryot had gained nothing from the zamindars whose invariable policy had been “to grind him down, to enhance his rents, leaving no margin for a saving.”² Major Lees most aptly remarked that “His Excellency [Lord Cornwallis] no doubt thought to make English landlords of the zamindars of Bengal : but it is patent to the world that he succeeded only in making Irish ones.”³ This change of status was more keenly felt in this tribal area where the original clearers of land had an hereditary interest and where they had been paying only a quit-rent or no rent at all in some cases. The *Bhuinhars* (or *Khutkhattidars*) or the original clearers of the land held their land rent-free.⁴ But now their age-old rights were assailed, and even the old tribal ryots had to work on the land for the benefit of others. As a newspaper correspondent said, some modification was essential in the “perpetual settlement”, so that these original clearers of land had an interest in the land again.⁵

1. Drummond, M. S. Statistical Account, 19.

2. ‘The Kols of Chota Nagpore’, *Calcutta Review*, XLIX.

3. Quoted from *Land and Labour*, *Ibid*.

4. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 14, Misc. Dispatch Book, no. 247, G. G.’s Agent’s Office, Patna Archives.

5. Old Grundy, *India Gazette*, 4 Apl. 1832.

Early in 1832 Major Sutherland argued of the Kols that "Like the Gonds of the Nagpure territory, the Bheels of the North-Western part of India and other tribes of that nature, they require a peculiar form of Government and that which we have latterly introduced into this country does not seem suitable."¹ Blunt, arguing from his experience, held that like the poligars of the Northern Circars and the tribal people of the hilly tributary estates of Orissa, these people ought to have been put outside the ordinary regulations². He further commented that "the system of civil administration which may be well-calculated to protect the rights and to promote the happiness of the people in our Regulation provinces cannot with advantage or safety be extended to the Jungle Estates ; and that for many years to come, the extension of our laws and of the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts of justice in such tracts will be both premature and injurious both to the peace of the country and to the welfare of the people, and I think a serious error was committed in introducing our Regulations into Chota Nagpore or in attempting to create a revenue from tax to be levied from subjects so uncivilized and so poor."³

Such remarks had also been made in the years immediately preceding the unrest. For example, Colvin, in his long report on the Tamar disturbances, had suggested in 1821 that "a strict adherence to the Regulations also might in many instances be dispensed with."⁴ In his opinion they were not well adapted to the character of the greater portion of the inhabitants.⁵

N. Smith in 1823 had written in the same vein when he had urged the Government to place Chota-Nagpur "under a more summary system of management than is sanctioned by the existing Regulations."⁶ He had argued for a change in the

1. Sutherland to Govt., n.d., B. C. 1363/54227.

2. Blunt, Minute, 27 Apl. 1832, *ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. Colvin to Govt., 10 Apl. 1821, para. 63, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 16 of 8 June 1821 (134/53).

5. *Ibid.* para. 66.

6. N. Smith to Govt., 19 June 1823, para. 8, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 21 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/38).

administration of criminal justice on the following grounds : first, the expediency of a more rapid administration of criminal justice in consequence of the tendency to violence, which displayed itself on a vast variety of occasions, amongst the people of Palamau ; secondly, the simple character of criminal trials, arising from the rude nature of the people, the practice of voluntary confessions, or the otherwise-satisfactory nature of the proof adduced, rendering unnecessary here, the complicated system of jurisprudence, the grand object of which was to guard against the possibility of error in the criminal judge ; and thirdly, the great geographical extent of the district and the nature of the country, its difficult *ghats* and vast forests, rendering it "an almost intolerable inconvenience for witnesses, twice if not oftener to attend a trial."¹

With regard to civil administration also he had thought many of these inconveniences led to a failure of justice. The "total inability of the people to cope with our forms of proceeding, and the process of our courts", he had written, "led to the explosion of the combustible materials."² "In Palamow this inability patiently to endure the tyranny of forms, and injustice under colour of law has displayed itself in acts of violence ; while in Nagpoor [Chota-Nagpur] it has given rise to conspiracies of the most atrocious description."³ He had frankly confessed, "I find it easier to decide the rich man's than the poor man's cause. In the rich man's case the system works as we contemplate it in our regulations ; but the poor man has to learn that the machinery of an Arnold's time-keeper, when once out of order in any, even the minutest parts, renders the instrument useless : and perhaps in his case, Colonel Wilkes may be right where he considers the mechanism of a smoke-jack, as better adapted to the exigencies of these people than that of the finest chronometer."⁴ In support of his argument that "what is good in theory is bad in practice and vice versa,"

1. *Ibid.* para. 9.

2. *Ibid.* para. 10.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

he had given several illustrations from the cases of tribal peoples he had tried at Chatra, and had suggested to the Government "the expediency of extending to this part of the country, the principles of legislation adopted for the Garrow Hills"¹ which might be modified in some ways to suit the requirements of this area.² In short, Smith had voted for quickness of decision and for the removal of unnecessary complicated forms of judicial procedure, because these formalities and delay "the necessity of which they are unable to comprehend, lead them to have recourse to the main [more] speedy decision of arms."³

In the same way the unsuitability of the regular police system for this area had been emphasised by Blunt, Fleming, Colvin, N. Smith and Cuthbert (in the later years of his office). Fleming, who had been the Magistrate of Ramgarh before Cuthbert, had gone to the length of suggesting that the zamindars might think that the charge of police gave them consequence and that they would feel themselves disgraced by being deprived of it, while the nature of the country was such that without their influence and assistance it would be impossible to apprehend offenders.⁴

Yet nothing was done to develop a purely indigenous police system nor to change the complicated machinery of British administration. The only changes effected were the uniting of the offices of the Judge, the Collector and the Magistrate of Ramgarh in 1826, and the abolition of the unpopular post of native superintendent of police, these, too, mainly for the sake of economy.

Cuthbert in the later years of his office here had repeatedly pointed out the unsuitability of the ordinary laws for this area. Only a few months before the unrest, he had reported on the abuse of the law of the distraint regarding the sale of property for the recovery of the arrears of rent. "The inhabitants," he

1. *Ibid.* para. 14.

2. *Ibid.* para. 15.

3. Memorandum, Shakespear, 20 Jan. 1826, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 31 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

4. *Ibid.*

wrote, "are often exposed to loss, hardship, and all those impositions which corrupt officers and crafty vakeels know so well how to practise on the ignorant. Regulation 5 of 1812 affords the people no protection, they being for the most part unacquainted with its provisions."¹ But before Cuthbert could take any action to forbid the services of the professional lawyers in the *munsif's* court, much harm had already been done to the tribesmen. The poor, unsophisticated Kol, if ever he went to the court, could hardly stand the searchlight of cross examination. Dent admitted in 1833 that the two recently established *munsif's* courts were looked upon by the Kol with awe as instruments of oppression, which only helped the creditors and the landholders to recover their money and rents respectively.²

Spry noted in 1837, "In our revenue assessments and collections, such is the nature of this part of the country, we are compelled to depend, in a great measure, upon the native officers of the courts, a class of men so badly paid for their services that whenever the fear of detection is removed they tyrannize over and oppress the cultivators."³ Indeed the administration of the area in 1831 "had all the faults of a rigidly legal system, applied unscrupulously over an unwieldy extent of country, by officials who had the scantiest knowledge of the people with whom they were dealing."⁴ On the one hand, the higher district authorities were inaccessible, on the other the subordinate non-tribal officers were enemies of tribal interests. The hinduized maharaja and the lesser rajas, irritated at their loss of power and prestige, and lately associated with the non-tribal settlers, would not help the tribesmen. No wonder, therefore, that the tribesmen felt that "they were neglected by their new masters, oppressed by aliens and deprived of the means they had formerly possessed of obtaining redress through their own chief."⁵

1. Cuthbert to Patna Commissioner, 14 March 1831, B. C. 1502/58894.

2. Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. *Modern India*, I, 116-117.

4. Hunter, *Statistical Account*, XVI, 20.

5. Dalton, *Ethnology*, 170.

If the Kols went to the non-tribal *daroga* to complain of the loss of land, or of some manhandling by the foreign settlers, they found every influence arrayed against them, and "a host of witnesses in the pay of the opposite party" to prove that the poor Kol "had not only no rights in the land, but was a turbulent rebel besides."¹ Could they then approach the Bengal Government directly? Metcalfe, the Vice-President of the Calcutta Council, thought that they could have done so by petition. He believed that they did not do that simply because they wanted to overthrow the British Government and to establish their independence. (They vaguely talked of marching to Calcutta!) "I have no doubt however much they may have miscalculated," said Metcalfe, "that they did intend to expel the British Government from their own country and establish their own independence in imitation of their brethren, the Singhbhoom Coles, who are as free and independent as any people on earth, acknowledging no Government but that of their own village chiefs, for the most part paying revenue to no one, and scarcely acknowledging any allegiance to their nominal Raja," though Roughsedge had once "said and fondly imagined" that the territory of Singhbhoom "was annexed to the British Empire."² Metcalfe further lamented that "the seeds of Insurrection exist everywhere under our Government, and more or less in all parts of India under our supremacy. This is partly owing to the readiness of the people to embrace the prospect of any change and partly to the antipathy against us as foreigners and conquerors, which I consider to be universal among all classes, although, according to circumstances, it is felt more bitterly and more actively by some than by others."³

It is true that these tribesmen wanted to end all encroachments upon their own system, but whether they thought in such large terms as the freedom of the whole area, it is difficult to say. Blunt rightly pointed out that people, who hardly knew any authorities beyond the native and European functionaries

1. *Ibid.* 170.

2. Metcalfe, Minute, 14 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. *Ibid.*

of the district, could scarcely have planned the subversion of the British power in India.¹ The fact was that they could not find a simpler—or more effective—method of airing their grievances than a rebellion. Certainly they never dreamed of sending a petition to the Vice-President of the Calcutta Government. Blunt sensibly asked, "Even supposing that any of their Sirdars through whom they would naturally seek redress, were capable of representing their grievances in that form or were aware of the facility afforded by the Honourable the Vice-President to all persons aggrieved, to prefer to him in person their complaints", what villager would have thought to send a petition through the *dak* or would have ventured in person to Patna or Calcutta ?²

Metcalfe's emphasis on the 'spirit of revolt' and 'the spirit of independence' among these tribal people may be partially correct in view of their long tradition of unrest in Tamar, Bundu and other dependencies of Chota-Nagpur, but it is noteworthy that the Dhangar Kols of North and Central Chota-Nagpur proper had never revolted before. His belief that the Kols, on the basis of reports about the reduction of troops at Hazaribagh and of the exaggerated accounts of the Muslim revolt at Baraset near Calcutta, considered it to be the best opportunity of throwing off the British yoke,³ is not confirmed by any statement of the prisoners. Metcalfe's idea of a general Kol feeling of disaffection against the British—a feeling "composed partly

1. Blunt, Minute, 27 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227: J. Master, the officiating commissioner of circuit, who tried the Chota-Nagpur cases in the sessions, remarked similarly, "They [the Kols in search of employment] visit the Presidency, and all the principal towns in Bengal where opportunities occur of witnessing the prodigious extent (to their simple minds) of British enterprise, resources and power. The possibility of such a Government being subverted by their feeble and insignificant efforts could never therefore enter their contemplation and their views must have been confined to the expulsion of those by whom they considered themselves supplanted and aggrieved :". Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 24, B.C. 1502/58833. Also in Bentinck M. S., Box 15.

2. Blunt, Minute, 27 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. Metcalfe, Minute, 14 Apl. 1832. The Muslims of Baraset had revolted in 1831 under one Titu Mir.

of natural antipathy for a race so different in every respect from the native population and partly of disgust for foreign conquerors"¹, does not seem to be based on facts either, for the Kols revolted against all outsiders [*suds*]—the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh landlords, moneylenders and subordinate servants of the maharaja as well as the agents of the Government. Blunt firmly stated that it had not come to his knowledge "that the Coles of Chota Nagpur or its dependencies have at any period antecedent to this insurrection meditated their independence."² Metcalfe's use of the absence of any previous wrong as a proof of conspiracy to rebel was also rather ludicrous—and Blunt effectively countered it by a reference to the Cuttack revolt of 1817 which, though occasioned by a long systematic oppression and misrule, had not been preceded by any complaints.³

It is possible that the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur had been thinking of throwing off a control which had been growing lighter ever since 1819 when his police powers were taken away. Before that he had been virtually independent, and so late as 1810 the Acting Magistrate of Ramgarh had admitted that the pretensions of this zamindar to be a tributary chief had never been contradicted by the British Government.⁴ Similarly in 1811 the introduction of the revenue regulations had not been deemed advisable, and the collector was "peremptorily prohibited from interfering in the affairs of Chota Nagpoor."⁵

In 1819, however, though the maharaja was still nominally required to select and dismiss the police officers of Chota-Nagpur, and was responsible for their payment, he ceased to be the head of the police of the estate, and real power passed into the hands of the *mirdaroga* or native police superintendent.

1. *Ibid.*

2. Blunt, Minute, 27 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. *Ibid.* Blunt's remarks were more practical because he had the personal experience of this area.

4. Ramgarh acting magistrate to Government, 15 Jan. 1810, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 5 of 2 Feb. 1810 (130/12).

5. Cuthbert to Government, 17 July 1824, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 36 of 26 Aug. 1824 (139/31).

The heavy blows, however, only fell after N. Smith was appointed. Smith's first measure, of February 1822, was "to forbid his collecting *sayer* and to publish a proclamation forbidding any person to pay it to the Rajah, although proof was offered that it had always been collected, and that even decrees of our adawlut had been passed in favour of the Rajah's right to collect it."¹ The maharaja protested against this injustice on the ground that the *sayer* duties had been included in the assets of the Decennial Settlement of 1789, and therefore to prohibit this was to annul that settlement which had been declared permanent.² At the same time he claimed an exemption from the general regulations as they had not been formally extended to his estate. The Government, however, rejected these claims.³ His objection to the introduction of the *abkari* duties (especially *hanria* tax) on the ground that it meant "twice taxing the rice or produce of the land,"⁴ was similarly overruled. According to his own statement, besides his loss of Rs. 11,000 on account of *sayer* (with corresponding gain of Rs. 12,000 to the Government and of Rs. 25,000 to the *thikadar* on account of excise) he was still forced to pay Rs. 7,006 towards the expenses of police establishments, the revenue of Rs. 4,000 of Tamar and Rahi had been assigned to Thakurain Pancham Kunwari of Pachet (whose claim was to not more than Rs. 2,400 annually)

1. Sutherland to Government, n. d., B.C. 1363/54227. Cuthbert, the magistrate, submitted a dozen documents to show that the maharaja's right to collect the *sayer* had been recognised by all the district authorities in the past and that "on every principle of law, justice, and good faith," he was at least entitled to a reasonable compensation : Cuthbert to Government, 17 July 1824, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 36 of 26 Aug. 1824 (126/31). Cuthbert at times showed a good understanding of the local matters—perhaps it was his opposition to some Government measures that made Blunt and even the Directors ready to abuse him in 1832.

2. Petition, Agents of Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, enclosure, Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227. Also enclosure, Board to Government, 2 Sept. 1823, Beng. Rev. Cons. 42 of 2 Jan. 1824 (59/61).

3. Government to Board, 2 Jan. 1824, *Ibid*.

4. Petition, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, n. d., Beng. Rev. Cons. 38 of 19 Jan. 1826 (60/51).

and he was also forced to pay an allowance of Rs. 1,400 to the Rani of Tori.¹

While he was forced to meet these demands, his financial difficulties went unnoticed by the authorities, and in 1825, when he fell into arrears, his *amla* was called to the *sadr* station, his elephants, horses, etc., were seized and he was reduced to great distress. No wonder that while tendering his resignation as police zamindar, he emphasised his "utter ruin" and "unhappy situation."²

In January 1826 the Government accepted the resignation of the maharaja, and a purely regular police under the magistrate was established.³ But a still more severe blow was given to the maharaja's prestige when in 1830 Cuthbert vested his subordinate rajas with police powers, but kept the maharaja's case under consideration.⁴ The maharaja "objected to the arrangement by which the several subordinate Jaghirdars ...were vested with police powers independent of his authority and control and he deputed his Moktear to Calcutta to petition Government against that arrangement, claiming to be vested exclusively with the charge of the police throughout Chuta Nagpur and its dependencies as in the time of his father."⁵ Still Cuthbert in July 1831, shortly before the outbreak of the unrest, advised the Patna commissioner that the question of the maharaja being vested with these powers, even in his own area, should be "postponed until time shall have been allowed to ascertain the fitness or otherwise of the zemindary system of police in those parts [dependent parganas] in which it has been already introduced," and until he had proved his ability to defray the expenses of the *thanas* punctually.⁶ Blunt criticised this

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* In 1824 the maharaja had shown "his utter inability to discharge arrears" of police expenses and had requested to be allowed to liquidate them in ten years by annual instalments: Shakespear, Memorandum, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 31 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/39).

3. Resolution, Govt.; 26 Jan. 1826, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 32 of 26 Jan. 1826 (137/33).

4. Cuthbert to Lambert, 5 July 1831, B. C. 1503/58895.

5. Blunt, Minute, 28 Jan. 1832, para 9, B. C. 1363/54227.

6. Cuthbert to Lambert, 5 July 1831, B. C. 1503/58895.

action of Cuthbert, on the ground that even in the Jungle Mahals the expenses of the *thana* establishments had not been charged to the zamindar.¹ Major Sutherland, on the basis of his long discussion with the maharaja during the unrest, commented that the recent measures of the authorities "are doubtless all most offensive to the Rajah, and would, but for the utter hopelessness of success, have naturally led to an open hostility on his part towards us."²

The interference of the British authorities had affected the power and prestige of the maharaja in several other ways. In 1827, for instance, he had been prohibited from assuming the power of conferring titles upon his subordinate *jagirdars*.³ His subordinate rajas had now realized that so long as they paid the revenues, the maharaja could do them no harm. Moreover, in his several petitions in 1832, the maharaja asserted that he was entitled to money payments and services (*dam* and *kam*) from the *mundas*, the *mankis* and all other landholders, but that they had now stopped these payments and thought themselves master.⁴ Indeed, since the introduction of the regulations, the maharaja had lost the power of escheating an estate on the failure to fulfil the services. Moreover, he had lately been prohibited from realizing a contribution (*madad*) from them every third year. Not only that, the *panchpownia*, or tax on certain castes and trades (e.g., oilmen, washermen, barbers, weavers, shoemakers, etc.) varying from four to twelve annas per house and a levy of special contributions on occasions of rejoicing or mourning—all these had been prohibited by Cuthbert in 1827.

It may well be surmised that the maharaja would have welcomed an end to British control and to their undue interference in his affairs. But whether he directly instigated the tribal people to revolt has not been conclusively proved. In

1. Blunt, Minute, 28 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

2. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., *Ibid*.

3. Govt. to Cuthbert, 14 June 1827, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 57 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

4. Cf. Petition, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, 22 March 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

his statements he totally denied his association with the rebels. When told by Major Sutherland that he was suspected of having to some degree instigated the insurrection, he pointed out the loss of his property and of his kinsmen, and asked the Major, "Would any one believe that you would set fire to this and this [pointing to his bed, table and chair]" ?¹ But Dent, one of the joint commissioners, in his separate remarks, Russell, the Jungle Mahals magistrate, who apprehended some of the rebel leaders of Chota-Nagpur in Patkum, and Blunt, who had a past experience of this area, honestly felt that the maharaja was at the bottom of the insurrection. Dent thought that these were the strongest grounds for believing that the Nagvansis "were at the bottom of it and that the Raja's name was made use of."² The maharaja and his Nagvansi kinsmen were very hard pressed at that time, and to get out of their financial difficulties, they wanted to increase the rents of the farmers (non-tribal settlers to whom they had recently granted lands) or to eject them forcibly. But since they could not easily do either, in the face of the authority of the civil and criminal courts, and of the police, they wanted to set this authority at naught. The instrument for doing this was found in the discontented and ousted tribesmen.³ Both Russell and Dent gave weight to this fact because they were convinced of Singrai's straightforwardness. Moreover, this was corroborated by other evidence. For example, Sahib Singh, a subadar of the Ramgarh battalion, who, with a party, was at Palkote, the maharaja's residence, during the later part of the unrest, stated it to be his belief that the Nagvansi chiefs had instigated the tribesmen. Captain Wilkinson, one of the joint commissioners, dismissed this

1. Sutherland to Govt., n: d., B C. 1363/54227.

2. Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. Statement, Singrai, in Patkum, Enclosure, Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54226. He even alleged that the maharaja had "ordered them to expel all the natives, the Hindusthanees and the Mahajun Theecadars out of their territories, and to bring their riches, money, jewels and plates to him, that he may pay his Malgoozaree (Government rent) out of them saying "Let their paddy, rice and other eatable things be pillaged by the hungry and the poor."

evidence on the ground that the subadar could not fully corroborate his statement. But Dent, the other joint commissioner, in his separate remarks, described the subadar as a dependable character and lent support to his contention.¹

Against such a belief could be set, however, the known ill-feeling between the maharaja and his relations,² and his undertenure holders. It was the subordinate *jagirdars* who could assemble the *paiks*, but they were dissatisfied by the maharaja's rack-renting. When even the *rautias* (non-tribal settlers and dependants of the maharaja) were at odds with him, could the maharaja have issued orders to them to create disturbances?

Several statements tending to implicate the *kunwars* of Basia and Gavindpur as the planners of the insurrection were received by the joint commissioners. One was that of Sibnath Tiwari, a Brahman holding several villages on *mukarrari* tenure.³ He alleged that the *kunwars* of Basia and Govindpur, the uncle and cousin respectively of the maharaja, had complained to the zamindar of Chhatna, a relation of the Pachet raja, that they had lost their independence since the commencement of the Company's rule and that many estates were now auctioned through the decree of the courts. The Chhatna chief, who had married into the family of the Nagvansi zamindars, advised them to emulate the example of the Pachet raja (who had successfully defied the British authority in 1797-98), to defy the Government with the help of the tribesmen and to take possession of the *jagir* of those who would be killed. The *kunwars*, it was further alleged, persuaded Lohar Singh, a *rautia*, and all the *mundas* or *mahtos* and *pahans* to rise in arms, and one Gopi Pandey, who knew these facts and who wanted to inform the commissioners, was murdered.⁴

Wilkinson, after his investigation, thought that the accusa-

1. Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. Sutherland to Government, n.d., B. C. 1363/54227.

3. Petition, Sibnath, 7 May 1832, Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

4. *Ibid.*

tion was false, though the marriage alliance with Pachet and Chhatna and the death of Gopi in suspicious circumstances, were true enough. Dent, however, gave more weight to Tiwari's statement than Wilkinson had done.¹ He pointed out that not one of the Nagvansis had come forward to assist the authorities in checking the insurrection till sufficient troops had arrived, and the failure of the insurrection had become apparent. Moreover, the villages, in which these chiefs resided, and their houses and property were invariably respected. Even the flight of the kunwar to Doesa might have been a blind. Dent also cited the case of Rahamalli Khan who had been trading in Chota-Nagpur for the last 35 years and who had purchased two villages in the Sonapur *pargana*. His property had been plundered at the clear instigation of the *kunwar* of Basia and of Lohar Singh Rautia.²

Wilkinson admitted that there were "some Circumstances in the conduct of the Raja of Nagpoor and the Kuar of Basia which give the story [of Tiwari] an appearance of truth. In several instances, in which Elaquadars and thiccadars were killed in the insurrection, their villages have been taken possession of by the Kuar and Raja on the plea of there being no direct male heir.³ But since the man who made these allegations was known to be on inimical terms with the Basia family and since he admitted subsequently that certain parts of this statement were pure conjecture, Wilkinson refused to give any credence to it. Moreover, he thought that the *mankis* and *rautias*, whom the kunwar had reduced to poverty and beggary, would not have acted as his instrument.⁴

It may, however, be pointed out that though the Nagvansis were instrumental in ruining the tribesmen, the tribal wrath was directed against the non-tribal people who had directly harassed them. So when they were instigated by the *kunwar* and other chiefs, they were only too glad

1. Dent. Separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Jt. Commissioner to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 82, B. C. 1502/58891.

4. *Ibid.*

Sahib Singh subadar stated that in his presence one day at Palkote the maharaja had accused the Kunwar of Basia and Lohar Singh of being the originators of the insurrection. The maharaja insisted in the joint commissioners' presence that Lohar Singh Rautia alone was the chief instigator of rebellion. Was this merely a second thought, designed to shield his kinsman?

Another statement dismissed by the joint commissioners was that of a brother of the *diwan* of Rahi who said that "the kols of Tamar and Bundu had received sunnuds from the Maharaja...desiring them to burn, plunder, and expel the foreigners."¹ His statement was discounted because it was based on hearsay, and no confirmatory evidence could be found in the *pargana*. Similarly they rejected the allegation of a Brahman of Basia named Sohra Misra who said that Lohar Singh Rautia and Kamal Singh Rautia had planned and instigated the insurrection for the purpose of getting rid of the *thanas* and gentlemen (Englishmen), and of the *suds* (foreigners). This was dismissed because the man was not considered a good character, and he could not adduce proof.² Such proof was however, unlikely to be forthcoming in view of the wide influence of the Nagvansi chiefs. After all, no one had come forward in 1818-1819 to give evidence of the maharaja's complicity in the murder of a witch.

Yet, as Russell, the Jungle Mahals magistrate, pointed out, "if the insurgents were not urged on and supported by some such influential individuals, it is difficult to account for the insurrection [becoming] so extensive and simultaneous."³ He had learnt that for a long time before joining the joint commissioners' camp, the maharaja had retired to the hills in concealment in order to avert suspicion from himself as party to the rebellion. He had also heard that the maharaja was displeased

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 86, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 87, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, para. 23, B.C. 1363/54226.

with the new system of police, and that he was annoyed with Cuthbert for having invested his subordinate zamindars with police powers. Russell was therefore convinced that the maharaja was the chief instigator of the rebellion.

J. Master, who succeeded Lambert as the commissioner of the Patna division, also thought that the rajas had excited the insurrection. He, however, held that the maharaja himself was poor, passive and powerless. It was designing persons among his connections and dependants who had misled the tribesmen who were later to await capital punishment. In support of his view that the Nagvansi chiefs were at the root of the turmoil, he wrote, "Heavy pecuniary demands existed against them in favour of the foreign settlers and the expulsion of the latter promised to remove from the debtors a burden of endless embarrassment. Whilst the country was in flames too, the lives and property of most of the Raja's relations were scrupulously preserved from mischief and molestation, a circumstance which argues tacit participation or most culpable supineness in neglecting the adoption of effective measures for crushing the rebellion in its infancy."¹

It may, therefore, be surmised, in spite of the lack of any direct proof that the maharaja and the lesser rajas, irritated with the British authorities and goaded by their financial difficulties, instigated the tribesmen to revolt. In the words of Blunt, the maharaja "may have considered the summary expulsion of the Mahajuns and the destruction of their houses, papers, and effects, the most convenient way of squaring all accounts with them, to many of whom he is understood to be much indebted and as to the loss of revenue it is the loss only of one year, and he has no doubt calculated on a remission of the public demand very possibly for some years to come."²

But it should be borne in mind that the Nagvansi chiefs could not of themselves have caused an insurrection without some heavy grievances among the tribesmen. It is time now

1. Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 16, B. C. 1502/58893. Also Bentinck M. S., Box 15.

2. Blunt, Minute, 4 Apl. para. 34, B. C. 1363/54227.

to turn to a rather more detailed analysis of what those grievances were, for so far attention has been directed rather to the attitude of the British, of their agents and of the chiefs than to the people themselves. Professor Haimendorf has said, of the causes of tribal rebellions, "in Chota Nagpur it was land in Rajshahi sex—yet in both cases violations of a tribal system led to a similar conflict with 'law and order'".¹ Though land was certainly not the only issue in Chota-Nagpur it was of primary importance, and land therefore will be the first issue considered.

In the years preceding the outbreak of 1831 many ryots had been dispossessed of land. The plainsmen who had poured into Chota-Nagpur—as traders, craftsmen, priests, or officials—and the relatives of the chiefs, had been given land which was really tribal property, and "the landed rights of the aboriginals with which their village system [was] closely bound up"² suffered. The total land thus alienated included 4,288½ villages in Chota-Nagpur proper (i. e. owned by the maharaja), 393 in Sonapur *pargana*, 321 in Basia, 253 in Jashpur, 1156 in Khukhra and so on.³ Most of the grantees, other than the relations of the ruling families, were outsiders, whether priests, officials or traders. All alike sought, whenever possible, to dispossess the tribal landowners within the villages. Blunt commented, "I am decidedly of opinion that the insurrection originated in the dispossession of the Mankees and Moondas of Sonepoor and the adjacent Pergunnahs from their hereditary lands."⁴ He admitted that in a more 'civilized part of the country such a transfer of possession was a normal feature, but in such jungly estates with so little civilized a people, "the experiment of transferring such lands to farmers and foreigners" was highly dangerous, and wherever it had been attempted, it had invari-

1. 'Aboriginal Rebellions', *Man in India*, Rebellion Number XXV, No. 4, Dec. 1945.

2. *Modern India and the West*, 730.

3. Appendix I, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B.C. 1502/58891.

4. Blunt, Minute, 27 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

ably been productive of injurious consequences.¹ Davidson in 1839, on the basis of his intimate knowledge of the area, definitely stated that "the disturbances in Nagpore in 1832 were caused by no one cause so much as the dispossession of the Moondas and Mankies who are the Bhoonears [*Bhuinhars*] of Sonepore of their lands...."²

In Sonepur *pargana*, all the *mankis* (one of them for three years back and the rest for about seven years) had been deprived by 1832 of their hereditary estates by Harnath Sahi, the *Kunwar* of Govindpur, who had farmed them to *thikadars*³. The most glaring case was that of Singrai Manki, who was deprived of his twelve villages. "These Teekadars had rendered themselves obnoxious not only to the Mankies but to the cultivators. They would not permit the former to have even the fruits of trees which [they] themselves and their forefathers had planted, and having only a temporary interest in the land they naturally raised from it the highest possible rents."⁴ In the words of Singrai, "they have taken away from us our trees, fishes, lands and jagirs. They lend us 1 Rupee, but take three from us."⁴ Thus the real "germ of discontent may unquestionably be traced to the arbitrary resumption of lands by members of the ruling family from certain Mankies in Sonepore who conceived that their rights were established by hereditary tenures, and to the introduction of aliens in the capacity of Theekadars to the exclusion of the parties thus harshly and precipitately dispossessed."⁵

1. *Ibid.* With this view the joint commissioners actively agreed. "We attribute to a desire of recovering those estates and villages [of which the Bhuinhars had been dispossessed] the commencement of the late disturbances." Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 111, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 19, Misc. Despatch Book, No. 247, G. G.'s Agent's Office, Patna Archives.

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 111, B. C. 1502/58891. Also statements of Sagar Manki (B. C. 1363/54227) and of Singrai (B. C. 1363/54226).

4. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 73, B. C. 1502/58891.

5. Statement of Singrai, B. C. 1363/54226.

6. J. Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 8, B. C. 1502/58893. Also Bentinck. M. S., Box 15.

The foreigners, who thus secured the revenue-farms, were not satisfied with the customary share of the produce from the cultivators, and they having attacked "the most vulnerable points" of the village system, came to enjoy an absolute right to the villages, introduced the "foreign idea of rent", and the 'Rajhas' and the 'Manjhihas' tenures thus originated.¹ Naturally enough, the tribal people, who were unusually conscious of their inherent right in the land,² developed a hatred towards these foreign intruders. Their "blood boiled with indignation" at the sight of these foreigners "whom the Maharaja had let loose over the country and who sought to reduce them from their position of village proprietors to an inferior status. And their fierce hatred of these aliens, the Mundas expressed in indignant songs...in which the unwelcome strangers are compared to the greedy vulture, the ravenous crow, the upstart peacock, and the ominous owl."³

1. Rakhal Das Haldar's Report, *Supplement to Calcutta Gazette*, 1 Dec. 1880. In 1839 Davidson explained Manjhihas as "ground allotted to the landlord or his theekadar" and Rajhas as "the land paying rent to the owner or his representative." But later on the *thikadar* began to cultivate the latter category of land: Davidson to Ouseley, 29 Aug. 1839, para. 13, Misc. Despatch Book, No. 247, G. G.'s Agent's office, Patna Archives.

2. According to an anonymous writer of "Kols of Chota Nagpore" in *Calcutta Review*, XLIX, 124, they adhered to the Hindu law-giver Manu's principle, "The cultivated land is the property of him who cut away the wood, or who cleared and tilled it." Moreover, "like Russian peasants, [they] are wide awake to their right to the land": Ibid. 112.

3. Roy, *Mundas*, 168-169: The English translation of one such song is:

Look where thou wilt, dear, wherever eye grazes,
Upto the sky or below to the earth,
(Men of mean blood wilt thou meet in high places),
Owls pose as lords, dear, the owls of low birth.
Look how the crow rules as diguar (village watchman)
each village.

Peacocks are grown great beings on earth
Rules the vile crow now as Kotwar all over,
Now hath each village for Digwar a crow.
Mundas of hamlets now tremble and shiver,
They that were owners of hamlets are now.
Bhuinhars all over now quake and quiver,
Terror supreme now doth reign the land over,
Mundas of hamlets have lost their old cheer.

The influx of these hated outsiders gave rise to the system of sub-letting two or three villages to small farmers or *thikadars*—a practice which eventually crushed out all indigenous village organisation. The *thikadar* was usually a Muslim and the “kols bore that sort of hatred to him which the Irishman bears to the interloper who gets possession of his hut and croft.”¹ The Hindus were mostly traders and moneylenders, hated for their enormous profit and usurious interests: “The mahajans who advanced money and grain managed within a twelve month to get from them 70 per cent and sometimes more.”² According to a newspaper report, the *mahajan* often wrote in an option to take either money or grain in the harvest season and “if he takes money, being the only purchaser, he first buys the grain at his own price and thus gets his money back either way.”³ Another correspondent wrote of these *mahajans*, shroffs and others, who had come from Patna, Gaya and Sherghati, that they captured the trade of this area and “by means of loans, exorbitant interest, etc., even the land and villages eventually became theirs,” and the tribesmen were reduced to mere serfs.⁴ When the tribesmen had thus become deeply involved in debt to the plainsmen and they had been pressed hard for payment, many of them “had executed ‘Sewukpattas’, that is, had sold their services till the debt was discharged, which was in fact binding themselves to give their whole earnings to their creditor receiving from him food and clothing, or [to] work for him exclusively, thus becoming his bondsmen for life.”⁵ Little wonder that some contemporary newspapers described this rising as a helots’ war against the

1. Sutherland to Govt., n.d., B.C. 1363/54227.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 75, B.C. 1502/58891.

3. ‘Old Grundy’, 6 March 1832, *India Gazette*, 16 March 1832. An interest of 75 p.c. per annum was charged, though the interest permissible by law was only 12 p.c.

4. A letter in *India Gazette*, 19 March 1832.

5. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 75, B.C. 1502/58891.

masters.¹ Even the joint commissioners who in 1832 tried to argue that though the tribesmen did not resent the exorbitant rate of interest (75 to 100 p.c.) as oppressive, agreed that it could not "but have been severely felt by them."²

Yet another grievance of the tribal people was the manipulation of the currency. With the introduction of a money economy, for the payment of revenue, they were exposed to numerous frauds by moneychangers and revenue officials. They complained to the Joint Commissioners "against the zemindar and jagheerdar for having within the last few years increased their land rent, by collecting malgoozarrie in Sicca which was formerly paid in Sonat rupees."³ The change also involved an actual increase of 35 p.c. in the land revenue burden. Dent, in his separate remarks, noted, "the fluctuations in the copper currency have been complained of by the Coles, the coin is a mis-shapen piece of copper without any impression, (averaging about 4 Drams 1 scruple apothecaries weight), stated to have been originally manufactured at Mirzapore by a Bunea of the name of Muddoo Sahee. It is not current in the adjacent districts."⁴

The *thikadars* and officials also misused their power in ways even more personally wounding. There were numerous accounts of women being seduced or carried off by the Muslim and Sikh *thikadars*. Bindrai, the *manki* of Katwa, in Bandgaon admitted frankly that he became desperate because Jamadar Khudabaksha and the barkandazes, Jagarnath and Musan "took away one of my women to Bundgaon and at night took her 'Hoormut' (honour)", and that he could not find her in the jungles. He confessed that this was why he killed Jafar Ali, the *thikadar* of Bandgaon, plundered and burnt his house, and thus began

1. 'Jassos', 4 March, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 March 1832.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 5 Apl. 1832, para. 24, B.C. 1363/54227.

3. *Ibid.* Para 19: The evil was "felt more sorely from the depreciation of the copper coin. 13 Tucka or 26 pukka pice were formerly equal to a sonat Rupee and received in payment of rent as such. The present value of the sicca Rupee is 20 Tuckkas, the rents being collected in copper."

4. Dent, Separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B.C. 1502/58891.

the disturbance.¹ Earlier he had told Bahadur Dubhasia (Interpreter), who had been sent by the authorities to get in touch with him, that two of his wives had been carried off by the *Munshi* and his Muslim peons who had ravished the younger one and ill-treated her in a bestial fashion. Moreover the Singh (the Sikh *thikadar*) of Surgaon had taken away two of his sisters by force and retained them at his place.²

One may wonder, as Metcalfe did, why these aggrieved people did not seek redress in the court of law or from the police *thanas*. But these departments were, as has been already noted, honeycombed with abuses, and the poor tribesmen had no hope of justice there. Mia Ram, the *Nazir* of the Ramgarh court, surpassed all others in oppression and extortion.³

The police officers were similarly famous for their extortions. Blunt admitted in 1832, "the most grievous oppressions and exactions have been practised by the native officers of Government, especially the police Darogahs" which alone, amidst a people so poor, might well account for any general feeling of discontent.⁴

A few examples will show "the hopelessness of the aboriginal population ever obtaining any redress from the local potentates who were then in practical possession of the country."⁵ Sui, the *munda* of Echagutu, stated to Bahadur Dubhasia: "I gave a tola of gold to Luttie Cole of Koomang

1. Statement, Bindrai, 19 Apl. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

2. Statement, Bindrai, Bahadur, Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Government, 12 Feb. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227. Baijnath Manki stated before the Ramgarh magistrate and the Patna commissioner that some Sikhs "took from Sing Rae Manki his daughters and kept them in their houses." According to a newspaper report, on the other hand, his sisters and wives were taken away and one of the wives was treated "with unheard of and unparalleled barbarity." 'P', Bengal, Hurkaru, 15 Feb. 1832.

3. 'Jassos', Bengal Hurkaru, 14 March 1832. He was mainly instrumental (in a negative way) in producing the rising, and still he was allowed to continue in office: "Jassos", Bengal Hurkaru, 30 Apl. 1832.

4. Blunt, Minute, 4 Apl. 1832, para. 12, B.C. 1363/54227.

5. Reid, Ranchi Settlement Report, para. 48.

of Sonapore ; in exchange for which he agreed to give me a pair of buffaloes during three years. I applied to him several times for them in vain, for which reason I carried off a pair of his buffaloes. For this I was considered a thief by Mohammad Ally Naik of Koomag, who took from me the buffaloes, and tied and took me to his house. The next day he suspended me from a tree by a rope tied to my hair, and subsequently cut me down, when by the fall one of my toes of my left foot was broken. I was kept in the stocks five days suffering great torture, and only obtained my release on giving a bullock and a buffalo. I immediately went and complained of the treatment I had received to the Poorahauth (Porahat in Singhbhum) Rajah, and wished to be informed by him how to recover my gold, and what redress I should have for Mahommed Ally's conduct towards me, who had taken Luttie's [part], as he belonged to his village. The Raja said he could not send for either Mahommed Ally or Luttie, but that his Moonshee and Jamadar of the Chuckerdherpore Thanna, when they went to Bandgaon, would investigate and settle my business. The Moonshee and Jamadar came to Bandgaon in the month of Bhadow 1238 Fussilly, and I went to them. In place of paying attention to my petition they fined me five rupees. I was satisfied the Moonshee was taking his friend's part and that my grievances would not be redressed."¹ Though Sui, when cross-examined after his arrest in April 1832, gave rather a different statement,² the tenor of both the versions was the same, revealing a helplessness and desperation which inevitably led to violent action.

The second statement was by Bindrai Manki, another leader of the insurrection. He stated to Bahadur, the interpreter, thus, "I borrowed a pair of old buffaloes from Burju Bania of the Sonapur pargana. This man came to my house accompanied

1. Statement, Sui Munda, Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

2. Statement, Sui, 19 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.* The difference was only in details regarding beating, etc., by Mohammad Ali. He also stated before Wilkinson that he did not complain to the higher authorities out of fear.

by 60 men and took from me six cows and calves, and four buffaloes, seized both my brother, Singhrai and myself, and took us to his house. We succeeded in effecting our escape, but my cattle was not released. I complained to Koomkera Singh, Raja of Bandgaon [in Singhbhum], of the Bania's treatment of us. He listened to me and gave me 35 men for my protection with whom I went to Surgaon, where not finding the Bania, we seized two men and a pair of bullocks which we took to the Raja. For this an inhabitant of Surgaon, named Singh [a Sikh *thikadar*], preferred a complaint against us at Sherghati. My brother Singhrai and self and Bahadur were seized by the Chakradharpur Munshi and Jamadar who came to Bandgaon for the purpose. I requested them to send us to Sherghati, if our seizure were in consequence of orders from there. They replied that they would give us answer on paying them 100 rupees. After remaining confined in the stocks for fifteen days and suffering great pain, we escaped..."¹ Bindrai further stated how his wives and sisters were ill-treated and how the Porahat raja's *diwan* told him, on being approached, that "we might do as we pleased, but be careful not to involve Raja Achet Singh in any difficulties by our conduct."²

These incidents not only reveal the inefficiency of the police of Chota-Nagpur and Singhbhum, but also the helplessness of the Singhbhum raja, like his compeer in Chota-Nagpur, before the manoeuvres of his *diwan* and the turbulence of his tribal chieftains. Incidents like these put the spark to the fumes of discontent. Bindrai and Singrai, naturally enough, assembled their brethren of Singhbhum and Tamar, and resolved to do or die: "We returned home, invited all the kôls our brethren and caste to assemble at the village Lankah in Tamar, where we had a consultation. The Pathans had taken our honour and the Singh our sisters and the Kuar, Haranath Sahi, had forcibly deprived us of our estates of twelve villages, which he had given to the singh. Our lives we considered of no value, and

1. Statement, Bindrai, Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

2. *Ibid.*

being of one caste and brethren, it was agreed upon that we should commence to cut, plunder, murder and eat. We said, if any were hanged it would be us four; if any put in irons, we should be the four. We four should be answerable, and if the gentlemen sent for any, it would be us who were ready to attend and submit to whatever might be the sentence. It is with this resolution that we have been murdering and plundering those who have deprived us of both honour and homes, conceiving that [by] committing such outrages our grievances would come to light, and that if we had any master, notice would be taken of them and justice rendered."¹

The complaints of oppression preferred against the *thana* establishments, particularly in the remote parts of Chota-Nagpur, were "very loud" and "considerable sums are stated to have been taken by the Darogha, and Jemadar, as Sullamee and in bribes from all classes."² If many people who had paid bribes, were reluctant "to come forward with their complaints from an apprehension that proving their correctness will be attended with much trouble and inconvenience"³, there must have been many cases like that of Laruram Kol of Chhattarkol. He stated that "in the month of Bhadow last one of his Dangas [Dhangar Kols], returning from work went to a tank, fell into it and was drowned. The circumstance was reported at the Thanna of Jeekoochuttie [Jhikochatti] in consequence of which there came a Burkundaze to examine the corpse, etc."—accompanied by 10 to 15 Kotwars [*Kotwals*]⁴—and remained eight days in the village.⁴ They consumed 150 seers of coarse (*Usna*) rice, 75 seers of fine (*Arwa*) rice, *ghee*, worth two rupees, and salt worth one rupee. Besides, the sepoy

1. Statement, Bindrai, Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 5 Apl. 1832, para. 18, *Ibid*.

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 78, B.C. 1502/58891.

4. *Ibid*. para. 79. The maharaja had opposed the introduction of village chaukidars (*hotwals*) because every village already had a *gorait* or village constable who was sufficient for village watch: Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B.C. 1502/58891.

realized Rs. 26 annas 4 on the threat of sending the Kol to Sherghati for execution.¹

Nor were abuses practised only upon individuals. The *mahtos*, *dahans* and *ilaqadars* were required annually to register the names of the *Kotwals* and *goraits* of their villages in the *thana*, for which the *darogas* exacted a fee of one rupee or more, according to the size of the village.²

Metcalf made light of these "excessive or undue or illegal exactions" made "by the Rajah and the jageerdars, and by our police and Revenue officers in chota Nagpoor," declaring them "hardly sufficient to cause such an insurrection as this, which has not been directed towards a redress of grievances, but to the utter annihilation of the Government, and extermination or expulsion of every inhabitant of the country, who came under the designation of Foreigner."³ He later pointed out that "shameful as some of these exactions undoubtedly are, they are not so rare in India as to have been exclusively inflicted on the Coles."⁴ What he failed to recognise was the strength of the Kol spirit of independence, and their tradition of tribal exclusiveness. The seven cuts inflicted on their victims by the Kols on account of seven obnoxious taxes suggest that the extortions and abuses were not unimportant to the insurgents. The cuts were given one for each tax : for the *batta* on changing copper for silver, the excise tax on spirits, the proposed tax on opium, the fines for supposed or real crimes, the village *salamis*, the forced labour on the roads and the postal taxes on the villages.⁴ Most of these were new taxes.

1. *Ibid.*

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 80, B.C. 1502/58891.

3. Metcalfe, Minute, 30 March 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

4. Metcalfe, Minute, 14 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

5. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227. A similar instance of barbarity can be found in the Santhal Insurrection of 1855-57 : One Din Dayal Ray's limbs were chopped off bit by bit with such remarks : "With these fingers you counted your interest and ill-gotten wealth ! With this hand you snatched away food from the mouths of the hungry poor !" K. K. Datta, *Santhal Insurrection*, 34.

The most galling of these was the tax on *hanria* or rice beer which, as the local authorities and even the Bengal Government admitted,¹ was almost a necessity of life with these tribal people. Cuthbert, by reviving this tax as a house-tax in 1830 had, in fact, infringed Regulation X of 1813 which provided only for duties on the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors, and not on domestic brewing. Since no zamindar had imposed such a tax before, this was ascribed to British rule, which was thus made obnoxious. Accustomed as the tribesmen had been to use *hanria* "from their infancy, becoming through time almost necessary to their existence, it was hardly possible to expect that the Koles would make so great a sacrifice as almost wholly to resign the use of their favourite beverage."²

The Board of Customs, salt and opium had sanctioned³ the levy of four annas on every house with a full knowledge of the oppressions perpetrated by the excise staff and farmers: "The inhabitants of Chota Nagpore...are stated to be subjected under the present abkaree system of this pergunnah to various oppressions, such as being forced by the farmer to take out licences for the sale of liquor when they know nothing of the way of manufacturing it—of being afterwards compelled to pay the tax for the license so forced upon them, in advance for half the year at once, and of being further subjected to extortions on behalf of the farmers by their Peadas."⁴ But since there was a possible increase of Government revenue to be had, the Board cheerfully swallowed Cuthbert's assertion that it would be a "popular tax."⁵

1. Bengal Govt. to court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223.

2. Drummond, M. S. Statistical Account, Chapter VI. (No page no.)

3. Cuthbert to Govt., n. d., Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 5 April 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

4. Board of Customs to Patna Commissioner, 18 June 1830, B. C. 1363/54229.

5. A writer ('a looker on', Camp Chota Nagpur, 18 March 1832) in the *Bengal Hurkaru*, 30 March 1832, described Cuthbert as "another zealous servant of the rising star, who discovering these Coles to be sons of Bacchus and lovers of intoxicating juice, conceived it to be inconsistent with good moral government that such propensity should remain untaxed, and recommended an impost on all stills."

The reports of the joint commissioners revealed how effective an instrument of oppression the tax of four annas a house became in the hands of the tax collectors. The *peadas* sent to count the houses, exacted bribes from the village heads, the latter instead of taking four annas or ten *dabus* (or large pices) took twelve, even sixteen *dabus*¹. Every village paid a cash *salami* to the *tahsildar* and *peadas*, often a goat as well.² As Sutherland put it, "All taxes of this nature are intolerable to the Coles to whom they are new, and who are not sufficiently civilized quietly to bear the infliction of new taxes."³

Cuthbert, when asked for his comments, replied that at the time of the excise settlement he had questioned hundreds of Kols without finding one who complained of the tax.⁴ Nor had the zamindars expressed any dissatisfaction with the plan. In the newspaper controversy over the causes of the outbreak there were some who defended Cuthbert, arguing that even if the tax gatherers had taken twelve annas instead of four that was not the cause of the outbreak, and that many prisoners had said they "did not know what they were fighting for."⁵

But the evidence suggests that though only one of several factors, the *abkari* tax was a major one. Of the village heads questioned by Major Blackall after the rising had been suppressed 20 referred to the great exactions of the collectors, who took 12 annas, or even a rupee where four annas alone were due,⁶ and the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur also pointed to the tyranny and oppression of the *abkari tahsildars* as a cause of the popular discontent.⁷ He had opposed the tax from the beginning, pointing out that the poor labouring tribesmen had "neither the means of preparing nor purchasing liquor, but in

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 5 Apl. 1832; para. 8, B. C. 1363/54227.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 75, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

4. Cuthbert to Govt., 29 March 1832, *Ibid*.

5. 'P', camp Pitoria, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 8 March 1832.

6. Blackall to Cuthbert, 8 April 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

7. Statement, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, n. d., *Ibid*.

the same way that they support life by eating rice, so that they mix that same rice with jungle productions and giving it the name of "Handea" therewith satisfy their wants. To collect promptly the four annas which has now been imposed on each house is difficult, and injury and oppression of the poor are the necessary results of the demanding it."¹ The *Calcutta Courier* certainly believed that here was a major grievance. "It is now pretty well ascertained that the tax on houses substituted for the spirit tax, was the inciting cause of the insurrection... It is assessed, the tax was collected in a very oppressive way by the agency of Moosulmans and other foreign agents and that... these merciless extortioners levied a poll tax ad libitum."²

Besides this liquor tax, another grievance of the Kols was the forced poppy-cultivation and, according to Sutherland, another cut was given to the victim's body on this account. Though Cuthbert had introduced it as a valuable cash crop which would improve the condition of the peasants, "the thing was disagreeable to the Coles, who knew nothing of the manner of making it."³ It was made more disagreeable by the pressure which Cuthbert put upon the cultivators, despatching *parwanas* to the zamindars, *jagirdars*, and police officers to extend its cultivation. The Kols pleaded that the officials "might take their Dhotees (loin-cloths) and puggrees (turbans) almost the only things they had to give, but that they would not cultivate the poppy."⁴ But the subordinate officials continued to press them, even after Cuthbert had issued instructions that the *amlas* should not force those who did not produce opium.⁵

1. Petition, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, 6 Apl. 1832, Enclosure, Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Calcutta Courier*, 11 April 1832, Editorial.

3. Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891. The statement of opium produce in Chota-Nagpur (Appendix, Joint Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891 shows that in 1828/29, 1829/30 and 1830/31 the average produce was about 1 Md. 16 seers, 3 Mds. 31 seers and 4 Mds. respectively. Dent found the soil quite unfavourable for its cultivation and strongly recommended its discontinuance.

4. Sutherland to Govt., n.d., B. C. 1363/54227.

5. *Ibid.*

The contemporary newspaper reports confirm the view that this new opium policy was a cause, albeit a minor one, of the unrest, and that it was particularly disliked by the tribal people.¹ (One good reason may well have been that the Company paid only Rs. 3 annas 8 per seer for opium produced in this area).²

The joint commissioners corroborated the reports that opium production was disliked. In April 1832 they admitted that the *thanadars* had been in the habit of taking from almost every village within their jurisdiction "from one to two rupees for exempting the Coles."³ They further admitted that it was quite uncertain whether Cuthbert's instructions not to use compulsion had been obeyed, and in November 1832 having found other classes as averse to poppy cultivation as the Kols, they "ordered it to be discontinued in [Chota] Nagpore."⁴

A correspondent of the *Bengal Hurkaru* summed up the matter by saying, "This obnoxious measure [liquor-tax], together with the compulsory means adopted for the cultivation of opium, has driven the Coles to the desperate resolution of taking justice into their own hands, and now they are making the country smoke for it."⁵

Other grievances of the tribesmen were the demands and exactions made by the *nazir*, the *darogas*, and their subordinates under the term '*Gunahgari*', i.e., fines for offences real or pretended.⁶ No wonder the rebels inflicted a cut for this on the bodies of their victims. If a person committed suicide or even died a natural death, some one in his village would be accused

1. *Ibid.* Also see Blunt, Minute, 4 April 1832, *Ibid.* One 'Ignoramus' (in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 25 Feb. 1832) argued that the Kols rejoiced in poppy cultivation, which was in no way true.

2. cf. Report from Camp Banta Hajam, 16 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 23 March 1832. 'A looker on', Camp Chota-Nagpur, 18 March 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 30 March 1832.

3. Letter from Camp Bundu, 27 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 5 March 1832. According to 'Old Grundy' (6 March 1832, *India Gazette*, 16 March 1832) it was only 2 rupees per seer.

4. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 5 Apl. 1832, para. 20, B. C. 1363/54227.

5. A Dawk stager, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 28 Jan. 1832.

6. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

of murdering him and would only escape on payment of a bribe.¹ It was a common sight in the countryside to see the *darogas* travelling in a palanquin carried by the Kols with the *bahangi*-loads of rice, ghee, fowls, etc., the forced contributions from the villagers, following them.² Each village had its own catalogue of such payments and the *darogas* lived lavishly in spite of their petty salary. There was hardly a *daroga* "who, on his 25 Rupees a month did not keep his palanquin, and hardly a peadah, who on his 3 Rs. a month, did not keep his horse. The former are said to have emulated the Nagbunsees, the Rajah's brethren and jageerdars."³ Sutherland thought that this system of *Gunahgari* was perhaps that "from which the people suffered most."⁴

Manipulation of the copper currency and exaction of the *salami*, a yearly *nazar* of Rs. 1½ realized from each village, were the other grievances. Yet another form of oppression was the forced labour on the roads exacted without any remuneration.⁵ Some other types of forced labour too came to light in 1839⁶ and to which the Senior Assistant Commissioner of Lohardugga referred in 1859,⁷ as three days' ploughing, three days' spade work, three days' planting and so on. The seventh grievance was the Dak-collection, a contribution of 4½ rupees taken from certain villages to keep open the communication between

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.* The joint commissioners also heard complaints about this *begar*: Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 5 April 1832, para. 21, B. C. 1363/54227. Already in 1830 Cuthbert had reported that the villages near the roadside were 'much deserted' owing to the practice of sepoy and officers "pressing the villagers as *Begarees*." The people "made greivous complaints" to him on this head: Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, para. 40, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 27 of 11 May 1830 (139/51.) It was an irony of fate that some of these roads materially facilitated the operations by the troops against these very people in 1832.

6. See Chapter I.

7. 'Kols of Chota Nagpore', *Calcutta Review*, XLIX.

Sherghati and Chota-Nagpur.¹ According to Dent, the total demands were never realized, and since the tax was not general, it must have been the more felt by those who had to pay it.² Till January 1830 the collections were made by the Chota-Nagpur chief, but in consequence of some irregularities, they were handed over to the police officers, thus opening another avenue for their exactions.

Of the seven obnoxious tax-items, the liquor-tax, forced labour and the *Dak*-collections, according to Sutherland, were sanctioned by the Government.³ Blunt thought that it was doubtful whether any of these had the clear sanction of the Government.⁴ But whether officially sanctioned or not, their collection by Company officials necessarily made British rule hateful: each item might seem trifling in itself, but together they were an intolerable burden.

In fine, this unrest, though unusual in its unanimity and rapid progress, was, like all other revolts, not accidental or spontaneous in its origin. That the tribal people had serious grievances against the administration cannot be doubted. Certain proximate causes, however, were accidental and they served to kindle the flame. Three such incidents, already referred to, were the arrest and maltreatment of Sui Munda and the two brothers, Bindrai Manki and Singrai Manki (whose women were also dishonoured).⁵ Similarly in Tamar, where the raja's death in September 1831 had caused great confusion, the conduct of the Ramgarh *nazir* acted as the match which set fire

1. This tax had been imposed in 1829 (though the *Dak* had been established two years back) under Reg. XX of 1817. The total collections from nine villages of Chota-Nagpur were Rs. 5, 495 up to 1831: Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

4. Blunt, Minute, 4 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

5. Statements, Ghasi Manjhia before the *nazir*, 14 Jan. 1832: Statement, Shaikh Dina, an intelligence messenger of the Agent, S. W. F., 7 Jan. 1832, Statement, Sahu Mahli, before Bhairo Singh Jamadar in Tamar, Enclosure, Jt. Comm. to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

to the train. He took no notice of the feelings of the aggrieved *mundas* and *mankis* in Tamar,¹ not even mentioning the outbreak of December 1831 in his report on 2 Jan. 1832.² Instead he used trickery to secure the arrest of Baijnath Manki. The *barkandazes* of Govindpur went to Baijnath and said, "Come with me to the Thannah, where the Nazir and Thannadar are, and your villages [of which he had been dispossessed] will be restored to you."³ But immediately on Baijnath's arrival at the *thana*, he was put in irons. "I told them I had neither committed theft, nor murder, that they should imprison me," said Baijnath, "but my remonstrances were disregarded and I was sent a prisoner to Sherghatty."⁴ "This trickery", the Joint Commissioners reported. "so irritated his sons that they exerted their influence with their brethren, and prevailed on them to extend the devastation to the utmost of their power."⁵ The Patna commissioner, after hearing Baijnath, commented that "the apprehension of Byjnauth Mankee, one of the most influential persons among the Coles by the Magistrate's officers, on a charge preferred against him after the disturbance had commenced, caused the extension of the outrages beyond the Estates of the Raja's uncle."⁶ Thus, Dalton rightly remarks that this unrest, "though no doubt, only the bursting forth of a fire that

1 Tamar was one of the worst danger-spots of the area. Colvin had reported in 1821 that the people of this *pargana* "are a degree more civilized than the tribe of Lurka Cole inhabiting the territory of Singbhoom, but a similar proneness and inclination to plunder and lawless excess of every kind and a like inherent contempt of all subordination and obedience to authority obtain amongst them as amongst the latter... At the sound of their immediate superior's drum [they] instantly assemble and will not hesitate in the commission of any acts of violence or outrage...": Colvin to Govt., 10 April 1821, paras. 7-8, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 16 of 8 June 1821 (134/53).

2. Report, Nazir, 2 Jan. 1832, Enclosure, Jt. Comm. to Govt., 5 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

3. Statement, Baijnath Manki, Enclosure, Jt. Comm. to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, *Ibid*.

4. *Ibid*.

5. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 12 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

6. Lambert to Govt., 15 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

had long been smouldering, was fanned into flame" by these unfortunate episodes.¹

Here was just the sort of occasion to turn smouldering resentment into active resentment. The Kols, long exploited and looked down upon by the non-tribal people, at last turned on their oppressors, and though "outrivalled in craft and cunning, they were irresistible when once the arrows of war, like the fiery cross, had passed among them, rousing the whole countryside to arms."²

Palamau :

The history of Palamau had been a disturbed one, marked by such resistance to Government as the outbreaks of 1801, 1817 and of 1823 by Sheo Baksha Bhogta.³ Yet in April 1827 Cuthbert had thought fit to write that "should it be satisfactorily made out that Government is entitled to an increased land Revenue from the Pergunnah, it may be levied without hazard to the tranquillity of the country."⁴ And from Rs. 9,000 in 1818 the revenue demand had risen to Rs. 33,326 in 1830.⁵ The landholders who suffered from this financial squeeze, and who could count on the obedience of the tribal masses,⁶ rose against the Company in 1832. Neave, after his investigation, admitted that all the Chero and Kharwar *jagirdars* of Palamau between Mankeari and about two *kos* south of Tarhasi, with their ryots, were concerned in the rising.⁷ Even those who, because of disputes with their fellows, did not join the insurgents were not prepared to obey Neave's orders to repel them. They would not take any risks, nor would they incur any serious outlay on behalf of the Company.

1. Dalton, *Ethnology*, 171.

2. Bradley-Birt, *Chota-Nagpore*, 6.

3. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Feb. 1823, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 19 of 26 Jan. 1826, (137/38).

4. Cuthbert to Board, 13 Apl. 1827, para. 10, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 54 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

5. Cuthbert to Govt., 15 Apl. 1830, Beng. Rev. Cons. 46 of 25 May 1830 (61/60).

6. Cuthbert to Board, 13 Apl. 1827, para. 67, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 54 of 14 June 1827 (138/22).

7. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 10 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

In his detailed report of 28 April 1832, Neave, like his superior Cuthbert, chose to attribute the rising in Palamau not to any specific grievances of the people but to their general tradition of turbulence. Neave argued, for instance, that the fact that they had voiced no complaints to Cuthbert, who was in Palamau settling revenue matters, and that they had not risen until five weeks after the outbreak in Chota-Nagpur proved that "the Palamow people were not driven to this sudden flood of meeting [mutiny] by any grievances whatever, but that they were induced to join the Coles by a love of plunder and a hope of impunity and to this it is that they themselves attributed."¹ He specifically declared his belief that they had no grievance either against the spirit tax or against the cultivation of the opium poppy. He had reached this conclusion, he said, after questioning those who were arrested.

He thought that the *abkari* system in Palamau was quite different from that of Chota-Nagpur, and since he had seen no signs of poppy cultivation he did not even think it necessary to make any enquiries about it. Neave also reported that there were no complaints about the police and argued that "the Cheros and Kerwas of Palamo are of a different race of people to the Coles and are by far too independent to suffer themselves to be trampled upon without calling for redress."²

There certainly seems some truth in his observations, but that the pressures of the Company's administration were felt in Palamau as in all the neighbouring tribal areas seems equally certain. Neave had in fact received a petition from certain Palamau villages, on the borders of Chota-Nagpur, against the form of the *abkari* settlement³. The joint commissioners found that in fact more opium was produced in Palamau than in Chota Nagpur, though the yield per acre was very low and the price offered by the Company was poor, and in November 1832 they recommended "that the people in Palamow should no longer be called on to cultivate it."⁴ It can hardly be believed

1. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 6, *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* para. 4.

3. Cuthbert to Govt., 29 March 1832, B.C. 1363/ 54227.

4. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 76, B.C. 1502/58891.

that the *mohurirs* and *tahsildars* and the *thana* police were less ready to abuse their powers in Palamau than in Chota-Nagpur. Nor does the murder of *mahajans* in Leslieganj and Latehar suggest that they were less obnoxious to their debtors in Palamau than elsewhere.

The main cause of the rising, however, was the inefficiency, negligence and even connivance with the rebels of the local subordinate officials. "The intrigues and misconduct of the Sheristadar of the Ramghur Cutchery and of the Qanoongoe of Leslieganj", the Bengal Government noted, "are mentioned to have materially assisted the spread of the disturbances."¹ Neave put the main emphasis on the conduct of *sheristadar* and *qanungo*, who not only sent false reports to the higher authorities but also took part in the deliberations of a council of rebels at Leslieganj. "The system of falsehood which these two men practised towards the authorities in regard to the Rajah and those who had really done their duty," wrote Neave, "is highly culpable and might have led to serious results had full credence been placed on their reports."² They created a misunderstanding and misapprehension in the minds of the authorities and thus prevented the unity and cooperation between the well-intentioned jagirdars and the officer-in-command.

That the subordinate staff was corrupt and inefficient cannot be denied. But there must also have been certain specific grievances of the people which goaded them to rise : otherwise the degree of destruction would not have been so large. The list of villages destroyed or partially affected shows that the loss in the Government villages was larger than in others because they contained more foreigners.³ Unless these foreigners had made themselves obnoxious to the tribal people because of their exactions, why should their wrath have fallen so heavily on them ?⁴

1. Bengal Govt. to Court to Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, B. C. 1362/54223.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* Appendix, Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl.1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

4. Almost all the persons killed were Hindus and Muslims.

So Neave was wrong in asserting that the Cheros and Kharwars were induced 'by a love of plunder' alone.

Singhbhum :

The history of the East India Company's connections with Singhbhum before 1831 shows how far from being subdued or pacified the Larka Kols were, even though they had executed agreements which promised quiet. As the infiltration of non-tribal outsiders increased, and their own chiefs turned against them, the chances of continued quiet in Singhbhum steadily diminished.

When the outbreak began in Chota-Nagpur, the Larka Kols of Singhbhum, under Bindrai, Singrai, Khandu Pater and others took the lead. Their very names were an encouragement to the Dhangar Kols, who used the words Dohai Khandu Pater¹ (Victory to Khandu Pater) as their war cry, and rumours of the Larka Kols' arrival was enough to terrify many non-tribals into instant flight.²

An important grievance of the Larka Kols against the non-tribal *thikadars* of the southern parts of Chota-Nagpur was the ill-treatment of their women who went to sell iron in Sonepur *pargana*. Thus, Jafar Ali of Gangira, who bought iron in large quantities from Morhu Bazar for export, used to take away all the iron of the women from Singhbhum, and 'indignantly' threw into their baskets only two pice for each seer of iron taken, in spite of the protests of these women.³

Another important cause of unrest in Singhbhum in this period was the dispute between the Bamanghati chief and his suzerain the Raja of Mayurbhanj,⁴ aggravated by the division of control between the Political Agent on the South-West frontier and the superintendent of the tributary Mahals (i.e. the Cuttack

1. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

2. Wilkinson to Neave, 20 Jan. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

3. Roy, *Mundas*, 203-204.

4. This dispute was 25 years old, but from April 1832 to April 1833 it took a violent form: Beng. Govt. to Court of Directors, 23 Oct. 1832, Beng. Letter Recd, Vol. No. 120.

commissioner)¹ The main issue was the attempt of the raja to recover some kol villages from the Mahapater of Bamanghati, and the attempt of the latter to resist it.² Though the dispute had been compromised in 1825, at the mediation of the Cuttack commissioner, both parties, with different intentions, had purposely abstained from particularizing in the documents exchanged between them of what villages *Khas Des* and *Khoorder Des* (the disputed area) consisted.³ The raja's grant of several villages in the disputed area to Brahmans and temples therefore re-opened the quarrel.

The revival of the dispute necessarily involved the Larka Kols of the area. According to their own statement, "For a length of time we paid our rent to Neerunjun Dass Mahapater [father of Madho Das] who was placed over us [in 1821] and adhered to the engagement..., but lately emissaries of the Mohurbunge raja having come into our village, gave us bad advice and tempted us, and we were prevailed on to desert the service of the Mahapater and adhere to the Rajah. Disturbances were the consequence..."³

Yet another cause of their unrest, especially in north Singhbhum, was the misunderstanding between the chiefs of Porahat, Kharsawan and Saraikela and the weakening of the control of the Porahat raja. This led to frequent raids by the Larka Kols into Chota-Nagpur and other neighbouring areas in 1832-1833. They also attacked the villages of one chief at the instigation of the other.

1. *Ibid.* Stockwell, the Cuttack commissioner, resigned his Office in June 1832, on this very issue.

2. Wilkinson & Ricketts, Arbitrators in the dispute, to Govt., 1 Apl. 1833, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 1 of 6 Apl. 1833 (140/31).

3. *Ibid.* para. 22.

Thornton described the risings as an orgy of mutual slaughter, in which "the hand of every man is against his neighbour."¹ The Bengal Government noted of the rising that "During the whole of its course and progress, though perhaps in a less degree in Palamow than within the Chota Nagpore country, the worst excesses attended it. In the latter tract, from one part of it to the other, as the insurrection advanced, the people of the rude tribe of the Coles...sacrificed numbers of those who fell into their hands, to their excited passions of revenge and hatred."² There was a sort of madness and blindness and they could no longer see the light of reason. The Patna commissioner, Master, reported the rising in lurid terms: "Restless, wild and ferocious, they rushed into an insurrection scarcely paralleled for ferocity and eager for plunder, universally prone to inebriation and infuriated by real or imaginary wrongs, the whole population yielded to the unobstructed tide of rebellion—fire, rapine and murder marked their paths, nor was their vindictive spirit confined to those to whom their injuries were ascribed, but madly extended to unoffending females and helpless infants with the subtle determination of extirpating the whole race."³

A number of the cases brought to trial revealed the savage nature of the attacks to which any who failed or were unable to flee were exposed. The commonest feature was the hacking to death of victims who were killed even though they made no resistance. One Dahir Singh was dragged out of hiding, given two sword cuts across his back, two on the neck and finally his

1. Thornton, *History of British India*, V, 203.

2. Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, B.C. 1362/54223.

3. Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 13, B.C. 1502/58893. Also see Bentinck MS., Box 15.

head was struck off by a *balwa*.¹ Shaikh Sagar, found hiding in the jungle, was carried back to his village and there murdered by blows of a *balwa*.² In Jhiko Chatti, a father and son were pulled from their hut, mercilessly beaten, and finally killed by having their heads hacked off with *balwas*. The headless trunks were then dumped before the house which the police officer had occupied.³ At Tiku six unhappy creatures, discovered sheltering in a hut, were "cruelly and wantonly butchered."⁴ In another case a Muslim family of eight, "male and female, one advanced in years, several in the bloom of youth, and some in unconscious infancy", was completely annihilated. The husband of a poor female "had a rope of straw twisted round his neck by which he was forcibly dragged from his house and taken to the bed of a river at a short distance followed by his distracted wife...Chugroo with a Bulwa severed his legs from his body. In this mutilated condition he was able to exclaim, 'you are resolved on my destruction. Kill my wife who stands there weeping', on hearing which a third accomplice...cut off the sufferer's head with a sword".⁵ Women, children, the aged, none were spared. One woman's head was cut off "to be presented to a Deota [God]"⁶, and there were half a dozen cases of infants and babes in arms being killed.⁷

Cases of treachery and brutality were in fact very common during the unrest.⁸ In one instance a non-tribal family, which had returned from *pargana* Jashpur after supposed tranquillity, was offered pretended hospitality by a Kol and then the head

1. Master to Register, Nizamat Adalat, 22 Oct. 1832, Trial No. 7, B.C. 1502/58893. The handle of *Gundas* was always long, while shorter shafts of varying size were attached to *balwa* and *fulsa*: *Ibid.* No. 6. See the photographs of these weapons in *India Gazette Supplement*, 20 March 1832.

2. *Ibid.* No. 13

3. *Ibid.* No. 18

4. *Ibid.* No. 33

5. *Ibid.* No. 103

6. *Ibid.* No. 27

7. *Ibid.* Nos. 65, 68, 91, 94, 109, 102.

8. There was at least one example of benevolence on the part of a tribesman who concealed and fed a non-tribal man for several days before he was discovered and killed most brutally by the other tribesmen. *Ibid.* No. 134.

of the family was murdered in cold blood.¹ In another instance the insidious information being conveyed to a secluded party in the hills, the family began its return journey. But no sooner had a member of the family approached the village than he was wounded severely and the assailants "then seizing his arms and legs dragged him to a well into which they threw him and heaping upon him earth and stones thus terminated the wretched man's existence."² In yet another instance a *pahan*, who had taken five rupees as the price of protection of lives and property of a family, shamelessly assembled the Kols and attacked the victims.³ At one place, after the male members of a party had been killed, fire was set to a house in which their women and children had taken refuge, and when these attempted to escape they were all murdered. The last member of the group, a young man, who had hidden up a tree, was dealt with by cutting down the tree and hacking him to pieces on the spot where he fell. Seventeen people in all were killed by fire and sword on this occasion, in a case which the commissioner of circuit rightly described as pre-eminent in atrocity. It exemplified, he wrote, "in the strongest light the licentious appetite of the insurgent Coles for the blood of all foreign settlers and the systematic study of massacre which was pursued during the rebellion."⁴

The murders committed were most numerous in the *parganas* of Doesa and Korambi, because the non-tribal people of this area were quite unprepared for the attack. Moreover, it had been at Churia, Chutia, Barkagarh and other such important places that the non-tribal merchants and moneylenders had mostly resided and so the vengeance of the Kols became most apparent there. "The sight most humiliating to our Government that I have ever witnessed", wrote Sutherland, "was such of the inhabitants of these places as had returned standing with their children in the midst of this scene of desolation with occa-

1. *Ibid.* No. 106. Also see No. 64 for a similar case.

2. *Ibid.* No. 115.

3. *Ibid.* No. 125.

4. *Ibid.* No. 32. One of the murdered women was pregnant.

sionally an old man or woman whose infirmities had prevented their accompanying the rest of their flight, and who, by the savages, had risen to desolate their houses and ravage their fields, had been tortured or burnt to the verge of death—all calling in one loud voice for redress of the grievances they had suffered, and in reproaching on our Government for having left them unprotected. They were told, not in scorn, that their Rajah [maharaja] should have protected them, and they replied significantly enough, we had no Rajah.”¹

As compared to this awful tale of misery in Chota Nagpur and its dependencies, the estates on its fringe suffered much less. In Ramgarh in the north it was limited to the plunder of a few villages in Gola *pargana*, because of the activity of the Raja of Ramgarh.² On the other hand, in the small portion of the Jungle Mahals in the east, Patkum and Hasla “suffered severely, Bagmoondee and Torong but slightly. The injuries committed have been plunder and destruction of property, but generally accompanied with wanton murders or atrocities.”³ The houses of no less than 40 moneylenders and other non-tribal people were plundered and burnt in the village Elu alone, besides eight in the neighbouring villages and four in Torang.⁴ Six of the houses burnt in Patkum belonged to the non-tribal employees of the zamindar.⁵ (They had presumably made themselves obnoxious to the tribesmen during the minority of the raja).

As in Patkum and other estates to the east of Chota-Nagpur, so in Palamau and Tori to the west of it, the insurgents of Chota-Nagpur first entered and fired the faggots. But once the Cheros and Kharwars were excited, there was the same melancholy tale of plunder, arson and murder. Through the whole of February 1832, these areas were in chaos and confusion. “Of the state of Toree”, wrote Neave on 23 February,

1. Sutherland to Govt., n.d., B.C. 1363/54227.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 25, B.C. 1502/58891.

3. Govt. to Braddon, 15 May 1832, B.C. 1363/54226.

4. Govt. to Braddon, 15 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54226.

5. Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, *Ibid.*

"I am at a loss to give any account save that it is in a state of complete disorganisation...the villages are fired, and the roads are blocked up and all passers are plundered."¹ On the same day Col. Hawtrey wrote that several villages in that *Pargana* "were plundered and burned" south of his camp.² Near Udaiganj *thana* also he found the same scene of desolation—all the adjacent villages having been burnt by the tribal people.³

Four *thanas* of Palamau, Tarhasi, Leslieganj, Shahpur and Gurhwa were effected, but the first two were most hard hit. A thousand houses were burnt in all.⁴ The Government loss was much larger than that of any individual, both as to the number of villages injured, and the extent of injury in each. This was because most of the foreign settlers were living in the Government villages. As in Patkum and its neighbourhood, the Chero and Kharwar rebels also "burnt one or two houses of their own villages in order to give an idea that they were themselves sufferers and not the inflictors of injury."⁵ Thus, Latehar, Satbarwa and Mankeari, situated in the midst of the clusters of villages inhabited by Chero, Kharwars and others, were partially destroyed. But in the villages with a mixed population, none of the houses of the tribesmen was touched. Most of the persons murdered were the non-tribal servants of the ex-*raja* and the influential *jagirdars* who had tried to fight the rebels. But stray killing of sweet-meat-seller, farmer of pounds, traders, and muslim adventurers was also reported.

The official returns of persons murdered in Chota-Nagpur show that 219 Hindus and 76 Muslims fell a victim to the tribal wrath, besides 7 Hindus and 2 Muslims killed in Doma.⁶

1. Quoted in Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para. 27, B. C. 1362/54223.

2. Hawtrey to Jt. Commissioners, 23 Feb. 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Appendix, Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Appendix, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B.C. 1502/58891.

But the joint commissioners admitted that the returns of Doma were partial, and of Barwa and Barkagarh no returns were received. Again, though the number of houses burnt in Chota-Nagpur proper was officially put at 4,086 the number of cattle seized at 17,058 and the quantity of grain burnt at 822,992 maunds,¹ the report seems to be partial. A contemporary newspaper report rightly noted, "it is impossible to calculate the number of men murdered, villages burnt, and property destroyed or pillaged...Nagpore, from being a flourishing pergunnah, has now been rendered a desert, and years will not suffice to restore its pristine prosperity."²

It is unnecessary to give other details as examples of the violence of the rising in Chota-Nagpur and Palamau. Those which have been listed show the pattern of behaviour of the tribal people. The terror such actions spread can well be imagined, and from the earliest stage those who feared that they were possible victims could be found on the move, carrying off such valuables as they could. Their flight undoubtedly served to set off yet wider movements of non-tribal people, and so to spread the atmosphere of uncertainty and excitement. It also served to rouse hopes of plunder among the tribal people through whose midst they had to pass and so in places gave to a movement begun as a rebellion against oppression the air of ordinary banditry.

Several methods were adopted by the tribal leaders to spread the rising : one was the beating of the *nagaras* or great drums, another the circulation of a 'dheori' (a branch of a tree, usually mango), which was "despatched from one party of Coles to another as a signal for them to join expeditiously and to engage in any contemplated exploit,³ a third was to circulate arrows of war.⁴ The villages which wished to join those by whom the

1. *Ibid.*

2. Report from Sherghati, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 Feb. 1832.

3. Master to Register, Nizamat Adalat, 22 Oct. 1832, Case No. 22, B. C. 1502/58893.

4. Statement, Singrai, Enclosure, Russell to Govt., 18 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54226.

arrows were sent, were required to return these arrows whole, and those who wanted to oppose them were to return them broken. This was, in fact, a custom of the Larka Kols of Singhbhum, and had never before been generally adopted by the Dhangar Kols of Chota-Nagpur.¹ In the first phase of unrest, however, this practice began in the Sonapur *pargana*, and arrows later circulated throughout Chota-Nagpur, accompanied with a notice to all foreigners to quit, and threatening messages to those who might remain or offer opposition."²

The obvious motive of the tribal people was to so terrorise the non-tribal settlers as to make them abandon everything and flee from the whole tribal area. In the large village of Patta Hasla, in Bagmundi, for example, the zamindar's brother connived with the *muras* or tribal headmen to circulate an arrow of war and to spread rumours that the Kols were coming soon to kill the *mahajans*. This led to the flight of the non-tribal settlers, and their property was plundered at will. Then they burnt the whole village as a cloak to their actions. Moreover, when the non-tribal refugees with their few portable possessions reached the village where the zamindar's brother lived, the latter blackmailed them out of several articles worth Rs. 140 and "by means of his servants and dependents plundered them of their remaining property on the following night, all of which were conveyed to his residence."³ Others who took shelter in two or three villages in the neighbourhood were similarly robbed. In Patkum and other neighbouring *parganas* there was likewise much despoiling of those who were fleeing from Tamar and Chota-Nagpur, or of those who sought to escape when the Kols crossed into the Jungle Mahals. Indeed the Kol Insurrection led to a serious refugee problem in the neighbouring areas. (Some of the refugees found they had escaped the frying pan only to fall into the fire—the refugees from Tamar were relieved of all their belongings in Patkum). Several Calcutta papers described the sad plight of the refugees fleeing with their families

1. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., para. 8, B. C. 1363/54227.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54226.

from place to place in a state of greatest want : "It is a matter of regret that of these victims many perished from want of food, as the Coles have studied to destroy all the grain which they were unable to carry off."¹

The spread of the insurrection so quickly and so widely was only made possible of course by the absence of any effective check. The result was most shocking. As a newspaper correspondent noted, "Chota Nagpore is completely sacked by this semi-barbarous race, who have succeeded in fighting and dusting the respectable and higher class of people, and are themselves the Malliks of the whole pergunnah."² Another correspondent put it, "Finding so little opposition in their attack, and the soldier's life to be 'a very merry kind of life, if taken smooth and rough', they proceeded from village to village burning and massacring every respectable person, and every foreigner, and forcing every Cole by the fear of instant death, to join their standards. Thus the fire of rebellion once lighted, the flames spread rapidly. The villages, ever ready to fly to arms, and bitter themselves at the experience of their less numerous and more peaceable superiors, eagerly seized their bows and arrows, and pursued a course of the most coldblooded and heartless barbarity, in which they received no check until the arrival at this place. of...the Joint Commissioners..."³ As Sutherland said, "this insurrection had no limit but that which it found in the class of people by which it was instigated. Had the country between Chota Nagpoor and Calcutta on the one hand and Benares on the other, been inhabited by Dāngar Coles, the insurrection would have spread to those places."⁴

It was a consciousness of the lack of any effective power in the field to check the rebels which caused the unusual alarm. "It is impossible," wrote Russell, "to describe the terror and alarm occasioned by the disturbances throughout the district

-
1. Report from Camp Pitoria, 28 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 6 March 1832.
 2. Report in *East Indian*, n. d., quoted in *Indian Gazette*, 22 Feb. 1832.
 3. 'P', Pitoria, n. d., *Bengal Hurkaru*, 15 Feb. 1832.
 4. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

[Jungle Mahals]. In all the villages I passed through on my way to Patcoom, the inhabitants had dug large pits adjacent to their houses to conceal their effects in case of necessity."¹ Neave also reported from Palamau that though only a small portion of that estate was seriously affected, "yet the villages to the very northern extremity of the Pergunnah were usually deserted from fear."² Rumours were at one time afloat that Mirzapur near Banaras to the west of Palamau, had been sacked by the Kols on 2 February, and that disturbances had occurred at Azimgarh. On 3 February it was reported to the *Meerut observer* that for the last ten days the town of Mirzapur and the surrounding area was "thrown into fearful consternation by the intelligence of a body of men to the amount of 4 or 5000 being assembled at a short distance, carrying plunder and rapine before them, and leaving desolation and misery in their rear."³

The *India Gazette* noted in its editorial columns, "from Chota Nagpore to the frontiers of Oude there is a general commotion."⁴ (Even the people of Banaras were getting panicky lest they should be attacked by the Kols).⁵ At one point it was rumoured that the Marathas were also joining the Kols from the south-west.⁶

The question naturally arises, with a rising so widespread, and a rumour even wider, whether it was an anti-British rising, an early independence movement. Was there any concerted plan to throw off the British yoke? Master, the Patna commissioner, argued that the Kols, who emigrated in vast numbers to Calcutta and other big cities in search of work, must have been familiar with the British enterprise, resources and power, and,

1. Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, para. 15, B. C. 1363/54226.

2. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/65228.

3. Quoted in *India Gazette*, 8 March 1832.

4. *India Gazette*, 9 Feb. 1832, editorial.

5. *India Gazette*, 10 Feb. 1832, editorial.

6. R. J.'s friend, quoted in R. J.'s letter, *India Gazette*, 6 March 1832.

There were some sceptics, however, who held that it was but a trifling affair: "a few cases of 'Hodge's Cordial' and some of 'Vansandyke's best Chinsurahs'" would soon settle the insurgents: See 'P', Pitoria, 5 March 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 13 March 1832.

therefore, they could never have thought of subverting such a power.¹ Metcalfe, perhaps voicing the opinions of Sutherland, who had visited the area personally and submitted a long report, believed, however, that the insurrection really had originated "in the spirit of independence...and [in] the belief that the opportunity of throwing off our yoke had arrived."² Blunt, as has been seen,³ disagreed with this view. "Though the predatory habits of this people (habits which formerly prevailed more or less in all the Jungle Estates)", he remarked, "may have rendered them ready auxiliaries to their discontented neighbours in Sonepoor; but I cannot for a moment believe that either the Coles of Singhoom or Nagpore could ever have entertained so wild a project (a project as far beyond their comprehension as their means) as that of subverting the British Empire".⁴ He, therefore, believed that they had no design "beyond the immediate gratification of their revenge against those by whom they had suffered oppression."⁵ Indeed, it would seem clear that the ordinary mass of the tribal people were ignorant of the complex machinery of the British administration, scarcely knew a British official by sight, and were rising against much more immediate enemies, *thanadars* or salt *darogas*, moneylenders or *thikadars*.⁶

1. Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 24, B.C. 1502/58893. Also see Bentinck M.S., Box 15.

2. Metcalfe, Minute, 14 Apl. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227. Sutherland thought that since the Kols "had made incursions into the foreign possessions of Patcoom on the one hand and Palamow on the other", and had "talked of Calcutta and the form of Government they were to establish", they had certainly a design to throw off the British yoke and "had they possessed either leaders or enterprise, they would undoubtedly have established themselves at our stations of Hazareebough, Bankoorah and Sherghotty, perhaps at Gyah [Gaya], commanding the principal road between Calcutta and Benares and taking possession of some of the oldest territories of the Company": Sutherland to Govt., n.d., B.C. 1363/54227.

3. See chapter III.

4. Blunt, Minute, 4 Apl. 1832, B.C. 1363/54227.

5. *Ibid.*

6. "It scarcely deserves the name of an Insurrection when a body of men, goaded by the apparent want of redress, rose not against the Government, but against the zamindars, seeking 'the wild justice of revenge': 'Kols of Chota Nagpore', *Calcutta Review*, XLIX.

Those who would have gained most from the destruction of the Company's rule, the once-independent rajas and *jagirdars*, did not, in the event, ally themselves with the tribal rebels, and though they would not take a risk and actually support the British officials, they stood neutral. Some, indeed, got the best of both worlds : they used the tribal unrest to free themselves from the clutches of the moneylenders, and then carried merit with the authorities by turning on the rebels. The Rani of Patkum, called 'the great Machiavelli' by one newspaper correspondent,¹ was particularly efficient in such double-dealing. She utilised the services of the Kols in ousting foreigners from her estate and plundering their property, and then had seventy-five of them arrested. The more important rulers in the unrest apparently stood aside from the rebels ; it was the minor *jagirdars*, the *mankis* and *mundas* who suffered with the common people at the hands of both outsiders and Company officials. An answer given by the noted leader Singrai to a question from Russell may serve as a more general answer. Russell asked whether the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur had said anything to him about fighting the *Sahib Log*, the British. He replied that the Maharaja had said nothing of that sort. The only statement that the maharaja had made to him was that he, the maharaja, would be answerable to the British authorities, and not the common people.² There was, then, nothing so grandiose about the various phases of the insurrection as a national rising to secure independence from the British. The enemy which was attacked was a more local and particular one : the outsider who had clamped himself like a leach on the body of tribal society, and the pithy, extortionate government official. The Joint Commissioners put it succinctly when in

1. 'Old Grundy', n.d., *India Gazette*, 21 Feb. 1832.

2. Statement, Singrai, n.d., Enclosure. Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, B.C. 1363/54226. Russell, the Jungle Mahals magistrate, was enraged by the supineness of the chiefs, and would have invoked the severest punishment permitted by the regulations upon the "many persons who ought to have come forward at once to support the civil authorities, and to check the system of plunder and outrages", and whom he held, probably mistakenly, to have been "so criminally and deeply concerned in these transactions".

February 1832 they wrote "The whole of the Moondas and Coles who, we believe, compose about two-thirds of the population, have taken up arms against the respectable inhabitants of the country, burnt and plundered their houses and property, and expelled them."¹ Initially at least, plunder was not the main object of the tribesmen. Had it been so then the Chota-Nagpur risings would surely have extended to the rich country across the Subarnarekha river, abounding in loot. Ordinarily, however, the insurgents did not move very far from their own villages, once they had cleared them of the objectionable foreigners. Sonapur was the one great exception for there most of the property and the cattle taken were carried off into the neighbouring areas of Singhbhum.²

Once the expulsion of the foreigners was well under way their property was of course thoroughly looted: "all the respectable looking houses in the villages have been previously burnt by the Coles, and their own huts are filled with every species of grain which this province produces; and some of them are amply supplied with preserved mangoes, pickles...and sundry other articles."³ Major Sutherland commented, "They had enriched themselves with the spoils of their enemies, for such they considered all foreigners."⁴ Revolt thus degenerated into banditry: the insurgent leader, Singrai, took from one money-lender, Santokh Sahu, no less than Rs. 2,000 which he had kept in salt bags.⁵ Yet even in the later stages it is significant of the deep hatred of the foreigners that their houses, however valuable, were almost invariably destroyed by the tribal people, who seemed to wish to erase all signs of their hated presence among them. By contrast the property of the tribal chiefs was nearly always respected, though often enough after their hinduization they had been ultimate origins of oppression. In villages

1. Jt. Commissioners to Bowen, 9 Feb. 1832, para. 2, B. C. 1362/54224.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 23, B.C. 1502/58891.

3. Letter from Camp Pitoria, 15 Feb. 1832, *John Bull*, quoted in *India Gazette*, 22 Feb. 1832.

4. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

5. Statement, Singrai, Enclosure, Russell to Govt., 18 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54226.

with a mixed population, none of the houses of the tribesmen were touched.

The unrest was then, in origin, a revolt of the dispossessed, of the helots against their masters. Sutherland described the Chota-Nagpur insurgents, "intoxicated as they were with liquor, with success and rising as they did like a slave population on their taskmasters, numbers were massacred in cold blood ; and perhaps no foreigner falling into their hands would have been safe."¹ The statements of both prisoners and victims show that the Oraons, Mundas, Mahlis and other Chota-Nagpur tribesmen made the *suds* their victims.² Moneylenders, merchants and shopkeepers, land-grabbers and tax-farmers, these were the people attacked—those foreigners who had been usefully integrated into the tribal economy, the *chaukidars*, milkmen, and artisans were generally spared. However, those who had sided with the foreigners, acting as their agents or spies, suffered like their masters. Birbal, the *chaukidar* of a village, who attempted to protect the property of a foreign *thikadar* of the village, was attacked, pursued and hacked to pieces.³ Similarly a certain Monohar Singh was killed by the whole Kol population of a village because, as the *peada* or messenger of a *sud* landholder, he had the duty of seizing the Kol ryots for arrears of rent.⁴ There were also examples of those who had been bond-servants seizing the chance to destroy their employers and their employers' families.⁵

The dealers in salt were another special target of attack, for they had excited the general anger of the people by selling this common necessary at an exorbitant rate. When the home of a family of salt-dealers was attacked and the assailants found that all but one old man, had fled, they first asked him to show them the spot where the salt was deposited, and then they

1. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 26 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54229. Also see Abstract statement of prisoners, B. C. 1502/58893.

3. Master to Register, Nizam Adalat, 22 Oct. 1832, Case No. 92, B. C. 1502/58893.

4. *Ibid.* No. 34.

5. *Ibid.* No. 77.

killed him mercilessly.¹ So were the moneylenders, whose fleeced debtors took a savage revenge. Doma Tiwari, one such moneylender, was pelted with stones, and then severely wounded as he was, in cold blood was killed.²

The non-tribal landlords were the third group upon whom the Kols turned. There were numerous cases³ of their revenue collectors and agents being brutally murdered. Even the servants of the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur were not immune if they were foreigners, and a number who had harassed the ryots were killed and their property looted.⁴

In Palamau again the destruction of "Mahajuns and foreigners engaged in commercial transactions"⁵ was a prominent feature. Once again, too, the foreign servants of the ex-raja and the leading *jagirdars*, muslim adventurers and the like, were singled out for attack.

1. *Ibid.* No. 108.

2. *Ibid.* No. 150.

3. *Ibid.* Nos. 9, 151.

4. *Ibid.* Nos. 11, 52.

5. Neave to Govt., 29 March. 1832, para. 2, B. C. I363/54228.

Chapter

V

The Aftermath of the Unrest—I.

With the ending of military operations in Chota-Nagpur it became necessary first to ensure a rapid return to normal economic life in the ravaged districts, and to make such minor security arrangements as would preserve that life in peace, then to decide how to reward the loyal and to punish the guilty, and finally to resolve all the conflicting claims between parties thrown up by the insurrection, or left unresolved because of it. Only when that had been done, and the reports of the officers had been digested, would it be possible to consider what changes in the administration of the tribal areas would be necessary to prevent in future such a growth of grievances as had been issued in violent rebellion between 1831 and 1832.

A great destruction of life and property took place during the risings and in the course of their suppression. Official figures, for example, gave the number of non-tribal people killed in Tori, Lohardugga, Sonepur, Palkote, Tamar and Doma alone as 304.¹ Wilson in his edition of Mill, put the figure at over a thousand.² Probably both figures were underestimates, many deaths being unreported in the long period of administrative confusion, when most officials had fled from their civil stations. On the insurgents' side losses were even heavier, though here again because of the tribes peoples' habit of carrying off their dead and wounded into the jungles,³ no accurate total can be obtained. The loss of property was likewise very great, for large areas, especially during the rains, had been "almost entirely at the mercy of the insurgent chooars"⁴ who

1. Appendix, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. Wilson, *Mill's History of British India*, 1858, IX, 234, footnote.

3. Braddon to Govt., 6 Sept. 1832, B. C. 1501/58887.

4. Govt. to Braddon, 3 Aug. 1832, *Ibid*.

had "sacked every place worth plundering."¹ As British authority was restored by military action, further material loss was inflicted, this time upon the tribal people, against whom the Hindu and Muslim troops acted in some measure as avengers of the 'foreigners' attacked by the Kols. The destruction was so great as to rouse some disquiet among the officers engaged in operations,² and there was for a while a lively controversy in the Press. Some denounced the punitive measures: "the country is filled with blood-thirsty and plundering troops, and England the free, the noble England pours her legions into Nagpore, and empties the phial of her wrath upon the heads of the devoted and patriot Coles! These poor unfortunates are hunted from their villages to the jungles and from thence to the plains where they are massacred like beasts of the field."³ To this those engaged in the suppression of the rebellion replied defensively, asserting "There perhaps never was an insurrection of such magnitude put down by a military force...where recourse was had to so few measures of severity, or where there was so little sacrifice of life and property—yet these...are the troops that Indian papers paint as ruthless savages, and these the measures that they describe in terms calculated to raise the indignation and contempt of all good men."⁴ They also took a legalistic line: "I have yet to learn that the destruction of the supplies of every description which the insurgents had carried to their positions to enable them to protract their resistance, was not lawful, that the destruction of the habitations which they had there erected for their shelter was not lawful, and that the demolition of the villages in the immediate neighbourhood of their positions, which they had deserted, but where they found occasional shelter was not lawful likewise."⁵ Others counter-attacked the

1. Dalton, *Ethnology*, 175.

2. See Chapters II and III.

3. A paper said to be published in Chota-Nagpore, quoted in *Bengal Hurkaru*, 18 Apl. 1832.

4. 'M. N.', *Barrackpur*, 24 May 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 30 May 1832.

5. *Ibid.*

humanitarians, asking, "Is all the pity and compassion of the *Bull's* correspondent to be expended on these ruthless murderers, who spare neither women nor children...? Is no compassion to be extended to the hundreds, whom they have killed, whose blood cries for vengeance ; to the orphan whom they have rendered fatherless and the widow whom they have made so. Is no one to feel for the thousands who block up the roads and villages with their starving families, who are wandering about without a morsel of food and perfectly destitute of the means of getting it ?"¹ But whether excessive or justified, the destruction of houses, grain, equipment, cattle, etc., was certainly heavy : "so much blood has been shed, such almost irreparable ruin and devastation spread over a fine country which now is 'Greece—but living Greece no more'."² The land could not be cultivated for want of seeds and bullocks, the crops were widely damaged and those that survived could not be harvested in time. "In every village," wrote Neave about Palamau, "the crops were standing ripe and there was none to reap them."³

The first task of Government, under such conditions was to restore order and restart the economic life of the area as quickly as possible. Even before the full pacification of Chota-Nagpur the local authorities had been instructed to seek to inspire confidence in the people : "The main desire of the Vice President in Council respecting Palamau as well as other portions of territory in which there has been insurrection, is to re-establish tranquillity & secure good order for the future."⁴ Major Sutherland, Metcalfe's private secretary, stressed the need to prevent "further depression and degradation of the Cole population."⁵ "Whether we consider their number or look upon them as the productive and industrial classes," he wrote, "their appeal to arms having so far failed to obtain for them redress of those grievances which in their estimation had become

1. 'Tee-to-Tum', *Bengal Hurkaru*, 13 March 1832.

2. 'Jassoos', 9 Apl. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 30 Apl. 1832.

3. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

4. Govt. to Neave, 7 Apl. 1832, para. 2, B. C. 1363/54228.

5. Sutherland to Govt., n. d., B. C. 1363/54227.

intolerable, there will be a reaction against them...They will, unless protected by the hand which has reduced them to subjection,...be reduced in the first instance to a state of greater debasement than ever."¹ Steps were accordingly taken to restore the thousands of maunds of grain and the cattle recovered from the insurgents to their rightful owners, so that cultivation might be got under way. In Patkum alone 12—15,000 maunds of grain were recovered, and in Tamar 4,000 heads of cattle.² As police and other officials were again posted in the districts they were instructed to aid in the recovery and restoration of property—though with caution, for there were many claims and counter claims, and the tribal people frequently protested that they were "being deprived of all their own property after having given up their plunder."³

Indeed in May 1832 the squabbles about the restoration of property assumed such proportions in the Barkagarh area that it was thought necessary to post troops there to prevent "a partial rising, which might extend were not troops on the spot."⁴ The hostility of the non-tribal people by the tribal masses was making it very difficult for the headmen and chiefs who had bound themselves at the time of their surrender to secure the restitution of all looted property within their villages. Moreover, the presence of troops, it was thought, would reassure the non-tribal people and encourage them to resume their normal occupations.

The officials were also ordered to "use their best exertions in concert with the landholders and heads of villages to preserve order and conciliate all classes."⁵ Here Cuthbert gave a lead in trying to get those who had suffered at one another's hands to live again as good neighbours. (In May 1832 the joint commissioners had reported that the general convulsion had "completely disorganised society and destroyed all confidence amongst

1. *Ibid.*

2. Russell to Braddon, 18 Apl. 1832, para. 16, B. C. 1363/54226. Also see Col. Bowen to Jt. Commissioners, 11 March 1832, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 6 May 1832, para. 5, B. C. 1363/54228.

4. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 31 May 1832, para. 2, *Ibid.*

5. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 6 May 1832, para. 5, *Ibid.*

the different classes.")¹ Cuthbert called together the Chota-Nagpur raja and the *mundas* and *mankis* of the five dependent *parganas*, giving them all a patient hearing, promising redress of grievances. "I have succeeded," he wrote, "in allaying old and bitter animosities and in persuading those to be reconciled to each other, whose enmities are as detrimental to their own interests as they are injurious to the peace and welfare of the country; I mean the Rajas and the Mankies and Moondas."²

As in one area after another military operations came to an end and troops were withdrawn, it became necessary to establish a transitional security arrangement to protect the new-found calm. One method of doing this was to establish small temporary posts, such as that at Barkagarh. In Palamau, for example, Neave dealt with the trouble-spot of Latehar, by posting the *daroga* of Tarhasi there with a *dafadar* and 19 *barkandazes*; he posted another *dafadar's* party at Satbarwa in Leslienganj *thana* and a party of *barkandazes* with the *tahsildar* of the *khalsa mauzas* or government villages.³ Before long he could report the whole *pargana* tranquil and the villages busy with peaceful inhabitants. By July 1832 Government sanction had been received for these reinforcements of the police,⁴ and for the building of the necessary accommodation for them.

In Chota-Nagpur proper, police *amins* with the necessary establishments were appointed at Lohardugga, Jhikochatti and Barkagarh and, for the dependent *parganas*, at Tamar.⁵ The joint commissioners laid down that the *amins* should follow a conciliatory policy. The *ilaqadars*, *thikadars*, and other officials were to be restrained from using force in the performance of their duties. There was to be no arresting of persons on mere suspicion, and trifling cases of assault and theft should be settled by the local *panchayts*.⁶ The *amins* were strictly warned against accepting gifts—of money or goods—from any one, and were ordered to prevent their subordinates from accepting any

1. *Ibid.* Para 1.

2. Cuthbert to Govt., 24 Apl. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1362/54225.

3. R. Trotter to Jt. Commissioners, 18 June 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

4. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 10 July 1832, *Ibid.*

5. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 6 May 1832, para. 3, *Ibid.*

6. Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 31 May 1832, *Ibid.*

also. They were to maintain a diary, submit weekly reports, and work out tables showing the number of houses burnt, the amount of property plundered, and the number of persons killed in their areas. All this was approved of by the Government and the extra expense agreed to, though the posting of a detachment of troops at Barkagarh was disliked. "A post of that kind once established there," the Government wrote, "afterwards [there may be] some risk and difficulty in withdrawing it, and while continued it locks up a portion of our military force and tends to fritter the whole away in some detachments.....Our army is not sufficient to be provided a multiplicity of small detachments to be stationed on every spot where it may seem desirable to have troops."¹ In fact, the Government wanted "to keep its force collected in efficient bodies to be used where required than to scatter it in small parties, like so many Police Thannas, to keep the peace."²

Besides these official police posts the *zamindari* or *ghatwali* police was re-established wherever possible. As the tribal chieftains surrendered they were asked to enter into fresh agreements with the Company. Thus Singrai Manki of Sonepur *pargana*, when he surrendered in May 1832, executed a *kabuliat* with kunwar Harnath Sahi, promising to be alert in doing service and in looking after his pass, where no plundering or disturbance was to be allowed.³ He also undertook to obey all the Company's orders, to prevent the entry of dacoits into the twenty-two villages in his charge, and to report all crimes to the police officers. Similar *kabuliats* were executed by Ghasi Manjhi, eight *rautias* and eight other *mankis*.⁴ Even a leader like Bindrai was "coaxed and made much of, had a puggree [turban] given him and a cheroot",⁵ and was pardoned and re-established in his old duties.

1. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 17 May 1832, para. 4, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Enclosure, Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 30 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54223.

4. *Ibid.*

5. 'The ghost of the sons of Singrae Mankee and Bindrae Mankee', Tartarus, Apl. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 14 May 1832.

In other areas it was to the rajas and chiefs that police duties were re-entrusted. Palkote and contiguous *parganas* were left under the Raja of Chota-Nagpur, Sonepur under the *Kunwar* of Govindpur, Basia under the *Kunwar* of that place, and Barwa under its raja. All were to keep the higher authorities regularly informed of the real state of the country.¹ The Calcutta authorities were ready, indeed, to push such arrangements further. "In a country", they wrote, "where the land revenue is received by the Raja, and where we receive only such a portion on that account as may more properly be termed a tribute, it seems equitable that the Raja should be at the expense of keeping the peace and expedient to make over the territory at present to the sole charge of the Raja." Such a measure would have the great attraction of reducing government expenditure upon the police, which threatened to exceed the revenues drawn from the territory. It was also hoped that the influence of the maharaja, especially in the Palkote area, would lead to further recovery of property and an easing of the strain between the various classes of people.²

The various measures in Chota-Nagpur worked well, but with the signs of disturbance in the neighbouring Jungle Mahals they had to be extended beyond October—the date on which the extra police were to have been withdrawn. The officiating Ramgarh magistrate argued that "where a revolutionary spirit has so recently shown itself and where the lower orders have so lately learnt their own strength when opposed only by the ordinary police establishment the extra force cannot for some time to come with safety to the tranquillity of the pergunnah be dispensed with",³ and the need to despatch a large part of the force of *barkandazes* from Tori to Barabhum in the Jungle Mahals reinforced the argument. The special arrangements were therefore extended by Government for another four months. They also promoted Lt. Ouseley, who had been acting as *amin*

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 6 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 31 May 1832, *Ibid.*

3. Trotter to Jt. Commissioners, 30 Oct. 1832, para. 1. B. C. 1502/58893.

at Barkagarh, to be assistant to the joint commissioners, and to take over their supervision of Chota-Nagpur when in October they had to go to the Jungle Mahals.¹

With order restored attention was turned to reward and punishment. Among the officials, Major Sutherland was the first to receive high praise for his zeal and public spirit.² Neave, the Acting Magistrate of Ramgarh, was thanked for his services, especially in procuring provisions for the troops.³ Lastly Dent and Wilkinson, the Joint Commissioners, were thanked, the former perhaps less warmly than the latter. On the other hand Lambert at one stage had to supply a long explanation for having left the disturbed area, an explanation which was only grudgingly accepted, and Cuthbert, as has been seen, was bitterly criticized by Blunt, and was made something of a scapegoat by the joint commissioners.

It was then the turn of the subordinate officials of Chota-Nagpur. Neave asked that Shaikh Anwarullah, *tahsildar* of the Maharaja of Tekari, be rewarded for his "very great and important assistance" in providing supplies: "no method of securing the services of the people to Government," he urged, is "so sure and effectual as that of honorary rewards to those who deserve them."⁴ As the Patna commissioner also warmly supported Neave's request,⁵ the Government asked him to convey to the Shaikh their approbation and to present a pair of shawls or any other honorary distinction to the value of 300 rupees.⁶

Mitrabhan Singh, the zamindar of Deo, had rendered extraordinary services during the military operations, and his zeal and loyalty were highly spoken of by the joint commissioners.⁷ As his grandfather and father had also served the Company well,

-
1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 31 Oct. 1832, *Ibid.*
 2. Govt. to Sutherland, 3 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54337.
 3. See Neave to Lambert, 30 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54229.
 4. *Ibid.*
 5. Lambert to Govt., 3 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54229.
 6. Govt. to Lambert, 15 May 1832, *Ibid.*
 7. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

it was recommended that he should be granted an honorary dress of some splendour, with sword, string of pearls and so on, as well as some villages or a *pargana*, such as he himself had asked for.¹ To this, too, the Calcutta authorities agreed, though they were doubtful whether it would be easy to find a suitable *pargana* which could be granted without injury to the rights of others.² On the delicate issue of the value of the *khillat*, or dress of honour, the joint commissioners found a diplomatic answer, by making it the same as that conferred on Mitrabhan's father in 1816.³

Mirza Khan Bahadur Khan, an illegitimate son of Maharaja Mitrajit Singh of Tekari, then appealed for some recognition of his services in Palamau.⁴ Since there was much official support of his claim to reward, it was agreed to confer upon him an honorific title. In his case, too, the exact form of the reward called for much consideration. After a lot of discussion as to whether a Hindu or a Muslim title would suit him,⁵ the Governor-General finally authorized the title of Raja Khan Bahadur Khan Dilawar Jung.⁶ An appropriate *khillat* was also forwarded from Calcutta—though for this the new raja had to present a *nazar* of equal value, i.e., 750 rupees.⁷

Meanwhile the Maharaja of Deo had died,⁸ and the question

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 21 June 1832, B. C. 1363/54229.

2. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 30 July 1832, *Ibid.*

3. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 18 Aug. 1832, B. C. 1503/58898.

4. Petition, Mirza Khan, to Lambert, n. d., B. C. 1503/58899.

5. Lambert to Douglas, Judge of appeal at Patna, 15 Sept. 1832, *Ibid.* Also see Douglas to Govt., 24 Sept. 1832, *Ibid.* Also Govt. to Douglas, 8 Oct. 1832, *Ibid.* and Govt. to Douglas, 26 Nov. 1832, *Ibid.*

6. G. G. to Raja Khan Bahadur, 20. Dec. 1832, *Ibid.* The letter read : "My friend, in consideration of the public services which have been performed on several occasions by yourself and your father Maharaja Mitterjeet Sing, I have resolved...to confer upon you the dignity of Raja by name, style and title..." Also see Notification, Vice President in Council, Political Deptt., 14 Jan. 1833, *Ibid.*

7. Govt. to Douglas, 4 Feb. 1833, *Ibid.*

8. Trotter to Dent, 8 July 1833, B. C. 1502/58893 : "I cannot here avoid expressing my regret at an event by which a young man of the high-

arose of the best form in which to continue his reward to his minor son. The grant of a *pargana* desired by the late Mitrabhan Singh seemed unsuitable; so a remission of revenue of a thousand rupees a year was made instead, confirmed by a *sanad* in perpetuity.¹ The more imaginative proposal made by Dent, that the sum might be spent in giving the boy a really suitable education, was not adopted.

Next came the question of rewarding the loyal *jagirdars* of Palamau. Neave had recommended in April 1832, that the Raja of Palamau, whose estate had been sold up, and purchased by the Government several years back, should be given back his estate as a reward for his services.² The joint commissioners were cautious about this and suggested that the feeling of the people of Palamau should first be ascertained.³ Government agreed, stressing that it was particularly important to ascertain the inclinations of the principal *jagirdars*.⁴ But ultimately the estate was retained by the Government.⁵

The other *jagirdars* were suitably rewarded at Trotter's recommendation since by rewarding them "their assistance and good faith may be more surely relied on in the event of any future insurrection in the pergunnah,"⁶ Their balances were

est promise has thus prematurely been cut off and the district deprived of the good which must have resulted from his example and management."

A military officer paid a tribute to Mitrabhan Singh in the following words, "I have been fortunate enough during my pilgrimage to the East to meet with several very worthy and estimable native gentlemen, but certainly none who surpassed, if equalled, ..Mitrabhan Singh....I may with confidence appeal to my brother officers, and fellow sojourners in Nagpore, to bear witness to his courage, his kind and obliging disposition, his genteel manners and the total absence of scheme and strategem in his conduct..."A Subaltern, *op. cit.* 187, footnote.

1. Dent to Govt., 7 Oct. 1833, B. C. 1502/58893.

Also see Govt. to Dent, 23 Dec. 1833, *Ibid.*

2. Neave to Jt. Commissioners, 28 Apl. 1832, para. 8, B. C. 1363/54228.

3. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 29 May 1832, paras. 3-4, *Ibid.*

4. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 29 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

5. Bridge, *Palamau Settlement Report*, para. 82.

6. Trotter to Jt. Commissioners, 17 Oct. 1832, B. C. 1502/58893.

written off,¹ those who had engaged extra troops, etc., were re-imbursed, and an annual reduction of Rs. 240 was made in the revenue payable by Thakurai Chhatradhari Singh, Bhawani Basksha Rai and Thakurai Basant Singh, during their life-time.

One special award in Palamau was that of life pensions to the heirs of the ten persons killed at Latchar in action against the insurgents.² They received the standard rate under the pension rules of January 1831, of Rs. 2-8 annas a month—no very great sum for those who had left a number of dependants, though Trotter argued that living was cheap, and the persons were all men of no rank or position.³

After these many awards had been nicely adjusted to the merits of the deserving, the Government had to turn its attention to the question of punishment for the guilty. What policy should be pursued towards the rebels had been discussed from the very beginning of the outbreak in Chota-Nagpur. First reactions had been harsh. Cuthbert in January 1832 had written, "with reference to the sanguinary deeds of these freebooters, it appears to me that their trial should be summary"⁴, and, as has been seen, the joint commissioners were given power "to apprehend, try and bring to immediate punishment without further reference to Government all persons whom you may find in open resistance to the civil power."⁵ Second thoughts were more cautious and more sympathetic to the insurgents. In a later note to the joint commissioners the Government directed that those who submitted without resistance, "although they may previously have taken part in the insurrection, are either to be reserved, or dismissed without security for their future good behaviour or detained as long as may seem expedi-

1. Khirodar Sahi, the chief of Chechari, was one of those who got such a remission : Beng. Rev. Cons. 62 of 20 Nov. 1832 (⁶²/₁₁).

2. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 2 Nov. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58893. The persons killed were Mansaledar Khan, Ismail Khan, Khan Bahadur Khan, Sheo Dayal, Biranchi, Dana, Jaggu, Surdha, Bechu Khan, and Adhin Upadhyay.

3. Trotter to Jt. Commissioners, 19 Oct. 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Cuthbert to Govt., 19 Jan. 1832, B. C. 1362/54224.

5. Govt. to Cuthbert, 24 Jan. 1832, para. 1, *Ibid.*

ent at your discretion."¹ Even when it was thought necessary to bring active insurgents to trial it was directed that "capital punishment should be abstained from, unless the particular case of the criminal to be condemned may appear to you to be of such an atrocious character as to render the example indispensable."² For serious crime imprisonment with hard labour, banishment or transportation overseas should be the sentence, "subject to the confirmation or revision of the Government."³ Again in April 1832 the Acting Magistrate of Ramgarh was instructed that "punishment for the offences which have been committed in the heat of the insurrection is only so far desirable as it may conduce to the maintenance of tranquillity hereafter."⁴

This change of attitude was the result of a realization that the outbreaks had not been mere expressions of savagery but of protest against genuine grievances. Blunt had urged an early enquiry into the causes of the outbreak: "the earlier investigation is instituted, the less difficulty is likely to be experienced in ascertaining the truth and of acquiring correct information as to the causes that have produced the disturbance or the parties by whom the insurrection may have been instigated."⁵ The enquiries made in Patkum and Palamau by Russell and Neave, and by Sutherland, Cuthbert and the Joint Commissioners in Chota-Nagpur and Tamar⁶ did much to make the position clearer, and to establish the justice as well as common sense of Metcalfe's refusal to follow a harsh or vindictive policy towards the tribal people. "Our duty towards those committed to our care by Almighty Providence," wrote Metcalfe, "is happily the same, whatever their feelings may be towards us, we are bound to protect and cherish them, to secure them from oppression

1. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 20 Feb. 1832, *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. Govt. to Neave, 7 Apl. 1832, para. 3, B. C. 1363/54228.

5. Blunt, minute, 14, Apl. 1832, para. 7, B. C. 1363/54227.

6: The reports they submitted were probably not entirely accurate reflections of tribal feeling: after months of fighting not even witnesses were

and give them good government... Humanity, duty, policy and common sense unite in prescribing the same course."¹

Meanwhile the number of prisoners had been growing alarmingly. From Patkum and the neighbouring *parganas* alone some 650 prisoners had been sent to the Bankura jail by March 1832,² and cholera followed upon over-crowding.³ In April it was decided, therefore, to release those against whom the evidence was weakest. (Russell had earlier released 86, and Braddon 35).⁴ The same thing came to pass at Sherghati jail where by March 1832 there were 828 prisoners and prison accommodation for only 600.⁵ There the joint commissioners recommended the release of over 250 prisoners who belonged to that part of Chota-Nagpur where tranquillity had been restored and there was no danger to public peace.⁶ Trotter provided the released prisoners with eight annas each towards the cost of food for their return home, so that they might not take "recourse to their old habits of pillage."⁷ The release of the prisoners, and the provision of ration money were both approved by a Government which had by now decided "to encourage the insurgents by kindness and persuasion to return to their allegiance."⁸

The joint commissioners meanwhile had committed 179 prisoners, mainly Mundas and Oraons, for trial, nearly all for attacks upon *suds*. By November some 364 prisoners were on

likely to speak fully and openly. And as a radical Calcutta paper put it, "Among the requisites for knowing the true causes of this frightful Cole revolt, were men 'who would walk into the village, sit down under a tree, and talk over the matter with the people.' " *Bengal Hurkaru*, 30 Apl. 1832, editorial.

1. Metcalfe, minute, 14 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.
2. Govt. to Braddon, 10 Apl. 1832, B.C. 1363/54226.
3. Asstt. Civil Surgeon, Bankura, to Russell, 14 Apl. 1832, *Ibid*.
4. Braddon to Govt., 7 May 1832, *Ibid*.
Also see Govt. to Braddon, 15 May 1832, *Ibid*.
5. Neave to Lambert, 8 March 1832, B.C. 1363/54229.
6. Jt. Commissioners to Neave, 31 March 1832, *Ibid*.
7. Trotter to Lambert, 6 Apl. 1832, *Ibid*.
8. Trotter to Jt. Commissioners, 9 Apl. 1832, B.C. 1363/54228.

trial in cases involving the killing of some 238 persons.¹ The immediate problem of the authorities was to find the persons to dispose of the huge number of cases. The Burdwan commissioner agreed to deal with cases concerning the Jungle Mahals district, but when the Patna commissioner was asked what time he could devote to the conduct of the trials, Lambert reported none. He pleaded heavy arrears of business, and asked that some other officer be appointed with additional staff.²

The Government, taken aback, expressed itself as "at a loss to understand how the supervision of the revenue affairs of the two districts and of the small part of the third" could be sufficient to occupy the whole of his time.³ None of his explanations were considered to be convincing, and the Government reported his behaviour to the Court of Directors: "we have not been able to regard his explanation on the subject as fully satisfactory."⁴

His place was filled, however, by deputing Master, a Calcutta magistrate, to hold the trials. He found that in most cases the prisoners had made confessions, and that on that basis the law officers⁵ had normally pronounced the sentence of capital punishment. To the *Nizamat Adalat* he emphasized the difficulties in the way of adequate investigation and a fair trial: "The possibility of investigating the cases according to the dates of apprehension or commitment is precluded by the nature of the country from which the parties have been called, the difficulty of issuing their appearance and the extreme distance they have to travel without reference therefore to numerical arrangement, I make it my duty to dispose of the trials as the persons concerned in each arrive from the interior."⁶ He also stressed

1. Trotter to Lambert, 7 June 1832, B.C. 1363/54229.

2. Lambert to Govt., 16 June 1832, *Ibid.*

3. Govt. to Lambert, 26 June 1832, *Ibid.*

4. Bengal Govt. to Court of Directors, 25 Sept. 1832, para. 46, B.C. 1362/54223.

5. The Muslim law officers were also known as *Maulavis*. Mohammedan law continued to be the basis of criminal jurisprudence at this time.

6. Master to Register, Nizamat Adalat, 22 Oct. 1832, B. C. 1502/58893.

that these cases had been committed for trial during the days of stress and confusion, and so lacked regularity because of the absence of inquests, the imperfect authentication of confessions and other omissions. He therefore expressed the hope that "mercy will not be withheld from an uncivilized race whose offences were committed during the heat of rebellion."¹ Again, finding in one particular case an exceptional number of discrepancies in evidence he wrote an explanatory note, stating that "allowance must be made for the uncivilized condition of the people, for their inability to stand cross-examinations and for the circumstance of their original statements having been required from them 7 and 8 months ago."²

Master showed himself understanding in dealing with the tribal people, and often asked for leniency towards such unsophisticated folk. The law officers, however, had found no regard to the peculiarities of the tribal society and had rigorously followed the canons of Muslim law. The *Nizamat Adalat* acted in similar fashion. "The Court of Nizamat Adawlat judging of each case as it comes before them on its own merits, are bound to administer the full rigor [sic] of the law whilst they must be very imperfectly apprized of many circumstances connected with the state of the people."³ The Bengal Government had therefore itself to intervene. It believed that the crimes "were perpetrated by an ignorant and barbarous people, at a time when they conceived that all civil authority was terminated, and when they saw no restraint opposed to the operation of their most malignant passions."⁴ (They may also have taken note of the plea frequently made by the tribesmen that they had only acted upon the orders of their chiefs and leaders.)⁵ Fearing that "if the sentence of the law were in every instance carried into effect," the number of executions would be quite shocking, the Government ordered Master to suspend the execution of all

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* Case no. 58.

3. Govt. to Master, 11 Dec. 1832, B. C. 1502/58893.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 26 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54229.

capital sentences passed by the *Nizamat Adalat*. Those so convicted were to be kept in close confinement until he should have consulted the joint commissioners and submitted a report on the commutation of sentences.¹ They even went so far in a letter of 11 December 1832 to suggest that a general amnesty for all offences committed before the re-establishment of the authority of the Government might be given, as had been beneficially done in 1809.²

If the Government thus showed itself favourably inclined towards the tribal folk, their own ruler, by origin one of them, most certainly did not. In January 1833 the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur wrote directly to the Governor General to ask that the tribal prisoners be severely punished. "If they are not punished," he wrote, "they will in 3 or 4 years become more insolent and audacious. They will destroy every man of rank who has as yet by some means or other saved his life and property, and carry off whatever he may accumulate in the meantime. They will not leave one out of ten alive, and it will be impossible to prevent them from laying waste this kingdom and other territories besides."³ In his keenness for retribution he urged that the same harshness as had been displayed at Nawagarh, Bijnaur and Silli should be practised everywhere. There was no evidence in his attitude that he had realised—as the British authorities had done—that neglect of the rights of the tribal people had caused the unrest, and that his failure to protect his people called for a reform in his own attitude.

But before these sentiments could reach the Government, Master had submitted his final report on 17 January 1833. In all he had tried 165 cases connected with the unrest, involving 429 prisoners of whom 164 were convicted by him subject to the approval of the *Nizamat Adalat*, 59 prisoners were convicted without reference to that court, and 106 prisoners had either

1. Govt. to Master, 11 Dec. 1832, B. C. 1502/58893. 32 prisoners had been capitally sentenced by the *Nizamat Adalat*.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Transl. Petition, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, Chota-Nagpur to Governor-General, 28 Jan. 1833, B.C. 1503/58907.

died or had been discharged or acquitted. In all 1,063 witnesses had been examined and six trials postponed. The prisoners whose cases had not been referred to the *Nizam Adalat* had been sentenced to terms of from three to seven years.¹

While reflecting on these trials, Master repeatedly emphasised the peculiar nature of these ignorant, uncouth and uncivilized tribal folk who "were apparently so wholly unconscious of the fearful and revolting nature of their crimes as to excite mingled sensation of horror and pity."² He had been moved to pity to find unhappy men of very advanced age and extreme youth in the calender for capital punishment, and to find that many of the unfortunate prisoners had been driven to commit horrible crimes through "obsequitous attachment to their employers or from servile fear" and he lamented that the real leaders had invariably "contrived to elude justice and to escape with impunity."³

Master went on to express his pleasure that in many cases where the *Nizam Adalat* had not shown mercy, the Government had commuted the extreme sentences. The one body of prisoners for whom he did not ask for mercy were those from Palamau. These, he thought, had had no legitimate grievances, their crimes had been wanton and unpardonable, and since they were cut off by impenetrable hills and woods from the contagion of Chota-Nagpur, and were of a different stock they could not plead that they had been swept away by the general tribal uprising. However, in his note to the joint commissioners Master argued that "to enforce the execution of so many capital sentences would be impolitic, and productive of no beneficial consequences."⁴

The joint commissioners agreed with some of Master's arguments, but thought that "notwithstanding the lapse of time since these offences were committed we are decidedly of opinion that a certain number of executions to take place in

1. Abstract of Prisoners, B. C. 1502/58893.

2. Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 6, B.C. 1502/58893.
Also in Bentinck MS, Box. 15.

3. *Ibid.* Para. 18.

4. Master to Jt. Commissioners, 4 Apl. 1833, B. C. 1502/58893.

chains in the Pergunnahs where murders and other atrocities were most numerous will have the best effect in securing the future peace and order of the country."¹ So they recommended that 8 out of 32 prisoners who had received capital sentences from the *Nizamat Adalat* might be hanged, and that the remaining 24 should be imprisoned for life.² The Government agreed with these proposals, and the Ramgarh magistrate was ordered to arrange the executions while those who received life sentences were sent under safe custody to the Magistrate of the 24-Parganas, who would lodge them in Alipur jail.³

The Government drew the attention of the joint commissioners, however, to their letter of 11 December about the expediency of publishing a general amnesty for offences committed before the re-establishment of the Government's authority in Chota-Nagpur.⁴ They thereupon stopped all further prosecutions for crimes still unpunished which had been committed before 25 April 1832. Then in June 1833 they published, on the Government's instructions,⁵ a total amnesty throughout Chota-Nagpur. Thus to the relief of the authorities and to the joy of the terrified people the work of punishment was completed in Chota-Nagpur.

A number of minor political and administrative measures required immediate attention, before any general plan of reforms could be instituted. To these some brief reference must now be made.

Cuthbert, when he made his report on Tamar in 1832, had drawn attention to the problem of the succession to the Tamar *gaddi*, which had fallen vacant in September 1831. The Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur claimed that since the raja had died

1. Jt. Commissioners to Master, 10 Apl. 1833, *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. Govt. to Master, 6 May 1833, B.C. 1502/58893. The eight prisoners to be hanged were Partowa, Chugnu, Dullu, Hadi, Etua, Gondela, Surwa and Chumra.

Also see Govt. to 24-Parganas Magistrate, 6 May 1833, *Ibid.*

4. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 6 May 1833, para. 3, *Ibid.*

5. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 3 June 1833, *Ibid.*

childless, the estate should revert to him. The tribal people and their *mundas* and *mankis*, who had declared that they would not pay their revenue either to the Tamar raja or to the Chota-Nagpur raja, but only to a Government official, resisted the maharaja's claim. They wished to see Pradhan Maninath Sahi, a relation of the raja, installed as their new ruler. (They also prayed that up to fifteen hundred rupees should be set aside for the support of the two ranis, widows of the late raja.)¹ There were two other claimants also in the field, Raghubar Sahi, another relation of the late raja, and Thakur Chetan Singh of Kharsawan, who for a long time had been laying claim to suzerainty over the turbulent Kols of Kochang, Tamar Chitpele, Sonapet and Maramjanga.²

These conflicting claims were not, however, settled until Wilkinson, in his capacity as Political Agent to the Governor-General, came to Tamar in April 1833. The claim of Thakur Chetan Singh, he recommended, should be allowed, since he alone was capable of controlling the area.³ He then turned to the main question, to discuss which he had assembled the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur, the late raja's relatives, already referred to, and the chiefs of the five *parganas* of Tamar, Silli, Baranda, Rahi and Bundu. Two other claimants also appeared, Kanhai Sahi, the raja of Rahi, and Gopal Singh, the son of the Jaipur raja by the late Tamar raja's daughter. After a thorough investigation, Wilkinson selected Maninath Sahi to succeed to the *gaddi*, a choice which gave general satisfaction,⁴ and to which the *mundas* and *mankis* gladly signified their agreement in an *ikrarnama*.⁵ Raghubar Sahi, who had proclaimed

1. Cuthbert to Govt., 24 Apl. 1832. B. C. 1362/54225.

2. Memorandum, Wilkinson, 1 March 1833, B. C. 1502/58889.

3. Memorandum, Wilkinson, 4 March 1833, *Ibid*.

4. Wilkinson to Govt., 20 May 1833, B. C. 1502/58893 : Interesting facts came to light in the course of this investigation. Genealogical tables were produced and legitimacy challenged. Raghubar Sah, for example, stated that "there were scarcely any Rajahs in either Cuttack, Sumbulpore, or other jungly districts whose ancestors were not some of them illegitimate and on that account as his grandfather was the brother of the late Govind Sah, he hoped his claim might be preferred."

5. Transl. Agreement of the Tamar *mundas* and *mankis*, 30 Apl. 1833, Enclosure, Wilkinson to Govt., 20 May 1833, *Ibid*.

himself raja without waiting for the commissioner's decision was put under restraint.¹ In June 1833 the settlement was confirmed by the Bengal Government with much satisfaction.

It has already been seen that as the depth of the insurgents' sense of grievance became apparent, and with the penetration of European military and civil officers, in far greater numbers than usual, into the tribal areas, measures were taken first to record and then to remove evils. Thus we find the joint commissioners, in March 1832, ordering the officers commanding detachments to enquire into complaints of oppression of the tribesmen by their landlords, and bring offenders to book.² Blunt went so far as to suggest that "to secure the future peace of the disturbed pergunnahs the first measure necessary appears to me to be the restoration of the Mankees and Moondas to their hereditary possessions."³ As has been seen, in Sonapur just such a restoration was effected in May, the *mundas* and *mankis* being re-instated as soon as the leases of the *thikadars* or revenue-farmers expired.⁴

Another grievance came to an end in May 1832 when the joint commissioners suspended the tax upon home-brewed beer. They were also asked to consider whether the *abkari* tax should be abolished altogether.⁵ In January 1833 Dent proposed a quite radical solution: that a fresh tax on land should be substituted for the *abkari* and *dak* collections, which had amounted to about 15,000 and 4,000 rupees respectively. Such a tax would eradicate the possibility of a whole series of illegal exactions. The domestic manufacture of *hanria* by the tribal people was to be freely allowed.⁶

1. Govt. to Wilkinson, 3 June 1833, *Ibid.*

2. Jt. Commissioners to Officers commanding Tikoo and Churia, 2 March 1832, B. C. 1362/54224. The *amins* appointed in May 1832 were instructed to find out how much had been collected on account of *zamin-dari dak*, and what bribes the *nazir* and *thana* officers had taken: Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 31 May 1832, para. 7, B. C. 1363/54228.

3. Blunt, minute, 27 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1363/54227.

4. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 30 May 1832, B. C. 1363/54229.

5. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 22 May 1832, para. 3, *Ibid.*

6. Dent, Separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

The joint commissioners also recommended the ending of poppy cultivation in Chota-Nagpur and Palamau, even though "by the abolition of the Hundea tax and the destruction of the poppy cultivated by the Koirees, we can hope for little revenue under the heads of opium or sayer."¹ The Government ordered that the cultivation of the poppy was to be discontinued and the *abkari* collections and the *dak* cess were to be suspended.²

Dent's last major recommendation was that the practice of slavery—usually for indebtedness—should be prohibited, and that all in a state of bondage should be declared free within two years from the time of the proclamation.³ He also urged that the abolition of slavery should be extended to Bihar, from which it had been introduced into Chota-Nagpur.

Such were the measures taken piecemeal, on an ad hoc basis, to cure the immediate evils of the situation in the tribal areas. They served to restart the economic life of the region, to ensure order and a return to confidence, to reward the faithful and to punish those guilty of heinous crimes, and to eradicate or at least suspend some of the evils which had prompted rebellion. There remained the larger task of recasting the whole administration so as to consolidate these gains.

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 19 June 1832, B. C. 1363/54228.

2. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 3 June 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. Dent, Separate Remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891. Dent had also urged the abolition of salt darogaship at Armai in Chota-Nagpur, and that a cheap supply of salt should be made available to the tribal people: "I cannot understand why the unfortunate Coles of Nagpoor should be saddled with an Establishment to prevent their purchasing salt as cheap as their neighbours of Singbhoom and Sumbhulpore."

Chapter VI

Aftermath—II. The Reorganisation of the Administration of the Tribal Areas

Early in 1832 Major Sutherland, the private secretary to Metcalfe, had expressed his opinion that with the suppression of the first phase of tribal unrest "a fit occasion" had arisen for devising new administrative arrangements for Chota-Nagpur.¹ The insurgents had been impressed "by the exhibition which we have been called upon to make of our military power", and would accept a new, more judicious administration if one could be devised.²

At least one suggestion how improvements might be effected had the merit of simplicity: a correspondent of the *Bengal Hurkaru* suggested that the best way "to reclaim these people from their present barbarous state" was to drive a good road through the district and so bring them into touch with the civilized world. (He did add as an afterthought "Education ought not of course to be neglected."³) The Government, however, preferred a thorough investigation of the peculiar problems of the area. Local investigations were carried on by several officers, both individually and collectively, and on the basis of their reports Metcalfe and Blunt recorded their view in several minutes.

It was on 16 November 1832 that the joint commissioners submitted their report on the Chota-Nagpur unrest, and, "with great diffidence" their suggestions for the future management of Chota-Nagpur.

1. Sutherland to Govt., n.d., B.C. 1363/54227.

2. *Ibid.*

3. A correspondent, Camp Chuk Bhawani, 14 Feb. 1832, *Bengal Hurkaru*, 24 Feb. 1832. Nothing was done with regard to their education, though an effort was made to recruit them into the local battalion: Wilkinson to Govt., 1 Sept. 1832, Bentinck MS., Box 23. Also see Wilkinson to Benson, 1 Sept. and 29 Sept. 1832, *Ibid.*

They dealt first with future police arrangements for the area. For Chota-Nagpur they suggested that the maharaja "should be entrusted exclusively with the charge of the police of his country and should possess the power and authority to discharge and entertain his own Umlahs of every grade."¹ He in turn would invest his subordinate chiefs of Tamar, Baranda, Bundu, Rahi and Silli with police powers within their estates.² They in turn would leave the management of the police to their subordinate *jagirdars* within their respective *jagirs*. Each chief would thus be directly responsible for those lands which he held as *khalsa*, i. e., unfarmed, under his direct management.

For Sonepur a similar arrangement was recommended, with the *kunwar* being subordinated in his police duties to the maharaja, and his *rautias*, *mankis* and other minor chiefs, subordinate to him, but all in direct control of their *khalsa* villages.³ Elsewhere in Chota-Nagpur the maharaja might establish *thanas* at important points, with a *thanadar* in control of the division.

Should disturbances break out, despite this elaborate arrangement of indigenous police, the *jagirdars* of the *dam* and *kam* (cash and service) villages would provide men for the suppression of the disorders. Should they fail repeatedly in their duty, then their *jagirs* might, with the approval of the European authority, be transferred to another member of their family.⁴

Within the village there was to be an equally clear administrative system. Each holder of a village would receive directions from above. He in turn would nominate his assistant, a *gorait* or *Kotwal* whom he would remunerate either with land or a fixed annual payment in grain. To that payment in grain every ryot was to contribute according to the number of his ploughs.⁵ (The exact share of each ryot would be settled by the *ilaqadar*, circle headman, or the zamindar of the estate.)

When any culprit was seized he was first to be taken by the village headman to the *ilaqadar*, who would send him on to the

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 98, B.C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.* para. 99.

3. *Ibid.* para. 105.

4. *Ibid.* para. 110.

5. *Ibid.* para. 101.

head of the estate. If his crime was a minor one he would be kept in confinement, if a major one he would be forwarded to the European authorities. The *ilaga*dar would report each case either in writing or through a trustworthy messenger. In areas where the *thanadari* system operated the village *gorait* would forward culprits to the *thanadar* whose functions would be similar to those of the *ilaga*dar.¹

There would thus be a hierarchy of officials, with the maharaja exercising a general control over all, and every landholder responsible for protecting his own dependants. The whole scheme would be financed from the sums realized from unclaimed property found in the jurisdictions and from the fines imposed upon offenders dealt with in them. Were these inadequate then permission might be granted to make a levy of from eight annas to three rupees upon each village.²

The joint commissioners were very particular about the protection of the rights of the ryots and of the tribal chieftains. Since the *mankis* and the *mundas* had been put back in possession of their estates, they thought that neither the maharaja nor the *kunwar* should have the power of depriving any of these chiefs of their lands. They therefore requested the Government to declare null and void any transfer of land in repayment of advances of money. In case of recurrent misconduct, lands of such chiefs might be transferred to the nearest of their kin popular among the ryots. "Such a rule", they wrote, "would prevent the assignment of villages to men of capital in lieu of cash advances, and the non-confiscation of the lands of zemindars except in favour of individuals of their own family, would...obviate the apprehension of the recurrence of disturbances."³

Another important recommendation was with regard to the use of *panchayats* to settle boundary disputes among landholders, which disputes often led to local affrays of a serious nature. In case of a dispute between the maharaja or a raja on

1. *Ibid.* para. 105.

2. *Ibid.* para. 109.

3. *Ibid.* para. 112.

the one hand and an *ilaqadar* on the other, three to five *ilaqadars* of the area should decide the issue and their award should be final. In case of dispute between two villages within a petty estate the *ilaqadar* of that estate was to select the heads of the adjoining villages "of most importance."¹

In civil cases involving money transactions they suggested that the maharaja and rajas might be vested with judicial power. But where they were themselves parties, a *panchayat* might be useful. In ordinary cases the parties were to choose between judgment by *panchayat* or by the raja and a written undertaking to abide by their decision was to be taken from the disputants beforehand. A *panchayat's* decision was to be final, but an appeal could be allowed to the European authority from the decision of a raja.²

Investigations in cases involving landed property, such as the right of succession to estates, would be made by the European authority who was to refer the matter to the Government in doubtful cases or where the public peace was involved. But cases of minor importance might be referred back to the raja or to a *panchayat*.³

These recommendations for a new police and judicial system could be expected to bring justice to every man's door, and so the expense and inconvenience of the old system, with its distant, unfamiliar courts, would be done away with. They thus embodied Bentham's idea of "a summary, non-technical method in which the suitor would orally state his plea and personally confront the defendant."⁴ But the creation of such a hierarchy of authority also presupposed the concentration of undivided power in the hands of the European officer in charge of the area. Indeed, the joint commissioners themselves clearly saw this, and they asked that the officer in charge of Chota-Nagpur should be granted special powers, and that other officers with similar powers should be appointed to supervise a similar system

1. *Ibid.* para. 113,

2. *Ibid.* para. 114.

3. *Ibid.* para. 115.

4. Stokes, *Utilitarians*, 71.

in the disturbed areas of the Jungle Mahals and Midnapur districts and in Palamau.¹ Here was the genesis of the Non-Regulation system which was to be applied to the South-West Frontier Agency, and of the special position of the Political Agent who was, with his assistants, to administer it.

This joint report was not the only report or body of suggestions made to the Bengal Government. Dent, one of the joint commissioners, submitted a note dissenting from some of the proposals outlined above.² His comments were not directed against the system proposed, as against the personnel who, it was intended, should manage it. Thus he argued that past experience showed the maharaja to be incapable of wielding police powers; he should not be entrusted with extensive powers again. If there were to be *thanadars* and *thanas* it must be specified that the officers should be selected from amongst the principal inhabitants of the *thana*, and that the subordinate staff should be residents of the division. The post of *amin*, for which he thought *thakur* a more acceptable title, should be filled by the maharaja, but with European authority retaining the power to confirm or remove his choice.

Dent also wished to stiffen the system somewhat. He pointed out the great distance of the *sadr* station from Chota-Nagpur, and showed from Rennell's figures that the Ramgarh district formed more than two fifths of the whole area of Bihar. A non-Regulation system, he agreed, was the best system for Chota-Nagpur, "from its great extent, the peculiar nature of the country and state of the population."³ But it was necessary that the controlling European authority should reside within Chota-Nagpur and that authority should be supported by a body of troops also stationed within the tribal territory.

His other major point, of an economic nature, was a plea for a reduction in rents, coupled with security of tribal rights in land. He suggested that it was necessary "to fix the rent of

1. Jt. Commissioners to Govt., 16 Nov. 1832, para. 116, B.C. 1502/58891.

2. Dent, separate remarks, 5 Jan. 1833, *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

the Moondas and Mankees occupying the hilly tract [of Tamar] on a very low scale which will make the payment easy and tend to prevent future disputes."¹ Once such men had a real interest in the soil, the fear of losing these rights would prevent them resorting to violence and unrest again. For the same reason he proposed that a curb should be set upon the maharaja's power to alienate the lands held by *jagirdars*, and that the lands of the raja and of the hereditary *jagiadars*, *mankis* and *mundas* should not be liable for their private debts, so that those who lent them money should do so at their own risk. These rules, Dent realized, would deprive the capitalist of the security of landed property and would tend to check cultivation and retard improvement but they were, in his view, necessary for the preservation of the public tranquillity. He forwarded a copy of the rules which had been proposed by the Ramgarh collector on 17 March 1814, and which, with one exception—rule three—embodied most of his suggestions.

Another set of proposals, informed by a very different spirit, came from the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur. His first request was that the police administration of the whole area, including all the *jagirs* and subordinate estates, should be entrusted to him. He wished to have the power to appoint all the *amlas*, whose faults he would be responsible for. He should also be responsible for entertaining, investigating and discharging all cases.²

The *jagirdars*, he suggested, should be required to give *muchalakas* or securities "that they will not conceal any Muq-dumas [cases], but promptly make them known, and that they will make no excessive demands, or oppress their inferior jageerdars or ryots, but remain in attentive obedience,"³ and if they failed in their duty their property should be attached. In Sonapur the *rautias* too should be compelled to give such securities, as they had been responsible for instigating insurrection and for sharing in the plunder.

1. *Ibid.*

2. Transl. Petition, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, 6 Apl. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. *Ibid.*

To prevent any future tribal risings, the *jagirdars* should be required to entertain stout, well-armed *barkandazes* ready at their *ghats*. Bodies of regular troops should also be posted at important points, and the *mundas*, *mahtos*, *mankis* and *pahans* should be made to maintain the roads in their areas in such repair that the troops could easily be moved from place to place.¹

To defray the expenses of the police the *jagirdars* should pay according to their capacity, and although he proposed to reduce the number of village *goraits* or watchmen, each village should be asked to contribute in grain towards the salaries of the subordinate police.

In a later petition he again pressed for the maintenance of regular troops in Chota-Nagpur to hold down the tribal people, perhaps with a cantonment in the Sonapur *pargana*. Then "the rebelliously disposed would never attempt to carry their marauding schemes into execution."² He pointed particularly to the experience of the four months of the rainy season of 1832 when, in the absence of regular troops, the *barkandazes* had entirely failed to prevent the sacking of some 20 villages by the Larka Kols of Singhbhum.

Yet another set of suggestions came from Master, the Patna commissioner, who stressed the need for a more central *sadr* station, "providing ready access for the injured and more speedy redress of their grievances. It would ensure during favorable [sic] seasons a more familiar intercourse with these wild tribes who would gradually be led to appreciate such extended kindness and conciliation and much would thus be gained by moral influence which physical power could never effect."³ He therefore suggested that a joint magistrate and deputy collector should be stationed at Sherghati to look after "the internal management of the restless province of Palamow, with a controul [sic] over certain other Thannas."⁴ The former custom of

1. *Ibid.*

2. Petition, Maharaja Jagannath Sahi, 28 Jan. 1833, B. C. 1503/58907.

3. Master to Govt., 17 Jan. 1833, para. 27, B. C. 1502/58893.

Also see Bentinck MS., Box. 15.

4. *Ibid.*

holding courts for some months in each year at Chatra, which was much nearer to Chota-Nagpur, might be revived. A magistrate from this place (its climate was favourable to Europeans for some months) would be "alive to the wants or grievances of a singular race of people who, tho' nominally governed, receive little protection from laws which cannot be efficiently administered."¹ Master was quite conscious that these arrangements would entail extra expenses, but "when the peace of so extensive a district is concerned & the repose of so many thousands of inhabitants is at stake the trifling expense to be incurred by this arrangement," he thought, "would surely be a point of minor consideration to a liberal and enlightened Government."²

In the suggestions of the joint commissioners, of Dent individually, and of Master, there can be seen applied to the problem of the tribal areas some of the ideas which had been worked out by Munro and Elphinstone or of Metcalfe, even of Bentham. Outside Bengal the reaction against the Permanent settlement and the Regulations of Cornwallis had grown vigorous. Now that attack was pushed within the Presidency. It is not possible to show whether Master or Dent had been in direct contact with Munro, Elphinstone or the other recognised leaders of the anti-Cornwallis school, though Dent, while serving at Allahabad might have become familiar with Metcalfe's system in the Delhi Territories³ or with the new arrangements in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces. Their movements—and those of Blunt who had only recently framed rules for Arakan—towards a Non-Regulation system may have been made on the basis of their direct experience, for Dent and Blunt had both considerable spells of duty in the tribal areas.⁴ In the case of Wilkinson, however, the link of ideas is clearer. He had

1. *Ibid.* para. 31.

2. *Ibid.* para. 28.

3. Dent was at Allahabad in 1817 (*Register of E. I. Co.'s servants*, 91), while Metcalfe system was at its height in 1815-1818 (Spear, *Twilight of the Mughals*, 88).

4. *Register of E. I. Co.'s servants*, 91-92 and 35-36.

served at Nagpur for more than a decade,¹ and he drew directly on his experiences, and upon the ideas worked out by Munro and Elphinstone. Thus in a letter to Ross Mangles written in 1837 he wrote, "In the Deckan where the offices of collector and magistrate were held by the same person, the collector's influence as such contributed much to promote the efficient performance of the magistrate's duties, because the villages in his Division were generally the Khalsa of Govt., of which he had to make the settlements; he was thus brought in frequent contact with the people and became well acquainted with them ..", and he went on, "the Patel of a village was not only its Farmer, but at the head of the village police, and a neglect of his police duties, as well as a breach of his farming engagements, rendered him liable to be turned out of his farm. Here [in Chota-Nagpur] neither a Theekadar nor Ryot of a village have [sic] ever occasion to approach the collector as such, and the former is only liable to forfeit his farm when he fails in fulfilling his engagements to the zemindar."² Here are laid out what he would have wished to see in the South-West Frontier Agency: a clear line of undivided authority and responsibility, and direct contact between European official and the people of his district, down to the village level. His appeal for experienced officers who should be accessible to the people at all hours and thus shield them from the exploitation by the petty officials, is in the best Punjab manner.

Such ideas were also likely at this time to be well received by those in power in India, for under the reforming Bentinck were ranged such men as Charles Metcalfe, Vice-President of the Council, Blunt, the third member of Council and James Thomason, later famous for his work in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, as Deputy Secretary of the Judicial Department. Of these Blunt, the least known, was certainly not the

1. Hodgson, *Officers of the Bengal Army*, IV, 472-473. He had fought in the third Maratha War (1817-18) and had served with the Nagpur Auxiliary Horse from 1819 to 1830.

2. Wilkinson to Govt., 1 Oct. 1837, para. 5, Political Despatch Register, G. G's Agent (7 Jan. 1837 to 28 Sept. 1833), Letter no. 48, Patna Archives.

least important in pushing the views of the joint commissioners. He was a paternalist who attacked the Permanent Settlement vigorously: "How many ancient and highly respectable families" were reduced to want by the frauds and chicanery of our native officers and by the operation of our Revenue laws in bringing their Estate to sale."¹ His experiences in Ramgarh, the Jungle Mahals, the Cuttack Tributary Mahals and as the special commissioner for Arakan were particularly valuable aids to the reformers, and, as will be seen, the rules which he had drawn up for Arakan were put to use in formulating a scheme for Chota-Nagpur and the Jungle Mahals.

The early burst of plans and proposals, designed to deal with the situation revealed and created by the unrest in Chota-Nagpur, came for a while to a halt when violence spread into the Jungle Mahals and the joint commissioners had again to turn their attention to military campaigns. But by the middle of 1833 the Government was able to take up again the consideration of the earlier proposals.

The first point considered was the suggestion made on 16 November 1832 by the joint commissioners that the *parganas* of Palamau, Chota-Nagpur and its dependencies, and the adjacent areas of the Jungle Mahals and Midnapur districts might be put under a separate administration, excluded from the operations of the general Regulations. On 3 June 1833 the Government, adopting the general plan, asked the joint commissioners to submit a detailed plan for a non-regulation area under the Political Agent for the South-West Frontier as commissioner aided by one or more assistants.² They were further asked to consult the commissioners of the Patna, Burdwan and Cuttack divisions and the magistrates at Sherghati, Bankura and Midnapur and others on the following points: the extent and limits of the new jurisdiction, the most suitable place for the station of the commissioner and his assistants, as also the means of supervising and controlling their actions.³ At the

1. Beng. Secret Cons. 8 of 6 Aug. 1832 (967/5).

2. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 3 June 1833, B.C. 1501/58891.

3. *Ibid.* para. 3.

same time the commissioners of Patna and Monghyr divisions were asked to give their opinion regarding the disposal of those areas of the Ramgarh district not included in the new jurisdiction when the post of the Judge-Magistrate and Collector of Ramgarh was abolished.¹

The joint commissioners were asked not to take the problems of Chota-Nagpur, Palamau, Dhalbhum or Barabhum separately, but "on a consideration of the wants and peculiarities of the whole range of country to be brought under the contemplated arrangement and with advertence to all the matters on which suggestions have been offered and which remains for determination, to embody in a distinct draft of rules, which you will make as simple and concise as possible, the provisions general or local which you would recommend to be prescribed by the Government for the conduct of the judicial, Revenue or police affairs of the Commissioner's jurisdiction."² In case of difference of opinion, each joint commissioner was to report separately.

The Government further made it clear that the Assistants to the Commissioner were ordinarily to exercise the authority vested by the regulations in the officers in charge of districts. The final say in any matter would lie with the commissioner, except in criminal trials where he would be subject to the *Nizamat Adalat*. In any revenue or civil matter affecting the general peace of the area, he was to report to the Government. The joint commissioners were most particularly warned that the new establishment should be on the most economical lines, especially as the charge of the police would be transferred to the rajas.³

Finally the Government called upon Wilkinson individually to comment upon the points of dissent with the joint commissioners' proposals which Dent had submitted in January 1833. (These dealt with such points as the substitution of a land tax

1. Govt. to Commissioners of Patna, Burdwan, Cuttack and Monghyr divisions, 3 June 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. Govt. to Jt. Commissioners, 3 June 1833, para. 6, B.C. 1501/58891.

3. *Ibid.* para. 8.

for the *abkari* and *dak* collections, abolition of rural slavery and restrictions on alienation of lands by the chiefs.)

This resolution of the Government set in motion a big territorial readjustment, in the course of which many vested interests had to be reconciled. The process was therefore quite a protracted one, especially as Wilkinson, a key figure, was for some months detained in Sambhalpur.¹

On the Ramgarh district, Dent, in the capacity of the judge of that district, reported that Palamau, Ramgarh including Raindihi, Kodarma, Kharakdiha, Chakai and Kunda might advantageously be included in the new jurisdiction, whereas Sherghati, Siris-Kutumba, Charkawa, Japla, Surjun and Belonja might be left under the regulations.² He left Chota Nagpur and its dependencies untouched because there could be no two opinions about the need to include them in the new jurisdiction.

Trotter, the Acting Magistrate of Ramgarh, differed on certain points with Dent. The first consideration of the Government, he thought, was "to provide for the tranquillity of the country and to secure the rights of the inhabitants for whose protection the introduction of a new system is accounted necessary."³ In this light he did not think it proper that such a large territory, as Dent had proposed, should be excluded from the operation of the regulations. The northern parts of Ramgarh *pargana*, fertile, civilized, close enough to Sherghati, ought to remain under the regulation system. The Raja of Ramgarh might press for the whole of his zamindari to be included within the jurisdiction by pleading the inconvenience and expense of having to institute cases in different courts. But on the basis of the Benthamite principle of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number, the question resolves itself into this,"

1. Dent to Govt., 25 June 1833, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 34 of 22 July 1833 (¹⁴⁰/₃₃). Meanwhile, Dent asked for rules in force in Arakan, Assam, Nerbada, Sagar and Delhi territories (*Ibid.*). The Government, however, sent the rules for Arakan only because they were "more detailed and specific than any other": Govt. to Dent, 22 July 1833, Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 34 of 22 July 1833 (¹⁴⁰/₃₃).

2. Trotter to Jt. Commissioners, 25 July 1833, para. 2, *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

he said, "whether the convenience of an individual or the benefit of a large body of people is more deserving of the consideration of Government."¹ Since the revenue of the whole zamindari was fixed there would be no administrative problem for Government in dividing it, while the maintenance of an efficient police force in the Regulation *parganas* "bordering on Behar, one of the most fertile and populous districts in the country, would not only benefit the inhabitants of those pergunnahs, but materially tend to strengthen the police of the adjoining districts."² Nor need Government fear that the same arguments might be used in support of a division of Chota-Nagpur, for "the same facilities do not exist of retaining the latter under the operation of the Regulations on account of its great distance from any established court, and further, that the turbulent disposition which has lately been displayed by the inhabitants of the latter, and has been the immediate cause of the change of system, has never manifested itself, nor do I believe exists in the least degree in the portion of Ramghur now alluded to."³

Those areas of the Ramgarh district not transferred to the new Political Agent should, Trotter thought, be allotted to Gaya. The one exception might be *pargana* Kharakdiha, the lands of which had come into the possession "of Mahajuns and other monied men from zillah Bihar, and elsewhere, who have now become the principal landowners...by taking land in security for money but at exorbitant rates of interest to the old occupants by whom they are regarded with the same jealousy and dislike, as the Suds by the inhabitants of Chota Nagpore."⁴ In fact, it had been hinted to him many a time that had the insurgents extended their operations as far as Kharakdiha, whose southern portion was chiefly jungle and hill, the inhabitants would not have hesitated to join them. On this score, he thought that this *pargana* could be included in the new jurisdiction.

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* para. 3.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

Trotter's views were in the main supported by Cuthbert. But on one point he differed sharply. Trotter had suggested that Kunda and Chakai should remain Regulation, since the *malikana* (proprietary) allowance from them was received by the Maharaja of Giddhaur. Cuthbert, on the basis of his ten years' experience of Ramgarh district, held that the jungly, uncultivated *pargana* of Kunda, with its scanty and backward population was quite unsuited "for the general Judicial, Revenue and Police systems which I consider unapplicable to their actual grade in the scale of moral improvement."¹ He would like to see all the hill *parganas*, Kharakdiha, Chakai, Kunda and Untari "brought under one uniform system of management, viz., that sanctioned by the resolution of Government under date the 3rd of June last."² He was in fact fervent in advocating "that no part of the Hill country, no portion of its population should again be placed under the Regular Adawlut system."³ The late disturbances, he wrote, "have confirmed me in the opinion as to the utter inaptitude of Regulation 2 of 1819 to such wild and barbarous regions. It is the bane of all improvements, tends to unsettle minds of the people by filling them with alarm for the stability of their property and checks that confidence in the justice and beneficence of Governments which it is so desirable should exist in the minds of the hill people, the Regulation should be immediately withdrawn."⁴

Lambert, the Patna commissioner, upheld Cuthbert's views, and suggested that Palamau, "in consideration of the nature of the country and its population and with reference to its situation with regard to pergunnah Chota Nagpore and its dependency pergunnah Toree, and also that Pergunnah Koonda with reference to its adjoining pergunnah Toree as well as to the nature of the country should form a part of the jurisdiction."⁵

1. Cuthbert to Jt. Commissioners, 1 Aug. 1833, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.* para. 5.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.* para. 4.

5. Lambert to Jt. Commissioners, 9 Aug. 1833, para. 3, B. C. 1502/58891.

But in view of Trotter's arguments and of a petition of the inhabitants of Chatra objecting to the inclusion of *pargana* Ahori and its adjoining areas in the new unit, he thought that the northern portion of Ramgarh might be left under the regulations.¹ He also concurred with Trotter in the suggestion of Kharakdiha being included in the new jurisdiction and of Chakai being transferred to Monghyr. Moreover, he agreed with Dent's proposal to retain Sherghati and other neighbouring *parganas* under the general regulations.

It was on 6 September 1833 that Dent forwarded these sentiments to the Government. On a consideration of these views he thought that Chota-Nagpur and its dependencies along with the following *parganas* of Ramgarh might be included in the new jurisdiction : Palamau, Ramgarh, Kodarma, Kunda and Kendi. Chakai should be transferred to Monghyr and Sherghati with the *parganas* to the west to Bihar district.²

The new jurisdiction, he thought, should be formed into three subordinate divisions. Ramgarh, Kendi, Kodarma, Kharakdiha and Kunda should be under one assistant residing at Hazaribagh. The second division including Chota-Nagpur and its dependencies and Palamau were to be under another assistant at Lohardugga. If this division was found unmanageable, the northern half of Palamau might be transferred to the Ramgarh division. The third division should comprise Dhalbhum and the *parganas* of the Jungle Mahals, the Kasai river forming the boundary to the east. A suitable place on the banks of the Subarnarekha might be selected for the station of the third assistant. For the station of the political agent he suggested Amaidanda, Churia or Lohardugga or any other town in Chota-Nagpur, though the final say would lie with Wilkinson.³

With the replies to their proposals of 3 June for reorganization of the administration before them, and a reminder of the urgent need for reform to hand from Dent, the Bengal Govern-

1. *Ibid.* para. 4.

2. Dent to Govt., 6 Sept. 1833, para. 2, B. C. 1502/58891.

3. *Ibid.* para. 8.

ment proceeded to take action.¹ On 22 December 1833, the Government announced that "considerations connected with the present state of certain tracts of country now included in the Districts of Ramghur, Jungle Mehals and Midnapore, the nature of the disturbances which recently prevailed in various parts of those districts, and the character of the inhabitants had rendered it expedient to separate these tracts," and proceeded to pass a Regulation for "abolishing the Courts of Dewanny Adawlut of the Zillahs of Ramghur, Jungle Mehals and Midnapore."² The tracts included in the new charge were, in the Ramgarh district, Chota-Nagpur, Palamau, Kharakdiha, Ramgarh and Kunda, in the Jungle Mahals all the *mahals* except Sainpahari, Shergarh and Bishnupur, in Midnapur Dhalbhum. The new jurisdiction was placed under an officer to be denominated Agent to the Governor General, who would administer justice and superintend the police and revenue services under rules to be framed for the area. Those parts of Regulation III, 1793, and Regulation XVIII, 1805, and all other regulations which had applied to the area were rescinded.

Until detailed instructions had been issued by the Government, the Agent and his subordinates were to be guided by the rules in force for the conduct of all local duties at the moment. The Agent would exercise the same power and authority for the time being as were vested in a commissioner of revenue and circuit and a civil and sessions judge. Until otherwise directed, he and his assistants would be subordinate to, and would conform to all orders from the *Sadr Diwani Adalat* and *Nizamat Adalat*, the *Sadr* Board of Revenue and the Board of Customs, salt and opium, as heretofore. But these Courts and Boards would not normally interfere in the affairs of the Agency, and their powers of control would be ordinarily exercised by the

1. They would have liked to have had Wilkinson's comments on Dent's report on the Jungle Mahals unrest, but Wilkinson felt that he was not yet sufficiently informed to pass comment. Wilkinson to Govt., 14 Nov. 1833, B. C. 1501/58886.

2. Regulation XIII, 2 Dec. 1833, B.C. 1502/58891.

Agent over his Assistants. Only one annual report would be ordinarily required from this area.¹

Having thus decided the fate of the tribal people of this "wild, imperfectly civilized, and occasionally very disturbed" hilly and jungly area, the Government appointed Captain Wilkinson as the Political Agent on the South-West Frontier on a consolidated salary of Rs. 36,000. Lt. R. Ouseley of the 50th Regt. N. I. and Ensign P. Nicolson of the 28th were appointed as his first Assistants at Rs. 1,000 a month, and Assistant Surgeon Davidson a junior assistant with the salary of a senior assistant because of his "superior abilities."² It is noteworthy that no civilian officer was preferred for this area. The criterion seems to have been efficiency as a military officer in suppressing the unrest.

A number of consequential changes and adjustments followed from the creation of the Agency. Capt. Wilkinson was relieved from the command of the Ramgarh battalion, which was moved further south, towards the centre of the lately disturbed area. Bentinck also recommended that a regiment of native infantry should be stationed at Bankura, and he wondered whether an European regiment might not be conveniently stationed at Hazaribagh.³

Copies of the new Regulation and Rules were sent to all the commissioners and other officers concerned, and to the register of the *Sadr Diwani* and *Nizamat Adalat*.⁴ The Ramgarh judge was informed that those areas of his district not included in the Agency would go to Bihar and Bhagalpur, and he was to dispose of all cases pending so that his court could be abolished. It would be his task, being in charge of the establishment and records to transfer all papers relating first to cases pending and then to all former cases of the area.⁵ Similar instructions were

1. Governor-General, minute, 6 Dec. 1832, B. C. 1502/58891.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. Govt. to Commissioners, Patna, Burdwan, Cuttack and Monghyr and others, B.C. 1502/58891.

5. Govt. to S. R. Davidson, 9 Dec. 1833, *Ibid.*

issued to Trotter, the officiating magistrate and collector. He was placed in charge of the districts transferred to Bihar, and ordered to maintain the records of those areas. He was also to remain responsible for the prisoners at Sherghati.¹ Further orders dealt with the nomination of *munsifs* for the transferred areas, and for the disposal by *sadr amins* of the cases transferred to Bihar and Bhagalpur.

Within the Agency the existing establishments of *munsifs*, police and revenue officers were to remain for the present and the principal *sadr amin*, *sadr amin* and the *munsifs* were to continue to perform the same duties for the time being. But it was left to the Agent to limit their duties or to discharge any part of those establishments. Moreover, he was authorized to employ new men in such posts if he thought it necessary, submitting a detailed statement of the establishment which he wanted to retain permanently. Similar stop-gap arrangement was to be made for the custody of prisoners, the protection of treasure and other purposes, while he formulated suggestions for adoption permanently.²

The joint commission was now to be wound up, its records being transferred to Wilkinson, who would arrange for the transfer.³ Dent was to dispose of the arrears of business immediately to await further instructions.⁴

Thus by the middle of December 1833, all preliminary consultations had been completed and Capt. Wilkinson⁵ had emerged as the sole official head of the new administration. He was to set up a paternalist non-regulation system of administration for this undeveloped area, at the apex of which he would stand with very considerable powers. The swing of the

1. Govt. to Trotter, 9 Dec. 1833, *Ibid.*

2. Govt. to Wilkinson, 9 Dec. 1833, para. 13, *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* para. 14.

4. Govt. to Dent, 9 Dec. 1833, B. C. 1502/58891.

5. It may be noted that besides possessing experience of the Deccan and of this tribal area, he was also an intimate friend of Major Benson, the private secretary to the Governor-General, and of Major Sutherland, the private secretary to Metcalfe.

pendulum away from the complex machinery and regulations of the Cornwallis system was complete.

The new Agency was carved into three divisions : Manbhum consisting of those parts of the Jungle Mahal which had been de-regulationised, along with Dhalbhum ; Lohardugga comprising Chota-Nagpur, including Tori, Barwa and the five dependent *parganas* of Rahi, Silli, Tamar, Bundu and Baranda below the *ghats*, and Palamau ; Hazaribagh comprising Ramgarh, Kharakdiha and other estates of the Ramgarh district withdrawn from the operation of the regulations but not included in the second division. Nicolson was appointed in the first, Ouseley at Lohardugga and Davidson at Hazaribagh.¹ These assistants were provided with necessary instructions for their guidance in civil and criminal justice. They were charged with the performance of all the duties previously performed by the magistrates and collectors of their respective areas, hearing appeals from the court of the principal *sadr* amins, *sadr amins* and *munsifs*.² (A number of these were however discharged or transferred because of their record during the unrest.) They were to be guided by Regulation X of 1829 in the collection of stamp duties, were to pay special attention to the eradication of abuses in the *abkari* department, and to collect the many arrears of land revenue, keeping a close watch upon the activities of the *sazawals* managing estates for minors under the Court of Wards.³ They also received detailed instructions about the building of suitable jails, the housing of the detachments of troops posted at their headquarters, the proper payment of villagers living near the Banaras road who did coolie and carting services, and had often not been paid. But in addition to these and many other detailed and local orders, Wilkinson laid down for his assistants certain general rules. In these the influence of Elphinstone or Munro seems very complete. Wilkinson clearly had what, in another connection has

1. Wilkinson to Nicolson, Ouseley and Davidson, 7 Jan. 1834, B. C. 1502/58892.

2. Wilkinson to Nicolson, 7 Jan. 1834, *Ibid*.

3. *Ibid*.

been described as "the classic idea of the Collector of the Munro school—the man with wide discretionary powers, constantly travelling about his district, unhampered by forms and ceremonies, always and everywhere accessible to anyone with a complaint or petition."¹

Wilkinson laid much stress upon his assistants' annual tour of their divisions. The assistant was to halt for four or five days at convenient distances, inviting all the heads of estates and villages to meet him, and conversing on their own affairs and those of their neighbours. Thus in course of a year or two he would "become intimately acquainted with the state of your district and condition of its inhabitants."² Prior to undertaking such a tour, the officer was to get an English or Persian list prepared of every person's name whom he had to contact. He was to send for most of them, and others were to be contacted in course of a morning or evening stroll: "you should send for as many of them as you could conveniently converse with, and when alone in your morning or evening walks or before breakfast when sitting in front of your tent, or after dinner, talk with them freely, and encourage them to speak of the manner they had been treated, by the Darogah, Moonsif, Peadas and Chupprassies or by your own amlah if they had been to the Suddar station."³ Such heart to heart talk would go a long way in removing the fears of the people and would put a stop to the oppressions of the petty officials. (If charges of oppression were proved, the guilty were to be given an exemplary punishment.) "At these conversations with the people,"

1. K. A. Ballhatchet, *Social policy and Social change in Western India*, 104.

2. Wilkinson to Nicolson, 7 Jan. 1834, para. 14, B. C. 1502/58892. Elphinstone had also "urged his Collectors to 'move about the country', granting 'easy access to all comers, and a ready ear to all complaints'": Circular, 10 July 1818, Ballhatchet, *Social Policy*, 104.

3. Wilkinson to Nicolson, 7 Jan. 1834, para. 14, B. C. 1502/58892. The postscript of the letter stated, "you should not only make enquiries about your own umlah but mine—and that of other assistants, and if you hear that in any one of our Establishments one man is corrupt or that they are generally so, you will consider it your Duty to make the same known to me immediately."

Wilkinson went on, "you should not allow any of your Umlah, Chupprassies or private servants to be near you, and whenever a distinct accusation is made against any of the public officers, chupprassees &ca &ca, you should consider it your duty not to leave the odium of prosecuting him to the person who informs, but search for evidence and on conviction of bribery, exaction &ca &ca punish the delinquent, of whatever grade in the manner authorized in Smyth's penal code. A few examples thus made will operate as a check on your Establishment and be otherwise productive of the best effects."¹ The same course was to be followed at his *sadr* station also.

To check bribery, the *amlas* were to be strictly prohibited from receiving at their houses any persons who had business in the court. All letters and reports were to be opened and read in the presence of the assistant, and the readers were to be frequently changed to avoid corruption. The opinion of the *amla* was never to be asked about a case in the presence of the parties, and if voluntarily offered, the *amla* was to be scolded. In other words, the public should never have the impression that the officer was in any way influenced by his *amla*.²

To Nicolson Wilkinson wrote that he should not mind working longer than the usual hours: "We have not been selected for our situations for the purpose of working only a given number of hours according to rule, but to afford speedy and cheap justice to all who may appeal to us, and the latter can never be accomplished until we effectively put a stop to our Umlah's receiving anything from those who come to our courts, whether as Nuzzurs, Salamie, Bribes &ca."³ Eternal vigilance and superhuman effort would be necessary to clear this Augean stable; without them the rules would be dead letters: "Rules without constant watchfulness and great diligence are not of much use. It is therefore to your exertions and that of the other assistants that I must look for improvement in the management

1. *Ibid.* para. 14.

2. *Ibid.* para. 15.

3. *Ibid.* para. 16. No doubt the strain would be great, but Wilkinson wanted to live up to the ideal of an Elphinstone, a Munro and a Metcalfe.

of the country and condition of the people in the new jurisdiction, as I do so with confidence."¹

To bring justice to the door of the people, the assistant on tour was to decide pending cases at places where parties and witnesses could conveniently assemble. Moreover, during these tours when the people would gather at the assistant's camp, "the most extensive use of Panchayats" should be made.² Similarly, to check the corruption in the courts of justice, the jamadar, who was to be appointed in the place of a *nazir*, would distribute and receive back the notices, summons, etc. (to the *chaprasis*, *peadas*, etc.) in the *cutchery* itself, maintaining a register and reporting to the assistant daily. No such business was to be transacted out of court. This would prevent the *jamadar* from stepping into the shoes of the *nazir*, who had often become famous for his malpractices.³

Moreover, the *peadas* were also to be prevented from exacting money from the parties in a suit. All ordinary witnesses were to be reported to the assistant as soon as they arrived. If they arrived at night, the *peada* must bring them to the *cutchery* near which a shed would be erected for their shelter. The *jamadar*, on his arrival at the *cutchery*, was to take note of their attendance and to report it to the assistant. Respectable witnesses, however, might be allowed to stay at night at any private house, not being that of a plaintiff or a defendant in the suit.⁴ Also, the *peadas* were to be strictly prohibited from overstaying in the countryside where they went to deliver notice of cases.⁵ For this, a scale of distances of the different *parganas* was to be prepared, and a peon was to be expected to travel six *kos* a day, beyond which he should be asked to explain for any delay. Not only this, the *jamadar* and the *peadas* were to have no connection with money transactions such as payment of subsistence money to witnesses.⁶

1. *Ibid.* para. 17.

2. *Ibid.* para. 18. cf. Elphinstone's emphasis on *panchayats*.

3. *Ibid.* para. 20.

4. *Ibid.* para. 19.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.* para. 21.

To avoid unnecessary delay in a suit and to see that the *amlas* did not fraudulently cause such a delay, the assistant was to maintain an English and a Bengali register of suits and to devote an hour a week in the presence of the parties or their agents over the register to discover what delay in the suits had been caused. The treasurer was to receive and take charge of the revenue and stamps, and the money was to be forwarded to the agent's treasury.¹

It was also laid down that *vakils* (pleaders) were not to be allowed to plead within any of the courts of the Agency. The parties could conduct their business in the Courts either in person or by *mukhtar* or authorized agent.²

The next step taken by Wilkinson was to draw up, and on 13 January to forward for approval proposed rules for the administration of criminal justice in the Agency.

He suggested that the Agent should ordinarily possess the powers of control of the *Nizamat Adalat* over his assistants and other officials subordinate to him. He should be free to give sentences of up to fourteen years' hard labour in irons ; more severe sentences would require the sanction of the *Nizamat Adalat*. His assistants should have power to award hard labour in irons for up to two years, corporal punishment not exceeding thirty strokes of the rattan and fines of up to two hundred rupees, or a further year's imprisonment in default of payment. Higher sentences would require the approval of the Agent. The tribal rulers, rajas, zamindars and *jagirdars* might investigate petty cases, abusive language, slander, minor assaults arising in their estates. They, however, would not have power to award any punishment.

The assistants would be "empowered to receive and investigate all complaints, information or charges brought before them of crimes or misdemeanours committed within the limits of their respective jurisdictions."³ The tribal chiefs could investigate

1. *Ibid.* para. 23.

2. *Ibid.* para. 24.

3. Enclosure 48, Wilkinson to Govt., 13 Jan. 1834, B. C. 1502/58892. Rules for Arakan served as the model for these rules. For Arakan rules see Beng. Cr. Judl. Cons. 26 of 3 July 1828 (138/66).

complaints, receive and forward a *razinama* if attested by two witnesses. Complaints made to the assistants were to be written and on oath, those to chiefs could be either written or verbal.

For serious crimes the assistant would issue a warrant for the apprehension of the accused, for minor ones merely a summons. Both might be served either through the raja or other chief, or through the jamadar of the court. A person refusing to answer a summons might be arrested by the local chief and forwarded to the appropriate authority.

The examination of the prosecutor, and of all witnesses in the assistants' court would be on oath, the answer of the defendant without, though recorded. The assistant would carefully examine any confessions to make sure they were voluntary and not made either under threat or upon promise of pardon or a reduced sentence. In no case would the statements or confessions of one or more prisoners be admitted to convict another without further proof. All depositions would be in Hindustani or Bengali and would require to be witnessed.¹

Those who preferred groundless or vexatious complaints might be fined up to fifty rupees or imprisoned for up to three months. No one might be punished on mere suspicion, or placed in preventive detention, except on proof of notorious bad character. Even then one year would be the maximum period of detention.

In serious cases examined before the assistant indigent witnesses would be paid a subsistence allowance of 1½ annas a day during their attendance in court. Similarly prisoners on release from jail would be given subsistence money for their journeys home. In cases investigated by the local chiefs the complainant would be responsible for supporting poor witnesses.²

All sentences would be carried into effect by the agent in the manner prescribed for a judge of circuit. He was empowered with or without a petition being preferred to him to call for the

1. Enclosure, Wilkinson to Govt., 13 Jan. 1834, B. C. 1502/58892.

2. *Ibid.*

proceedings of his assistants in any cases decided by them, and he could mitigate or remit any punishment. He would submit periodical reports with statements of the crimes committed, the number of persons apprehended, convicted and sentenced, the nature of punishments inflicted, the amount of fines levied by the several courts. Without his confirmation, the assistants would not impose any fine exceeding Rs. 200, while the agent himself would not impose any fine exceeding Rs. 500 without the confirmation of the Government. It would be the agent again who would regulate the mode of employing the prisoners and the place of their confinement. He would require from his assistant periodical reports of the number of persons apprehended and discharged as well as of those in confinement, and he would carefully inspect the jail and places of custody and would issue necessary instructions for the proper and humane treatment of the prisoners.¹

The salient features of the proposed system were once again the creation of a hierarchy of authority, with powers and responsibilities clearly defined at each level, and the agent at the apex of the pyramid, and the creation of elaborate safeguards against the abuse of authority. The provisions for the payment of subsistence allowances were particularly aimed at making an appearance in a court of law no longer in itself a source of loss and injury. The one surprising omission was the absence of any reference to the use in criminal cases of *panchayats*, for in his earlier reports Wilkinson had emphasised the need to recognize these ancient tribal tribunals.

Much the same features were evident in the rules proposed for the administration of civil justice. There were special safeguards in cases involving the defendants of tribal chiefs, Americans or Europeans, or rent-free lands. All suits were to be tried and decided openly. Summons to attend court in person, nominally served through the village headman, would be returnable with an endorsement certifying the manner in which they had been served. Ample warning would be given to

1. *Ibid.*

the parties of the day on which the suit would be heard, and in case of illness or disability of witnesses their depositions might be taken by the nearest *munsif* or *daroga*. *Ex-parte* trials might be held if after three weeks the defendants had failed to answer a summons, but the approval of an assistant would be required before a *munsif* might try a suit *ex-parte*, as well as proof that the summons had actually been served on the defendant.¹

To prevent frivolous litigation complaints would be submitted on stamped paper, and if a suit was shown to have been instituted groundlessly a fine or moderate term of imprisonment might be imposed. Complaints regarding balances or undue exaction of rent, or dispute regarding revenue accounts would, however, not need to pay stamp duty, so that even the poorest tribal cultivator would not be denied justice because of his poverty.²

Every decree in a suit would specify the names of the witnesses who had deposed, the amount or value of the property decreed, the costs of the suit, and whether they were to be defrayed by any party. But no fees or costs whatever would be levied, except such as might be authorized by the rules or by special order of the Government.³ Copies of the decrees would be provided within ten days after the decision.

In all cases the parties could appeal from the *munsif's* court to the assistant's court and from there to the agent's court, within six weeks of the date of the decree, specifying the grounds of their dissatisfaction on a stamped paper. Moreover, any case could be transferred from a lower court by the assistant or the agent on sufficient grounds. Decrees would be executed by an order addressed to an officer of the court, or the headman of the estate in which the debtor might usually reside, or where the property might be situated. The rajas and other

1. Rules for civil justice, Enclosure, Wilkinson to Govt., 13 Jan. 1834, B. C. 1502/58892.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

chiefs might be exempted by the agent from attachment and sale of property, arrest and imprisonment in satisfaction of the decree.¹ The agent could afford relief to insolvent debtors or their sureties who might have no means of discharging the amount. But if subsequently such people acquired property, it could be brought to sale on an application by the creditor.

Persons confined in civil jail in execution of a decree would receive a daily subsistence allowance of two annas, to be paid through an officer of the court, by the party at whose suit the debtor had been confined. One month's subsistence allowance would be realised in advance in default of which the prisoner would be released forthwith. Moreover, no person would be liable to personal confinement in satisfaction of a decree, for any sum not exceeding fifty rupees, beyond a period of six months, at the expiration of which he would be released. However, any personal property of such a person would be liable to sale in the execution of the judgment. The poor debtor was thus given all possible relief.²

One of the most significant features of Wilkinson's proposals was for the use of *panchayats* in civil cases. Their use had already been a feature of Elphinstone's administration in the Bombay Presidency,³ and it is very likely that it was Wilkinson's long stay at Nagpur, one of the former centres of Maratha power, which had turned his attention to their possible utility.

Wilkinson suggested that he and his assistants should have the right to refer suits at their discretion for decision by *panchayats*, after the plaint had been filed and the defendant's answer received. A *panchayat* would consist of three to five persons to be selected by the agent or the assistant from amongst the persons most conversant with the matter at issue.⁴ The *Panches* would be nominated after the plaintiff, defendant and witnesses

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. Ballhatchet, *Social policy*, 106-109.

4. Elphinstone had also emphasised the *Panches'* knowledge of the matter at issue and of the personal character of the parties. *Ibid.* 109.

had assembled, and the parties would have a right to challenge a *panch*, and their grounds being valid, that *panch* would be replaced. But before constituting a *panchayat*, the parties would have to execute a bond that they would abide by its decision. A *mohurir* would be attached to every *panchayat* to record the proceedings and award. Its proceedings would be held in a part of the *cutchery* or a spot adjoining it. After taking evidence the *panchayat* would direct the *mohurir* and the parties to retire, and then it would consult and decide on the award. After that the *mohurir* would be recalled to record the decision, which, along with the signature of the members of the *panchayat*, would be delivered to the court, which would pass a decree in conformity with this award. This would be appealable or be liable to be set aside only if corruption would be proved against the *panchayat*, or if its decision would be contrary to the common law of the country or to the rules enacted by the Governor-General-in-council.¹

In case of a boundary dispute between two villages situated within a single estate, the *panchayat* would be selected from amongst most influential and respectable men of adjacent villages within the estate. They would decide the dispute after careful investigation of the boundaries and would fix permanent boundary marks. Where the dispute was between *zamin-dars* or *jagirdars*, both holding their estates from the same superior, then the *panchayat* would be constituted of leading *zamindars* or *jagirdars* of the neighbourhood.²

In case of a boundary dispute between two large estates, however, Wilkinson doubted the efficacy of such an arbitration. In such cases the agent or an assistant would proceed to the spot, and after a minute investigation, pass his decree, appeal lying from an assistant to the agent. In case of a danger to the peace of the country from such a dispute, the matter would be referred to the Governor-General-in-Council.³

1 Rules for civil justice, Enclosure, Wilkinson to Govt., 13 Jan. 1834, B. C. 1502/58892.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

The agent and his assistants would encourage all persons to refer their disputes to private arbitration or to panchayats so as to avoid cases coming to the court. The parties in a suit would be at liberty to settle their disputes by a *razinama* or article of agreement at any stage of proceedings in court, and where such a settlement was made before the examination of the witnesses had begun, the stamp fees would be refunded.¹

By the use of *panchayats* Wilkinson aimed at expediting justice, and by bringing cases before neighbours, who would know the parties and the circumstances, to prevent vexatious litigation. To the same end he provided that no *vakil* would be permitted to plead in any of the courts, for in the Regulation provinces intriguing lawyers and *mukhtars* had done much to promote unnecessary litigation. If *mukhtars* did conduct business on behalf of parties, they would not be allowed to recover fees through the courts.

Another salutary rule proposed by Wilkinson was with regard to sale or transfer of land in lieu of rent or debt. Such sales had led to recurrent disturbances in Pachet, Raipur and other *parganas* and Dent had already drawn the attention of the Government to this problem. Now it was proposed "to prevent the sale, transfer or mortgage of lands, which whether hereditary or not, are considered so by the holders, who would themselves hereafter, even if consenting to transfer, sale or mortgage, or whose heirs would (a favourable opportunity offering) make an effort to recover them by violent measures ; also to check the jungle Rajahs, jageerdars and zemindars from involving themselves in debt, which by mortgage &c&c they have a facility of doing." Wilkinson proposed that no transfer of land on account of claims for rent, etc., would be legal unless previously authorized by the agent or assistant, by a certificate upon the back of the bond. Moreover, it should be widely announced that in future consent to the sale, transfer or mortgage of landed property long held by rajas, *jagirdars* and other proprietors would normally be withheld.²

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

The Bengal Government approved of Wilkinson's arrangement for the conduct of judicial business. They slightly modified his proposed rules for criminal justice, and in enlarging the supervisory and reviewing role of the agent, and in providing for more ready appeal from the decisions of assistants. The penalties for vexatious litigation were considerably increased. Consideration of his rules for civil justice was, however, deferred, as at that time new regulations on that subject were in preparation, many of which, they said, "will be applicable to your jurisdiction, and it will be easy to add any that may be specially applicable to that territory, as well as to exclude from operation such as may be inapplicable."¹

These modifications did not change the spirit of Wilkinson's proposals. There was increased emphasis on the existing regulations as guides to both the agent and his assistants, but the rules for Arakan, which had served as a model for Wilkinson, had themselves presupposed the retaining of the spirit of the regulations, though the complexities were avoided as far as possible. As for the rules for civil justice those prepared by Wilkinson in fact were put into operation, for the Government did not pass the contemplated bill on the subject,² and in the absence of new Regulations, Wilkinson's simple code guided the courts of the Agency until the passing of the Civil Procedure Code (Act VIII) in 1859. The prohibition of sale, transfer or mortgage of land for arrears of rent or debt thus continued until 1859. What is more, Act VIII, recognising the continued validity of the arguments for that prohibition, laid down that "no sale of land shall be made in the districts of Hazaribagh, Lohardaga and Manbhum, without the sanction of the Commissioner of the province."³ Even when Act X of 1877, the Code of Civil Procedure, came into force, the rule was confined by notifications for Hazaribagh, Lohardugga, Dalbhum, and the non-Bengali parts of Manbhum.⁴ It was not until 1882 that these restrictive safeguards were abandoned.

1. Govt. to Wilkinson, 17 Feb. 1834, para. 4, B. C. 1502/58892.

2. Reid, *Ranchi Settlement Report*, para. 56.

3. *Ibid.* para. 58.

4. *Ibid.* para. 59.

Thus Wilkinson's salutary rule safeguarded the tribal people for a quite long time. In 1853 the Assistant of the Lohardugga division reported that from the constitution of the Agency to that date no instance of the sale of land in execution of a decree had been recorded.¹

On 15 January 1834 the South-West Frontier Agency was finally inaugurated.² On 6 March Wilkinson established his new headquarters at Barkagarh, in the centre of his charge.³ The inauguration of the Agency marked the beginning of a twenty year period of peace in the tribal area, a peace made complete after the incorporation of Singhbhum in the Agency in 1837.

The Court of Directors readily approved the judicious step of the Bengal Government in "exempting from the operation of the Regulations the whole range of the disturbed districts and placing them under a special commissioner."⁴ They also approved the appointment of Wilkinson to that post "for the duties of which, his personal character and his recent experience would seem to render him eminently qualified."⁵ Moreover, they approved the general instructions of the Bengal Government and of Wilkinson to his subordinates: "We observe from the tenor of his directions to his Assistants, that he justly regards it as his own and their first duty to come into immediate communication with the people for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of their real sentiments, and of promoting their welfare."⁶ Last, but not least, they showed their anxiety to know more about these tribal people and about the redress of their genuine grievances.

In subsequent years Wilkinson and his assistants made the protection of tribal interests even more complete. In October

1. *Ibid.* para. 60.

2. Russell to Govt., 15 Jan. 1834, B. C. 1502/58892.

3. Wilkinson to Govt., 1 March 1834, *Ibid.*

4. Court of Directors to Bengal Govt., 16 Sept. 1835, para. 9, India and Bengal Despatches, Vol. 6, p. 376.

5. *Ibid.* p. 377.

6. *Ibid.* p. 378.

1834 Wilkinson received permission to interfere whenever the estate of an hereditary proprietor was "so deeply involved as to render such interposition desirable."¹ Thus he could adjust accounts and regulate interest charges, to release mortgaged property where necessary, and to sequester an estate for the payment of debts. This was so salutary a measure that Dalton, the Divisional Commissioner of Chota-Nagpur declared in 1869 that in the absence of such a power, all the old semi-tribal zamindars would have lost their property in favour of the non-tribal money-lenders. Since the tribal people preferred their own zamindars, "however ignorant, dissipated, extravagant" they were, to the most enlightened of interlopers, Dalton even thought that a law of entail might well have been enforced.²

In 1838 Davidson, by then principal assistant, secured the total prohibition of *ex-parte* decrees, on the very valid grounds that such ignorant persons as *mundas*, *mankis* and the ordinary Kols and other tribal folk "would, when served with processes, abscond or conceal themselves, or confess judgment, though the plaintiff had no claim whatever against them, from fear of the courts."³ The wisdom of this measure was realised later when this salutary rule became obsolete after the extension of the Code of Civil Procedure to this area, and the execution of numerous fraudulent *ex-parte* decrees against the tribal people came to light.⁴ The Chota-Nagpur tenancy Act of 1908 therefore provided for special action against such frauds.

It was also during the period of the Agency that a police system was worked out. Initially police *thanas* were established at important places, while the zamindars were put in charge of the police of their own areas, defraying their expenses in the beginning. But later it was thought expedient to curtail the powers of the zamindars.⁵

The salutary rule against the enforced sale of lands for private debt or revenue arrears has already been referred to.

1. Reid, *op. cit.* para. 63.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* para. 60.

4. *Ibid.* para. 66.

5. In Dhalbhum in 1855 and in Chota-Nagpur in 1863 the zamindars were finally divested of their police powers.

In 1853, Ricketts, a member of the Board of Revenue, severely criticized the uncertain and mischievous system whereby, in effect, landowners were protected from all creditors by the fear that otherwise they would stir up their ignorant tribal ryots to resistance and rebellion. Reid, in the *Ranchi Settlement Report*, has pointed out how beside the mark were Ricketts' remarks, and how justified Wilkinson's rules were by subsequent experience. After 1882 the free sale of landed property led to a recurrence of serious abuses and of consequent disturbances, such as the *Sardari Larai* of the eighteen-eighties and the Birsait movement of 1895-1900. By the Chota-Nagpur Tenancy Act "the Government was obliged to give salutary effect to the principles, which the authority of the Agent enforced in the early days of the South West Frontier Agency."¹

1. Reid, *op. cit.* para. 62.

CONCLUSION

The Kol Insurrection of 1831-1832 was born out of frustration and anger—frustration with the new system of Government and laws, and anger at the people who either enforced them or took undue advantage of them.

The real tragedy of the tribal people of this area was that their chiefs, alienated by their conversion to Hinduism, and the English administrators, born and bred in the tradition of agricultural landlordism, had no sympathy with the tradition of tribal ownership of land or idea of peasant proprietorship. That was why the former brought in non-tribal settlers and the latter a complex administrative machinery run by an unsympathetic society. Against these the tribal people found no remedy except unrest and violence.

It becomes clear that from two sides their traditional society was being undermined: custom was being undermined by contract, a barter economy by a money economy they had not yet learned to handle, divisions of the land determined by tribal custom were replaced by a landlord-tenant relationship, and tribal solidarity was being destroyed from within by the hinduization of the chiefs, and from without by the pressures of the British raj.

How far these developments could have been checked it is hard to say. One could not surely have wished to see the tribal people completely isolated and preserved as museum or zoo specimens. Yet the introduction of so many new things at the same time and the unthinking effort to 'civilize' them were certainly instrumental in disturbing their minds and upsetting the habits to which they were adjusted.

The events leading to the out-break of the unrest and its spreading so quickly seem to suggest that this grim tragedy could have been avoided if the peculiar problems of this tribal area had been realized earlier because the task of personally administering the area was difficult and unrewarding. The occasional, eccentric officer—and Nathaniel Smith certainly was

eccentric—who did seek to interfere often did so without real understanding, and with the best of intentions, in trying to civilize the tribal people or to correct their 'criminal habits' caused still more harm.

When the disturbances began the Bengal Government did not at first realise that by its own actions—or inaction—it had a partial responsibility for the disaster. No Governor-General, not even the reforming Bentinck, visited the area. Few commissioners or district officers had any personal knowledge of Chota-Nagpur. So, having in the past been led to believe that the tribal people had no genuine grievances, when they broke out, their violence was attributed to savagery and innate wickedness. Naturally, therefore, a policy of vigorous repression was followed, the whole area was thoroughly sacked and hundreds of insurgents were killed.

Thus this unrest, which opened the eyes of the Bengal Government to the peculiar administrative problem on the south-west frontier, was a watershed in the history of this area. It made the Government aware of the ineffectiveness—rather futility—of stern measures and reprisals. To that extent the object of the tribal unrest was largely fulfilled.

It may even be argued that less terror and destruction would not have served the purpose. The panic caused in the areas west of this region as far as Banaras and in the east of it up to Calcutta certainly had wide repercussions. The reverberations of the tribal *nagara* were heard as far as Mirzapur in the west, and even the *Meerut-observer* had to take note of certain events. The many letters which appeared in the Calcutta press also suggests that public opinion was much aroused by events. Not only the radical (e. g. the *Bengal Hurkaru*) but also the Government-sponsored newspaper (e.g. the *Calcutta Gazette*) of Calcutta admitted that these areas had been utterly neglected by the British Indian administration. There was no map worth the name, no clear idea about the lay out or the potentialities of the hill and jungle. It was from ignorance that so many blunders and atrocities had been committed. With the new knowledge provided by the constant traversing of the area, the

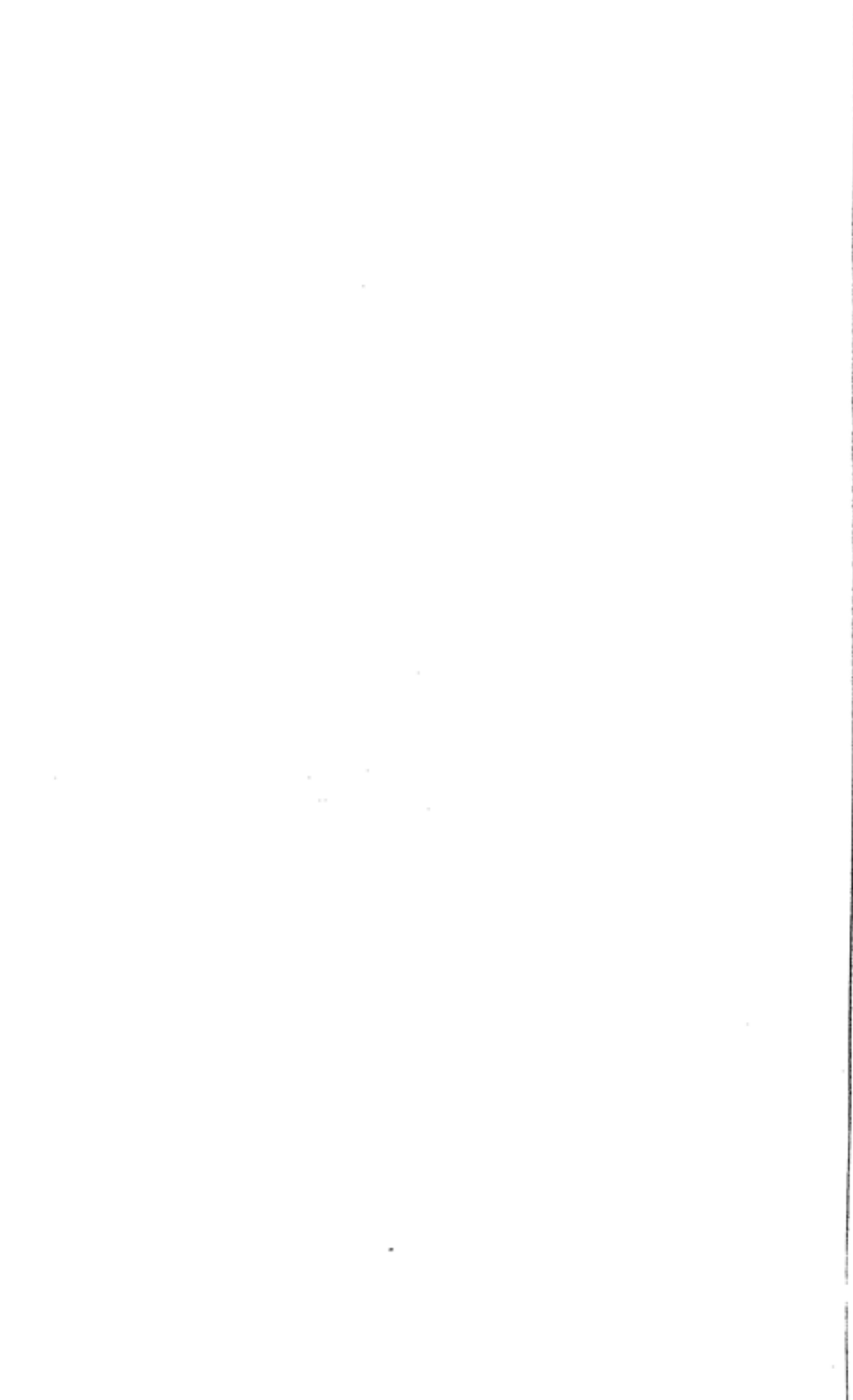
unsuitability of the general regulations for this area was at last clearly revealed.

Fortunately at this time there was a reforming Governor-General, and his Councillors were bitter enemies of the Cornwallis system. Last, but not least, Captain Wilkinson, the Political Agent to the Governor-General on this frontier, who had served for over a decade in the Deccan and had felt the influence of the ideas of Elphinstone, Munro and Malcolm, was able to influence Government decisions through his friends, Major Benson and Major Sutherland, who were private secretaries to Bentinck and Metcalfe respectively.

This cumulative influence, popular and official, led to a salutary change, and the tribal people of this area received a welcome relief through Regulation XIII, 1833. The special uncomplicated rules, framed for this area, gave them relief from the corrupt police, law officers and revenue collectors, from the abuses and levies of excise farmers and salt *darogas*. The money-lenders and merchants also had their claws blunted by the provisions about debt which recognised the vulnerability of the tribal people, whether raja or ryot. The aloofness of the administration was also done away with by the permanent residence in the tribal areas of the Agent and his assistants, and by the friendly, informal intercourse they permitted on tour. The administration of the law was made far less complex, and by the ban upon *vakils* and the introduction of *panchayats* was prevented from becoming an instrument in the hands of the unscrupulous. Not only was the Company's administration thus adapted to tribal needs, and its officers and officials made servants rather than oppressive masters of the tribal people, but the conflicts within tribal society itself eased. If rajas and *jagirdars* were saved by Wilkinson and Davidson from the clutches of the money-lender, the *mankis* and *ghatwals*, the junior members of chiefly families, and the minor zamindars were saved from oppression by their rajas. The result was twenty years of peaceful development in the Agency.

Abbreviations

Actg.	Acting
Apl.	April
Aug.	August
B. C.	Board's Collections
Beng.	Bengal
Comm.	Commissioner
Cons.	Consultation
Cr.	Criminal
D. G.	District Gazetteer
Enc.	Enclosure
G. G.	Governor-General
G. G.-in-c	Governor-General-in-council
Govt.	Government
I.O.L.	India Office Library
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
J.B.R.S.	Journal of the Bihar Research Society
Jt.	Joint
Judl.	Judicial
Magt.	Magistrate
Mds.	Maunds
M. S.	Manuscript
N. D.	No date
Rev.	Revenue
S.W.F.	South-west-frontier
Tr.	Translated



BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. *Manuscript sources :*

- (a) At the India Office Library and Record Department
(Commonwealth Relations Office), London :
Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations :

<i>Range</i>	<i>Vol.</i>
128	12, 13, 34, 36, 42, 44.
130	11, 12, 21, 22, 23, 44, 46, 47.
131	41.
132	58, 59, 61.
133	3, 4, 20.
134	16, 18, 53.
136	31.
137	33, 38, 39.
138	22, 31, 66.
139	31, 51.
140	3, 4, 5, 31, 33.

Bengal Political & Secret Consultations :
Previous classification no. 367—vol. 3.

Bengal Revenue Consultations :

<i>Range</i>	<i>Vol.</i>
51	33, 39, 44.
53	1, 2, 5, 7, 14, 15, 29, 58.
54	3.
55	13, 56.
56	5, 9, 15, 26, 33, 45.
57	46.
58	2, 60.
59	21, 61.
60	5, 7, 51.
61	1, 25, 60.
62	17.

(Note—there is no consultation number for the years 1787 and 1789 ;
so page number of the volume has been given in the footnotes.)

Board's Collections :

<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Collection</i>
746	20327.
1362	54223, 54224, 54225.
1363	54226, 54227, 54228, 54229.
1501	58886, 58887, 58888.
1502	58889, 58891, 58893, 58894.
1503	58895, 58896, 58898, 58899, 58907.

Home Miscellaneous Series—no. 724.

India and Bengal Despatches—vol. 6.

Letters received from Bengal, no. 120.

Drummond, A., Surgeon, Statistical Account of the Hazaribagh Division, 1841, MS. 25, I.O.L., maproom.

(b) Nottingham University Library—Portland collections—Private papers of Lord William Bentinck [denoted Bentinck MS. in the footnotes].

(c) Patna Archives—Miscellaneous Despatch Book. Governor General's Agent's Office, Ranchi, nos. 235 and 247.

Political Despatch Register (7 Jan. 1837 to 28 Sept. 1839).

II. Printed Official sources :

(a) Records—*Selections of papers at the East India House relating to revenue, police, and civil and criminal justice under the Company's Government in India*, 4 vols., London, 1820—1826.

Ricketts, H., (ed.), *Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government*, Vols. XVI-XX, Calcutta, 1855.

Hunter, W.W. (ed.), *Bengal MS. Records (1782—1807)*, 4 vols., London, 1894.

Mitra, K. P., *A handbook of the Historical Records in the Office of the Secretary to the Agent to the Governor General, Eastern States and Political Agent at Sambalpur*, (1803—1856), Patna, 1933.

Roychoudhury, P. C. (ed.), *Singbhum Old Records*, Patna, 1958.

(b) Reports—*Reports by the Agent to the Governor-General of Tours made by him through the districts attached to the Political Agency of the South-West Frontier in 1840, 1844, 1847*, Calcutta, 1847.

Firminger, W. K., (ed.), *Fifth Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company*, 1812, 3 vols., Calcutta, 1947—18.

(c) Regulations—Blunt, W., and Shakespear, H., (compiled), *An Abstract of the Regulations for the Provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa*, 4 vols., Calcutta, 1824—1828.

Regulations passed by the Governor-General-in-Council of Bengal, 3 vols., printed by the order of the Court of Directors, London, 1828.

Clarke, Richard (ed.), *The Regulations of the Government of Fort William in Bengal*, in force at the end of 1853, London, 1854.

Harington, J. H., *An Elementary Analysis of the laws and Regulations enacted by the Governor-General-in-Council at Fort William*, 3 vols., Calcutta, 1805-22.

Extracts from Harington's Analysis of the Bengal Regulations, Calcutta, 1866.

(d) Gazetteers (District Gazetteers denoted D. G. in the footnotes) ;

Hallet, M. G., & Macpherson, T. S., *Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteer*, Ranchi, Patna, 1917.

Hamilton, W., *The East India Gazetteer*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., London, 1828.

Hamilton, W., *A geographical, statistical and historical description of Hindostan*, 2 vols., London, 1820.

Hunter, W. W., *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. X, Oxford. 1908.

Lister, E., *Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteer*, Hazaribagh, Patna, 1917.

O'Malley, L. S. S., *Bengal District Gazetteer*, Palamau, Calcutta. 1907.

" " Singhbhum, Saraikela & Kharsawan, Calcutta, 1910.

The Bengal and Agra Annual Guide and Gazetteer, vol. II. Calcutta, 1841.

- (c) Settlement Reports—Bhattacharji, N. L., *Guide & Glossary to the Survey & Settlement Operations in the Chota-Nagpur Division*, Patna. 1939.

Bridge, T. W., *Final Report of the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Palamau*, 1913—20 Patna, 1921.

Craven, T., *Final Report on the settlement of Kolhan Government Estate* (district Singhbhum), Calcutta, 1898.

Reid, J., *Final Report on the Survey and settlement operations in the district of Ranchi*, 1902—1910, Calcutta, 1912.

Slack, F. A., *Report on the settlement of the estate of the Maharaja of Chota-Nagpur* (with MS. additions), Calcutta, 1888.

Sunder, D.H.E., *Final Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of Palamau*, 1894—1897, Calcutta, 1898.

- (f) Miscellaneous—*East India Register and Directory*, 1831—1833. *A general Register of the Hon'ble East India Company's civil servants of the Bengal establishment*, 1844.

Village Directory of the Bengal Presidency—Manbhum and Lohardugga, vols. XLII, XLIII, Calcutta, 1887.

III. Newspapers :

Calcutta—*The Bengal Hurkaru & Chronicle*, 1832—1833.

The Calcutta Courier, 1832—1833.

The Calcutta (Govt.) Gazette, 1832 (Jan. to March) and Dec. 1880.

The India Gazette, 1832—1833.

London—*The Times*, 10 Feb. and 26 June 1832 and Apl. 1867.

IV. Magazines :

Anthropos, London, vol. 4.

The Calcutta Review, Calcutta, vols. XIX, VI, XLIX.

The East Indian United Service Journal, Calcutta. No. III.

The East India Magazine, Calcutta, 1832.

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London, vols. VIII, XVIII.

Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna, vol. II (part 3).

Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna, (denoted J.B.R.S. in the footnotes), XLIII.

Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, (denoted J.A.S.B. in the footnotes), IX, XXV, XXVIII, XXXV, and LVII.

Man in India, Ranchi, XXV, no. 4.

V. Other printed sources:

- Aitchison, C. U., *A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries* (5th ed., Calcutta and Delhi, 1929).
- Bailey, F.G., *Caste and the Economic Frontier*, Manchester, 1957.
- Ballhatchet, K.A., *Social policy and Social change in Western India, 1817—1830*, London, 1957.
- Beveridge, Henry, *A comprehensive history of India, civil, military and social*, London, 1862.
- Boulger, D.C., *Lord William Bentinck*, Oxford, 1897.
- Bradley-Birt, F.B., *Chota-Nagpore, a little known province of the Empire*, London, 1910.
- Campbell, *Modern India*, 1852.
- Choudhury, S.B., *Civil disturbances under British rule, 1757—1857*, Calcutta, 1955.
- Dalton, E.T., *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1872.
- Datta, K.K., *Unrest against British rule in Bihar, 1831—1859*, Patna, 1957.
- „ *History of Freedom movement in Bihar*, Patna, 1957.
- „ *Alivardi and his times*, Calcutta, 1939.
- „ *The Santal Insurrection*, Calcutta, 1940.
- Diwakar, R.R. (ed.), *Bihar through the Ages*, Patna, 1958.
- Dodwell, H.H. (ed.), *Cambridge History of India*, vol. V, Cambridge, 1929.
- Elwin, V.H., *The Aborigines*, Bombay, 1942.
- „ *A Philosophy for NEFA*, 2nd ed., Calcutta, 1959.
- Ghurye G.S., *The Scheduled Tribes*, 2nd ed., Bombay, 1959.
- Griffiths, G., *The Kol Tribe of Central India*, Calcutta, 1956.
- Heber, R., *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824—1825*, 2 vols., London, 1828.
- Hobsbawm, E. J., *Primitive Rebels*, Manchester, 1959.
- Hobson-Jobson, *A Glossary of Anglo-Indian colloquial words and Phrases*, London, 1903.
- Hodson, V.C.P., *List of the Officers of the Bengal Army (1758—1834)*, 4 vols., London, 1927—47.
- Houlton, J.W., *Bihar: the heart of India*, London, 1949.
- Hunter, W.W., *The Statistical Account of Bengal*, vols. XVI and XVII, London, 1875.
- Kaye, J.W., *The Administration of the East India Company*, London, 1853.
- Mackinnon, D.H., *Military Service and Adventures in the Far East*, vol. II, London, 1849.
- Meulder, De, S.J., *Tribal India speaks*, Poona, 1952.
- Misra, B.B., *Central Administration of the East India Company*, Manchester, 1959.
- Mujid, H.M.A., *Seir Mutaqherin of Syed Ghulam Hossin Khan*, Calcutta, 1836.
- O'Malley, *History of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa under British Rule*, Calcutta, 1925.
- „ *Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Sikkim*, Cambridge, 1917.
- „ (ed.), *Modern India and the west*, London, 1941.

- Philips, C.H., *The East India Company, 1784—1834*, Manchester, 1940.
- „ *‘British Historical Writing on India’*, Listener, London 8, Dec. 1955.
- Phillimore, R. H., *Historical Records of the Survey of India*, vol. IV, Dehradun, India, 1958.
- Reid, J., *The Chotanagpur Tenancy Act*, (Act VI of 1908) with notes, Judicial rulings and the rules framed under the Act, Calcutta, 1910.
- Rennell, James, *A description of the roads in Bengal and Bihar*, London, 1778.
- „ *Memoir of a map of Hindustan*, 3rd ed., London, 1793.
- Risley, H.H., *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, 2 vols., Calcutta, 1892.
- „ *The People of India*, Calcutta, 1908.
- Roy, S.C., *Mundas and their country*, Calcutta, 1912.
- „ *The Oraons of Chota Nagpore*, Ranchi, 1915.
- Roychoudhury, P.C., *1857 in Bihar (Chota Nagpur & Santhal Parganas)*, Patna, 1959.
- Sarkar, J.N., (ed.), *The History of Bengal*, vol. II, Dacca, 1948.
- Shore, F.J., *Notes on Indian Affairs*, 2 vols., London, 1837.
- Spear, T.G.P., *Twilight of the Mughals*, Cambridge, 1951.
- Spry, H.H., *Modern India*, London, 2 vols., 1837.
- Stokes, E., *The English Utilitarians and India*, Oxford, 1959.
- Thompson, E., *Life of Charles Lord Metcalfe*, London, 1937.
- Thornton, E., *The History of the British Empire in India*, vol. V, London, 1841-43.
- Thornton, E., *A Gazetteer of the territories under the Govt. of the E. I. Co.*, London, 1854.
- Wilson, H.H., (ed.), *Mill's History of British India*, vol. IX, fifth ed., London, 1858.
- „ *A glossary of judicial and Revenue terms*, London, 1855.

VI. Maps :

- Rennell, J., *Map of India*, London, 1778.
- Arrow Smith, A., *Map of India*, London, 1816.
- Tassin, J.B., *A new & improved map of the provinces of Bengal and Behar*, London, 1841.
- Chota Nagpore Divisional Survey maps*, 1862—1863.
- Chota Nagpore Topographical Survey maps*, 1862—1865.
- ‘Sketch of Chuta Nagpore and its dependencies.’

GLOSSARY

<i>Abkari, Abkarry,</i>	The excise.
<i>Abwab,</i>	Miscellaneous cesses, imposts, and charges, levied by zamindars and public officers.
<i>Adalat, Adawlut,</i>	Law court.
<i>Amla, Aumlah, Omla,</i>	The subordinate Indian servants.
<i>Amin, Aumeen,</i>	An Indian official, employed under the civil courts to investigate accounts connected with a suit, to carry out legal processes as a bailiff, etc. Also applied to Indian assistants in the duties of land survey.
<i>Arwa, Aruwa,</i>	Rice cleaned from unboiled paddy (fine rice).
<i>Ashraf, Ashrof,</i>	Noblemen.
<i>Balwa, Bulwa</i>	A tribal weapon.
<i>Barkandaz, Burkundauz,</i>	A matchlockman, guard, or escort.
<i>Batta,</i>	Discount.
<i>Begar,</i>	Forced labour for which no pay was given.
<i>Bhagat,</i>	A title of the respectable Oraons.
<i>Bhandar,</i>	Villages managed by the raja or zamindar himself, not rented or farmed to others.
<i>Bhuinhars,</i>	Original clearers of land among the Oraons and Mundas who provided the leadership during the rising.
<i>Bigha, Beegah,</i>	A measure of land.
<i>Brahmachari,</i>	A mendicant or an ignorant vagrant.
<i>Brahmottar,</i>	Land granted rent-free to Brahmans.
<i>Brit, Vritti or Britta,</i>	Grant of land or other means of support to anyone, generally for religious purposes.
<i>Bahangi, Buhungi or Bhangi,</i>	Load-carrier.
<i>Chaprasi, Chuprasi,</i>	A messenger or courier, usually a public servant.
<i>Chatti, Chutti,</i>	Outpost.
<i>Chauki, Choukee,</i>	Station of police or customs.
<i>Chowky,</i>	
<i>Chaukidar, Chokeedar,</i>	A watchman, generally of a village.
<i>Chuar, Chooar,</i>	A thief or a bandit.
<i>Cutchery, Kachahari,</i>	Court.
<i>Dabbu, Dabu,</i>	A small copper coin of the value of twenty Kas.
<i>Dak,</i>	Postal service.

<i>Dam,</i>	Price, cash.
<i>Daroga, Darogha,</i>	Head of a police, custom or excise station.
<i>Dashahara,</i>	A popular festival in honour of the goddess Durga.
<i>Debottar,</i>	A grant for the worship of God or a gift in the name of God.
<i>Deota, Devata,</i>	A deity.
<i>Des,</i>	Country, province or a district.
<i>Dheori,</i>	Branch of a tree.
<i>Diwan,</i>	A minister, a chief officer of an estate.
<i>Diwani,</i>	Of or relating to a diwan, civil as opposed to criminal. The right to receive the collections of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa granted to the East India Company in 1765.
<i>Dour, Douva,</i>	To go about.
<i>Dubhashia,</i>	Interpreter.
<i>Ekrarnama, Ikrarnama,</i>	A deed of agreement or assent.
<i>Fasli,</i>	The harvest year ; the era originating with Akbar.
<i>Faujdar,</i>	The office of a magistrate or head of police, or criminal judge.
<i>Faujdari Adalat,</i>	The chief criminal court.
<i>Fulsa,</i>	A tribal weapon.
<i>Ghar, Ghur,</i>	House.
<i>Ghat, Ghaut,</i>	Mountain pass.
<i>Ghatwal, Ghautwal,</i>	A tribal constable in the Jungle Mahals.
<i>Ghatwali,</i>	A land grant to the Ghatwal.
<i>Ghi, Ghee,</i>	Clarified butter.
<i>Goles,</i>	Group.
<i>Gorait, Goret,</i>	A watchman.
<i>Gotra,</i>	A subdivision of caste, especially among Brahmans.
<i>Gundas,</i>	A tribal weapon.
<i>Gunahgari,</i>	Fine for offence.
<i>Gwala,</i>	Milkman.
<i>Hal,</i>	Plough.
<i>Hanria,</i>	Rice beer of the Mundas and Oraons.
<i>Huzur, Heozoor,</i>	Superior authority.
<i>Ilakadar,</i>	The person who engages, either on his own account or as the representative of others, for the payment of the assessed revenue upon a district or a village.
<i>Ijara,</i>	A farm of land of a village.
<i>Ijaradar</i>	A farmer of land.
<i>Insaf,</i>	Justice.

<i>Jagir,</i>	A conditional or unconditional assignment of land or its revenue.
<i>Jagirdar,</i>	Holder of a jagir.
<i>Jaidad,</i>	An assignment of the revenues of a tract of land for the maintenance of an establishment.
<i>Jama, Jumma,</i>	The rental of an estate, or a holding.
<i>Jamabandi,</i>	Settlement of the amount of revenue assessed upon an estate, a village or district.
<i>Jamadar,</i>	The chief or leader of any number of persons ; a native subaltern officer ; a police or excise officer.
<i>Kabuliat,</i>	A written agreement, especially one signifying assent, as the counterpart of a revenue lease.
<i>Kam,</i>	Work, service.
<i>Kath,</i>	Catechu.
<i>Kayastha,</i>	A Hindu caste of writers.
<i>Khalsa,</i>	Unfarmed land.
<i>Khas,</i>	Own.
<i>Khillat,</i>	A dress of honour presented by a superior authority to an inferior as a mark of distinction.
<i>Khorposh,</i>	Maintenance grant.
<i>Khutkhattidar,</i>	Original clearers of land in Chota-Nagpur proper.
<i>Kos, Coss,</i>	A measure of distance.
<i>Kunwar,</i>	The chief of an estate, or the son of a chief.
<i>Likhai,</i>	Fee for writing or registering.
<i>Madad,</i>	Assistance, allowance.
<i>Magh,</i>	The 10th month of the Hindu year.
<i>Mahajan,</i>	A merchant, a money-lender.
<i>Mahto.</i>	A village headman among the Oraons.
<i>Mahantha,</i>	The head of a Hindu religious establishment.
<i>Mahatran,</i>	Land assigned to religious persons.
<i>Mal,</i>	Public revenue from land.
<i>Malguzari,</i>	Rent.
<i>Mangan,</i>	Gift.
<i>Manki,</i>	A circle headman among the Mundas.
<i>Minhai,</i>	Rent-free Tenancy.
<i>Mir,</i>	Chief.
<i>Mohurir,</i>	A clerk, a writer.
<i>Muchalaka,</i>	A written obligation, a bond.
<i>Mukhtar,</i>	An agent, an attorney,
<i>Mukarraridar,</i>	A person holding land at a fixed rate of assessment.
<i>Munda,</i>	A village headman among the Mundas.
<i>Munsif, Munsiff,</i>	An Indian civil judge of the lowest rank.

<i>Mura,</i>	A village headman in Patkum.
<i>Munshi,</i>	A writer.
<i>Mutfurka,</i>	Separate, scattered, miscellaneous.
<i>Mutia,</i>	Retailer of salt.
<i>Nag,</i>	Snake.
<i>Nagara,</i>	Drum.
<i>Naib,</i>	Deputy.
<i>Nazir,</i>	An Inspector, a supervisor, the officer of the court who serves processes, takes depositions, and makes enquiries.
<i>Nazarana, Nazr,</i>	A present.
<i>Nizamut,</i>	The administration of police and criminal law.
<i>Pahan,</i>	The religious head of a Munda village.
<i>Paik,</i>	An armed attendant, a village watchman.
<i>Panchayat, Panchayat,</i>	A village court of arbitration.
<i>Pargana,</i>	A fiscal division.
<i>Parha,</i>	A group of Munda villages.
<i>Parwana,</i>	An order.
<i>Pat,</i>	A pass of a hill.
<i>Patta, Pottah,</i>	A deed of lease.
<i>Patti,</i>	A half, a moiety.
<i>Patwari,</i>	A subordinate revenue officer.
<i>Peada,</i>	Peon.
<i>Puchai, Pachai</i>	A rice beer.
<i>Pus, Paus,</i>	The ninth month of the Hindu calendar.
<i>Qanungo,</i>	Village and district revenue officer.
<i>Rahdari,</i>	Road-cess.
<i>Rakababandi,</i>	Measurement of land.
<i>Raj,</i>	Estate.
<i>Rasum,</i>	Fees, Customary payments and gratuities.
<i>Rautia,</i>	A horse soldier.
<i>Sadr, Sadar,</i>	Principal.
<i>Sahib Log,</i>	Englishmen.
<i>Sahu,</i>	Merchant, money-lender.
<i>Salami,</i>	A complimentary present.
<i>Sanad,</i>	A grant, a charter.
<i>Sati,</i>	Burning of the wife with the dead body of her husband.
<i>Sayer,</i>	A variety of taxes and imports, other than land revenue.
<i>Sazawal,</i>	A native collector of revenue.
<i>Sebundy, Sibundi,</i>	Irregular soldier.
<i>Sewakpatta,</i>	A deed or bond by which a person binds himself to servitude.

<i>Sheristadar, Sarishtadar,</i>	Record-keeper.
<i>Subah,</i>	Province.
<i>Sud or Sad,</i>	A tribal word for 'foreign'.
<i>Sunat, Sonat,</i>	A type of coinage.
<i>Sundis,</i>	A Hindu caste of wine sellers.
<i>Tahsildar,</i>	A native collector of revenue.
<i>Talabi,</i>	Demand of revenue, salary.
<i>Talbana,</i>	Daily fee to a subordinate officer serving summons.
<i>Taluk,</i>	A form of Jagir.
<i>Thakur,</i>	A person of rank.
<i>Thana,</i>	A police station.
<i>Thanadar,</i>	A daroga.
<i>Thikadar,</i>	Farmer of revenue or excise.
<i>Tilak, Tilauk.</i>	A colour mark on the forehead, installation.
<i>Taidad, Tydaad,</i>	Quantity.
<i>Usana,</i>	Coarse rice.
<i>Vakil, Vakeel,</i>	Agent.



INDEX

- Adawlat System, 220.
 Afghan, 29.
 Ahori, 221.
 Alamchand, 81.
 Ali, Jafar, 62, 154, 170.
 Ali, Karam, 55, 62.
 Alipur, Jail, 29, 203.
 Allahabad, 214.
 Ally, Mohammad, Naik of Koomang, 156.
 Amaidanda, 95, 221.
 Amanat, 7.
 Americans, 231.
 Anandipur, 61.
 Angelo, Captain, 80.
 Anwarullah, Shaikh, Tahsildar of Maharaja of Tekari, 193.
 Arakan, 214, Special commissioner for, 216, 236.
 Arkighat, 107, 114.
 Armai, 26, 66, 73, 110.
 Arnold's Timekeeper, 136.
 Aurangabad, 72.
 Azimgarh, 180.
 Bagankodar, 69, 76.
 Bagmundi (Bagmoonda), 74, 76, 77, 175, 178.
 Bahadur Dubhasia, 155-57.
 Balunagar, 88.
 Bamanghati, 170.
 Bamhani, 62, 116, 117.
 Banaras (Benares), 19, 68, 72, 79, 82, 97, 99, 102, 117, 180, 225, 241.
 Bandgaon, 70, 116, 154, 156, 157.
 Bangaon, 116.
 Bankura, 73-75, 77, 99, 216, 217, 223; Jail, 76, 198.
 Banta Hazam, 69.
 Barabhum, 75, 192, 217.
 Barahatu, 83.
 Baraik, Somode, 64.
 Baranda, 27, 28, 33, 68, 69, 73, 76, 204, 208, 225.
 Baraon, Jagir, 12.
 Baraset, 140.
 Bari, 79.
 Bariatu, 88, 92.
 Barkagarh, 26, 62, 64-66, 110, 117, 133, 174, 177, 179, 189-91, 193, 237.
 Barrackpore, 72, 73, 76, 99, 117.
 Barwa, Pargana, 7, 27, 46, 47, 50, 56, 66, 73, 91, 101, 110, 116; also Raja of, 133, 177, 192, 225.
 Basaharan, 31.
 Basantlal, 46.
 Basia (Bassia), 65, 66, 71, 100-02, 150; Kunwar of, 110, 146, 147, 148, 192.
 Behar, district of, 72, 219, 221, 223, 224.
 Belaunja, 7, 218.
 Belkudra, 63.
 Bengal, Presidency, Government of, 1, 6, 14, 22; plains, 37, 40, 60, 65, 72, 75-77, 86, 89, 92, 97, 102, 134, 139, 160, 169, 172, 200, 201, 204, 205, 211, 214, 221, 236, 237, 241.
Bengal District Gazetteers, 3.
 Bengal Government, Resolution of 18 September 1789, 41.
Bengal Hurkaru, 88, 107, 112, 163, 207, 241.
 Bengali, 230.
 Bentham, 210, 214.
 Benthamite principle, 218.
 Bentinck, Lord, 129, 215, 223, 241, 242, 261.
 Benson, Major, 242.
 Beveridge, 131.
 Bhagalpur (Boglepoor), 129, 223, 224.
 Bhagat, Budhu (Buggut Bhuddoo) of Silligaon, 98-100, 103, 117.
 Bhagat, Suru, 114.
 Bhandar Elaqa, 34.
 Bheels, 135.
 Bhogta, 9, 69.
 Bhogta, Sheobuksha, 167.
 Bhuinhars, 134, 135.
 Bhumij, 23.
 Bhumij Kols, 23.
 Bhutnath of Sazardi, 79.
 Bihar, Subdivision of, 8, 9, 14, 16, 19, 37, 41, 42, 83, 120, 206, 211.
 Bijnaur, 201.
 Bindrai of Singhbhum, 61.
 Birbal, the Chaukidar, 184.
 Birsait Movement, (1895-1900), 239.
 Bishnupur, 76, 222.
 Birsampur, 12, 14, 19, 21.
 Blackall, Major, 9, 11, 116, 117, 161.

- Blunt, W, Acting Magistrate of Ramgarh, 47, 48, 75, 128, 133, 135, 137, 140, 141, 143, 145, 149, 150, 155, 165, 193, 197, 205, 207, 214, 215.
- Board of Commissioners, 19.
- Board of Customs, Salt and Opium, 160, 222.
- Board of Revenue, 21, 42, 56, 59, 222, 239.
- Bombay, Presidency, 233.
- Bora, 88.
- Boria, 67.
- Bowen, Col., 99, 102, 104, 107-09, 111, 112, 114-16.
- Braddon, 198.
- Bradley-Birt, 3.
- Brahmachari, Naraibhatta, 120.
- Brehon, laws, 119.
- Brett, Lt., 18.
- Bridge, 11.
- British, 38-42, 47.
- Empire, 139.
- British Indian Administration, 241.
- Bugai, 107.
- Bundu, 27, 39, 45, 109, 140, 148, 204, 208.
- Bundunagar, 69.
- Burdwan, 216; Commissioner of, 76, 199.
- Burju Bania, 186.
- Burt, Lt., 92-94.
- Buruhatu, 104.
- Calcutta, 49, 80, 89, 90, 97, 109, 131, 139, 140, 143, 178-80, 192, 194, 199, 241; Council, 128.
- Calcutta Courier*, 162.
- Calcutta Gazette*, 241.
- Calcutta Review*, 40, 119.
- Camac, Jacob, Captain, 9, 10, 11, 38, 39.
- Cambridge History of India*, 3.
- Ceded and Conquered Provinces, 214, 215.
- Chakai, 218, 220, 221.
- Chainpur (Chainpore), 14, 18.
- Chand, Alam, 81.
- Chandoo (Chundoo), 18.
- Charkawa, 218.
- Charu, 88.
- Chas, 97, 98, 102.
- Chatra (Chittra), 10, 19, 43, 45-47, 55, 59, 68, 72, 85, 94, 137, 214, 221; Court, 47, 48.
- Chattar Kol, 158.
- Chaudhari, Radhakrishna, 94.
- Chaudhary, S. B., 4.
- Chaurasi, 53.
- Chechari Valley, 78, 81, 89, 91.
- Chero, 8, 15, 16, 17, 38, 78, 79, 81, 82, 87, 91, 167, 168, 170, 175; Raja, 13, 17, 18, 19.
- Chhatna, 147, Zamindar of, 146.
- Chhattar Kol, 158.
- Chiteri, 83.
- Chitma, 85, 87.
- Chitpele, 204.
- Chota-Nagpur (Chota-Nagpore, Chutia-Nagpoor), 3, 5, 7-10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21-31, 33, 35-41, 43-48, 49, 51-60, 62, 63, 65-71, 73, 74, 78-80, 87, 89, 95, 97, 99, 101, 105, 106, 114, 119, 120, 124-126, 128-30, 135, 136, 140, 141, 143, 150, 157-61, 163, 165, 168-72, 175-186, 188, 193, 198, 201, 202, 207, 208, 210, 211-222, 225, 238; Maharaja of, 62, 110, 128, 141, 161, 196, 201, 203, 206, 212; Raja of, 145, 147, 192, 204; Risings of, 189; Tenancy Act of 1908, 238, 239; Zamindari of, 65.
- Chuar (Chooar), 186.
- Chakradharpur (Chuckerdherpore), 156, 157.
- Chugroo, 173.
- Churia, 26, 65, 66, 95, 98-106, 109, 174, 221.
- Chutia, 65, 96, 174.
- Cleveland, 129, 130.
- Code of Civil Procedure Act VIII of 1859, 236; Act X of 1877, 236, 238.
- Coira Orissa, 29.
- Cole Lutti, 155, 156.
- Colvin, 52, 53, 133, 135, 137.
- Cooch Bihar, 11.
- Cornwallis, Lord, System, 1, 40, 41, 119, 134, 214, 225, 242.
- Court of Directors, 130, 199, 237.
- Court of Wards, 225.
- Cuthbert, S.T., Ramgarh Magistrate, 16, 21, 28, 36, 54-60, 64, 65, 67, 79, 95, 116, 117, 121, 122, 124, 126, 128, 129, 133, 137, 138, 143, 144, 149, 160-63, 167, 168, 189, 190, 193, 196, 203, 220.
- Cuttack, 216; Commissioner of, 171; Revolt of, 1817, 141; Tributary Mahals, 170, 216.
- Dai, Adhar, 120.
- Dalton, E. T., 23, 24, 61, 166.
- Dangas, 131, 158.
- Das, Lakhii of Kachi, 68.
- Das, Madho, 171.
- Das, Neerunjun Mahapater, 171.
- Dashahara*, 121.
- Datta, Akhauri Bhairo, 31.

- Daudnagar, 72.
 Davidson, J., 8, 23, 25, 30, 31, 32, 36, 151, 225, 238, 242, Asst. Surgeon, 223.
 Dawkstager, 27.
 Deccan (Deccan), 38, 215, 242.
 Decennial Settlement of 1789 ;
 System, 11, 12, 14, 40, 41, 142 ;
 Raja Old, 20.
 Delhi, Territory, 214.
 De Meulder, 23.
 Dent, 33, 76, 129, 138, 145-47, 154, 165, 193, 195, 205, 206, 211, 212, 214, 217, 218, 221, 224, 235.
 Deo, 62, 193 : Maharaja of, 194 ; of, 17, 19, 67.
 Deogan, 12.
 Deori, Mahal, 34.
 Deori, Nagari, 100.
 Dewan, 12.
 Dhalbhum, 23, 217, 221, 222, 225, 236.
 Dilawar Jang, 194.
 Dinapur, 65, 67, 71, 82-84, 87, 95, 117.
 Dindayal Nath (Deen Dial), 49.
 Dixon, 129.
 Diwani Adalat (Adawlat), 222.
 Doesa, 32, 66, 120, 147, 174.
 Doma, 176, 177, 186.
 Dorea, 63.
 Dravidian, 8, 23, 30, 36.
 Drummond, Lt., 24, 50, 51, 84-87, 134.
 Dukhit, 53.
 Dum Dum, 72.
 East India Company, 2, 9, 38, 39, 49, 78, 87, 95, 108, 125, 146, 163, 167, 168, 170, 182, 191, 42.
East India Magazine, 95.
 Echagutu, 155.
 Edict of Nantz, 106.
 Elliot, Henry, 8.
 Elphinstone, 214, 215, 225, 233, 242.
 Elu, 76, 77, 175.
 Elysium, 118.
 England, 187.
 English Constitution, 41.
 Englishman, 41.
 English Opinion, 41.
 Europeans 231.
 Ewart, 111.
 Farmer, Major, 43, 44.
 Fiery Cross, 61.
 Feudalism, 41.
 Fleming, 54, 137.
 Forbes, 8.
 France, 106.
 French, the Ramgarh Magistrate, 124.
 Gamharia, 112.
 Gangira, 62, 170.
 Gari, 100.
 Garrow Hills, 157.
 Gassu, 62.
 Gauri Charan, 81.
 Gaya, 36, 59, 62, 67, 72, 83, 153, 219.
 Ghasi tribe, 59.
 Gibbon, 118.
 Giddhaur, Maharaja of, 220.
 Gilbert, W. R., 56.
 Gonds, 135.
 Govindpur, 26, 61-66, 146, 166 ;
 Kunwar of, 192.
 Gorakhpur, 67, 70.
 Governor General, 10, 194, 201, 204, 222, 241 ; in Council, 234 ; Political Agent of, 56, 242.
 Grant, John, Sheristadar, 11.
 Greece, 188.
 Gujnoo (Gujnu), 67, 104.
 Guran, 91.
 Gurhwa, 176.
 Guruhatu, 106.
 Gwalior fort, 29.
 Haimendorf, Professor, 130, 150.
 Hazam Banta, 46.
 Hamilton, Lt. Col., 22, 31, 87, 88, 93.
 Hasla, 74, 76, 175.
 Hawtray, Col., 83-88, 91-93, 101, 176.
 Hazaribagh, 7, 10, 45, 59, 65, 68, 98, 117, 124, 131, 140, 221, 223, 225, 238.
 Heber, Bishop, 31.
 Hindustani, 230.
History of British India, 3.
History of Freedom Movement in Bihar, 5.
 Horse Artillery, 114.
 Horsburgh, Captain, 76, 77, 102, 103, 24.
 Huguenot, 106.
 Hundia Tax (*Hanria*), 206.
 Hutap Ghat, 69.
 Hunter, W. W., 3, 7, 42.
 Hurryharpore Ghat, 103.
 Hutton, 119.
 Ichak, 79.
Imperial Gazetteer of India, 3.
 Impey, Captain, 84, 97, 99, 104.
 Independence Movement, 180.
 India, 1, 4, 25, 27 ; north, 30, 113 ; north-western part, 135.
India Gazette, 118, 180.
 Indian Mutiny, Centenary Celebrations of, 4.
 Indo-British Power, 118.

- Ireland, 119.
 Insurrection, unrest of, 1832, of
 Kols, 120, 151, 178, 242.
 Jabera, 83.
 Jagarnath, 154, 159.
 Jaikishan, Raja, 11.
 Jaipur, 76, Raja, 204, 205.
 Jalera, 88.
 Jamira Pat, 7.
 Jamur (Jamoore), 60, 70.
 Janam Puri, 70.
 Japla, 7, 218.
 Jer, 87.
 Jhabe Ghat, 81.
 Jhalda, 68, 69, 74-77, 109.
 Jharkhand, 5.
 Jhikuchatti, 62, 63, 65-67, 133, 158,
 173, 190.
 Joaram, 122.
 John, Bull, 27, 106, 188.
 John Shore, 41.
 Johnson, Captain, 102, 111.
 Joint Commission, 224.
 Joint Commissioners, 63, 91-94, 97,
 102, 103, 105, 106, 108-110, 114,
 115, 145, 146, 148, 154, 161, 166,
 163, 177, 179, 182, 189, 190, 193,
 194-198, 200, 202, 205-207, 209-
 211, 216, 217.
 Jones, Col, 47.
 Judicial Department, 215.
 Jugi, 79.
 Jungle Estates, 130, 135, 181.
 Jungle Mahals, 6, 53, 68, 69, 74, 75,
 77, 99, 117, 133, 144, 145, 148,
 175, 178, 180, 192, 193, 199, 211,
 216, 221, 222.
 Jurga, 27.
 Kachri, 104.
 Kandupatti, 115.
 Karaikela, 111, 116.
 Karroo river, 63.
 Kasai river, 221.
 Kasir pargana, 27.
 Katawa, 154.
 Kayasthas, 31.
 Kera, 106, 111, 116.
 Kendi, 221.
 Kharakdiha, 38, 225.
 Kharias, 8.
 Kharakatta, 67.
 Kharsawan, 112, 171, 175, 204.
 Kharwar, 8, 79, 87, 91.
 Kharwas (Kairwas), 18, 78, 81, 82,
 167, 168, 170.
 Khan, Kale, 62.
 Khan, Mirza Khan Bahadur Raja
 Dilawar Jang, 194.
 Khan, Rahmalli, 147.
 Khan, Raja Khan Bahadur, Illegi-
 timate son of Tekari Raja, 72.
 Khan, Saifulla, 62.
 Khuda Buksha, 154.
 Khukra, 32, 150.
 Khunti, 62, 110.
 Khutkhattidar, 135.
 Kochang, 60, 70, 116, 204.
 Kodarma, 218, 221.
 Koel, North, 7, 65.
 Kokrah, 29.
 Kol (Cole), 23, 25-27, 29, 31, 32,
 36, 38, 62, 63, 69, 78-82, 87, 91,
 96-101, 103-116, 118, 130, 131,
 135, 138-41, 148, 152, 154, 159,
 161-164, 166-68, 171-174, 176-
 180, 182-188, 204; Dhangar
 (Danga), 65, 70, 101, 131, 140,
 158, 170, 178, 179; Laddoo Ram,
 158; Larka, 10, 23, 38, 60, 65,
 70, 170, 171, 177, 213.
 Kolarian, 23.
 Kolhan, 38.
 Koomang, 155.
 Koorha, 19.
 Koorka, 18.
 Korambi, 26, 174.
 Koru Buru, 62.
 Kota, 107.
 Kotonagar, 106.
 Kshatriya, 8, 30.
 Kulma, 69.
 Kumta Induhotri, 104.
 Kunda, Raja of, 85, 89, 218, 220-22.
 Kunta, 52, 53.
 Lal Akhauri Basant, 31.
 Lal, Akhauri Bihari, 31.
 Lal, Kishan Akhauri, 31.
 Lal Mohan, 31.
 Lambert, Commissioner of Patna
 Division, 60, 65, 80-85, 89, 93,
 94, 98, 149, 193, 199, 220.
 Lankah, 157.
 Latchar, 87, 91, 93, 169, 176, 190,
 196.
 Lathurna, 86.
 Lees, 134.
 Leslie, 12, 19, 20, 41.
 Leslie's Settlement, 12, 20.
 Lesliaganj, 66, 78, 81-83, 85-87, 93,
 169, 190.
 Light Cavalry, III, 83, 84, 97-99,
 111.
 Light Infantry, III, 79, 80.
 Lindsay, 18.
 Lohardagga (Lohurdugga), 26, 66,
 73, 84, 103, 106, 110, 186, 190,
 221, 225, 236, 237; Senior Asst.
 Commissioner, 164.

- Lohursee, 18.
 Lokeya, 19.
 Louis XIV, 106.
 Lower Provinces, 18.
 Luttie Kol, 155, 156.
 Machiavelli, 182.
 Macpherson, 129.
 Maharajganj, 26, 110, 133.
 Mahalis, 22, 184.
 Mahomedally, 60.
 Mahto, 110, 146, 213.
 Manbhum, 23, 225, 236.
 Manjhi, Aokloo, 18.
 Manjhi, Ghasi (Ghassie Manjee), 63, 191.
 Manjhihas, 152.
 Manjhi, Tribhuvan, 53, 70.
 Manka, 87.
 Manki, 29, 33, 36, 110, 114, 150, 151, 166, 190, 191, 202, 204, 205, 208, 209, 213.
 Manki, Baijnath, 63, 166.
 Manki, Bindrai, 70, 116, 154, 156, 157, 165, 170, 191.
 Manki, Dasai, 68, 70.
 Manki, Mohan, 70.
 Manki, Sagar, 70.
 Manki, Singrai, 61, 115, 145, 151, 157, 165, 170, 182, 183, 191.
 Manki, Sarga, 70.
 Mankeari, 79, 87, 167, 176.
 Malcolm, 242.
 Maltby, Capt^{ain}, 71, 94.
 Manatu, 86.
 Maramganj, 204.
 Maratha, 8, 9, 13, 23, 38, 39, 180, 233.
 Marsh, 85, 86, 88, 89.
 Martin, 75, 77.
 Master, J., Patna Commissioner, 149, 172, 180, 199-202, 213, 214.
 Mayurbhanj, Raja of, 170.
Meerut Observer, 241.
 Metcalfe, Charles, Vice President of Calcutta Council, 139-141, 155, 159, 181, 188, 197, 207, 215, 242; System, 214.
 Midnapore, 72-76, 80, 102, 211, 216, 222.
 Mia Ram, 155.
 Miles, 118.
 Mill, 2, 3, 186.
 Mirzapore, 154, 180, 241.
 Mishra, Sohra, 148.
 Mokha (Mokhatu), 110.
 Monghyr, 217, 221.
 Morhu Bazar, 170.
 Mughals, 8; Empire, 29.
 Munda, 146, 150, 152, 166, 190, 191, 198, 204, 205, 209, 212, 213; Dasai, 146; Sui of Godarpiri, 70, 116, 155, 156, 165.
 Munro, 214, 215, 225, 242.
 Musan, 154.
 Muslim, Law, 200.
 Revolt at Baraset, 140.
 Muras, 178.
 Nabinagar, 72, 89.
 Nagpore (Nagpur), 31, 69, 133, 135.
 Nagvansi, Raja, 30, 145-149, 164; Zamindar, 148.
 Nantz, 106.
 Napoleon, 118.
 Native Infantry, 2nd, 71, 95, 111, 117; 28th, 223; 34th, 72, 99, 107; 38th, 72, 76, 117; 50th, 97, 99, 101, 111, 117; 54th, 79, 99, 111, 117; 58th, 67, 223; 64th, 83, 87.
 Nath, Din Dayal, 48.
 Nath, Kapil of Salgi, 95, 120.
 Neave, 60, 64, 65, 67, 68, 71, 72, 74, 78-87, 89-98, 109, 167-170, 175, 180, 188, 190, 195, 197; Acting Magistrate of, 193.
 Nepal, 15.
 Nethurhatpat, 7.
 Nicolson, P., Ensign, 223, 225, 226.
 Nigger, 23.
 Nizamat Adalat, 125, 133, 190-203, 217, 222.
 Non-Regulation, 6, 211, 214, 216, 224.
 Norman Conquest, 41.
 Northern Circars, 135.
 Obra, 18, 19.
 O'Malley, 1, 3.
 Oraon, 5, 8, 22, 23, 28, 31, 184, 198.
 Orissa, 23; Hilly Tributary State of, 120, 135; Coira, 29.
 Oude (Oudh), 180.
 Ouseley, R., Lt., 192, 223, 225.
 Outram, 129.
 Ovans, 129.
 Pachet, 28, 30, 46, 69, Raja of, 76, 147, 235; Zamindar of, 142, 146.
 Panchete, 30.
 Pahan, 110, 146, 174, 213; Nagu, 70.
 Palamau (Palamaw), fort of; raja, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13-15, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 60, 64, 66, 73, 74, 78-81, 83-85, 87, 91, 93, 101, 102, 109,

- 119, 136, 167, 168, 169, 172, 175-177, 180, 185, 188, 190, 194, 195, 196 ; Raja of, 197, 202, 206, 211, 213, 216-18, 220-22, 225.
- Palma, 46.
- Palkote, 26, 66 ; Khas 101, 102, 109, 110, 123, 145, 148, 186, 192.
- Pandey, Gopi, 146, 147.
- Patel, 215.
- Panchayat, 209, 210, 242.
- Parry, 14, 15.
- Pater, Khandu, of Karaikela, 116, 170.
- Pathan, 69, 81, 121, 157.
- Patkum, 43, 46, 74, 75, 76, 77, 98, 145, 175, 176, 178, 180, 189, 197, 198, Rani of, 74, 182.
- Patna, 11, 38, 60, 65, 79, 84, 86, 89-91, 94, 132, 140, 149, 153, 166, 180, 216, 217, Commissioner, 143, 172, 193, 199, 213, 220 ; Council, 9, 10 ; Provincial Court, 59.
- Patta (Pattah), Hasla, 178.
- Pax Britannica*, 2, 4, 42.
- Pax Romana*, 4.
- Permanent Settlement, 40-42, 214, 216.
- Pindari, 15, 24.
- Pitoria (Peethowreah, Pathoreah), 26, 65-68, 74, 76, 80, 84, 95, 96, 98, 100, 102, 104, 105, 186.
- Polgars, 79.
- Poligars, 135.
- Political Agent, 211, 216, 219, 221.
- Porahat, 156, 157, 171.
- Princep, A, 21.
- Provincial Battalion, Patna, 75, 86.
- Punjab, 215.
- Putrahatu, 112.
- Radhanath, 46.
- Rahi, 27, 28, 33, 44, 46, 48, 68, 73, 74, 142, 208, 225 ; Diwan of, 148 ; Raja of, 69, 104, 204.
- Rai, Bhawani Baksha, 82, 195.
- Rai, Churaman, Raja, 11, 12, 14-16, 17, 19.
- Rai, Chhatrapati (Chutterputtee), 12, 14, 18.
- Rai, Dharni, 12.
- Rai, Gajpat, 19.
- Rai, Gajraj, 12.
- Rai, Gopal, 9-11.
- Gajraj, 12.
- Rai, Jai Kishore, 31.
- Rai, Jaikishun, 31.
- Rai, Ram Bahadur, Raja, 16, 78-81.
- Rai, Sadasiva, 31.
- Rai, Sugand, 12.
- Raipur, 235.
- Raindihi, 218.
- Rajhas (tenure), 152.
- Rajput, 8.
- Rajshahi, 150.
- Ram, Akhauri Sheo Charan, 14.
- Ram, Jonki, 31.
- Ram, Moti, Rautia, 62.
- Ram, Silwant, 20.
- Ram, Udwant, 10, 14.
- Ramgarh (Ramghur), battalion of, Raja of, 10-12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 28, 38, 39, 42, 44, 46, 47, 49-52, 54, 56, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 68, 71, 74-76, 78, 89, 90, 100, 111, 117, 122, 124, 127, 130, 131, 133, 137, 141, 145, 155, 165, 169, 175, 193, 194, 203, 211, 212, 216-223, 225 ; Acting Magistrate of, 186, 197.
- Ramghurees, 117.
- Ramjeree (Ramji), 62.
- Ramus, 39.
- Ranchi, 22.
- Ranchi Settlement Report, 239.
- Rania, 78.
- Ranidih, 111.
- Ranka, 13, 19, 21.
- Rara (Rarah), 66.
- Rautias, 70, 110, 146, 191, 208, 212.
- Regulation, 41 ; no. 6 of 1794 ; no. X of 1800, 42, 44, 122, 127, 135 ; no. 5 of 1812, 138, 144 ; no. 10 of 1813, 160, 214, 216, 218, 219 ; no. II of 1819, 220, 221 ; no. 18 of 1805 ; no. III of 1793, 222 ; no. X of 1829, 225 ; no. XII of 1838, 242 ; provinces, 138 ; system, 223.
- Reid, 239.
- Rennel, 211.
- Rewa, 15.
- Rickets, 239.
- Risley, H. H., 3, 8, 30.
- Rob Roy, 2, 24.
- Robinhood, 2.
- Rohitasgarh, 55.
- Roochang, 60.
- Ross Mangles, 215.
- Roughsedge, E. Captain, Commandant of the Ramgarh battalion, 12, 14-19, 27, 47, 49, 53, 139.
- Roy, Lachhmi Nath, 31.
- Roy, Phani Mukut, 29.
- Roy, S. C., 4, 22, 23.
- Rudun, 52, 53.
- Russell, 74-77, 145, 148, 149, 179, 182, 197, 198.
- Sadar Diwani Adalat, 222, 223.
- Sadar Nizamat Adalat, 223.
- Sagar, Shaikh, 173.

- Sahee, Muddoo, 154.
 Sahi, Buktaur, 50.
 Chamar of Bariatu, 79, 87.
 Dukhan (Dukani or Dukhin), 48.
 49; Durga Vijay, Raja of Tori,
 28; Durpnath, Raja, 38.
 Gopinath (Gopeenath), 66;
 Govind Nath, Maharaja of
 Chota-Nagpur, 120; Harnath,
 151, 157; Jagannath, Maharaja,
 120, 121; Kanhai, 204; Lal Mani
 nath of Jugi 79; Lal Jit Nath of
 Gujnu 95; Maninath Pradhan,
 204; Narendra, 44; Raghubar,
 204; Raja Khiredar, 91.
 Sahib Log, 182.
 Sahu, Prayag, 69; Santokh, 183.
 Sahy, Lali Gokul, 104.
 Sainpahari, 222.
 Sal, Durjan Raja, 29.
 Salgi, 95.
 Sambhalpur, 60, 64, 131, 218.
 Santhal, 5.
 Saradkel (Saradkeli), 70.
 Sarguja, Border of, Mahal of, 7, 9,
 13, 15, 18.
 Saraikela, 111, 171.
 Sardari Larai, 239.
 Sardar, Rati (Katik) of Kochang,
 116.
 Sasram, 79, 97, 98.
 Satbarwa, 83, 85, 93, 176, 190.
 Sati, 127.
 Sazardi, 79.
 Sazawal, 46.
 Seedook, 18.
 Sergee, 109.
 Shahabad, 70, 97.
 Shahi, Kunwar Harnath of Govind-
 pur, 61, 70, 191.
 Shahpur, 82, 176.
 Shergarh, 222.
 Sherghati, 19, 59, 60, 62, 66, 71,
 82-84, 86, 88, 91, 94, 97, 153,
 157, 159, 165, 166, 213, 216, 218,
 221, 224; Jail, 124, 198.
 Shershah, 8.
 Shore, 42, 132.
 Silli, 27, 43, 45, 46, 68, 73-76, 201,
 204, 208, 225; Khas Raja of, 69;
 Raja of, 112.
 Silligaon, 98, 99, 102, 106.
 Sima, 78.
 Sindri, 53.
 Singh Achet Raja, 157; Bahadur,
 116; Bikramajit (Beckermajeet),
 14, 18, 19; Bishun of Bariatu, 72;
 Chatradhari, 19; 82; Dahir,
 172; Fateh Narayan, Raja of Deo,
 13, 15, 16, 17, 19; Ghanshyam,
 Raja (Gunsham Singh), 17,
 19, 20, 67, 68; Gopal, 204; Hari,
 61; Haril, 87; Hukum, 87; Jagmo-
 han, 82; Jai Nath, 9, 11, 12; Jit
 (Jeet), 18, 19; Kamal, Baraik of
 Turpapatti, 64, 70, 148; Koom-
 kera, Raja of Bandagaon, 157;
 Lachhuman of Tarai, 70, 71;
 Lohar Baraik, 66, 146-148;
 Maharaj Mitra Jit of Tekari, 72,
 102; Mandal, 50; Maninath,
 Manohar, 184; Mitra-Bhan of
 Deo, 68, 72, 96, 193, 194, 195;
 Mukund Baraik, 65; Pahalwan,
 18, 19; Pooran, 18, 19; Raghu-
 nath, 53; Ram Baksha, 12, 18;
 Sahib, 100; Sheoraj, 19; Shiva
 Prasad, 11, 12, 13, 19, Suraj 18.
 Singh, Thakurai, Chatradhari, 195;
 Thakurai Basant, 196; Thakur
 Borhan, 70, 71; Thakur Chetan
 of Kharsawan, 70, 112, 204;
 Thakur Udai Nath, 79.
 Singrai of Kochang, 91.
 Sipua (Supa), 91.
 Siriskutamba, 218.
 Solakotee, 109.
 Smith, Nathaniel, 20, 21, 54, 56-58,
 125, 126, 128, 133, 135, 137, 142,
 240, 242;
 V. A., 3;
 W., Magistrate, 47.
 Son, 7.
 Sonahatu, 104.
 Sonapet, 116, 204.
 Sonepur (Sonepoore), 27, 33, 60, 61,
 63, 65, 66, 68, 70, 101, 102, 110,
 114, 147, 150, 151, 155, 156, 170,
 178, 181, 183, 186, 191, 192, 205,
 208, 212, 213.
 South-West Frontier Agency, 6,
 56, 211, 215, 216, 237, 241;
 Political Agent on, 223, 237, 239.
 Special Commissioner, 89, 94, 99.
 Spry, 138.
Statistical Account of Bengal, 3.
 Suvarnarekha, 28, 76, 183, 221,
 Sudgaon, 61.
 Surgaon, 155, 157.
 Surgia, 107.
 Surjandihi, 70.
 Surjun, 218.
 Sutherland, Major, 99, 135, 144,
 145, 161, 162, 164, 165, 174, 179,
 181, 183, 184, 188, 193, 197, 207,
 242.
 Tamar, 13, 24, 26-28, 33, 38, 39, 43,
 44, 46, 50, 52-54, 61, 68-70, 73,

- 74, 101, 102, 106, 107, 109, 111,
114-117, 133, 135, 140, 142, 148,
157, 165, 166, 178, 186, 189, 190,
197, 208, 212, 214 ;
Chitpele, 208 ;
Gaddi, 203 ;
Raja of, 204 ; Rani of 99, 112 ;
Hasta Chaurasi of, 27.
Tamolegarh, 7.
Tana Bhagat, 5.
Tarhasi, estate, 21, 78, 86, 167, 176.
Tekari, Maharaja of, 193, 194.
Terra Incognita, 9.
Thakuria, 11.
Thanadari (ee) System, 133.
Thomson, James, 49, 215.
Thornton, Edward, 2, 172.
Tikoo (Tiku), 26, 71, 73, 84, 91, 93-
97, 99-105, 109, 175.
Tikudiga, 110.
Tissa, 78 ; Ghat, 78, 79, 84.
Tiwari, Doma, 185 ;
Shibnath, 146, 147.
Topa Munda, 61.
Torang (Torong), 76, 176.
Tori, 7, 28, 35, 39, 47, 69, 71, 73,
74, 78, 81, 83, 84, 85-89, 91, 92,
94, 95, 101, 133, 175, 186, 192,
220, 225 ; Rani of, 143.
Trotter, Robert, 89, 90, 93, 94, 194,
196, 198, 218-221, 224.
Turpapatti, 64, 71.
Udaiganj (Udayganj), 69, 81, 176.
Udaipur, 48, 91.
United States, 23.
Untari, 220.
Vice-President-in-Council, 97, 188,
215.
Waldenses, 106.
Walpole, R., 14.
Warren Hastings, 10.
Wilkinson, T., Captain, 33, 64-68,
71, 72, 74-77, 81, 83, 84, 89, 93-
98, 116, 117, 129-132, 139, 145-
147, 186, 193, 204, 214, 217, 218,
221, 223-225, 227, 229, 233-239,
242.
Wilkes, Col., 136.
Wilson, 131, 186.
Wilson, Horace Hayman, 3.
Zamindari (Ghatwali) police system,
58, 132-134, 143.
Zamindari dak, 127.

Call

10.7.6

ERRATA

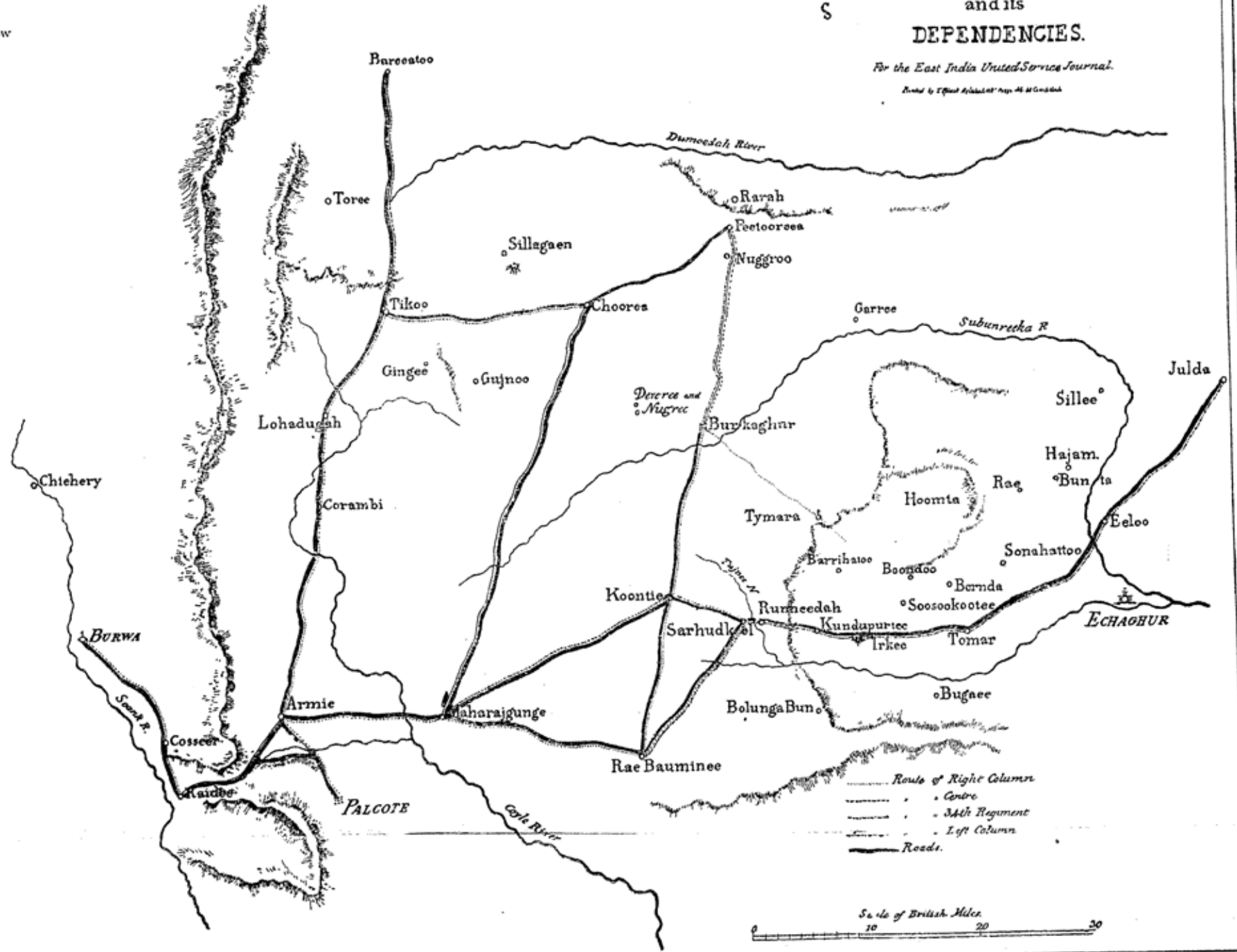
<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
3	10	episodeare	episode are (separate words)
3	26	subjcet	subject
11	19	estare	estate
11	21	Thakuria's	Thakurais
12	10	, (comma after Dharni)	delete
33	5	headman	headmen
43	16	1937	1793
43	4	peoples	people's
44	7	licentions	licentious
44	9	selfish	selfish
78	last but one	disposed	dispossessed
83	8	depo't	depot
85	last but one	Naik	naik
97	7	. (full stop)	: (colon)
102	9	necessasy	necessary
109	29	, (comma after 'sales')	delete
114	14		put comma between mankis and mundas
117	12		close the inverted commas after the dots
146	14	Gavindpur	Govindpur
205	11	ahd	and

The list is not exhaustive.

Munatoo about
20 miles in this direction
Lesliegunge

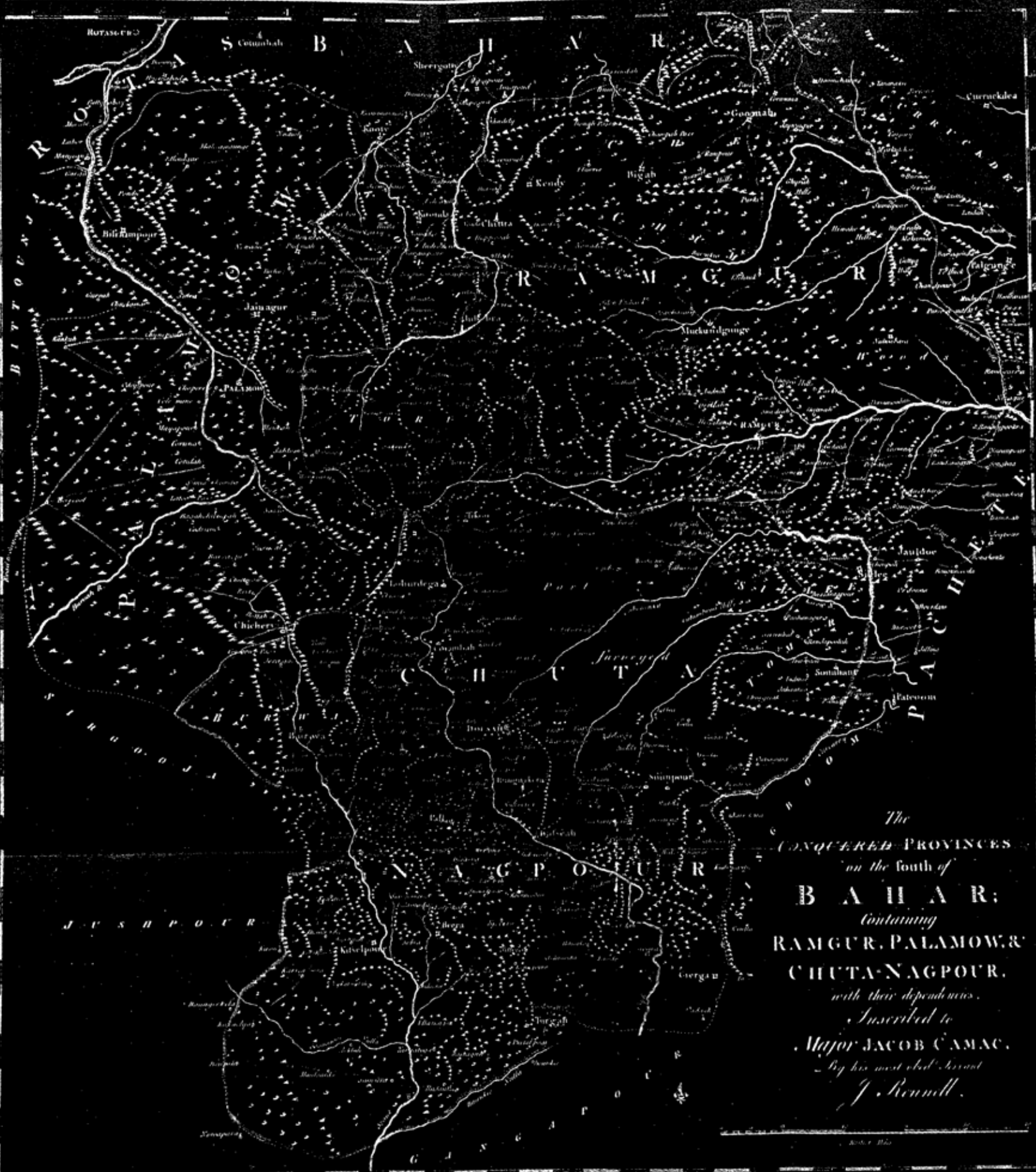
Sketch OF Chuta Nagpore and its DEPENDENCIES.

For the East India United Service Journal.
Printed by T. G. B. at the "Press" at Calcutta.



Ent 1 2 3 1 5
Ins. BRITISH 1 MUSEUM 2

Ps/483.
PP. 4030.c. (1833).



The
CONQUERED PROVINCES
on the south of
BAHAR:
Containing
RAMGUR, PALAMOW, &
CHUTA-NAGPOUR,
with their dependances.
Inscribed to
Major JACOB CAMAC.
By his most obedt. Servant
J. Rennell.





Get
✓ 30.7.79.

CV

Dec

Central Archaeological Library,
NEW DELHI.

Call No. 572.65416/Jha-42062

Author— Jha, Jagdish Chandra,

Title— Kol insurrection of
Chota-Nagpur.

_____ No. | Date of Issue | Date of Return

"A book that is shut is but a block"

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY
GOVT. OF INDIA
Department of Archaeology
NEW DELHI.

Please help us to keep the book
clean and moving.