

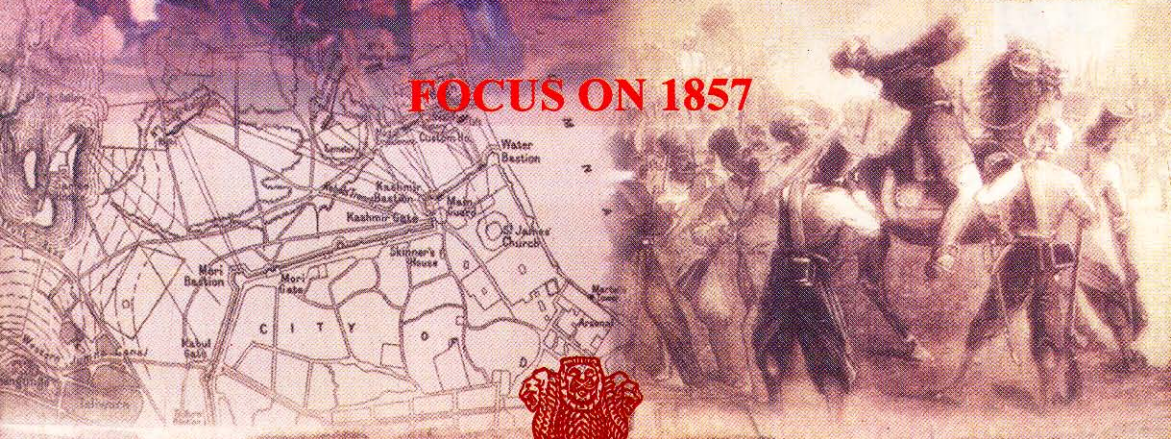


INDIAN HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION

Sources on Indian History

Volume-III

FOCUS ON 1857



National Archives of India
New Delhi
2007

PREFACE

The Revolt of 1857 is commonly perceived to be the culmination of traditional opposition to British Rule and was the first great struggle of the Indian people for freedom from British imperialism. Millions of people in different parts of India participated in the revolt which shook the mighty British Empire to its roots.

Right from the beginning of the British conquest, Indians never acquiesced in their political subjection. Not a year passed without an armed resistance to British rule in one part of the country or the other in the form of civil rebellions, tribal uprisings, peasant movements, etc. against exploitation by the British and their supporters — the class of *zamindars* and the moneylenders. The tribals, the sepoys, the deprived peasants and artisans formed the backbone of these rebellions. Some of the important revolts were those of the Sanyasis in Bengal and Bihar, peasant revolts of Midnapur, Rangpur, Mysore, Khandesh, Poligars of Tamilnadu, tribal revolts as of Santhals which swept across Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, of Khasis of North East, Kols of Bengal, Mundas of modern Jharkhand, Bhils of Central India, Kuki tribes of Manipur and Tripura, uprising of the Moplah peasants of Malabar and Chuars of Bihar and Bengal, uprising in Kittur, etc. The 1806 revolt of sepoys in Vellore was the first major uprising against the East India Company.

All the accumulated anger of the people and simmering discontent against the British finally found expression in the uprising of 1857 which shook the British rule in India to its foundations. The British expectedly termed it the 'Sepoy Mutiny' but Indian historians have hailed it as the 'First War of Independence' and 'an organized Hindu-Muslim Uprising' etc. The violent outbreak of the sepoys at Meerut on the evening of 10 May, 1857 was enthusiastically joined by the civil population of Hindustan. It brought the Hindus and Muslims together as a united force against the British rule which was evident from the declaration of Bahadurshah Zafar as the leader of the uprising.

The present volume commemorating the 150th anniversary of the uprising of 1857, is the third in the series 'Sources on Indian History' which brings together research papers on Indian history based on original sources, published in proceedings volumes of the Indian Historical Records Commission. This volume covers a vast array of papers relating to the subjects like influence of the press on the outbreak of the mutiny especially in Central India – Malwa, exclusion of high caste Hindus from Oudh Police after the mutiny, Study of mutiny letters in Madhya Bharat and Sohagpur, Bahadurshah Zafar of Delhi and the administration court of the mutineers. Some unpublished documents on the death of Rani of Jhansi and the mutiny in the Central India. Two unpublished records regarding the Sepoy Mutiny have been included in this volume. These papers have been authored by some of the most eminent historians, viz. R.C. Majumdar, Kali Kinkar Datta, Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, etc.

It is hoped that this volume will provide scholars with useful source material of this historic event, and encourage further research on the subject.

DR. SHITLA PRASAD

Director General of Archives and

Secretary,

Indian Historical Records Commission

New Delhi,

29 June, 2007

CONTENTS

	Pages
1. Two forgotten Mutiny Heroes - J.N. Samaddar	1-10
2. Influence of the Press on the Outbreak of the Mutiny especially in Central India-Malwa - K.L. Srivastava	11-14
3. A Contemporary Account in Persian of the Mutiny of 1857-58 - Syed Hasan Askari	15-20
4. Bahadur Shah II of Delhi and the Administration Court of the Mutineers - S.K. Banerjee	21-26
5. Two unpublished Proclamations of Nana Sahib - K.D. Bhargava	27-29
6. A Contemporary Mutiny account : Memorial of an Indigo Planter - K.K. Datta	30-39
7. Exclusion of High Caste Hindus from Oudh Police after the Mutiny - Nandalal Chatterjee	40-41
8. Some unpublished documents on the death of the Rani of Jhansi and the Mutiny in Central India - M.H.R. Taimuri	42-44
9. Some original documents relating to the Indian Movement of 1857-59 - Kali Kinkar Datta	45-54

10. Some contemporary records relating to the movement of 1857-59 in Chotanagpur, Manbhum, Singbhum and Palamau 55-61
- **K.K. Datta**
11. The Mutiny in Manbhum 62-74
- **Jagdish Narayan Sarkar**
12. The Patna Conspiracy of 1857 75-83
- **Jata Shankar Jha**
13. Some unpublished records regarding the Sepoy Mutiny 84-89
- **R.C. Majumdar**
14. Letters about the Mutiny of 1857 in Madhya Bharat 90-95
- **Y. Bhargava**
15. A study of some Mutiny letters of Sohagpur 96-100
- **Kameshwar Jha**
16. A Mutiny paper of Mirza Birjis Qadir Ramzan Ali Bahadur 101-103
- **Nandalal Chatterjee**
17. Mutiny and Titles with special reference to Bihar 104-112
- **V.C.P. Choudhury**
18. Some Mutiny Telegrams in the Bihar State Archives 113-121
- **N. Saran**
19. Musai Singh, the last survivor of 1857 'Mutiny convict' released from Andamans after 50 years in 1907 122-130
- **V.D. Divekar**
20. American views of the Mutiny of 1857 131-139
- **Rajiva Ranjan Misra**
21. Madras in 1857 revolt as reflected in the Madras records 140-145
- **M. Sundara Raj**

Two Forgotten Mutiny Heroes*

J.N. Samaddar

In the course of his official tour, Mr. G. E. Fawcus, M.A., I.E.S., O.B.E., C.I.E., the Director of Public Instruction of Bihar and Orissa, saw the graveyard at Chatra in the district of Hazaribagh (Chotanagpore), where were buried 50 men of Her Majesty's 53rd Regiment of Foot and a party of Sikhs on October 2, 1857, in action against mutineers of the Ramgarh battalion. There is no inscription at all in the graveyard and Mr. Fawcus requested me whether any light could be thrown on the question. He also drew my attention to *the Hazaribagh District Gazetteer*, p. 172, where occurs the following: —

“In the course of the Mutiny Chatra was the scene of a small but locally important engagement between the rebels and the British troops. The Ramgarh Battalion had mutinied at Hazaribagh and Ranchi, and though the Sepoys had received very little local support they were strong enough to compel the retirement of the government officials, and for two months they were masters of the situation. They then decided to leave the province by way of Chatra and join Kuar Singh at Bhojpur. At Chatra they were attacked by a mixed force consisting of a portion of the 53rd Regiment of British troops, and a detachment of Rattray's Sikhs, numbering in all 320 men. Apparently they were to some extent surprised; but they took up a strong position on the brow of a hill, and resisted stubbornly; for in the orders conferring on them the Victoria Cross Lieutenant J. C. C. Daunt of the 70th Bengal Native Infantry and Sergeant Dynon of the 53rd Foot are stated to have acted with ‘conspicuous gallantry in capturing two guns by pistolling the gunners, who were mowing down the detachment with grape.’ The rebels lost 150 men killed, and all their guns and ammunition; and those who

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceeding Volume—X, pp. 83–91.

scattered and escaped ceased to be a military force. There is a graveyard in Chatra where are buried the Europeans who were killed in this fight".

I lost no time in availing myself of the offer to elucidate the facts and immediately sought the advice of my friend, Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, M.A., F.R.S.L., the worthy Keeper of the Imperial Records and in the course of our investigation we came across with the three following documents:

A

Nos. 83-8.

*Message received by Electric Telegraph, from Sherghatty, Saturday,
3rd October, 9-23 p.m., from Lieut. Stanton.*

To—Calcutta

To—Secretary to the Government of India.

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

(Sd.) L. E. W. O'BRIEN,
3rd Assistant-in-Charge.

Calcutta,

Elect. Tele. Office

The 4th of October 1857—Despd. 8-25.

B

No. 89.

*Message received by Electric Telegraph, from Chuttra, via Burhee, 4th
October, 9 a.m., from Major English.*

To—Calcutta.

To—General Mansfield.

I came upon the Ramghur Mutineers at nine o'clock this morning, encamped on the west side of the Town after the enemy, their Guns are captured and their whole camp. We have taken four Guns and Waggons complete, ten elephants and much ammunition. Our loss is severe, thirty-six of Her Majesty's 53rd and 6 of the Sikhs killed and wounded, all officers are safe, the Men and Officers behaved nobly.

(Sd.) L. E. O'BRIEN,
3rd Assistant-in-Charge.

Calcutta,

E. T. Office;

4th October 1857—9 -p.m.

Secretary to the Government of India,

Army Department.

C

No. 152.

*Message received by. Electric Telegraph, from Chuttra, via Burhee,
7th October, 8-30 a.m., from Major English.*

To—Calcutta.

To—General Mansfield.

I have moved my camp to the east of the Town on a fine open plain. Major Simpson buried seventy-seven of the enemy yesterday, and reports that above one hundred are lying wounded in the Jungles and that the mutineers have dispersed. Two Subadars were brought in yesterday and hanged this morning. For the sake of the wounded I shall return to Hazarebagh by easy marches. The road is through Jungles in

many places and my party very weak to escort the line of the wounded, carts, Guns and Wagons. One hundred men would be of great assistance, the Guns will have to be dragged across many swamps and the road is very difficult; send me without delay Hospital Bedding and clothing for thirty men, hospital comforts and two casks of Rum, some treasure has been given over to Major Simpson.

(Sd.) L. E. W. O'BRIEN,
Pro Head Assistant-in-Charge.

Calcutta,
E. T. Office;
7th October, 1857.

The Imperial Record Department Archives also gave us the information that the following men belonging to Her Majesty's 53rd Regiment were killed during the action at Chatra on the 3rd October, 1857, viz.:—

1. Private William Cullen.
2. Private Patrick Burke.
3. Private John McAndrew.

Privates James Ryan and William Ashton subsequently died of their-wounds.

The paper in the Commissioner's office which is given below gives us a vivid account of the engagement, while the attached plan places before us the plan of the Battle, though the position of the 2nd gun of the Mutineers has not been shown. The Commissioner's office paper, however, does not mention the heroism of the winners of the Victoria Cross which we gather from Philip A. Wilkins' "The History of the Victoria Cross", London, 1904 and which is as follows:—

John Charles Campbell Daunt
(Lieutenant, afterwards Lieut-Colonel),
11th (late 70th) Bengal Native Infantry.

Decorated for conspicuous courage at Chatra, Bihar, on October 2, 1857, when in action against the mutineers of the Ramgurh Battalion one-third of the detachment had been mown down by grape-shot from two guns, when Daunt, in company with Dennis Dynon (V. C.) charged at the gunners, shot them down and captured both pieces.

Lieutenant Daunt was also specially mentioned for his gallantry on November 2, 1857, when he pursued the mutineers of the 32nd Bengal Native Infantry. Driving them across a plain into a thick cultivation, he, with a small party of Rattray's Sikhs, followed and attacked them, being himself dangerously wounded in the struggle. The mutineers greatly outnumbered Daunt's little force, and the ultimate preservation of any of the Sikhs was due to his courageous conduct and skilful leading.

Dennis-Dvnon
(Sergeant)
53rd Regiment.

Associated with Lieutenant J. C. C. Daunt, V.C., in heroically dashing at and capturing two guns from the Mutineers of the Ramguruh Battalion on October 2, 1857, at Chatra, Bihar.

Copy of the paper from the Commissioner's Office.

[From—Hazaribagh district (old correspondence), 1856-57, Vol. VII (spare copy).]

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

Sir,

My demi-official notes of the 30th, 1st and 2nd instant will have informed you of the advance of the force under Major English on Chittara and the defeat of the mutineers Ramguruh Battalion with detail of artillery and capture of 4 six-pounder guns on the 2nd of this month.

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

3. On the advanced guard passing west of the jail, the main body of the mutineers were discovered on the heights and skirmishers were

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

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

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

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

6. The conduct of the troops under Major English in the battle on the 2nd instant was beyond all praise, the cool intrepidity of the detachment Her Majesty's 53rd with every officer attached to it well seconded in the attack by the Sikhs under Lieut. Earle, and the excellent arrangements of Major English and his staff rendered success certain, and although it has been achieved at considerable loss, yet the object gained has been great and I trust will ensure the speedy tranquility of the whole of the province of Bihar, if not add considerably to the security of the country from the Son to Calcutta.

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

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

8. One of these men of the 8th I am led to believe was shot in the engagement of the 2nd. The mutineers had entertained a number of recruits, men from Bhojpur, Mugga or Bihar, and other parts, as also some discharged sepoy, and were actually teaching these with blank cartridge, the morning we approached Chuttra. Their ignorance or want of belief in our approach was most fatal to them as a party was actually plundering in the town at the time we were rounding the southern extremity of the city and within two gun shots of us. These men could have scarcely rejoined the main body before we attacked them and only knew of our approach from the top of a house, into the upper story of which they had proceeded for the purpose of looting the owner's property.

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

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

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

12. I have placed my seal on five boxes containing or supposed to contain treasure, two of these with Chub locks for want of keys we have been unable to open. In the other boxes there was found a good deal of small coins, pie, pice, etc., etc.; some rupees; also a chest of opium, all which I imagine must have belonged to the Lohardaga treasury, (I observed an office seal in one of the boxes), and on reaching Hazaribagh I will have the whole carefully examined and duly brought to the credit of Government.

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

14. I would have submitted this report earlier but as you may suppose under the circumstances detailed, have had little time to myself. Since the engagement the providing several requisites for about 50 wounded is no trifling task, and the means of moving them from a place which has been plundered and rifled by a mutinous battalion is no easy matter. However I trust our efforts will result in the admission of Government that we have all endeavoured to do our duty.

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

I have the honour to be, etc.,

(Sd.) J. SIMPSON,

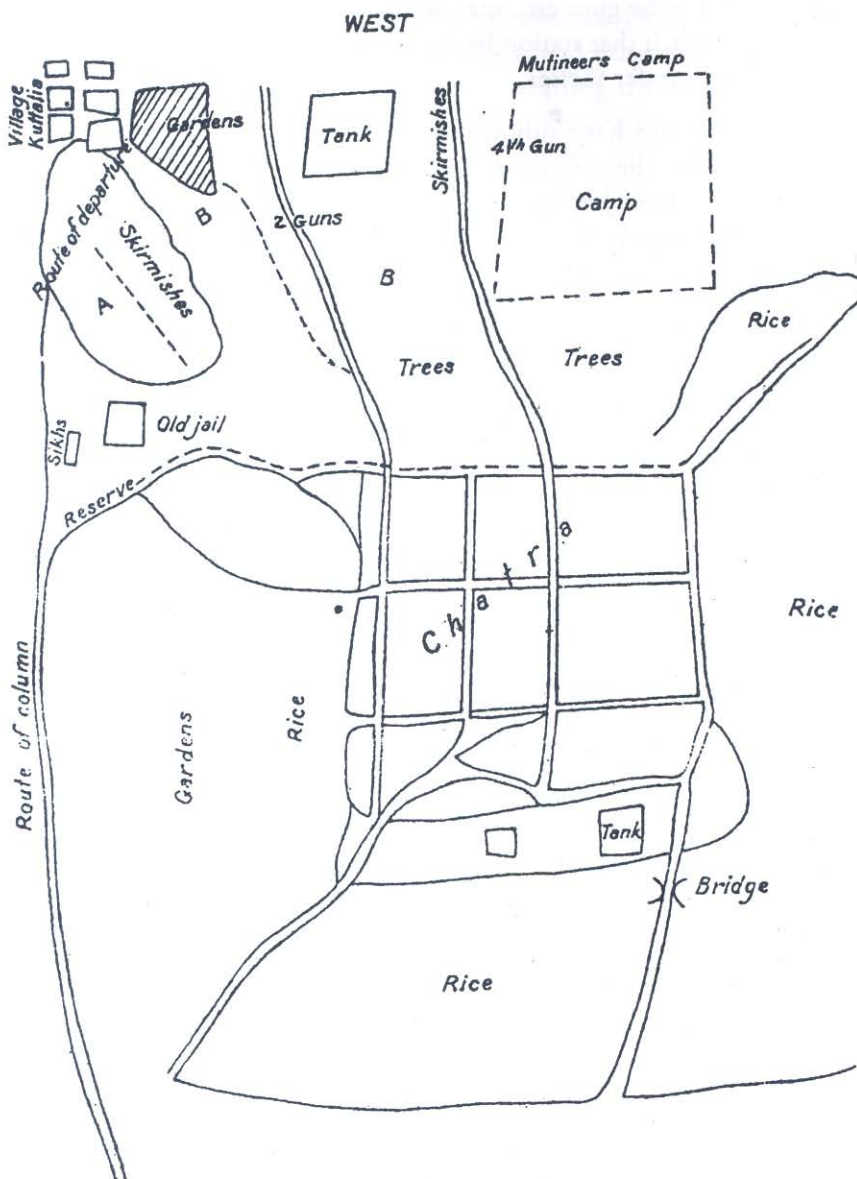
Principal Assistant Commissioner of Hazaribagh.

PRINCL ASST COMMR'S OFFICE,
HAZARIBAGH DIVISION,
CAMP KALAPAHAI NEAR CHITRA;
THE 4th OCTOBER, 1857.

Such in short is the plain and unvarnished history of two soldiers who sacrificed their lives for their king and country. No comments are necessary, no remarks are needed, but to them are very well applicable the pregnant words of Gray: —

“Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air”.

My object in bringing the above little facts to the notice of the learned historians assembled here and through them to the authorities concerned is that proper and systematic arrangement may be made so that proper tombstones may be erected and placed to perpetuate the memories of such heroes who for their king and country sacrificed themselves on the fields of glory.



Influence of the Press on the outbreak of the Mutiny especially in Central India-Malwa*

K.L. Srivastava

Sir Charles Metcalfe, during his temporary Governor-Generalship, passed the Act XI of 1835 giving full freedom to the Press.¹ Revolutionary as the measure was, it raised a storm of controversy among the British politicians? As it happened, the Indians took advantage of the liberty of the Press from 1835 to 1857 to insist on their political rights, to oppose the missionary activities, to resent the criticisms of the English Press on Indian social and religious practices, to shape a public demand, which was later backed by armed force during the Mutiny, for certain changes to prepare, in short, a full intellectual background for a revolution.² These activities were certainly not favourable to British interests. It appears from a despatch that the Court of Directors were alive to the magnitude of the Act. They characterised it to be opposed to all previous orders required by no emergency, an uncalled for substitution of legal responsibility for the previous licencing system".³ The Court of Directors, however, did not veto the Act and it remained in force up to the Mutiny when the full effects of the Act were realized by all. The Indian Press had brought about a great intellectual revolution and had thereby prepared the way for the Indian Mutiny.

Sir Charles Metcalfe himself, as early as 1825, wrote : "The real dangers of a free press in India are, I think, in its enabling the natives to throw off our yoke." An unbridled Press is as dangerous to the Government as a muzzled Press is to the public.

Public opinion was much influenced by the "Asiatic Mirror", "Bengal Journal", "Bengal Harkara", "The Telegraph", "India Gazette" "Dig-Dursun", "Samachar", "Hindu Patriot", "The Friend of India",

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XIX, pp. 156–158.

"Doorbeen", "Sultan-ul-akhbar", "Samachar Soodhurshun"⁴ and such other Papers. Among these we find a group of Government papers, a group of Missionary Papers and a group of Native Papers edited by Hindus and Muslims. The various groups had widely different outlooks. The English Press was often very free in its criticism of the Governmental acts but its principal object was to improve the administration. The Vernacular Papers on the other hand published translations of the articles of the English Papers mainly to broaden and deepen the distrust in the Government.

Prior to the Mutiny (1857) in Central India (Malwa), Indore and Gwalior were the two most important centres which had newspapers of their own. In Indore, newspaper was published under the title of "Perfect Moonshine". "Its last issue published the events of the 1st of July, 1857, (the day of the outbreak of the Mutiny at Indore). There was another Newspaper published at Indore called. "The Malwa Akhbar". This was also brought to an end by the insurrection. of 1857. The "Malwa Akhbar" was an official paper, and the "Perfect Moonshine" was a semi-official paper set up partly with the intention of opposing the views of the "Malwa Akhbar", At Gwalior, was published the "Gwalior Akhbar", but most of the news concerning the Gwalior State were published in the "Mofussilite". Both these papers⁵ (Paras 2 & 3, abstract) survived the Mutiny. The Papers published within the Province of Malwa had, however, little to contribute to the Mutiny. "Within the limits of this charge (Central India) I think there is less to be apprehended from the Newspapers that may be published locally than from Newspapers which come from Lucknow, Delhi, Agra, Benares and other places". Among the most popular foreign Newspapers which had a commanding influence in Central India were; the "Madvah Akhbar", Gwalior Akhbar", "Sealkote Akhbar", "Chusmah Fails", "Noor Murshurkee", "Persian Akhbar from Agra", "Delhi Akhbar", "Telermah Luckruiz", "Oonkor Eozegar", "Taleenool Hukkaayet" and the "Ahsoonool-Akhbar, Bombay"⁶.

The Newspaper acted as the transmitters not only of the news-items but also the comments published in the English contemporaries. In the case of comments on the acts of the British authorities they took deliberate care in putting perverted interpretation on administrative facts and exaggerated emphasis on official omissions or commissions. They laid their ingenuity under the fiddles possible contribution for fanning

discontent. As Mr. M. H. Durand aptly sums up in one of his minutes, "the ill-disposed were thus able to excite the race-antipathies of the masses, and fanned their hatred by appeals to every prejudice and passion which could intensify disgust at a foreign race and rule"⁷.

Native Newspapers had much influence upon the strata of Native Society below that of the Chiefs and perhaps had the greatest influence among the intelligentsia with national aspirations.⁸

At most of the Durbars, the British newspapers were received, and carefully read. All matters of importance were translated and made known to the Chiefs. Prior to the Mutiny, the Chiefs generally regarded them as helpful to their interest. But occasionally articles appeared in the British Press which embarrassed them because of the freedom of discussion which characterized them. These occasional but dangerous articles in the British Press gave a good handle to the mis-chief mongers who could easily translate the censorious passages and thereby fan discontent. The Native newspapers simply by translating such passages from the British Press did more harm to the British than by their own writings. It was difficult, to deal legally with them.⁹

The "*Hawking Publications*", also played not an insignificant part in bringing about the Mutiny. They contained "wholly distinct matter from the Native Newspapers" as they provided for the half-anna charm, half a dozen extracts from the religious books, provocative accounts of the campaigns in Sind, the Punjab, Afghanistan etc., a considerable quantity of writings on theology, forms of prayer, rules of ceremonial practices etc. They contained passages inculcating patriotism, racial bitterness and religious sentiments. "These (pamphlets) and the classics of Arabia and Persia were of usual stamp, but the pamphlets were more deserving of attraction and far more indicative of the feelings... of the population"⁹.

Besides newspapers, there were several other means of transmitting news in the pre-Mutiny period. Much of the local and foreign news were spread to the farthest corners of Malwa by bands of wandering sadhus and faquirs. The "hundis" received in many business, firms of Malwa were accompanied by news. The "hulkaras", "sandni-sowars", village 'kotwais' and the 'pandas' carrying 'gangajali' were as it were so many moving newspapers. The private letters carried by the 'bullock-train' drivers and the 'banjaras' were also a much utilised source of information in an age which had not witnessed an effective postal system.

All these agencies, in themselves harmless, became in the hands of interested persons an effective machinery for the dissemination of rebellious doctrines and thus played no small part in precipitating the insurrection of 1857. The "Madras Athenaeum" commenting on the contribution of the Press to the Mutiny wrote : "it is not the mal-administration of justice which gives rise to discontent but that being known leads to consequences which could not have been apprehended. Thus it is clear not the acts of the Government but comments of the Press are the real source of rebellion"¹⁰. It can hardly be denied that there is some truth in the above statement.

It is true that political and economic causes lay at the root of the revolt. But we should not ignore at the same time that the Press did play an important part in making the people alive to their grievances and thus preparing an intellectual background of the insurrection.

REFERENCES

1. "A Comprehensive History of India, Civil, Military and Social" by Henry Beveridge, Vol. III, Page 252.
2. "Report on the Newspapers in Central India" (1857).
3. Despatch of the Court of Directors dated 1st February, 1836.
4. "The Press in India, 1780-1908"—an article in the "Nineteenth Century and After" by S.M. Mitra, Vol. LXIV, No. 378, August, 1908.
5. Royal Asiatic Society, "Pamphlets on India" Letter No. 3. (Bombay Branch). Cf "The Native Press published matters objectionable and seditious."
6. Colonel H.M. Durand's Letter Dated 29th September, 1857.
7. Major W.H. Rickard's Letter Dated 5th November. 1857.
8. "Minute" Dated 25th January, 1866 By H.M. Durand C.S.I., Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.
9. Reply (to Government of India's circular letter dated 28th August, 1857) in Col. H.M. Durand's letter dated 29th September, 1857.
10. From "Madras Athenaeum" as quoted in the Royal Asiatic Society (Bombay Branch) Pamphlets on India, Letter No. 3.

A contemporary account in Persian of the Mutiny of 1857-58*

Syed Hasan Askari

An interesting poetical account of certain episodes of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 by an Anglo-Indian, named Francis Godlieu Quins¹, poetically surnmed Fraso, is available in a Persian Ms. which belongs to the O.P.L. of Patna. It is entitled "Fatah Nama-i-Angrez" or Zafar-uz-Zafar. The author says, on Fol. 98a., that he began writing it on the 15th of May, 1857, and finished it at the end of May of the following year, but certain events recorded by him did not occur till July, 1858.

We notice agreement between the author's account and those found in standard works on many important points such as Stories deliberately spread about the greased cartridges² and the mixture of ground bones of obnoxious animals in flours³; the disbandment and imprisonment of the 82 (85?) troopers (of the third Cavalry), on Saturday, the 9th May and the sympathetic rise of the men of other Indian regiments in Meerut⁴; the mutineers' march to the jail; the rescue of the prisoners; dance of death; wanton destruction of life and properties in European quarters; burning of the court buildings & of the registers of the Diwani Adalat⁵; murder of Col. Finnis⁶; while remonstrating with the troops on the 10th May (Fol. 17b-22); the mutineers' march on Delhi and the junction of the Meerut and Delhi forces; the emperors' collusion⁷ with the mutineers and fresh orgies of blood and the helplessness of the Europeans (Fol. 22a-23b); the first defeat of the mutinous sepoys on the other side of the Hindun river near Ghaziabad (not Ghaziuddin Nagar as in Kaye's),⁸ followed by two other defensive but successful engagements in which the Gurkhas fought along with Goras,⁹ (24-26); the move across the river Jumna to Alipur¹⁰

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XIX, pp.100-105.

and minor engagements there (Fol. 28); the seizure of powder, bullets and other ammunitions from the Delhi magazine; and the "first battle"¹¹ before Delhi (at Badle Ka Sarai on the 8th June) which resulted in the defeat and retreat of the enemies within the walls of the city. Here the poet "turns back to the beginning of the affairs" to tell us the sad and "perplexing story of the murder of Mr. Hutchinson¹², the collector and Magistrate of Delhi" and of Mr. Simon Fraser,¹³ "the resident of Delhi" within the fort and the palace of Delhi, (35-36). After a long and rather confused account of the doings of the Purbias and Telingas, the Ghazis and Jehadis and their repeated¹⁴ sallies, our author tells us about the "battle which raged on both sides for one weeks;" the attempt of the Mutineers to fall from the west on the camp of the English and destroy their grain supply¹⁵ (Fol. 36-40); the "arrival of reinforcements¹⁶ from the west from the side of Firozabad;" erection of the breaching batteries¹⁷ "between the Kashmir the and the Kabul gates facing the walls of the city;" "the last assault on Delhi;" successful "dash into the city;" general Wilson's exploits; capture of Bahadur Shah and murder of his 3 sons.¹⁸ The final struggle which resulted in the complete occupation of Delhi lasted, we are told, from the 14th to 20th Sept.¹⁹

Some of the points in which Fraso's version is at variance with those found in the standard works in English may be noted here (1) The cavalry troopers who were sentenced and imprisoned on Saturday, the 9th May, numbered 85 and not 82²⁰. (2) That Bahadur Shah called the mutineers, made them take oath, then spoke his mind, and appointed a son and a grandson, General and Colonel, does not appear to be correct.²¹ (3) That the Delhi insurgents belonged to 74 regiments with a total strength of 50,000²² is a new piece of information not borne out by other authorities. (4) Fraso alone tells us about 40 heavy guns of the enemies captured by the Goras in their first victory outside Delhi²³ (28b-33a). (5) The three sons of the king were not impaled but shot dead by Hodson²⁴.

It would be unfair to under-estimate the worth of this Ms. because of the limitations implied by the few instances pointed above. The real importance of the Ms. lies in the new and fairly detailed information it furnishes regarding the authors' own experience of the Mutiny. He gives a list of the Europeans, officials and businessmen, who fled for their lives from Delhi and elsewhere and found a welcome refuge²⁵ in the house of our poet. These included Col. Newett (?), Captain Forrest, Captain Manghir or Gamhnir, Mr. Carteret, Mr. Salcurn, the young Kelt, Mr.

Wilson, Mr. Proctor, Mr. Marshall "the ruined merchant", Mr. Webett, Mr. Hatts and Dr. Batson. There were also many ladies (Mem Sahiban). accompanying these refugees. The poet got news that Col. Newett or Hewett had fled from Delhi because of the atrocities of the sepoys. He hastened to welcome him and found him "distressed, tongue-tied, and in tattered clothes". The last to come was "the young and intrepid" Captain Kaf (Gough). He came to Harchandpur, the village where the poet lived, "and was accompanied by 30 horsemen, including a lieutenant." Before leaving for the Meerut Camp, they wrote testimonials appreciative of the services rendered by the poet. The poet's description of the "wise Dr. Batson,"²⁶ when the latter arrived at Harchandpur, is worth referring to. We are told that the Doctor had to come out from the Delhi Cantonment "being oppressed by the Sepoy miscreants". He "had to conceal himself in one village or the other". After a few days of wandering, he reached Harchandpur. He was "bare-footed," in "ochre-coloured clothes", with "an wooden rosary round his neck" and another "on his breast" and a hollowed gourd called "tunba" hanging from his neck. He had hardly any cloth-except a long "Kurta" and "was calling Ram Ram" but "otherwise appeared to have lost his senses" (75a). We get two other names, those of Captain Thomas Hald and of General Money. The former reached Harchandpur wounded and afflicted, and was looked after. As regards the latter, a line of the poet suggests that he had made use of the General's letters and dispatches (79).

Another portion of Fraso's work which specially attracts us is directed to the full and historically interesting account of his misfortunes, of the doings of his oppressors, Shah Mall,²⁷ the leader of the Jats and the Gujars, and his Afghan allies and of the successful expeditions of Mr. Robert Henry Walsh Dunlop, the magistrate and collector of Meerut, and the organizer of the Khaki Risala²⁸, against Shah Mall and Nirpat Singh²⁹. We learn that Shah Mall had raised a force which was composed of diverse elements. The execrable Afghan inhabitants of Harchandpur namely Nanwa,³⁰ Karim, Nadir, Aslat, Asalat Kharmast, Nanuhan had joined him. Ismael, Jasoudi and Rambhai, 'the inhabitants of Sonahra, used to keep company with him, and it is they who had persuaded some Telingas and Sepoys to join his force. Besides, his following consisted of a large body of Jats belonging to such villages as Sarkhlan, Bajrol, Johri, Bajwarah, Pothi, Dhanaura, Bodhera, Pois, Gorana, Naglagulab, Baroli Bali, Banali Baghom,

Santokhpur, Halvari, Barauth, Osaikh. Some of them joined Lajja Ram³¹ after Shah Mull had been slain. Sheo Singh,³² Biddhi and Jaishi were bound by religious tie to Shah Mall. All these vied with one another in oppressing people and wayfarers, plundering villages, setting fire to the houses and destroying grains and provision, if they could not carry them away. They were armed with swords and bayonets. Many of the scattered groups of penniless sepoys and Telingas had made a common cause with the Afghans and the Moghals, and the Jats and Gujar peasantry of the neighbourhood. The Afghan co-villagers of Fraso had represented the poet; "to have made it a profession to accumulate wealth." His Kothi, together with all its effects, was plundered, the ground floor was dug up and the hoarded wealth was brought out, loaded on Chakras and carried away. As for the old poet and his 'wife' Bukhti Bai,³³ they had been already tied with ropes, were mercilessly beaten with sticks until blood oozed out of their bodies, and were taken "in a Bahal (two wheeled cart) to village Maitli. The "black"³⁴ of this village, Jats and Gujars, received some of the plundered properties which were distributed at this place. Then his oppressors took him to Banali where the poet received another beating. They wanted some one to ransom him. Fortunately, he managed to secure the services of a Mahajan who stood a surety for him for Rs. 600. The money, along with its interest, was paid. The poet and Bukhti Bai were at last set free but at dead of night.

Fraso was brooding over his utter destitution at his village, and philosophising over the baneful effects of his wealth, when, two or three days after his victimisation, his saviours appeared in the persons of Mr. Dunlop, the Collector and Magistrate, Major Williams, Major Saros (?), Mr. Trumble, "the session judge, and many other bit; 'Sahebs'. They had set out from Meerut cantonment and arrived at Dola³⁵ which was 3 kos from Harchandpore, and were accompanied by the men of the Khaki Resala". Being determined to destroy the power of Shah Mull and hearing that the wretch was residing at Basaod,³⁶ Mr. Dunlop proceeded there and the village was burned down. The accursed Shah Mull fled to Dhanaura and when pursued, fled for his life towards Barauth³⁷ via Halwadi. He was, ultimately, overtaken and shot dead. His head being cut off was raised on the point of a spear, producing good results³⁸. The victors left Barauth, crossed the river Hindun and arrived and encamped at Sardhana³⁹. "The black had fled in thousands" but the village of Aqilpura was⁴⁰ still refractory. The Khakies arrived at the place

and set fire to the village. Nirpat Singh was defeated and slain. His head was severed from his body and his house was given over to plunder.⁴¹ The victors then left Sardhana for Meerut.

It is significant to find the author a representative of the Anglo-Indian Community, warning the English to "beware" of the Hindus and Musalmans "who really form one people", "the one siding with the Other", and to be "always watchful of them" and "never to trust the country in their hands", for, when "Hindus and Musalmans attain power, they are sure to be inimical to the Christians." They are advised further not to "refrain even from bloodshed" for "many a mischief is produced by evil-doers" and to "manage their affairs with the help of their own fellow-men" and "to send Christians in India in every direction."

REFERENCES

1. Described as "an Urdu Poet of the German race." (*Adabi dunya*. Annual Number, 1939). Fraso's father, Augustus Quins, a German, had married a French Lady and he was born at Sardhana, According to his Grandson. George Pris, 'Shor,' he died as an old man in 1861.
2. KI, 491, 559.
3. KI, 639.
4. KI, 653.
5. 11642.
6. KII, 59,665.
7. c/o KI, 643.
8. KI, 183.
9. 11187.
10. 11191-193.
11. 17188
12. He was murdered on the 11th May, 1857; (KII, 80).
13. KII, 77, 665.
14. 11554, 574-80.
15. Events of July 4th and 17th (KII, 565, 391).
16. This probably refers to the arrival of the Punjab Movable column on Aug. 12 (KII, 650.)
17. KIII, 559-69; MII, 12-20.

18. KIII, 650.
19. K, 610, 645; MII, 51, 79.
20. KII, 51.
21. KI, 643.
22. Wilson's estimate of 46,000—KIII, 551; MII, 79.
23. KII, 184, 187, 190, 192.
24. KIII, 652; MII, 79.
25. Fraso is unable to say about the ultimate fate of Massy and those people.
26. The Surgeon of the 74th Regiment who attempted on May 11 to convey letter from Delhi to General Hewett at Meerut. He disguised himself as a Fakir but the colour of his eyes betrayed him. He was robbed and stripped by the Villagers and finally cast adrift to wander about naked and hungry, weary and foot sore; KII, 91-92).
27. Malieson, III, 429-34.
28. The regiment was raised at Meerut in June, 1858, and was composed of English- men, Eurasians and a few Sikhs (MII, 428).
29. *Ibid*.
30. Note the names of persons and places which are quite new and not available elsewhere.
31. This is new and probably an important name. Mallesan, however, says nothing about the man and his activities.
32. Despite Malleson's silence about the trio, they can not, perhaps, be ignored.
33. A Jaipuri woman who outlived Fraso. and had constant dispute with his grandson 'Shor' about the property of the diseased; see Shore's Urdu Masnavi about the Mutiny published by Maadan-i-Faiz Press, Agra, 1863.
34. That our Anglo-Indian poet always speaks of the sepoys as "Seyatian" is significant.
35. Malleson pronounces it as "Deola". It was towards the end of July, 1858, that Dunlop arrived at this place.
36. MIII, 431. Acc. to Mr. Peyare Lal, Shaukir of Meerut, Shah Mall had plundered Fraso's house on the 17th July, 1858; (*Adbi Dunya*, 1939).
37. MIII, 432. Shah Mall had about 2000 men under him.
38. *Ibid*, 434.
39. The seat of the well-known Begam Samru in whose service Fraso's father had been; see MIII.
40. Malleson calls it Akalpura; the village belonged to Nirpat Singh, a "notorious rebel"; MIII, 435.
41. MIII, 435.

Bahadur Shah II of Delhi and the Administration Court of the Mutineers*

S.K. Banerji

Muhammad Bahadur Shah II was the last Mughal potentate. He was very old and infirm when the Indian Mutiny took place at Delhi in 1857 and he was dragged by the mutineers from his palace to be seated on the throne of his forefathers. He took up his task seriously and made earnest efforts to conduct the administration, e.g., in order to conciliate his Hindu subjects he had issued orders that no sacrifice of a cow, bullock or calf would be permitted on the Baqar-i-id Day¹. While he had to look after the civil administration, he had also to defend the city against the British besiegers. He had also to keep a careful watch on his insolvent and lawless soldiery, but here his efforts were mostly futile and infructuous.

Amongst the Mutiny papers is a unique document, 57-539 of the Press list published by the Government of India in 1921, which testifies to Bahadur Shah's anxiety to control his unruly soldiery. A court of ten members was appointed and among its aims and objects was included getting riddance of the terrible mess to be noticed in the several military and civil departments.

The following regulations were made to establish the court and direct its deliberations:—

1. A body named the Administration Court be established for the proper administration of the civil and military affairs of the country.
2. The Court shall consist of ten members of whom six were to be chosen from the military and four from the civil, and of the six military

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXIV, pp.47–50.

members, two will represent the infantry, two the cavalry and the remaining two the artillery.

3. The President and the Vice-President shall be elected by the members from among themselves and the Court shall resolve itself into five committees to look after the administration of the different departments

4. At the time of appointments, every member shall declare on oath that he would discharge his duties with integrity and not be subject to greed, malice or deception, his sole consideration to be to improve the administration and add to the peace and happiness of the ryots. Before the publication of the minutes of the proceedings, no member shall divulge them without permission from the President and the Court.

5. Only those members are to be chosen from the army who have put in approved service and are known to be prudent and likely to be of use to the State. In exceptional cases, one possessing the requisite qualifications but not the length of service may be selected; the other members shall not raise any objection to his choice.

The same shall apply to the selection of the civil members.

6. A member guilty of partiality or dishonesty shall be forthwith removed by the Court and recourse will be taken to regulation 5 for the selection of his successor.

7. All matters of the government shall be placed before the members and decided by the majority of votes. The decision shall next be placed before the Saheb-i-Alam-Bahadur for his consent and then finally for Huzur-i-Wala's approval². If, there, be a conflict of opinion between the Court, and the Saheb-i-Alam Bahadur, the matter will be placed at the Court meeting for reconsideration. If disagreement still persists the proceedings in full shall be placed before the king whose decision shall be final.

8. No one but the members is to have access to the meetings of the Court. The Saheb-i-Alam Bahadur and the king shall have the right to be present whenever they choose.

9. A resolution or amendment proposed by a member shall have the consent of at least one other member.

10. The proposer of a resolution shall speak first on it and without any interruption from the other members; after him an opposer will speak and then the supporter of the resolution and lastly the other members by turn.

10A. After the passing of a resolution by the Court and its approval by the king, it shall be circulated among the secretaries of the different departments-for information and necessary action.

11. The persons chosen from the military sections are also to act as their supervisors. To the two supervisors in each section shall be attached four other-members to form a committee, one of whom will act as its Secretary. The resolutions of the committee will be placed by a supervisor before the Court.

12. The Court shall, with the consent of the majority of its members, make-alterations in these regulations.

Let us make some observations on these regulations: —

1. A crude attempt was made by Bahadur Shah to introduce a popular element in the administration. But the details of the procedure of selection of the members of the Court are not forthcoming and we surmise that in the midst of stress and storm of war, he was content to nominate them. Since the military members were to control important sections, they must be senior officers.

2. Occasionally additional members of experience were invited if their presence was helpful to the deliberations.

3. No regulation is put down for the selection of the civil members. The civil departments were numerous and the choice of a member must have been restricted to the few important ones.

4. It is not clear how the two members from one military section correlated with each other especially when each acted as the convener of an important committee. Probably the two mutually agreed on the division of their work.

5. The decisions of the Court were not final but subject to the approval of the Saheb-i-Alam Bahadur and the king.

6. The Court dealt with all affairs under the sun. In the then disturbed state-its exact military and civil duties are not clear. More than

once it helped the authorities by encouraging the mutineers against the English.

The document is undated and bears no official seal and is written on cheap paper.

In the Mutiny papers there were several references to the Administration Court:—

(a) In some of the papers, it is seen acting as an advisory body, *e.g.* on a few occasions it informs the officers of the army that the king had promised to reward them if they carried the enemy trenches by assault and if they fell, their, surviving heirs would be supported³. Similarly it advised the king to agree to grant rewards to the soldiers in case of victory.⁴ It also supplemented the orders of the military headquarters by issuing instructions to the officers to oppose the approaching English⁵ and informing a colonel of the shortage of ammunition in camp⁶. It approved of a Brigade Major's proposal to construct a bridge and strengthen the guard at a particular post.⁷ It tried to maintain discipline in the army by forbidding plunder while fighting was going on.⁸ We have serious doubts whether all the instructions of the Court were attended to at all.

How disturbed the conditions were at Delhi may be granted from another document⁹ where the king directs the Court to stop the soldiers and elephant drivers from destroying the royal and private gardens. If the king felt helpless in the matter how could an advisory body like the Court be expected to be more effective? We presume that the complaint was made merely for the information of the Court and no prompt measures were expected of it.

There is another document¹⁰ which bears witness to the king's distress. It is addressed to his military officers and (a) expresses his weak state of health, aggravated by their lawlessness; (b) a request is made to them to remove the military guards placed on his *hakims* and to desist from laying hands on the people's property; (c) a warning is given that the plunderers will be severely dealt with by the Court and they are told that if punishment be not palatable to the soldiery he would either retire to the shrine of the Khawaja Sahib¹¹ or commit suicide by swallowing a diamond and even be ready to be killed by his own lawless men.

The document, written in Urdu for the benefit of his common soldiers, gives a vivid picture of the king's plight and his unfitness to act as leader at such a stormy period. He weeps over Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's death piteously bewails that now there was none else but God to look after him and pleads for the release of another of his *hakims* so that he might get a regular treatment and be cured of his malady. He goes on to complain of the misdoings of the soldiery and asserts that the spoliation of his subjects' property was nothing less than the spoliation of his own. The last, no doubt, shows his concern for his subjects but to no purpose; for when he threatens to set the Administration Court to punish them, he knew perfectly well how little he could rely on it. Probably, for this reason, he threatens at the close of the *hukmnama*, as it has been termed, of his resignation or putting an end to his life.

We are further enlightened of the king's distress by the document, 60-71. of the Press list, where a protest is lodged against the king's policy of obtaining money by raising loans from the local money-lenders. The petitioners point out that two such loans had already been raised in the past on promise of their repayment in full, together with an addition of twenty-five per cent, of the loan but the sum thus raised mostly remained with the corrupt middlemen, allowing only a meagre sum to reach the king. They also complained against the Administration Court, darkly hinting at some member being in secret league with the English and suggesting the substitution of a Council of only four men in its place.

We do not know whether the king approved of the last suggestion, but think it would not have improved matters at all.

In conclusion it may be stated that the whole atmosphere was steeped in suspicion, corruption, intrigue and lawlessness and no one was really interested in the affairs of the state and least of all, the Administration Court, and the king who alone seemed to think of the people, was infirm and powerless to do any lasting good to his suffering subjects.

Such is the gloomy picture of the conditions prevailing at the headquarters of the mutineers at Delhi.

REFERENCES

1. See, Press list of the Mutiny papers, 1857, p.p. 61-245.

2. Saheb-i-Alam Bahadur, it appears from another document (Persian O. R. 135-167) addressed by the king to the chief of Jaisalmiar to refer to Muhammad Bakht Khan, Bahadur Shah's deputy and entitled Lord Governor-General Bahadur. The Hazur-i-Wala refers to Bahadur Shah.
3. See papers 426-7, 429, 431-3, 437, 439, 443 all belong to section 57.
4. 57—445.
5. 57—470.
6. 57—449.
7. 57—486—9.
8. 57—56—60.
9. 57—573.
10. 135—167—170.
11. 135—167—170.

Qutbuddin Kaki, Muinuddin Chishti's successor. The Khwaja Saheb's tomb lies in the neighbourhood of the Qutb Minar.

Two Unpublished Proclamations of Nana Sahib*

K.D. Bhargava

The historical literature on the Indian Mutiny is admittedly of a voluminous nature, but very little has been written from the Indian point of view, which would give "the other side of the medal". The skill, initiative and resourcefulness displayed individually by rebel leaders have never been questioned, but it is an accepted fact that one of the main reasons for their failure was the lack of any co-ordinated plan of action. Nana Sahib, the adopted son of Ex-Peshwa Baji Rao II, issued two proclamations on 6 July 1857 which throw welcome light on the military organisation set up at his instance. English translations of the proclamations were sent by M.H. Court, Magistrate and Collector of Allahabad to G.F. Edmonstone, Secretary, Foreign Department, Government of India¹. Some important points from the proclamations are given below, which show that the rebel forces were governed almost by the same rules and regulations as the forces of the British Government and were in no way inferior to them.

Each infantry or cavalry regiment was placed under a Colonel who was to be the Commanding Officer. Under him were two officers, a Major who was to be second in command, and an Adjutant. The duties of these officers have been given at length in the proclamation. It was the duty of the Colonel "to command his Troops, and execute any orders which the 'Sirkar' may issue with respect to any arrangement as to be made in the Regiment." He was vested with full authority to adopt all necessary measures with regard to the construction of batteries and the conduct of war, but he was to implicitly obey any instructions from headquarters and to act in conformity with them.

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXV, Part II, pp.136–137.

The Major was considered as "The Aide-de-Camp of the Colonel assisting him by his advice and aiding him in commanding the Regiment." He was also to carry on the duties of the Colonel during his absence. The duties of the Adjutant included the supervision of the Regimental drills and training soldiers in military manoeuvres, He was also to hold charge of the records of the office of the Quarter-Master and to take care of the magazine and ammunition and prevent misappropriation of the goods under his control. "He will moreover see what quantity each sepoy has in his possession. If any of these articles be injured, found less in number or misappropriated, the person who may injure or misappropriate them, will be considered as a culprit."

The document also contains minute details concerning the clerical staff. A Munshi was attached to each regiment and his salary was to be paid by "the 10 Sirdars of the 10 Cos. that are in the receipt of allowances." It is not clear who the ten Sardars were but it may be safely presumed that the so-called rebel army was originally divided into ten companies at the head of each of which was a "Sirdar." The Munshi's duties may best be told in the words of the proclamation—"The duty of this "Moonshee shall be on the expiration of the month to prepare the Pay Lists of the 10 Companies as well as the Muster Rolls showing the number of Sepoys present, absent and wounded and to submit them under his signature to the Adjutant of his Regiment."

The Adjutant had to keep one Head Munshi and two Assistant *Moharrirs* whose salary were to be paid by the Government. On the occasion of the assembly of a Court Martial, the Head Munshi had to record the allegation of the plaintiff, the depositions of witnesses and the judgment of the Court. After getting the judgment signed, it was his duty to make it over to the Commanding Officer of the Regiment, who after attesting it forwarded it to the Brigadier. From the Brigadier the papers were finally transmitted to the "Sarkar" and the sentence of the court was given effect to on approval. The salary of the Head Munshi was Rs. 50/- and the two *Moharrirs* under him got, Rs. 10/- each.

One of the two *Moharrirs* was to attend the "Sarkar's" office every day. At 4 O'clock he had to copy out and take to the Adjutant's office any orders which may be issued by the "Sarkar." These orders were then promulgated and enforced in the regiment, by the Adjutant.

In addition to this a number of other proclamations were issued by Nana Saheb during the initial stages of the Mutiny. One of these

brings out clearly the generous pension which a wounded and disabled soldier of this army was to receive and the pension to which the surviving heirs of a deceased soldier were entitled. This proclamation dated 6 July 1857,² reads as under: —

“Every man belonging to the Artillery, the Infantry and the Cavalry, who has joined us or will join us in the contest, a Pension will be given for one generation, to his son, or his wife, or his mother or his sister, or his daughter. And whoever has been, or may he be incapacitated by wounds, he will get a Pension for his life according to custom; and those who are not incapacitated, and remain on duty, and those who get old in the service, will also receive Pensions according to custom. And whatever the rate of pay at Dehlee may be, that will be given here from the day of joining the army of the “Sirkar”.”

It would be interesting to know how the military organisation actually functioned, but I have not been able to gather any materials from available papers in the custody of the National Archives of India.

REFERENCES

1. Foreign Secret Cons., 21 July 1857, Nos. 88-89. (National Archives).
2. Foreign Secret O. C, 31 July 1857, No. 88.

A Contemporary Mutiny Account : Memorial of an Indigo Planter*

K.K. Datta

In the transcripts of records which I secured a few years back from the National Archives, New Delhi, for the preparation of a thesis on the Bihar phase of the Indian movement of 1857-59, I got the following account in the memorial¹ submitted to the Governor-General and Viceroy of India in Council by Alexander Martin, an Indigo planter in the district of Azimgurh (Azamgarh). On the 3rd June, 1857, the Sepoys of the 17th Regiment at Azamgarh² under the command of Major Burroughs revolted, whereupon the European residents of this place fled to Ghazipur.³ Azamgarh continued to be a centre of the movement for several months more. Kunwar Singh, the brave leader of the movement in Bihar, made a diversion. in eastern Oudh in March-April, 1858. He joined a party of his comrades at Atraulia (25 miles distant from Azamgarh) on the 17th March". A body of British troops under Colonel Milman attacked him there within a few days but were, themselves defeated and retreated to Azamgarh.⁴ Azamgarh was relieved by Lord Mark Kerr, whom Lord Canning had deputed specially for this. But Kunwar Singh continued fighting. against the British troops under Brigadier Douglas (April 17—April 21).

The Indigo planters naturally supported and helped the Company's government. In the document quoted below we read of Alexander Martin, an Indigo planter in the district of Azamgarh, praying for the grant of two confiscated taluqs of Shamsabad and Khorason in that district in recognition of his services to the government of the Company, particularly his work as an engineer in "fortifying the

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXVIII, Part II, pp.19-25.

Azimgurh Kutcherry" on the eve of the Mutiny there and for construction of the Azamgarh fort. He claims preference to the Indian zamindars, whom he deprecates in strong terms and holds out an assurance to pay increased revenue after a period of ten years by effecting various improvements.

This document also contains names of officers in command of the troops of the Company's government, during the investment of Azamgarh by Kunwar Singh and some new and interesting details regarding the latter.

Political Cons (Supply) 30 December 1859 nos. 590-97.

To

His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Charles
John Viscount Canning

Governor General and Viceroy of India in Council.

The Memorial of Alexander Martin Indigo Planter in the District of Azimgurh Respectfully sheweth.

That your Memorialist solicits a perusal of these pages, in as much as he has a conviction, from the tenor of the reply received from Government, through the Commissioner 5th Division to his first application submitted through the Collector of Azimgurh to Government for a grant of the Two confiscated Talookas of Shumshabad and Khurasoon in the Azimgurh District that Memorialists claim for services rendered in a Military capacity and as a Military Engineer has not been fully detailed to show the good effects proceeding from them; in order to enable the Government to arrive at a fair estimate of their value to the state at the most critical period, commencing from the time when the cartridge question was agitated by the Troops 17th Regt. B.N.I, and detail of Artillery with guns under Lieutenant Parish. Your Memorialist begs to lay this memorial in a narrative form before your Lordship and prays for a review of his case in finally deciding the measure of the reward due to him. Memorialist in his first application through Mr. Davies the Collector and Magistrate did not file the whole of his certificates, he now does so, soliciting a perusal.

2nd. Memorialist respectfully desires to bring to your Lordship's notice that from the very first, he volunteered his services to the Government and their value to the state is fully acknowledged in the

letters (herewith filed in original) from the Authorities, and at all times Memorialist has cheerfully done his part as a good subject by making himself useful for the benefit of the public works as an Engineer. The many extensive works executed by him are convincing evidence of his ability, and of his readiness to serve the Government and, show he is not deficient in qualification and experience of a nature, that only requires the opportunity to expand itself for the benefit of his adopted country. Moving in a, limited sphere of life, it has been his constant endeavour to do his part in such a manner as to earn the good opinion of his superiors. But in the isolated position the Memorialist has passed his days, it has not been possible for him to effect the good he could do for want of means and a position, and should he be so fortunate as to be successful in this his only chance of preferment; he in all humbleness of mind feels assured that the honor conferred on, and the trust confined in him will not be misplaced.

3rd. Memorialist has a perfect knowledge of the country the habits and customs of the people and their institutions, he can read and write the Oordoo sufficiently well for all practical purposes; of the system of village management Memorialist has much experience. Mr. Davies Magistrate and Collector of Azimgurh in his letter to the Commissioner No. 158 of the present year has done Memorialist the honour to bear emphatic testimony in Memorialist's behalf in the following extract. "It is not every European to whom the management of large estates can be wisely confided, but in this respect Mr. Martin may be safely recommended. He speaks the language perfectly, has had experience as a Planter, is possessed of resources as a Civil Engineer, and is likely to deal with his tenants fairly and considerably."

4th. In the Government despatch it is decided your Memorialist has earned a good claim to a reward, but that it is a question of a little time, before the award is made; remarking that Memorialists' application is of too high a value. Memorialist would here solicit a reconsideration of the subject in all its bearings, for with a smaller income than these estates are reputed to yield, Memorialist would be unable to do any thing in the way of improving the estates or the condition of the Royots. It being a fact that needs no elucidation that native Landlords as a general rule never lay out a farthing on their estates in the view of improving them, or encouraging the spread of scientific knowledge amongst their own class or brotherhood, or of being the means of enabling their Ryuts to improve the capabilities of their

holdings; and thus save them from the grasp of the village Mahajun. A large field is open to the intelligent and public spirited European Landlord, the productiveness of the soil is abundant if properly developed by Irrigation, an improved method of manuring, the introduction of a better description of cattle for the plough, and alternation of crops etc. the want of these principal features in husbandry is notorious; and none but a European Landlord who has abilities and energy to guide him could introduce these beneficial changes.

5th. Memorialist as an Indigo Planter, has minutely studied the practice of Agriculture during the past 7 years, and has found by practical experience that an incredible amount of ignorance prevails amongst the, Zemindars, and peasantry in the most ordinary method of cultivating land to the best advantage. Nothing so interests them as the condition of their lands and crops, but they are powerless to effect any change although of such vital importance to them; their landlords aiding in no way, they are thus thrown into the native Mahajans hands who never do business under 50 per cent., and not infrequently much more; hence the condition of the tenant is in a great measure at its lowest with no prospect of regeneration. Memorialist relies on the known enlightened views entertained by your Lordship on the requirements of India, that your Memorialist's prayer will meet with a fair hearing, and his endeavours to do the good, he would be enabled to perform encouraged by a favourable decision.

6th. Your Memorialist respectfully represent for your Lordship's consideration that by the bestowal on him of the Two Talookas asked for, his sphere of usefulness and social position would only be established in a decent mediocrity leaving barely 5,000 rupees a year clear to lay out on the improvements Memorialist would undoubtedly inaugurate. There being about 24 or 25 villages constituting the Talookas Rs. 200 a year would only be available for each, in sinking new wells, forming new Bunds and Tanks and in deepening the old ones. The Government Revenue or demand is about Rs. 8,000 a year. The rent Roll nominally about Rs. 19,000 which Memorialist doubts the estates in their present neglected state pay easily. These estates are at present under Memorialist's management and with every exertion during the past year he could only, realise about Rs. 14,000, nor do the Collections of the present year promise more favourably. The cost of collection and other village expenditure to the landlord would not be under Rs. 2,000

annually. Assuming that the rent roll is Rs. 19,000 after deducting the above outlay leaves Rs. 4,000 a year or nearly 334 Rs. a month for the landlord as his share for personal expenses. Each village in these estates would require from 2 to 4 new wells to give a moderate supply of water for irrigation, beyond that obtainable from the present available supply, before there could be any reasonable hopes of an increase in the collections, or to receive the present dues without pressure on the tenants.

7th. To effect these improvements a period of 10 years would be taken up, then no doubt a decided increase might be counted upon. Memorialist would steadily lay out the above mentioned proportion *viz.* Rs. 5,000 a year on works of Irrigation; and other improvements, and devote the whole of his energies to develop the resources of the trust confided to him (for memorialist is of opinion that property has its duties as well as rights) and he feels confident that a few years would prove the difference between a Zemindaree conducted by a European and that of any by a native Talookdar.

8th. Your Memorialist respectfully solicits your Lordship's attention to the following facts connected with his services before and after the breaking out of the mutiny.

9th. At the desire of the Civil Authorities your Memorialist rendered, as is acknowledged by Mr. Simson Joint Magistrate in his certificate "Invaluable aid in fortifying the Azimgurh Kutchary" a few days before the outbreak. The Troops mutinying suddenly on the evening of the 3rd of June 57 by killing one officer and wounding the Quarter Master Serjt, the Civil and Military Officers with their families were compelled to fly for their lives. Of these events your Memorialist knew nothing, until the morning of the 4th of June, 1857 when all the villagers rose up as one man, plundering not only the European planter but each other. All roads were closed and communication with the city stopped and impossible by any means whatsoever for the first two days. On the 6th of June your Memorialist determined on attempting a passage to the City with his family at imminent risk, and he was the first to enter the city alone of his own accord (of course escorted by some loyal Zemindars, whose names Memorialist has given to the Magistrate in hopes that their loyalty would be rewarded); At this time it was in agitation within the city to raise a Rajah to the command of the District, this was told by zemindars to Memorialist, who are returning

from the city consultation. Memorialist easily foresaw the mischief that would ensue if such an event took place, and on arrival in the city took measures to allay the ferment agitating the native mind on the mutiny of the troops and intrigues of the disaffected towards the Government. As Memorialist was well known amongst most of the influential men of the city, he sought these persons, and explained the power of the British Nation and made them to understand that speedy relief would arrive by troops ordered to Calcutta in place of proceeding to China, and all opposition be borne down. Memorialist's arguments were listened to with attention, and seconded by the tact and devotion of several of the native officials produced a revulsion (revulsion) of feeling in our favour. Azimgurh was thus kept from breaking out into any open hostility to the Government. Mr. Philip Niblett also assisted in reassuring the native mind. Memorialist respectfully submits, that to his opportune arrival in Azimgurh and his stay for 12 days amongst an excited population at a most critical moment may in some degree be attributed the peace and safety of the city.

10th. Memorialist would with due submission observe that he has seen a notice of the reward given to Mr. Boyle District Engineer on the Railway, for fortifying his house at Arrah and defending it along with others who took refuge in it from the fury of the Dinapoor mutineers and rebel villages. Memorialist would not for an instant detract any thing from the honour, due to Mr. Boyle for his high courage and ability in the Arrah affair, but in justice to himself Memorialist humbly asks permission to be allowed to contrast the extent and importance of the works (executed and continued series of services rendered) by your Memorialist in comparison with the Arrah fortification. The one was a place of refuge for 60 men, the Azimgurh Fort proved a place of security for hundreds. The Madras Cavalry under Colonel Cumberledge about 400 men and horses European Infantry 37th Regiment about 280 men and Madras Rifles about 120, Colonel Lord Mark Kerr with his detachment of Infantry and wounded found shelter therein together with many carts with stores, and Government cattle for the guns under Lieutenant Welsh. Mr. Boyle's active services continued for about a month, and they were deemed worthy of a jageer of Rs. 10,000 a year, while your Memorialist's services extending over a period of several months without any kind of remuneration are considered by one single authority as meriting a reward of a Jageer of Three or Four thousand Rupees a year only; whereas by Mr. Davies the Magistrate, whose

judgement must have been confirmed by the united opinion of the Civil and Military Officers present during the siege, and who was himself present, and was a constant eye witness of Memorialist's exertions, and could thus form a just estimate of their value, has strongly recommended your Memorialist for a reward commensurate with the value of the services rendered.

11th. To Captain G. M. Boileau on the first instance is the honour due for deciding that a Fort should be built. It was planned and constructed by Memorialist as testified to by Mr. W. Wynyard Sessions Judge of Azimgurh, as also to Memorialist's Military services in commanding and working the Barbette Battery against the enemy's guns in the following extract's from his Report to Government dated 13th July, 1858. "To Mr. Martin we are indebted in a great measure for the design and construction of the Azimgurh Fort in September, 1857, he was present throughout the siege and during the sally on the 28th March, and on many other occasions worked and laid the 6 lb. gun against the enemy's battery and in covering the retirement of the sallying parties. Mr. Martin who volunteered his services as Garrison Engineer was constantly exposed to the Enemy's fire during the seige. He was also employed in reconnoitering under fire. He has been favourably noticed by Colonel Dames commanding at Azimgurh to the Deputy Adjutant General of the Army dated 28th March, 1858 for his activity, courage, and knowledge of defensive operations. Colonel Milman also in his despatch of the 27th March to Colonel Dames, commanding at Azimgurh praises him for his exertions on all occasions. This fort has been of vast political importance from its geographical position, and was the cause not only of keeping the Azimgurh District it self from being in a constant state of anarchy but blocked the advance of Koer Singh's Rebel army in March and April 1858 into the Bunarus and Ghazeepore Districts.

12th. Before Koer Singh entered the district Memorialist foresaw the probability of the Fort being attached, he therefore of his own accord arranged to have ready 2,000 sand bags, and when the Rebel sepoys took possession of the city, these sand bags. (humanly speaking) were the means of saving many valuable lives, as the garrison was fired upon from houses only 100 yards from the parapets when these sand bags were expanded opposite the most exposed position, the value of this description of defence was appreciated and a further supply ordered, and procured with the utmost difficulty. For 22 days the rebel army was

engaged in devising plans for capturing the Fort, and plundering the treasure about six lacks with other; valuable Military and Commissariat store.

13th. In addition Memorialist may be pardoned in saying that to the existence of the Azimgurh Fort the safety of the rich commercial city of Gazeepore was due, for assuredly had there not been such a place of strength to retire into Colonel Milman with his very inadequate force would have had to retire on to Bunarus or Gazeepore and it is questionable if the Collector would have been able to collect carriage for the Treasure and other valuable property of Government. The rebel army would have been free to do much damage not only to private and public property but infinite mischief in disorganizing whole districts and Tribes.

14th. A few days after the expulsion of the Rebels by General Lugard, that officer did memorialist the honour of desiring his attendance in camp to consult as to the best means of securing shelter for the Troops and an hospital for the wounded. Thus again was your Memorialist the humble means of making himself useful to the state and at that officer's request immediately set to work under Captain Dawson (whose memorandum of works and letter of thanks are likewise filed) in roofing the available houses and in building a magazine for powder. A large hospital, originally the Collectors Kutcherry and 2 large houses, originally occupied by Civil Officers were completed with such despatch as to be ready by the time the greatest heat prevailed. In proof of this Memorialist begs to refer to Colonel Kelly, C. B. Major J. Maxwell and Lieutenant and Adjutant R. Leeson of H.M. 34 Regiment. In June last Memorialist offered his services to Major Thring Royal Artillery, which were accepted in surveying the Town and Military position of Azimgurh.

15th. Your Memorialist in proof of this (these) assertions also begs to mention the names of officers in command of Troops during the investment of Azimgurh by Koer Singh viz Major General Dames and Colonel Milman 37th Regiment, Captain Broom Madras Rifles, Captain J. D. White Brigade Major to the Garrison and in the civil department to Mr. W. Wynyard, Special Commissioner and Mr. Davies the Magistrate. Before the mutiny to Messrs C. Horne and J. Simson Civil Service. During the time the Fort was constructing to Messrs. C. Home & A. Pollock Civil Service, and Captains G. M. Boileau and

C. Miles, and Your Memorialist believes Colonel Moberly Royal Artillery with General Franks Column sent in a report to Government on the Fort.

16th. Under the circumstances your Memorialist solicits the grant of these Estates intact carrying their present Revenue of Rs. 8,000 a year, and would after a period of 10 years pay and increased revenue of one fourth of the present Government demand; when the effect of his improvements would be established. For your Memorialist is convinced that throughout the country the Revenue could be increased by attention being paid to the present ancient system of Agriculture. Your Memorialist would here beg to explain one material circumstance to your Lordship, viz. the result likely to arise from the division of estates bound together by a community of interests under one head, by a severance of which, the harmony of the whole would be deranged : For rights of way, water from wells and tank and other village privileges which had never been questioned would if held under different masters become subject's of endless litigation etc. source of serious loss to each party, and in many other ways be a cause of irremediable inquietude.

17th. Lastly your Memorialist would mention as indicating the loyalty and usefulness of his family and that of the irreparable loss they have suffered through this Rebellion, that at Delhi on the 11th May, 1857 nine of its members were massacred and only one escaped, and he was one of the nine who defended the Magazine under Lieutenant Willoughby. At the defence of the Residency at Lucknow another relative was twice, wounded in sorties, a third did good service at the seize of Delhi as Adjutant of the Regiment of Pioneers under Colonel Baird Smith C.B. of Engineers and in repressing the outbreak in the Saharunpore district. In the early wars of the Deccan, an ancestor of Memorialist was killed while leading the forlorn hope at the storming of Argaum. In short, whenever duly called Memorialist's family has ever been ready to come forward with heart and hand. Your Memorialist in this Rebellion has personally suffered very severely in the destruction of his factories and plunder of all he possessed, the labour and saving of many years, and as a consequence the utter ruin of his business. The loss of 5/6 of his Indigo Crop of 1857, which was ploughed up and otherwise damaged by the zemindars during the short time the Authorities were absent from the district in August, 1857, a second loss of the new crop of 1858 when Koer Singh invested Azimgurh. All these combined have plunged him into heavy debt, to liquidate which is impossible as he is

at present circumstanced : for indeed up to the present time Memorialist has no hopes of being able to reopen his factories for season 1859.

18th. Finally your Memorialist has endeavoured to lay before your Lordship the peculiar features of his case, he could not make it shorter for obvious reasons, and in closing this, his Memorial feels assured your Lordship will grant him a just hearing and adequate reward. And as in duty bound he will ever pray.

Sd. Alexander Martin.

REFERENCES

1. Political Consultations, 30 December, 1859, Nos. 590—97.
2. Head-quarters of the Azamgarh District of the Benares divisions in the Lieutenant Governorship of the North Western Provinces.
3. Kaye, Sir John, *A History of the Sepoy War*, Vol. II, Pp. 213—216.
4. Malleon, Colonel, *History of the Indian Mutiny*, Vol. IV Pp. 318—320.

Exclusion of High Caste Hindus from Oudh Police after the Mutiny*

Nanda Lal Chatterji

I have discovered among the old English records of Lucknow at present in the custody of the local Deputy Commissioner some extremely interesting post-Mutiny circulars, memoranda etc. relating to the recruitment and organisation of the Oudh Police Force. These papers are of historical importance, for they throw a flood of light on the inner springs of British policy in connection with the maintenance of law and order in India.

A study of these papers reveals that after the Mutiny the British Government deliberately excluded from the Police force Hindus of higher castes, and sought to make it a close preserve for Muslims and Hindu Kayasthas alone. These official papers conclusively prove that the preponderance of Muslims or of Kayasthas in the Police was no accident, and was the result of a systematic plan based on imperialist considerations. The exclusion of high caste Hindus was obviously inspired by political motives. The Mutiny of 1857 in which the upper caste Hindu sepoys from Northern India had played a prominent role appears to have been the cause of the change of policy in respect of Police recruitment. The British bureaucracy must have considered it unsafe as well as impolitic to allow a preponderance of Brahmins, Chhatris or Thakurs in the Police personnel. That accounts for the studied exclusion of these higher castes from the Police in the years following the Mutiny.

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXIX, Part II, pp.13-14.

From the periodical returns furnished to the provincial Inspector General of Police, it appears that by 1872 the upper ranks of constabulary in Oudh were almost entirely composed of either Muslims, or the Kayasthas from amongst the Hindus. For example, a secret Memo (No. 50 of 1872) reveals the very significant fact that "out of the 53 Divisional Head Constables in the Police Force, no less than 27 are Mussulman, and 20 are Kayasthas (Kaiths)." This means that only a handful of these important posts were filled by men of other castes and communities. A list of chief constables *likewise* shows that a large majority of them were Muslims and Kayasthas. Even among the second grade constables, the same communal preponderance was admitted in another circular. One Memo contains a candid avowal of this fact in these words, ".....the tendency of late has been to promote from Mussulman and this caste (*i.e.*, Kayasthas), the result of such action must be that the upper ranks of the Police will before long be filled with Mussulman and Moonshes".

The records show that the authorities had evolved an interesting theory in justification of the planned exclusion of particular castes and communities and the preferential treatment shown to Muslim and Kayasthas. Lt. Col. D. S. Barrow, offg. Inspector General, Oudh Police, wrote in the course of a memorandum (Dated Lucknow, the 18th June, 1872)....."Mussulman and Kaithas are generally speaking the best and sharpest men.....". No commentary is needed on an explanation like this.

Another confidential circular directs the District Superintendents of Police to consider invariably "the caste of the man recommended in the recommendation Roll of Officers for promotion". This would serve to show that upper grade vacancies were in fact intended to be filled up as far as possible from the favoured sections of the population.

It is indeed a paradox that one high British officer raised his voice of protest against this policy and urged that it seemed to him "very unwise that we should have such a large number of any two castes holding the most important posts in the force". Apparently, this gentleman was not conversant with the ways of the British bureaucracy in India, and so his comment went unheeded. Probably, it was to answer such criticisms that the convenient theory about "*the best and sharpest men*" was propounded.

Some unpublished documents on the death of the Rani of Jhansi and the Mutiny in Central India*

M.H.R. Taimuri

The re-examination of Persian records undertaken recently in the Central Records Office, Bhopal, has revealed the existence of some valuable *muraslaj* (letters) which throw fresh light on the circumstances of the death of Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and other events connected with the Mutiny in Central India. These communications, six in number, were all addressed to Nawab Sikandar Begum of Bhopal, from 18 June to 4 July 1858, by Munshi Bhawani Prasad, the Begum's representative with the Political Agent to the Governor General in Central India. Bhawani Prasad was in the regular employment of the State and because of the trust reposed in him by the ruler of Bhopal was given this important assignment. He regularly communicated to the Begum reports containing information about the Mutiny and the operations undertaken by the British forces to suppress the rebellion in Malwa. The fact that the reporter was very close to the scene of action against the mutineers lend certain amount of authority to the reports furnished by him. Bhawani Prasad certainly conveyed to his employer complete information about the happenings as it was available to him.

From a study of these documents it appears that they were after a careful perusal transferred to Lala Menu Lal, Keeper of the *Daftar-i-Insha*. Incidentally it may be noted that there was a regular system of keeping these records in the safe custody of the Keeper of Records which office was one of trust and responsibility in the State. These letters of

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXIX, Part II, pp.157–159.

Bhawani Prasad have been thus in possession of the Record Office for about a century and they are of unquestionable authenticity.

The main contents of the documents are as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Dated, Morar Cantonment, 6 1274 Ziqaidh <i>Hijri</i> corresponding to Friday, 18 June 1858. | Relating to the death of Rani of Jhansi—wounding of the Nawab of Banda and meeting of the Maharaja of Gwalior with the Resident in Central India. |
| 2. Dated, Morar Cantonment, 10 Ziqaidh 1274 <i>Hijri</i> corresponding to Tuesday 22 June 1858. | Relating to the burning of the Morar Cantonment and looting of the grain stocks. |
| 3. Dated, Re-het, 13 Ziqaidh 1274 <i>Hijri</i> corresponding to Friday 25 June 1858. | Relating to Munshi Bhawani Prasad's departure for Sehore (Bhopal Agency) along with the Political Agent and leaving behind the clerk of the Vakil (local representative) in Lashkar (Gwalior) by permission of the Resident in Central India. |
| 4. Dated, Morar Cantonment 16 Ziqaidh 1274 <i>Hijri</i> corresponding to Monday 28 June 1858. | Relating to his (Bhawani Prasad's) arrival at the village and the miseries of travel and destruction of cattle due to heavy rains. |
| 5. Dated, Bhadravas, 20 Ziqaidh 1274 <i>Hijri</i> corresponding to Friday 2 July 1858. | Relating to the arrival of the reporter and the Resident at the village of Bhadravas. |
| 6. Dated, Guna, 22 Ziqaidh 1274 <i>Hijri</i> corresponding to Sunday 4 July 1858. | Relating to the departure of the Agent to the Governor General in Central India and General Rose and the conditions in Lashkar (Gwalior). |

It will appear that the first of these reports sent by Bhawani Prasad on 18 June 1858 from Morar Cantonment is the most important as it gives information regarding the circumstances of the death of the Rani of

Jhansi which is a matter of controversy among historians and Sir Hugh Rose's campaign for the restoration of British authority in Gwalior. The letter reads:

"Yesterday, the Rani of Jhansi and the Nawab of Banda both present at the entrenchment were personally directing the bombardment against Major R. (Hugh Rose's?) position. During the engagement that ensued one shell from Major R's(?) battery blew off an arm of the Nawab of Banda and another one went off bruising the Rani's breast which resulted in her death. The mutineers, therefore, cremated the said Rani's body with Sandal wood. It is also correct that at night the rebels numbering about 3,000 made away with the treasury and 13 mountain guns from Maharaja Scindia's artillery towards Karauli. It is also understood that Tantia Tope has ordered the mutineers accompanying him that when all of them with their equipment had crossed the Gwalior territory then they should get away by way of Karauli, but a small number of them should be ready at their entrenchments to give fight. Major R.(?) on the other hand has sent a small contingent for the punishment of the mutineers and the deserters. Maharaja Scindia came and met the Agent to the Governor General in Central India at 8, A.M. today. On his arrival a salute of 19 guns was fired in his honour. Hardly anybody had gone to receive him, the Maharaja Scindia himself entered the bungalow of the Agent to the Governor General in Central India. The Maharaja was accompanied by two Government Sikh squadrons from Akbarabad. Constant bombardment continues from Major R's entrenchment. It is certain that Gwalior will soon be captured and the Maharaja Scindia will be installed on the Gadi. Rupees sixty lacs in cash in Gangajali (Treasury) were captured by the rebels which either they spent by themselves or took away with them. They did not loot the property of the subjects. . Rest is all well.

Submitted for information.

It is again submitted that Karauli is situated on the north of Gwalior and borders the territories of Jaipur, Bharatpur and Ajmer.

May you live long to rule."

The foregoing paragraphs just form an attempt to show how valuable historical materials are to be found among the records of Bhopal and it is expected that scholars of modern Indian history will give proper attention for making use of them.

Some original documents relating to the Indian Movement of 1857-59*

Kali Kinkar Datta

The Indian Movement of 1857-59 was a gigantic and widespread challenge to British authority in India. Its first manifestation was naturally in the more inflammable quarters of the Sepoy Army of the Company's government in India. But it is not correct to describe it as a mere military rising. Referring to the areas covered by U.P. and Bihar, a contemporary British military officer observes as follows in part two of his Narrative¹, dated December 1857: "The crisis came. At first, apparently a mere military mutiny, it speedily changed its character, and became a national insurrection. The Rajpoot villages in Bihar, those in the districts of Benares, Azimgarh, Gorukhpore, in the entire Doab comprising the divisions of Allahabad, Cawnpore, Meerut and Agra, in the provinces of Rohilkhand and Oudh, shook off our rule and declared war against us". Lord Cromer significantly remarked, "I wish the younger generation of Englishmen would read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the history of the Indian Mutiny; it abounds in lessons and warnings." The Hon'ble Mr. Disraeli at Aylesbury, spoke as follows at a meeting held on 30 September 1857. "One of the greatest calamities that ever befell this empire, has fallen upon us Day by day, we have seen that which was at first characterised as a slight and accidental occurrence, is in fact one of those great events which form epochs in the history of mankind, and which can only be accounted for by considerations demanding the deepest attention from statesmen and nationsI think that what has happened in India is a great Providential lesson, by which we may profit....."².

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXX, Part II, pp.34-42.

While engaged in the study of this important subject and particularly in the preparation of an authoritative history of Freedom Movement in Bihar, I have been able to discover some highly interesting original records which contain plenty of new information regarding it. I am mentioning here a few of these:

(1) Message of April 1858. from the Commissioner of Patna, Mr. E. A. Samuells. who had succeeded Mr. William Tayler on 5 August 1857:

"First Message.—Letter just received from the Magistrate of Arrah of 22nd April. Expedition did not go out last night, fearful lest rebels might come another road and attack Arrah. Koer Singh (Kunwar Singh) is at Jugdespore with men. Lost his arm and wounded in thigh. Report that European force had come up with the rebels at the river yesterday. Killed a considerable number and took their guns and Treasure, proposed plan to march to Jugdespore in the evening of the 22nd and attacked the enemy the following morning, no further news from Chuppra. Patna Steamer after landing ladies and treasure has returned.

Second Message.—I have information received from Buxar. Douglas appears to have attacked the rebels at Bunsdee on the 20th and killed a number of them. He was pursuing them most energetically. 150 of the 54th were to be sent from Ghazeepore to Bulloh, on 20th on board Agra but the Steamer seems to have been detained. Cumberleges force at Gamaree on 20th. I am sorry. *Lugard³ has not waited for Douglas⁴ before attacking Jugdespore, but he is a prudent officer and he has good men under him.* Boyle⁵ tells me that Cutcherry is quite safe if nothing heavier than fieldpieces are brought against it. Message ends."

(2) In a letter from the Officer Commanding at Benares to Colonel Birch, Military Secretary to the Government of India, dated 25 April 1858, we get the following information about Kunwar Singh's victory over a party of British troops:

"I have just received by express a copy of a letter from Mr. Bowring from Mr. Madock, Dy. Collector, Buxar, stating that a force which had been sent from Arrah to meet Kooer Singh in the direction of Jugdispore, had been totally defeated, 2 of our guns being captured by the enemy. The Arrah detachment, it is said, consisted of 250 or 300 men and the spies report that only 25 or 35 Europeans, 30 or 35 Sikhs and 7 Officers were seen by them returning to Arrah. If this is true our

loss has been very heavy. Kooer Singh is entrenching himself in the Jungles and is burning all villages the inhabitants of which won't join him. He has 1,500 Sepoys, and rabble up to 4 or 5,000."

(3) In one of his letters addressed to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on 14 June 1858, Mr. Samuells wrote as follows regarding the successful movements of the followers of Kunwar Singh under the leadership of his brother Amar Singh, even after the death of that brave Rajput chief:

"I regret to have to report that a body of the rebels under Umur Sing said to be altogether about 1,500 in number has returned to the Jugdispore Jungle, and were by the latest accounts at Rujya on the west side of the Jungle. They must have crossed the Kurumnassa near Soupa and gone off to the East, while Brigr. Douglas was crossing it lower down in an opposite direction. They made their appearance at Mudnarpore about 4 miles south of Captain Rattray's at Roop Saugor on the 12th, they fired a few shots into his camp but did not attempt to molest him otherwise, and following pretty nearly the same tract by which they had advanced, re-entered the Jungle as I have above stated at Rujya. General Lugard is at Dalupoor about 5 miles North of Rujya with the 10 Foot and I believe the Madras Rifles and some Guns and Cavalry. He was to be joined by Captain Rattray with his detachment of Sikhs now numbering about 400 yesterday. Extensive clearances have been made in the Jungle under the superintendence of Messrs Barrows and Mylne of the firm of Burn & Co. since the rebels left it, and I trust that this may facilitate the General's movements and that the enemy may be so vigorously attacked as to compel them to abandon the Jungle for good.

A body of 3 or 400 rebels appears to have got across the Ganges, and to be doing great damage in the Ghazeepore district. They recently burnt down the Deputy Magistracy of Bulleah and will very probably seek to re-enter Shahabad after their mission of destruction in Ghazeepore is completed.

The object of the enemy as avowed by *one* of their number whom Captain Rattray captured a few days ago is to do as much damage as possible in order to compel the people whether from fear or the prospect of starvation to join them and to harass our troops by leading them up and down the country and avoiding fighting whenever it is possible to do so. They count much it appears on the rainy season when they think

our troops will be compelled to go into quarters and to leave the interior of the country to them.

These are no doubt ingenious tactics and are probably the best which the enemy can now adopt, but it seems to me that they may easily be defeated by a judicious distribution of troops by rapid movements and by vigorous and determined attack, whenever an opportunity of striking a blow presents itself. The heat of the weather it is true is terribly against the European soldiers at the present moment, but this in all probability will soon be mitigated. Elephants which are now available in considerable numbers may be used to afford relief to the soldiers on their march and it has been found I think throughout this campaign that inaction is much more injurious to the health of the troops than exposure when accompanied with the prospect of action.

We must make a very vigorous effort to drive the enemy out of those districts. I allude particularly to Shahabad and Ghazeepore before the rains set in: otherwise the rebels will employ themselves during the rains in thoroughly disorganising those districts and in conducting expeditions into the neighbouring districts of Gaya, Patna and Saran. The natives will see with astonishment and it is to be feared with a diminution of respect for our power which is much to be deprecated that we are actually receding in this quarter instead of advancing, that districts hitherto quiet are being invaded and overrun, and this not by formidable armies but by half armed gangs of men so contemptible that in the various actions they have had with our troops they have never succeeded in killing above two or three of our men in fair fight.

I trust the Lieutenant Governor will press very strongly on the attention of the Military authorities the serious consequences which will most assuredly result if these miserable bands of rebels are allowed to remain in the Jugdishpore Jungle and the Ghazeepore Doab during the approaching rainy season."

(4) In another letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, dated 30 July 1858, Mr. Samuells thus narrated the activities of the followers of Amar Singh:

"The main body of the rebels still continue in the neighbourhood of Jugdishpore (Jagdishpur near Arrah), and ape our Government in the appointment of Commissioners, Judges, and Magistrates. They even copy our revenue system (which some people tell us produced this

rebellion) to the letter, and sell all the estates of our friends for arrears of revenue with as much punctuality as the Collector himself could evince. Umur Sing hung a sepoy the other day for the murder of a Bunneeah (bania), which shows that the rebels are compelled to conciliate the people occasionally by giving them justice even when the offending party is one of themselves.”⁶

(5) An interesting and a very important correspondence relating to this topic has come to my notice in an old bound register in the Record Office of the Commissioner of Patna.⁷ It is a long letter of the Commissioner of Patna, Mr. Samuells, addressed by him to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, on the 4 December 1858, containing various observations from him on the two letters from his predecessor, Mr. William Tayler, dated 3 and 5 April 1858, which again had been written “by way of rejoinder to the communication” which Mr. Samuells sent to the Government on 29 January 1858, “commenting on certain statements which had appeared in a pamphlet published by Mr. W. Tayler.” Making allowance for personal recriminations⁸ of the two officers, one of whom had replaced the other. I find that this document is full of relevant references to many important events of Bihar connected with the trial of the local leaders of the Wahabi movement and the movement of 1857-59. In consideration of time and space at my disposal here, I reproduce only some highly significant paragraphs of it.

(a) *Insurrection at Patna on 3 July 1857.*

“Of the extent to which W. Tayler placed himself in the hands of Moula Buksh in this matter it is impossible however to judge without a short analysis of the proceedings of this Officer and of the evidence which he submitted to the Commr. It may be convenient that I should first state the facts of the case. The rioters from 50 to 100 in number appear to have assembled about 7 o’clock in the evening of the 3rd July at the house of Peer Ali Khan a bookseller who resided in a lane which leads off from the main street of the city of Patna. They issued from the lane into the main street with drums beating, colour flying and shouts of ‘Ali’ ‘Ali’. Their heads and faces were bound up with cloths, fashion common to dacoits and latteewallas and they were armed with guns, which they occasionally discharged, swords, spears. They first plundered the Catholic chapel which stands near the entrance of the lane and then proceeded eastward towards the opium godown plundering the shops

and disarming the Police. They were encountered at different times by the patrol Darogah Syed-oo-deen and sowar of the name of Peer Beg. The Darogah shot one of the rioters dead but was himself so severely wounded that he subsequently died. The sowar wounded another and the rebels then fled west but shortly afterwards returned. Dr. Lyell⁹ who had started on horseback from the godown on hearing of the disturbance with a small party of Sikhs and Nujeebs but had unfortunately cantered (*sic*) on alone was encountered by them on their return and shot dead. The Sikhs came up immediately afterwards and found only three men on the spot who fled on being fired at. The rest had previously dispersed. The whole affair appears to have been over in about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour" (para. 125).

(b) *Tayler's tyranny at Patna in June and July 1857.*

"The words which Mr. Tayler quotes were not applied, it will be observed, to him at all. The 7th and 8th paras referred expressly to my own policy. I challenged Mr. Tayler to prove that I had shown any tenderness for rebels or disaffected people and that challenge he passes by in silence. I repudiated on the other hand the policy of rigour towards the people of this country which Mr. Tayler had advocated at the 20th page of his pamphlet and pointed to the inevitable consequence of that policy. The 8th para refers to the same subject but, when I spoke of needless violence and petty annoyance I very probably had in my mind the accounts which I had received on all hands of the terror in which the people of Patna, lived during the months of June and July in consequence of the frequent arrests of respectable persons, the oppression of Gondas and the summary executions which took place as also the annoyance to which they were subjected by being confined to their houses after 8 o'clock. "The state of affairs at Patna. is as follows. Some respectable parties of the City are in prison and the subjects are all weary and disgusted with the tyranny and oppression exercised by Government whom they all curse." This is a confidential communication found in the house of one of the conspirators. He does not refer it will be seen to the conspirators themselves but to the people at large. The writer was interested in conveying to his friends a true account of the state of affairs at Patna and there is no reason to doubt that he describes correctly the effect on the general body of the people of Mr. Tayler's proceedings" (para. 15).

"I may leave Mr. Tayler's ideas that the daily sight of the gallows was likely to produce a good effect and that English ladies are fond of such spectacles to speak for themselves. As to matters of fact I will merely observe that the race course at Patna is, as I stated, 4 miles from the city, that it is a small confined place and that the houses of the residents enclose it on two sides. Mr. Tayler's proceeding in putting up a gallows there is precisely the same as if the Sheriff were to erect a gallows in Hyde Park, for the purpose of overawing the inhabitants of Wapping or Rotherhithe" (para. 47).

"Mr. Tayler is quite mistaken about the gallows at Mozufferpore. The place of execution, it is true, is on the race course because the Jail was originally in that neighbourhood but the gallows has never been permitted to remain there after the purpose for which it was erected has been secured and as the race course is not in the station it is not likely that any lady can ever have seen the gallows unless she went for the express purpose" (para. 48).

"I have said in my January letter that there was a very general belief that the majority of the men hung by Mr. Tayler were innocent. Reports to this effect were current in Calcutta before I came up here and had, I believe, reached the ears of the Lieut. Governor. In the course of the first month or two after my arrival at Patna I noted the names of 14 men who were believed by different people who spoke to me on the subject to have been the victims of false evidence This memorandum has been lost or mislaid for I cannot now find it. Of the fact that this report was prevalent, however, both here and in Calcutta there can be no doubt" (para. 123).

(c) *Case of Lutf Ali, one of those imprisoned by Mr. Tayler but released by Mr. Samuells.*

"I challenged Mr. Tayler to produce one fact in support of his charges against Lootfally and he gives us 15 paras about his own opinions instead. The fact is now, however, admitted that in the arbitration originated Mr. Tayler's bad opinion of Lootfally. Mr. Tayler had for several years been judge of an adjoining district in which Lootfally had many business transactions but he had never heard anything against him. When he became Commissioner he found Lootfally here acting as a member of the Education Committee and in frequent association with all the gentlemen of the station Mr. Tayler became arbitrator in the suit between Lootfally and his nephew. Still

not a whisper against Lootfally reached him. Even in the arbitration Mr. Tayler discovered nothing against his previous character. All that he wrote to the Magistrate on the subject was in a letter open in some respects to the same objections as those afterwards addressed to Mr. Farquharson¹⁰ that he had found Vilayut Ally's statements in this case to be true and Lootfally's to be false, not a word was said against the general character of the latter. Up to the time of his committing him for trial in fact we hear nothing of his notorious bad character and considering the deep offence which Lootfally had given Mr. Tayler by getting his arbitration set aside and opposing him in the matter of the Industrial School it is certain that Mr. Tayler would not have allowed Lootfally to continue on the Education Committee if he had any good grounds, such as the notoriety of his character for removing him. I stated in my former letter that Mr. Taylers assertion of Lootf Ally being a man of notoriously bad character was "wholly untrue" and I submit that Mr. Taylers entire failure to support the assertion together with the strong presumptive evidence I have adduced on the other side fully bears out my statement" (para. 27).

"Mr. Tayler's 70th para affords a good exemplification of the morbid feeling which bears him to regard every question as a personal one. I had seen the papers in Lootf Ally's case before I left Calcutta. I made further enquiries into it on my arrival and came to the conclusion at which every one who considers it impartially must arrive that Lootf Ally had been scandalously ill treated and that there was no reason whatever why he should not be received by the gentlemen of the station on the same terms as before his commitment. A decision on the point was absolutely necessary because he was a member of the Local Committee of Public Instruction and had sent to beg he might be permitted to pay his respects. It never for a moment occurred to me that by acting on my own convictions in this matter I could offend Mr. Tayler. In the court in which I had the honor to sit last year it was not usual in deciding an appeal to consider whether our decision would please the Judge whose orders we were reviewing. Mr. Tayler, however, considers that you ought to think only of the Judge's feelings and to disregard those of the suitors, nay, that if a suitor has already suffered injustice you should rather add to that injustice than run the risk of wounding the self love of the Judge who first took up the case. This appears to be a fair statement of his argument. I should rather have added to the indignities which had already been heaped on Lootf Ally

though I believed him to have done nothing to deserve them, than have ruffled Mr. Tayler's susceptibility by treating the injured man with common civility. I can truly say that none of my public acts since I have been in this office have had any personal reference to Mr. Tayler nor have been dictated by any spirit of opposition to him. So far too have I been from wishing to apply technical rules of evidence to cases arising out of the mutinies that the Lieutenant Governor will remember I declined to recommend the interference of Government in a case of Mr. Tayler's which formed the subject of a memorial to Government when the parties had been convicted without legal evidence because it seemed to me that there was moral evidence of their guilt and that Mr. Tayler was justified under the circumstances of the country in acting upon such evidence" (para 35).

(d) About *Kunwar Singh*.

"In the same way the whole of the facts which constitute the charges are imaginary. The Board's order was not ill timed, for it was issued before the mutiny. The communication of the Board's message was not received by Kooer Sing in such a way as to justify Mr. Tayler's description of the probable effect of the measure threatened. Mr. Tayler did not exhibit the energy and promptitude he boasts of. On the contrary it was solely owing to his own carelessness and procrastination that the matter was not settled a month before the mutiny. The Lieutenant Governor did not show any want either of promptitude or decision. Mr. Tayler's assertions that the Lieutenant Governor's dilatory mode of dealing with his recommendation either caused Kooer Sing's rebellion or added one inducement thereto falls entirely to the ground. Mr. Tayler may depend upon it, it will take much more fencing than he is master of to make any impression on these facts" (para. 74).

"That Kooer Sing sent round a circular to his villages in which he professed his belief that Mr. Tayler had summoned him to Patna for the purpose of hanging him and called upon his tenantry to save him, is a fact which the Magistrate and others in Major Eyre's¹¹ force learnt at Jugdeespore and which is very generally known. A letter which I received from a gentleman in Shahabad who had excellent opportunities for getting at the truth and which without any reference to Mr. Tayler contains among other remarks on the state of the district and the causes of the rebellion the following passage.

"The general opinion and belief is that Kooer Sing's defection was forced on him 1st, by Mr. Tayler's improper treatment of the Wahabees in Patna and 2nd, by the indiscreet language used by Mr. (.....). Could Kooer Sing have relied on Mr. Tayler's justice and impartiality he would have appeared at once notwithstanding Mr. (.....) derogatory threat; but seeing the whole system of hanging going on at Patna at the time and the breach of all honorable engagements indulged in by the head of the district, Kooer Sing in a moment of exasperation and despair of being more honorably treated than others threw off his allegiance to the British government". "Another letter which has been mislaid in giving an account of the share which the different members of Kooer Sing's family took in the rebellion mentions particularly that while Umur Sing and other persons counselled Kooer Sing to obey the Commissioner's summons Hurkissoon Sing who had from the first advocated rebellion, argued the arrest of the Wahabees and the executions at Patna as reasons why he should not trust himself there. The opinion that Kooer Sing did not obey Mr. Tayler's summons for fear of being seized on his arrival so far from being my supposition is very widely spread and certainly has probability on its side" (para. 75).

REFERENCES

1. *The Mutiny of the Bengal Army : An Historical Narrative.*
2. Quoted in Charles Ball, *History of the Indian Mutiny, Vol. II, pp. 418-420.*
3. Sir Edward Lugard, who had been ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to press unwar Singh in April 1858.
4. Brigadier Douglas.
5. Railway Civil Engineer at Arrah.
6. Copies of documents no. 1-4, studied here, were obtained by me a few years back from the National Archives of India.
7. I am obliged to the Commissioner of Patna for kindly permitting me to study it.
8. British officers of the Civil Service in India were not above these.
9. The principal Assistant to the Opium Agent in Bihar.
10. R. N. Farquharson, Judge of Patna.
11. Vincent Eyre who, on his way to Allahabad, relieved the besieged English garrison at Arrah.

Some contemporary records relating to the Movement of 1857-59 in Chotanagpur, Manbhum, Singbhum and Palamau*

K.K. Datta

During the Movement of 1857-59 British authority was seriously challenged in Chotanagpur, Manbhum, Singbhum and Palamau as in the other parts of Bihar.

At Hazaribagh were detachments of the 8th and 7th Native Infantry sent from Patna on station duty in July, 1857, at Ranchi were quartered the headquarters and artillery of the local Ramgarh battalion, and at Chaibasa and Purulia, detachments of that battalion. The Companies of infantry at Hazaribagh revolted towards the end of July 1857. Just before this the European officers at Hazaribagh had managed immediate flight. Captain Simpson, the Deputy Commissioner, and Dr. Delprat joined Mr. Liebart who lived at Sitagarha about three miles outside the station and hastily fled to Bagodar on the Grand Trunk Road, where they expected to communicate with their authorities at Calcutta and to get assistance. Meanwhile Captain Oakes, the Judicial Commissioner of Chotanagpur, had run to Ranchi conveying there to the Commissioner the news of the impending outbreak on the 1st August.

But smouldering discontent soon manifested itself in open outbreaks at other places too. The example of the Hazaribagh troops was followed in no time by the two companies of the Ramgarh infantry with whom Lieutenant Graham had been ordered to proceed to Hazaribagh to disarm the battalions there on suspicion of disloyalty. They revolted, under the leadership of Madhab Singh, the Jamadar, and hurried back

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXI, Part II, pp.12-16.

to Ranchi to join others. Those at Doranda also followed suit under the guidance of Jaimangal Singh. Both Ranchi and Doranda soon fell under the control of the revolted sepoys who took possession of what they found in the local Government treasury and released the prisoners from the jails. Though of the Zamindars of this area some sought to impede the march of the insurgents in various ways, others allied themselves with them. Thakur Biswanath Sahi of Barkargarh and Pandey Ganpat Rai of Bhaunro were leading supporters of the latter. Detachments of the Ramgarh battalion at Purulia and Chaibassa too revolted on the 5th August. Their comrades at Doranda left Doranda on the 11th September and were joined at Chouriya by Bhola Singh, a Zamindar, and from there they went through Kara and Chandwa to Chatra. They probably intended to proceed through Palamau and effect a junction with Kunwar Singh's troops at Rotasgarh. There is no doubt that all who had revolted in Bihar, Chotanagpur, Manbhum, Singbhum and Palamau wanted to work together under the general leadership of Kunwar Singh.

There are some short printed accounts¹ about the outbreak and progress of the movement in these areas till its final suppression by the end of 1859. But for a more detailed and comprehensive study of the subject, especially to understand properly its scope and nature, we have to utilise the mass of original records, stored chiefly in the record rooms of the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi. Of these the correspondence of Colonel E.T. Dalton, then Commissioner of the Chotanagpur Division, form the most valuable source.

In a letter written by Colonel Dalton on the 5th August 1857, to A.R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, he thus describes the beginning of the outbreak in Chotanagpur :—

“After writing and despatching my report of the 2nd instant Colonel Robbins received letters from Lieutenant Graham in command of the detachment of the Ramghur Light Infantry proceeding to Hazareebaugh to disarm the two companies of the 8th, reporting that all the Infantry composing his detachment.....had, on hearing of the Mutiny at Hazareebaugh, themselves broken out into open mutiny, taken possession of the guns, ammunition and carriage including four elephants, my private property, and in defiance of Lieutenant Graham's orders and the expostulation of some of the Native Officers, made preparations for marching back to Ranchee with avowed hostile intentions against the British Officers there. The troopers under their

Native Officer, Jamadar Ahmiediar Khan, who behaved most gallantly and loyally throughout this business held to Lieutenant Graham and proceeded with him to Hazareebaugh.

I had gone down to cantonments to be with Colonel Robbins and remained there that night. The men at Headquarters had not heard of what had occurred with Lieutenant Graham's party and our preparations for receiving mutineers of the 8th, who, it was known, were only 20 miles distant at a place called Boormoo and apparently in a state of uncertainty as to whether they should march on Ranchee or not, were continued without interruption and outwardly no change had taken place in the feelings of the Dorunda (Doranda) troops.

It was, however, bruited that the men were not all right, that they would not fire on the men of the 8th and consequently our position was somewhat critical. The propriety of releasing ourselves early next morning from this position by leaving the station was that night canvassed by all the officers present at Ranchee, and the majority were for going, but Colonel Robbins and myself determined that so long as there was even a chance of our being supported by the men at Headquarters we should remain at our posts and the other officers with a very proper spirit resolved to do the same.

About noon of the 2nd several sepoy from the Infantry portion of Lieutenant Graham's party arrived in the lines and we heard that the corps had received a communication from Madhoo Singh, Jamadar, now known to be a leader of this mutinous body, at the head of which he was advancing with the guns, etc., but we could not find out when it was likely that the party would arrive. About 2 p.m. the Serjeant-Major reported that since receipt of this communication the demeanour of the men, most of whom were assembled on or lounging about the parade ground, had completely changed. The cheerful manner in which they hitherto performed their duties was gone, and was succeeded by a sullen and disrespectful behaviour in a few, whilst others appeared dejected, and at the same time it was made known to Colonel Robbins by one of the most influential and most trusted of his men that he need not expect support from any of them either to repel the mutineers of the 8th, should they advance, or to coerce the body of his own regiment, who it was ascertained were advancing and would speedily arrive in a state of open mutiny. The same person also stated that there had been communication between the mutineers of the 8th and those of the

locals. It was further intimated from the same quarter to Colonel Robbins that the men at Head-quarters would not be answerable for the safety of their officers if they remained in the station and they were recommended to withdraw,

On this I concurred with Colonel Robbins in thinking that to remain longer was as useless as it was hazardous and we decided on immediately removing and with that view accompanied by Lieutenant Reeves, the Serjeant-Major and his little girl we left the Cantonment and proceeded to the Civil Station. In the meantime information had been received in the Civil Station that the mutinous body of the Ramghur Locals were close at hand with guns shotted and muskets loaded. Lieutenant Birch rode down to inform us that the danger appeared imminent and that Captain Oakes and Davies had ridden off in the Pithuria direction, the straight road across the hills to Hazareebaugh intending to wait for us when well out of the station. As the road by which the mutineers were coming in and that by which we intended to go out were for a few miles nearly parallel and not far apart there was clearly no time to be lost. We pushed on, picked up Captain Oakes and Davies and reached Hazareebaugh next evening. It was my desire to have halted at Pithuria, 6 miles from the station, to await the turn of events, but this was overruled as hazardous as there was danger to our retreat being cut off by the river Damoodah if we delayed in crossing it and we went on.

A servant of mine has just come in from Ranchee, he reports that the mutineers of the Ramghur Locals reached the Station at 4 p.m., about an hour after our departure. They proceeded first with their guns to my house but after consultation they left it uninjured and went to Captain Oakes, which they burnt and then burnt Lieutenant Moncrieff's; they released the prisoners and fired with the guns at the Church which they injured. They then halted and sent a deputation to Dorundah, received one from thence deliberated and then marched into Cantonments, the remainder of the Battalion having, it is presumed, decided on admitting and coalescing with them.

In sending further information to the Government about the progress of the movement Colonel Dalton wrote on the 21st August, 1857 that "Thakur Bisnath Sahai of Burka Ghur, had come out with 150 followers and had cut out several branches in the road leading over the Ramghur Ghaut with the obvious intention of making it difficult for the troops advancing against Durandah".

Important details are also available in the correspondence of some other contemporary British officers at those stations, namely Major W.H. Oakes, Deputy Commissioner of Chotanagpur, Lt. R.G. Birch, Senior Assistant Commissioner of Singbhum, Captain J. L. Nation, Commanding Local Force at Doranda, a suburb of Ranchi, Captain J.S. Davies, Principal Assistant Commissioner of Lohardauga Division, Lt. G.M. Graham, Extra Junior Assistant Commissioner in charge of Doranda sub-division and others. By way of illustration I mention below two significant letters :

(a) "I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter no. 3526 of the 15th Sept., last and in reply beg to state, that the property forfeited under Act XIV of 1857, in the case referred to therein was in real (?) on Landed property of the annual value of rupees thirteen thousand nine hundred and twenty eight Rs. 13,928—X—X, besides personal property amounting to Rupees Four hundred and seventy nine Rs. 479—x—x.

The forfeiture took place under the following circumstances.

It appearing that Thakoor Bishnath Sahee. one of the largest landholders in Chotanagpore. had been guilty of Rebellion and could not, after, diligent search be found, an application was made to my court, by the Assistant of the Lohardugga Division, for the forfeiture of the rebel's property under sec II of Act XXV of 1857.

An enquiry was accordingly held by me under the section above cited, and evidence was taken to ascertain whether Thakoor Bishnath Sahee was guilty of the charge—It was fully established by the deposition of the witness, that Thakoor Bishnath Sahee had been guilty of Rebellion. That he had joined the Ramghur Battalion immediately after the mutiny had broken out on the 2nd August 1857, and that he had continued to act with the mutineers and to forward their designs, that he had, moreover, carried out his rebellious intentions against the Government by closing the Ghauts and by furnishing the mutineers with carriage when they marched from Dorundah in September 1857. It was proved that Thakoor Bishnath Sahee had placed some merchants in durance with a view of extorting Rs. 25,000 from them to enable him to wage war with the Government. It was in evidence also that the Thakoor had been elected Chief of mutineers.

Considering the charges of Rebellion fully proved against the Thakoor Bishnath Sahee, and that it was further established that he could not after diligent search be found an order was passed by me on the 10th December 1857 adjudging the whole of his property to be forfeited to the Government under Sec. II of Act XXV of 1857.

Thakoor Bishnath Sahee was however subsequently arrested and committed for trial by the Assistant of the Lohardugga Division on the charge of Rebellion.

A trial was consequently held by me to investigate the charge and at the conclusion of the proceedings, the crime being fully brought home to Thakoor Bishnath Sahee, he was executed by the order of this Court: on the 16th April 1858 and all his property was at the same time ordered to be forfeited to Government as reported in my statement of cases tried under Act XIV of 1857 for the month of April last already submitted to your office².

(b) "The several Telegraphic messages sent by Lieutt. J.M. Graham, Extra Junr. Asstt. Comr., will have kept his Honor the Lieut. Governor in possession of the state of affair in Palamou so that being, as I am, out of the way of either receiving or communicating speedy intelligences, I have not thought it necessary to trouble His Honor by writing direct. As however intimation has reached me from the *mohafiz* or manager of the large semi-independent state of Sirgoonja (Sirguja) of parties of rebels having entered his District also I deem it my duty to communicate the same without delay for His Honor's information—

Lall Binda Surry Persad Deo, *mohafiz*, writes on the 12th Instant, that the rebel chief Rambahadoor Sing and Sheeda Sing with a number of wounded rebels, some women and children and several hundred armed men were at Tutta Panee uncertain apparently what more next to make, another large party under a leader unknown - he reports in Tuppa Pall which lies on the western border of Sirgoonja touching Singrolee.

These parties I have reason to believe come down with the hope of finding protection with the insurgent Bhogtas - but as the Bhogta chiefs are not even able to feed them, they are at a loss what to do.

The rebels with the Bhogtas now muster very strongly, so that without further reinforcements it will be difficult to coerce them as they hold a very strong position in the Hills; the effective troop with me under Captn. Nation number about 100 of the Seikh volunteers 20

men of the Cole and Santhal Levy and about 60 of the Ramghur Irregular Cavalry. Lieutt. Graham is at Chyenpore and I am with Capt. Nation at this place distant only 20 miles from the rebel's stronghold.

Now that the rebels have been expected from Shahabad, I respectfully urge that no time should be lost in moving Troops in this direction."

REFERENCES

1. Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny*, Vol. 11, pp. 436-441: Bradley-Birt, Chotanagpore, pp. 203-228; Minute of Sir Frederick Halliday on the Mutinies in Lower Bengal printed in Buckland, *Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors*, Vol. I; *Bengal : Past and Present*, 1941.
2. Letter from W.H. Oakes to A.R. Young dated 4 August 1858.
3. Letter from J. S. Davies, Senior Assistant Commissioner, dated Camp Akoosee, Tappa Chechary (Chhechhari in the entire south of the district of Palarmau), Palamow, dated the 13th December, 1858.

The Mutiny in Manbhum*

Jagdish Narayan Sarkar

The Mutiny of 1857-58 was a gigantic explosion of anti-British forces. Its repercussions were not confined to Delhi, Meerut, Cawnpore, Lucknow, Jhansi, Rohilkhand, Oudh and Allahabad and such other places but also felt in remote places in Bengal and Bihar. Chotanagpur, though distant, was not lightly affected by these stirring events and caught the flame of resistance and was shaken with the spirit of defiance of authority and of independence from British yoke. The districts of Hazaribagh, Ranchi. Palamau, Singhbhum were all aglow with it. Thakur Bishwanath Sahi of Bhaunroh, Subadar Jaimangal Pande and Subadar Nadir Ali and Jamadar Madho Singh in Ranchi, the Ramgarh battalion, the 8th Native infantry at Hazaribagh, Nilambar Sahi and Pitambar Sahi and Debi Baksh Rai in Palamau, Paramanand, Ilakadar of Kunda, the Raja of Porahat in Singhbhum, Raja Nilmani Singh Deo of Pachete (i.e. Panchakote) in Manbhum, all participated in varying degrees in raising the banner of resistance to the British. But for various reasons their efforts which occupy an important place in the history of the struggle for Indian Independence failed and in the suppression of their insurrections, the British Government received considerable help from other fellow Rajahs, Jagirdars and other persons. Thus while some landholders fought against the British, others fought with the British against their own fellows. Indeed the part played by the landed aristocracy in the different districts of Chotanagpur in this movement, either against or for the British is all inspiring and instructive study, pregnant with valuable lessons to the student of history.

2. *Nilmani Singh Deo of Pachete.* An attempt has been made in this paper to study some aspects of the sequel and nature of the Mutiny

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXII, Part II, pp.36-45.

in Manbhum with special reference to Nilmani. Singh Deo of Pachete, on the basis of some selected unpublished records in the Record Room of the Deputy Commissioner, Manbhum.

At the news of the mutiny of the native garrison at Dinapur and of the rising of Kunwar Singh, the detachment of the 8th Native Infantry stationed at Hazaribagh at once mutinied (30th July, 1857). This was followed by the Mutiny of the 7th Native Infantry at Ranchi and Doranda. On 5th August, 1857, the Sipahis of the Ramgarh Battalion¹, stationed at Purulia also mutinied, and after the abandonment of Purulia by Capt. G.N. Oakes, Principal Asstt. Commissioner, plundered the treasury having more than a lakh of rupees, released the prisoners numbering 200-300 from the jail, and sacked the private residences of the Europeans who had to retire to Raniganj. They advanced to Ranchi without causing any further serious disturbance in Manbhum. With the officials and the sepoys gone, "the jail birds and other bad characters, led, it is said by a member of the family of Panchet" (Panchete) set the court house and the record room on fire and perpetrated "various other outrages" at Purulia and on the road towards Raghunathpur. A large number of *Choars* also assembled together to plunder the Purulia Bazar. To protect the Grand Trunk Road immediate steps were taken a part of Rattray's Police Battalion was moved up from Suri and accompany of H.M.'s 35th was sent to Raniganj. Immediate measures were also taken for the reoccupation of Purulia (after that of Hazaribagh, 28th August). On the 11th September, Capt G.N. Oakes, the Principal Asstt. Commissioner of Manbhum "reoccupied Purulia without opposition" with the help of Sikh volunteers. The scattered disturbances in different parts of the district and especially near Hazaribagh due to the activities of escaped convicts or Sonthals were easily suppressed. But the Sonthals of Manbhum were reported by Capt. Oakes to be "in a state of high excitement". In Pachete, then under Burdwan division, on the border of Manbhum, Nilmani Singh Deo, the Zamindar, was reported "to be arming his retainers and in other ways assuming a warlike attitude" as if he was in "a state of semi-rebellion." He not only refused, when asked, to render assistance to the Principal Assistant Commissioner, but ignored him on the pretext that he could not spare any out of his small contingent necessary to protect his Own *garh*. This made his conduct liable to suspicion, or as the records say, he "was implicated in the mutinies in Manbhum²". A wing of the Shakawati Battalion was despatched to coerce him. He was unprepared to resist if and surrendered to Col. Foster (early Nov. 1857).

As a result of this, the Zamindar of Panchete was arrested, sent to Calcutta, and confined as a state prisoner in the Burdwan jail³. Subsequently he was ordered to be detained under surveillance at Santipore under Government Warrant no. 4834 dated 16th December 1858⁴. Moreover, his entire property, personal and landed was attached under instructions from the Commissioner of Burdwan. The date of confiscation of his property was 20th Oct. 1857 or 1264⁵. B.S. Pending detailed arrangements, the Police Darogah of Raghunathpur had been commissioned to occupy the *garh* of the Zamindar at Kashipur.

On 11th November, 1857, Captain J. S. Davies, Senior Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum instructed R.C.P. Perry, his Sub-Assistant Commissioner to "proceed at once by Dak" to the *garh* at Kashipur and take charge of it from the Police Darogah of Raghunathpur, to duly forward all the Zamindar's records, all arms and ammunition and livestock to Purulia and to prepare "a careful and correct inventory" of the entire property, moveable or otherwise, of the Zamindar, with the help of the Sheristadar and Jamadar of the Purulia Collectorate and two or more *amlah* of his own office, if necessary⁶. Mr. Perry reached Kashipur on 12th November; and reported his arrival the same day. In anticipation of his requisition, the Senior Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum, sent a party of Mr. Biddle's men under a *Jemadar* for the occupation of the *garh* (13th November, 1857) so that the services of the police and the Zamindar's people in guarding the property could be dispensed with. On the same day the Senior Assistant Commissioner informed the Officiating Commissioner of Burdwan about the compliance with his instructions. After assuring him that "full publicity shall be immediately given throughout the Division" to the Commissioner's Proclamation regarding the attachment of the estate, he recommended to the Commissioner the course of attachment of the property of the Zamindar to be followed. "4th. In this Division indeed throughout the Chotanagpur on the attachment of any estate, if one of any extent, first to issue a proclamation to that effect, then to call on the Jagheerdars, Izaradars, Thickadars and all persons paying rent to the Zamindar to furnish written agreements to pay such rents until further order into the Government Treasury only : the Zamindar is then called on for a correct copy of his rentroll, a summary enquiry into the correctness of which is then made and the rents realized accordingly, the District Officer having the entire management of the Estate as to the

renewal of leases etc. during the time it may remain under attachment.” “5th. It appears to me that a similar course may be adopted with the Pachate Estate—from its immense extent some delay must necessarily arise in obtaining the usual written agreements from all parties paying rent to the Zamindar; but the issue of your proclamation will suffice to prevent their paying to the Zamindar or any of his servants after this date any further sums on account of rent.” “6th. Should it be decided to retain the estate permanently or for any time under attachment the services of a Deputy Collector would be required, but on this subject it is at present unnecessary to report further”⁷.

In his letter of 16th November 1857, Captain Davies approved the proceedings of his Sub-Assistant “for effecting an entrance” into the Kashipur *garh* and instructed him (i) to send all elephants and Camels of the Zamindar to the *Sadar* station at once, retaining the “horses and other live-stock at Kashipur till further orders (ii) to despatch (under directions from the Commissioner of Burdwan), the four guns which lay spiked in the enclosures” to the Joint Magistrate, Raneeunge. (iii) “It is desirable that the services of the Zamindar’s diwan Treasurer, Mohafez and others acquainted with the Zamindar’s accounts should be retained till farther orders”⁸.

The records throw light on the question whether there was any connection between Praganait Jagat Pal Singh of Pithoria and Nilmani Singh Deo of Pachete. At the request of Captain J.S. Davies, Senior Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum (15th Dec. 1857), Captain E.T. Dalton, Officiating Commissioner of Chotanagpore “called on the Purgunait Juggut Pal Singh”. The latter “denied most positively having written to or received letters from or had any communication with the Pachete Zemindar since the mutiny of Ramgurh Battalion”⁹.

The Bengal government was anxious to know the details “how the Pachete Estate is now managed” (no. 2697 of 9th July, 1858). Accordingly the Commissioner of Chotanagpore called for a report from Capt. G.N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum (11th Aug. 1858) “under what sort of settlements by whom the collections are made, how the money paid into the Treasury is exhibited in the accounts, whether any changes have been made since the Estate came under your predecessors’ management and all other particulars”¹⁰.

Captain G. N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum proposed to dispose of the confiscated jagir of the Zamindar of Pachete in pargana Khaspel by bestowing it on Gouree Pershad Singh,

Hukeem of Barrahboom (Barahbhum). The Commissioner of Chotanagpore, Captain E.T. Dalton, however, did not immediately approve of it and considered a reference to Government necessary (23 Oct. 1858). Till its final decision, "the net profit of the estate must be carried to the credit of government." The Commissioner presumed that there were "certain Police duties connected with the tenures" of the estate, which was called a "Police Jaghier" (by Captain Davies)¹¹, and enquired if these were "likely to be properly discharged by the Hukeem" in case it was given to him¹².

About October, 1858 Lt. Governor of Bengal directed the Principal Asstt. Commissioner of Purulia to make over charge of the "Zamindaries and moveable property" of the Zamindar of Pachete to his authorised agent or agents. But he was then confined in the Burdwan jail, and "fearing mismanagement of my (his) property and—perhaps nonpayment of Government revenue", he declined to avail himself of the Lt. Governor's sanction to appoint a manager of property.¹³

Accordingly on 3rd November, 1858, the Commissioner informed Captain G. N. Oakes, that "as the Puchate Zamindar is not prepared to relieve the Government of the charge of his Estate the collections should on no account be suspended and.....that all dues from the Zemindaree are realized as punctually as possible."¹⁴

On the 17th November, 1858 ~~the~~ Commissioner again instructed Captain Oakes (in reply to the letters' no. 947 dated 12th inst.) that "under the peculiar circumstances of the attachment *or* Pachete, you should, I consider, continue to realise all rents as the Zemindar appears to have been in the habit of realizing them leaving parties claiming exemption to establish their claims in the courts of Law."¹⁵

After remaining under surveillance at Santipore from December, 1858 Nilmani Singh felt that he could conveniently get information about his Zamindari affairs. In fact he got information that his moveable property at Purulia and Raghunathgunge was "going to decay for want of proper care and that portions of it are for the same reason exposed to danger of loss." Hence, in his petition dated 3rd February, 1859, to the Secretary to Government of Bengal, he prayed for Lt. Governor's order to the Principal Assistant Commissioner, Purulia to make over charge of his moveable property at Purulia and Raghunathgunge to his "servants Samchund Baboo and Bissonath Baboo".

He further represented that since his arrest "upwards of a year ago", (i.e. end of 1857), he had been put to very heavy expenses and was in very—"straitened" circumstances for want of funds, to pay his expense at Santipore and those of his family and establishment there and elsewhere. Hence, he prayed for (i) payment of "a moderate sum of money" out of "the accumulation of income from my Zemindaries" and.....(ii) payment of "a monthly sum out of the rents of the said zemindaries so long as they shall continue to be collected by the said Principal Asst. Commissioner, due provision being first made for payment there out of the *Sudder Jamma* due to Government."¹⁶

The Zamindar's petition was forwarded by the Commissioner of the Nuddea Division to the Secretary to Government of Bengal. The latter forwarded it along with the favourable orders of the Lt. Governor, Bengal on the two demands to the Commissioner, Chotanagpore for communication to the Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum viz: (i) the moveable property at Purulia and Raghunathgunge to be handed over to his agents, (ii) payment of sums of money to meet the necessary expenses of the Zamindar.¹⁷

About this time the Commissioner, asked by higher authorities, enquired from the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Manbhum (Capt. G. N. Oakes) "if Nilmani Singh Deo, Zamindar of Pachete could be safely released from confinement."¹⁸ All disturbances had ceased and evidently the reports were favourable, for the Lt. Governor was pleased (on 21st March, 1859) to "authorize the immediate & unconditional release of the state prisoner" Nilmani Singh Deo, Zemindar of Pachete" from surveillance at Santipore and the Deputy Magistrate of the place was authorised to explain to him that "he is at liberty to return to his Zemindaree."¹⁹

After his release the Zamindar sent a representation to the Government, that "a portion of his moveable property" which had been attached on his arrest had not been restored by the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Manbhum. On a report of the Commissioner, orders (for restoration) were passed by the Lt. Governor (15th April 1859).²⁰

When, however, the Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Perry, made over the property to the Zamindar and asked him "to give a receipt" for it the latter used "offensive language" and refused "to give a simple acknowledgement without improper & impertinent impression'.

These were reported by Captain G.N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum to the Commissioner²¹. The Commissioner's instructions to his Assistant (re: the Zemindar) were approved by the Lt. Governor. The Secretary to Government, Bengal informed the Commissioner. "If the Zemindar continues to evince so contumacious a spirit, it may become again necessary to place him under restraint." (No. 2473. dated 15th April, 1859). Accordingly the Commissioner asked his Principal Assistant "to furnish the Zemindar with a copy of this letter further have the exact purport of it conveyed to him in a Perwannah from yourself and you will also personally explain to his Moktear the precise nature of the instructions you have received and the orders of government upon those instructions²²."

In these records, the Zamindar of Pachete was not given the title of "Raja". A few years later, however, this title 'Raja' is found in a case of 27th September, 1861 and referred to in a letter of 24th January, 1862²³.

3. *Santal rising near Tongbhoe*: About the middle of December, 1857, a man named Munund Manjee (Anand Majhi), a resident of Tongbhoe²⁴ was arrested for instigating the Santals in the northern portion of the district of Balasore to rebel against the government and fight on behalf of the 'Badams Rajah'²⁵ against the 'Sahibs' on 15th Poos (28 Dec).

The Officiating Magistrate of Balasore enquired about the name of the place and of the Raja from the Commissioner of Chotanagpore who in turn asked Senior Asstt. Commissioner, Manbhum to report.

From E.T. Dalton, Offg. Commissioner. Chotanagpore to Captain J.S. Davies, Senior Asstt. Commissioner, Manbhum, dated Chotanagpore, 29th December, 1857 (judicial).

"Forwards copy of a letter No. 339 of 23rd inst. from the officiating Magistrate of Balasore. Calls for enquiry and report whether there is any such place as Tong-bhoe within your jurisdiction, or any, Rajah answering to the name mentioned by the man approved.

"No. 339. A man was caught some 14 days ago in the northern portion of the District instigating the Santals in that neighbourhood to rebel against the Government stating himself to be the Vakeel of the Badams Rajah who was to come to fight the Sahibs on the 15th Poos (28th Dec.) and whom they were to assist.

"He now states his name to be Aunund Manjee a resident of Tongbhoe which from his description is about 100 miles north of the Soobunrekha & 50 miles south of the Damooda. This would place it near Singhbhoom & Chyebassah & I should therefore, feel obliged if you could inform me whether there be any such place of Rajah within your District as I can find neither named in any map²⁶."

4. *Matchlocks of Jhalda and Silli supplied to Raghu Deo, Diwan of Porahat in Singhbhum.* The mutineers of Porahat in Singhbhum were supplied with matchlocks from Jhalda and Silli. Evidently a lot of unlicensed manufacture and sale of matchlocks went on in the districts of Manbhum and Ranchi, from where they were conveyed to "Rughoo Deo", Diwan of the Raja of porahat. The Commissioner of Chotanagpore on 13th July, 1858 learnt this from a confessing prisoner. Acting on the information Lt. Reeves and his party seized the entire lot of 30 brand new matchlocks received by the dewan during the attempt to surprise him the same day. The confessing prisoner was hanged for "the crime of aiding and abetting in rebellion."

The same day Commissioner Dalton asked Captain G.N. Oakes, Principal Asstt. Commissioner. Manbhum, (i) to depute a "sharp Police officer to enquire into the names of the persons engaged in this unlicensed manufacture and sale (ii) to intercept and apprehend the men named in the confession as having along with the Prisoner conveyed matchlocks to Rughoo Deo and obtain evidence so that the offence may without fail be brought home to the real offenders", and (iii) "to adopt measures to put a stop to the unlicensed manufacture and sale of matchlocks in your Division."²⁷

5. *Attitude of Zemindars or landed magnates of Manbhum during the Mutiny.* While the Zamindar of Pochete (Pachete) Nilmoney Singh Deo, took a leading part in the anti-British movement in 1857, there were other Zamindars and Rajas who helped the British. Captain G. N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum, informed the Commissioner of Burdwan (31 Oct. 1857) that "during the late disturbances in this District the Zamindars of Manbhum, Burrabhoom and Amyenuggar (e.g. Rajah Mokunda Narain Deo, Zamindar of Manbhum, Rajah Radhakristo Singh Deo, Durpa Shaha Zamindar of Burrabhoom, Rajah Juggselim Lal Deo Shahazada, Chotarajah of Amyenagur) have given me every satisfactory assistance by sending men to my aid. The Zamindars of Manbhum and Ameynagur came to

Purulia with a number of their trustworthy dependents and the Zemindar of Manbhum being himself ill sent the Hickim (Hakim) with more than 300 men". The Principal Assistant Commissioner recommended that, "These Zamindars should be addressed by all functionaries with the title of Tahoowar (B or S) Ustagar Rajahs."²⁸

Besides supply of manpower, another way of helping the British authorities was by loan of elephants. These animals were urgently required for conveyance of troops. But in the district of Manbhoom "no elephants could be procured either for sale or hire", because the Zamindars there "had generally one or at the most two Elephants which they were unwilling to part with". Accordingly the Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhoom, issued *Ishtahars* for Elephants and if available these would be sent to the Commissioner, Chotanagpore".²⁹

An exception to this was the "Ranee of Raepore" who supplied one elephant. The Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhoom, sent the animal with the *mahoot* along with Rs. 9/- for its food on the way to Chotanagpore.³⁰ The descriptive roll of the elephant was as follows :—

1. District	Manbhoom
2. Name of owner	Ranee Oljullah Coomaree Dhujjamonee.
3. Residence, Purgunnah, Thana, Village	Raipore, Thana Raipore
4. Name of Elephant Age, height, with or without teeth & any distinguishing mark, name of mahoot	Putteyguj: aged about 30 yrs ; 8 ft., with : 2 teeth docked tail, Bheekoo Mahoot.
5. Sold, lent or given in hire Remarks	For the service of Government. Price of elephant estimated at Rs. 700 (Seven Hundred rupees).

This was "a loan given to the government for service" and the Ranee would not take any hire for it³¹.

The Raja of Jhalda has been put in confinement in Hazaribagh jail but he was released by the mutineers. "He made use of his liberty to close the passes between Ranchi and Purulia so as to prevent the mutineers from moving in that direction. He now presented himself to

Captain Oakes, to whom he had furnished a small contingent. He was allowed to be at large for the present having executed an agreement to appear whenever called for) : a small sum was advanced him to enable him to entertain men to keep the ghats closed against mutineers, & marauders, & a promise was made that his case should be favourably represented to Government. He has since received a remission of his original sentence". (Buckland I. pp. 102-3).

His release was recommenced by Captain G.N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhoom, for performing certain services. In a letter to the Commissioner of Burdwan dated 2nd November 1857 he wrote : "In continuation of my letter dated 18th September last...as I am removed for the present from Manbhoom to Lohardagga I think it my duty to bring to the notice of Government through you that the Rajah of Jhalda effectually closed the passes between Purulia & Ranchi and Purulia & Hazaribagh & that he did not allow any disturbances to take place, in his Zemindaree. He also proceeded under my orders to Joypore to aid the Joypore Zemindar in dispersing the Sonthals assembled in that Estate." I have therefore the pleasure to recommend as a fulfilment of the hope held out to him when first he appeared before me that he be released from confinement³²."

REFERENCES

1. Buckland, *Bengal under the Lt. Governors*, Vol. I: "In Chotanagpore the Ramgarh Battalion mutinied, and as might naturally be expected, the savage and ignorant inhabitants deceived into supposing, from the partial anarchy prevailing, that all government was at end, rallied round the feudal chiefs, in many instances probably seeking an opportunity of avenging old grudges and renewing old tribe feuds, rather than with any hope or serious intention of resisting the Government..." pp. 66-67. The Ramgarh Battalion consisted of a full corps of infantry, with cavalry and artillery. Though a local corps, it mostly included "Hindustanis" at the outbreak of the Mutiny. Detachments of the Battalion were posted at Hazaribagh, Ranchi (i.e. Doranda), Purulia, Chaibassa and Sambalpur-Ibid pp. 99-104. See also Kaye and Malleon, *History of the Indian Mutiny of, 1857-58* Vol. IV (1839). H 95-96. The Purulia detachment consisted of 64 sepoy and 12 sowars. *Manbhoom District Gazetteer*; Gokhale : *Final Report of the Survey and Settlement operations in the District of Manbhoom* p. 23. Doranda was the military cantonment, 3 miles distant, from the civil station of Ranchi.

2. Buckland, I, 67,103,104. The exact nature of this implication is not clear from the records so far studied by me.
3. Letters Received Series (22-1-59—6-11-60) Petition of Raja Nilmani Singh, Santipore, February 3. 1859. He was placed under arrest before being brought to trial on serious charges according to Buckland. op. cit. In Gokhale's Report we read "The Deputy Commissioner returned with reinforcements from Raniganj and arrested the Raja (P. 23).
4. Letters Received Series (22-1-59—6-11-60) P. 36 No. 1817 (Printed) From A.R. Young, Secretary to Govt. of Bengal to the Deputy Magistrate of Santipore. Fort William, 21st March, 1859.
5. No. 102, Letter of Rama Prasad Ray, Offg. Suptdt. and Remembrancer of Legal Affairs to the Secretary, to the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, Dated Fort William, 24 January, 1862.
6. Letters Issued Series (31-10-57—13-5-58) P. 42. No. 210. Dated Purulia, 11th November 1857. Raghunathpur is about 30 miles N.E. of Purulia and 5 miles north of Adra rly. station, (sur, Ind. Sti. 73 1/10). Kashipur is about 25 miles N.E of Purulia. (86 40E 23. 32'N. Ind. Sh. 73 1/11.)
7. Letters Issued Series, p. 44. No. 215. From J.S. Davies Senior Assistant Commissioner in charge Manbhum, to the Officiating Commissioner of Burdwan, Purulia, 13th Nov. 1857.
8. Letters Issued Series. P. 50. No. 225. In his letter to the Joint-Magistrate, Raneegunge, dated 19th November, Mr. Davies suggested that if the guns were useless they might be broken up and sold as old iron. (p. 60. no. 243).
9. Letters Received Series (19-8-57—31-12-58.) P. 74. No. 238.' Dalton to Davies, dated Chotanagpore, 17th December, 1857 (judicial), Pithoria is about 12 miles N. of Ranchi on the old Ranchi Hazaribagh road.
10. Letters Received, p. 195. No. B. dated Camp Asuntolia, 11th August 1858.
11. Captain Davies' letter no. 233 dated 12th March, 1858. Khaspel is now in Chasthana, N. W. of Purulia. Barahabhum (86 22'D, 23 2'N) thana is south of Purulia. The station of Barahabhum is on the Adra-Chakeadharpur railway line, about 20 miles S. of Purulia (Ind. Sh. 73 1/8).
12. Letters Received. P. 263. No. 108. Letter dated Camp Chyatassah, 23rd October 1858.
13. Letters Received (22.1.1859.-6-11-60) P. 22. petition of Raja Nilmani Singh Santipore, 3rd Feb. 1859.
14. Letters Received. P. 270. No. III Dated Camp Chyabassah 3rd Nov. 1858.
15. Ibid. P. 282. No. 117, dated Chybassa, 17th Nov. 1858.
16. Letters Received (22.1 1859,-6.11.1860/) Petition of Raja Nilmani Singh,. Santipore, Feb. 3, 1857 to A. R. Young, Secretary to Govt. of Bengal.

- Raghunathganj (Gandh Bazar, 86 12E, 23, 17N) is about 12 miles S W. of Purulia; 6 miles S. E. of Arsha, & 6 miles W. of Hesla. (Sw Ind. sh. 73 I/3).
17. Letters Received 22.1.1859.-6.11.60. P. 22. From Commissioner, Chotanagpore,. Camp Chyebassa 22nd Feb. 1859. No. 1153. From A. R. Young, Secy, to Govt. of Bengal, to the Commissioner of Chotanagpore, Fort William, 17th Feb. 1859 (judicial).
 18. Ibid. P. 278 no. 115 dated Chyabassa, 15th November, 1858.
 19. Ibid. Judicial. P. 36. no. 1817 (printed) from A. R. Young, Secy, to the Govt., of Bengal to the Deputy Magistrate of Santipore; Fort William, 21st March, 1859. Copy to the Commissioner of Chotanagpore with ref. to his letter no. 53 of 8th March, 1858.
 20. Letters Received Series, P. 71 no. 62 From E. T. Dalton, Commissioner Chotanagpore to Capt.. G.N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum, dated Chotanagpore 21st April, 1859 (judicial). Copy of letter no. 2447 from A.R. Young, Secy; to, Govt. of Bengal to the Commissioner of Chotanagpore dated 15th April, 1859.
 21. Letter no. 81 from the Commissioner of Chotanagpore to A. R Young, Secy. Govt. of Bengal (6th April, 1859). Not yet found by me.
 22. Letter no. 2473 from A. R. Young, Secy. Govt. of Bengal to Commissioner of Chotanagpore, 15th April, 1859 forwarded in No. 63. From the Commissioner, Chotanagpore to the Principal Asst. Commissioner, Manbhum dated Chotanagpore, 22nd April, 1859.
 23. No. 102 Letter of Ramaprasad Roy. Offg. Superintendent & Remembrance of Legal affairs to the Secretary of the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, dated Fort William, 24th January, 1862.
 24. This is probably to be identified with Tunbhum, south of Purulia.
 25. This is probably to be associated with Baram Trakursima or Simbhuya (86 8E-23-22 N), 4 miles, south of Jaipur (Ind, Sh. 73 I/3). There is another Baram 80 17E 22. 57N. only about 10 miles N. of Subarnarekha (Ind. sh. 73 I/5).
 26. Letters Received (19.8 57-31.12.58.) P. 81. No. 273.
 27. From Capt. E.T. Dalton, Commissioner, Chotanagpore to Capt. G.N. Oakes, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Manbhum, dated Camp Asuntolia, the 13th July. 1858 (judicial) P. 185. No. 72. Thalda is 30 miles west of Purulia by rail and situated in Manbhum district. Siui is 33 miles east of Ranchi by rail and situated in Ranchi district. For Porahat see Buckland 1104-5.
 28. Letters Issued (31.10.57.-13.5.58) P. 10. No. 153. This would suggest that the Zamindaries of Manbhum, Barahabhum and Amyenagar are under Burdwan. The pargna of Manbhum is in Manbazar thana, S.E. of Purulia on the border of Bankura district. The estate of Amyenagar is probably Ambikanagar (86 46E, 22, 57 'N, south of junction of Kumari N. & Kansai R in Bankura district (sui. Ind.

sh. 73 I/73.) After Ganga Narains rebellion in 1832-33, the district of Jungle Mahals was broken up in 1833. Some estates were transferred to Burdwan. and the new district of Manbhum was created with its headquartes at Manbazar. It included, besides its present area, the estates of Supur. Raipur, Ambikanagar, Dhalbhum and some others. In 1838 Purulia became the headquarters of the district, *Gazetteer* : Gokhale, 22. See also Hunter, *Statistical Account of Bengal Vol. 17*. Raipur is now in Bankura district.

29. The mutineers of Ranchi had seized four elephants belonging to Captain Dalton. Commissioner, Chotanagpore. Kaye & Malleson, op. cit. Vol. IV. P. 96.
30. Letters Issued (31.10.57-13.5.58) P. II No; 154 from G.N. Oakes, Principal Asstt. Commissioner, to the Commissioner of Chotanagpore, Purulia, 31 Oct. 1857 in reply to the letter no. 62 of 9th Oct. 1857.
31. Ibid. P. 32. No. 185 From same to same, Purulia 6.11.57 in reply to letter no. 126 of 4.11.57.
32. Letters Issued (31.10.57.-13.5.58) P. 20. No. 163.

The Patna Conspiracy of 1857*

Jata Shankar Jha

In January last I got an opportunity to study the "Mutiny Papers" deposited in the Central Record Office, Calcutta. There I came across records bearing upon the existence of a conspiracy in Patna in 1857. These are reports from various Government officers and English translations of some private letters discovered in the houses of the leaders of the conspiracy. They furnish us with information regarding the origin of the conspiracy, its extent and character, its subsequent discovery and the ruthless punishment meted out to the accused.

Mr. William Tayler was the Commissioner of the Patna Division when this conspiracy made its first manifestation, on the 3rd July, 1857, in the form of a furious rising at Patna, in which Dr. Lyall, the Principal Assistant to the Opium Agent of Bihar, was killed. Only a few years before, in December 1845, another conspiracy had been detected in the Dinapur Cantonment and had been suppressed. Even at the time he joined the Commissionership (in May, 1855) Mr. Tayler found the popular feeling so much excited over the wide circulation of christian missionary pamphlets that he submitted to the Government in the following month an exhaustive report on the state of public feeling. The excitement was for the time being cooled down by the measures adopted by the Government and a personal visit on the part of the Lt. Governor to this side of Bihar. But the Commissioner knew it very well that the apparent calm that had followed it was not the true picture of the people's mind. The seeds of discontent still remained there, waiting only for a more favourable condition to sprout. So the news of a rising at Meerut made the Commissioner terribly apprehensive of a similar rising in Patna. He at once took stern measures to suppress the anti-British

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXII, Part II, pp.78-84.

elements in his division. On the 19th June, 1857, he invited respectable residents of Patna "for consultation on the state of affairs" and arrested three influential Maulvies, named Muhammad Hussain Ahmad-ullah¹ and, Waizul Huq², who had come along with others to his house in response to the invitation. That very day he arrested Maulvi Mehdee,³ the Principal Patrol Daroga of the city on suspicion of collusion with the disaffected. He further demanded from the people of Patna to deliver up their arms in the local Thannahs within the period of a few days. Besides, people were prohibited from leaving their homes after 9 p.m.

In spite of these repressive measures the secret meetings of the conspirators continued. On July 2nd, the Commissioner was informed by Ilahee Buksh, the father of Ahmudullah, about a gathering at Peer Ali's house. He sent the man to Mr. Lewis, the Magistrate who failed to act up to the information. And on the 3rd July, a big mob armed with weapons and shouting "deen" "deen", attacked a Roman Catholic church close to Peer Ali Khan's house, the news of which prompted Dr. Lyall to proceed, with a small force to the scene of occurrence; where he was instantaneously shot dead. Then followed an exchange of shots in which a man was killed and one wounded, and before Captain Rattray's force arrived at the scene the mob had dispersed. However, they seized the wounded man and two green flags with inscriptions "*La Ilah Illallahe*". Next day Peer Ali's house was searched. Five guns and some other weapons were found, and also a quantity of papers which afforded a clue to the plot.

Of the letters discovered in Peer Ali's house, I found in the Central Record Office, translations of only five of them, and they are all quite informative. The first is a post-script to a letter from Mussih-us-Zaman, a Lucknow editor and book seller, to Peer Ali Khan book-seller, Patna, dated 3rd Ramzan. The year and place are not mentioned. In this post-script the writer asked Peer Ali to contact, with the present of a book of the value of 25 or 20 rupees, Ali Karim "who lived either at Sahibgunj or Patna, and whose banking houses" were situated at different places. This information, the writer obtained from Maulvi Zaman Shah and Maulvi Gholam Ahmad who also told him that Ali Karim "was a very respectable, generous, pious and philanthropic man" and "in a knowledge of the Laws and Regulations there was not a second person equal to him". The object of such a contact was to get compiled by him "all the Regulations injurious to the Mohamedan religion, etc., for instance those forcing the prisoners to eat, or referring to any enquiry

from Government about the corn factories of all places, or taking away arms from all the people, or those prohibiting circumcision, or any detrimental to the seclusion of women, or ordering the Hindoos to give, their widows in marriage, or others like those of a nature which will tend to the extermination of Mohamedanism in future. And secondly he believed that by being known to a man like him there is no doubt, after a short time it will be productive of general advantages."

Peer Ali was also directed, in the same letter, to make presents of books of the value of 5 or 6 rupees to "aggrieved" learned men but he was at the same time warned "not to break the matter to them" unless they swore by the Koran to remain faithful.

Peer Ali was further asked to give an idea of the family of the great Wahabee leader, Maulvi Willayet Ali or Maulvi Muksood Ali.⁴ And for the great object in their view they were to shed all religious differences, "even with the Hindoos". The writer concluded, "For my part, I am on terms with Wahabees, with those who are weak and wavering in their faith, and many even of the Sheeas and Rafzees".

The second letter found in Peer Ali's house was addressed to Yusuf Ali Khan, Peer Ali's Agent at Patna during his absence. Here also the date and place are not mentioned. After acknowledging the receipt of the addressee's letter and enquiring about his health Peer Ali wrote about his concern, the sale of books and settlement of accounts with some Maulvi. He had no idea of the whereabouts of Maulvi Mussih-us-Zaman, against whom Government had issued summons and who was not appearing. Peer Ali spoke about himself as a servant of Abdoolah (it is not clear from the letter as to who he was) but the sepoys took him to be the servant of Mussih-us-Zaman, and were enquiring about "his present residence". He further instructed Yusuf Ali to take away the property of Torab Ali from Khan Saheb (Imamuddin), if the former proved ungrateful. Yusuf Ali was also required to take as much money as Peer Ali needed, from Shaikh Abdool Hamid who had left Benaras for Patna, and send it on to him by 'Hoondée', failing which he was to send only the sum lying with Mobeen-oollah and Khoda Bux. The object of such a transmission of money was to create an impression upon the people that Peer Ali got his expenses from Patna.

It appears from his letter that he had sent a separate letter written in a "disguised style" to Maulvi Waizul Huq; yet he was sure "the wise will find out all my meanings."

The third letter discovered in Peer Ali's house was written by one Muhammad Ali to Peer Ali, dated 29th Rabi-ul-awal 1273.⁵ Here also the name of the place is lacking. Muhammad Ali refers to a previous letter in which he had requested for "full and early particulars" of their affairs. He desired Peer Ali to send him hundred or at least fifty rupees and in case he found himself unable to secure the money he was to direct the bearer to Mohsimpore⁶. He was further requested to bring Maulvi Imamud-deen⁷ within him and to send fresh news, if there were any. Concluding the letter Muhammad Ali significantly wrote—"Be it known that in this place there is no obstacle whatever to oppose our design now. To the wise a hint is sufficient."

The fourth letter is dated Patna 29th Shawwal (Monday) 1857, from Hafiz Budrud-deen Ahmad to Meer Bhuttoo, Shah Dumree etc. Since the letter gives a very graphic picture of the state of affairs in Patna at this time, I quote the whole of it—"Some respectable parties of the city are in prison, and the subjects are all weary and disgusted with the tyranny and oppression exercised by Government, whom they all curse. May God hear the prayers of the oppressed very soon. The business for which I have come here is progressing though not accomplished. Let us see when our object is to be obtained. On account of the disturbed state of things. I am unable to come. Please Heaven I shall come back after finishing our work of sedition and obtaining our object.....

I cannot write to you the true state of things here. I had better be silent on these matters. You have an enlightened mind—bright as the crystal of Aleppo, hence nothing will escape your notice."

On the same sheet of paper Peer Ali had also written a short note to the effect that he had not failed to attend to their "unsettled affairs", but fate being adverse he must submit to it. He added, "I am really ashamed, and require assistance of your prayers to obtain my end; if not, I value not life. In other matters we are all safe."

Other papers which further gave clue to the existence of the plot were found in the possession of Waris Ali, a police jamadar at Muzaffarpur. He was said to be related to the royal family at Delhi and the Magistrate of Tirhoot believed him to be employed as spy for some time. Letters found in his possession were all addressed by Ali Karim, and he was himself "seized in the act of writing a long letter to Ali Karim" and getting ready to quit the place, perhaps in response to Ali

Karim's letter of the 12th June 1857. The letter, just referred to, ran thus: "I have reached Doomree today and I am as yet unwell. Matters are assuming a different turn now. Your immediate coming is very necessary. To-day I have sent my Peada, Munsoor Ali, to you with a letter; another letter I have very carefully sent by post. Come away at sight of this, either on leave, or by any means possible. Do not delay at all. Everything depends on you. Without your arrival, the defence of the honour, property, and life of poor people like us is impossible. At such a period matters should be shared by you, otherwise a weak and old man like me can do nothing. The ruling powers are straitened by the work of the ingrates. Who asks what poor people such as we are doing? Bring the riding horse, etc. with you. I await your arrival every moment.

The second letter found in Waris Ali's possession was dated Patna 13th Falgoon 1264. Ali Karim, in this letter conveyed his "deep thinking about their undertaking, and although he had entrusted one Hafiz with the execution of the task he had no satisfaction unless he did that himself. He had received "no fresh news from the west." He further gave his intention of visiting Sahebgunje in four or five days to which place he asked Waris Ali⁸ to direct all letters.

The third letter was dated 4th April 1856 and had been written from Colonel Kulb Ali's house in Mahendru (Patna). Ali Karim wrote in this letter about the king of Oudh as "lying in Calcutta and crying bitterly for the Imam⁹." About his own undertaking he wrote that he was fully determined about that. The *Khaleefas* were to be sent, shortly, "to several places to lead the ignorant and prepare all for an issue."

Thus all the letters discovered either at Peer Ali's house or at Waris Ali's prove beyond doubt the existence of a conspiracy to overthrow the Government. One thing is also very clear that there were besides the Wahabees, two groups of people at Patna engaged separately against the Government. One was the Lucknow group with Peer Ali, Yusuf Ali, Imamoodeen and others. This group had begun to work, most probably, just after the annexation of Oudh. The other group, of Ali Karim, Waris Ali and others, drew inspiration and help from Delhi, and it was this group which had won over the Native Infantry stationed at Dinapore by various inducements, such as distribution of money etc. But efforts had already been made to effect collaboration among these groups. Mussih-us-Zaman, the Lucknow editor and book-seller, in one of his letters to Peer Ali had emphasized the need of such combination,

and instructed the latter to contact Ali Karim and others, and also to shed all religious and sectarian differences on such occasions. It appears that, they did gain some success in this regard, for the rising of the 3rd July the slogan and flags of the mob; shows that it was a combination of various groups. The slogans—"Deen, Deen" "Ali, Ali" and "Badshah of Delhi" are sufficiently significant and suggestive. So is the green flag with the inscription *La Illah Illallahe*. Peer Ali was himself present in the mob and had shot Dr. Lyall." And at least Maulvi Waizul Huq, one of the arrested Wahabee leaders, had the knowledge of this plot.

The statement of the arrested persons, particularly that, of Imamoodeen also prove this fact. Imamoodeen was wounded in the skirmish of the 3rd July and arrested by the Sikh force. According to his statement he had with many others, been engaged by Peer Ali and was receiving pay for the last three months,' on the understanding that when the time arrived, they should fight for. "Deen" and "Padshah of Delhi."¹⁰ He testified that the parties concerned in the outbreak were Soonnees and Hindoos also¹¹. Ali Karim was to have been elected Ruler of the Province, if the scheme had succeeded, and on the night of the disturbance, as he was absent, a substitute named Kasim Shere was chosen. The Dinapore sepoy had consented to the conspiracy, but there was a difference of opinion between them and towns-people as to the day; the sepoy wishing for Sunday, the townsfolk preferring Friday. And the 3rd July was actually Friday.

From evidence adduced on the trial of Peer Ali¹² it appears that he had entertained 12 servants, who lived in his house, and that arms were also collected there. The other conspirators resided elsewhere, many of them out of the town, and came to his house occasionally.

The discovery of the conspiracy let loose a reign of terror. House-searches, arrests and executions became the order of the day. Thousands were thrown into prison on mere suspicion while hundreds were hanged without regular trials. The trial of Lootf Ali Khan a rich banker of the city, is a typical example of W. Tayler's tampering with the course of justice. This man was committed to sessions by the Commissioner, on the charge of first being an accomplice in the conspiracy, and that failing on his having harboured a mutineer. 'Lootf Ali was thrown into the prison. His case was tried by Mr. Farquharson, the Session Judge of Patna. While he was trying the case Mr. Tayler tried to influence him by several private letters. In a letter of the 14th July 1857 he wrote,

"L.A.K seems to have had a nest of ruffians in employ; two of the hangees are shown to have been closely connected with him. The man. himself admits that he was an 'Omedwar for 8 or 10 days with him. I fancy *hundreds have been hanged on less evidence than this.*" Failing to substantiate his charge Mr. Tayler requested the judge to postpone the proceedings for few days to enable him to procure stronger evidence. Finding, the judge not agreeing with him, he again wrote to him, on the 23rd July, "*Hundreds have been hanged on much less evidence*, but I can obtain a better still, and you will, I think, incur great responsibility if you do not postpone the case." Lootf Ali Khan was, however, acquitted of all charges.

We have already noted the tyranny of W. Tayler in a private. letter from Hafiz Budeeoodeen Ahmad to Meer Bhutto, Sah Dumree.¹³ etc. Mr. Tayler had employed *Gondas* to bring him secret information about the people of the town. These *Gondas*, wrote Mr. E. A. Samuells on the 22nd, September 1857, were much more formidable to innocent men from whom they extorted money by accusation than to criminals, who could generally secure their silence either by bribery or intimidation. The "hundreds" whom Mr. Tayler capitally sentenced were not the real offenders, for, reporting on the severity of the measures adopted by the Commissioner. Mr. J. M. Lowis, the Magistrate, in his letter of the 11th July, 1857 to the Government, observed—"It is, however, to be regretted, that with the exception of the Book-Seller, Peer Ali Khan, none of the heads of the conspiracy have as yet been apprehended."

These irregularities and high-handedness of the Commissioner were seriously taken notice of by the Government and the Lieutenant Governor in his minute of the 5th August, 1857 very truly observed, "He (Mr. Tayler) had already, in the cases of fifteen or sixteen persons capitally convicted, largely mixed himself with the operations of the Police Magistrate and Public Prosecutor against persons whom he was afterwards to try, and did actually try, as a judge in the last resort". And in spite of clear and specific instructions of the Lieutenant Governor "not to sit as judge in the case of any one against whom he had been concerned in the previous examinations and enquiries, but to commit such persons for trial to the more impartial tribunal of the Session Judge.....Mr. Tayler did not hesitate to try and condemn to death a Trooper of Captain Rattray's corps,.....upon whose trial he could not

possibly be considered impartial". Again in the case of Lootf Ali Khan, "Mr. Tayler has evinced a most indecent anxiety for a conviction, and has not scrupled to assail the judge with private letters, urging him to condemn the prisoner in a manner contrary to all usage and propriety, and even humanity."

The Lieutenant Governor did not fail to notice the effect of such a policy. In the same minute he observed that "Mr. Tayler's hasty and indecorous proceedings.....have tended to irritate-men's minds and to produce a feeling of insecurity among the respectable portion of the inhabitants."

Fortunately for the Division, Mr. W. Tayler was removed from the Commissionership on the 4th August, 1857.

REFERENCES

1. Ahmudullah was the principal accused in the Patna Wahabi case (1865) and was transported for life to Andman, where he died.
2. I have learnt from a descendant of Waizul Huq, Mr. F. Balkhi of Patna university, that he incurred the displeasure of the Government on account of his prominent opposition to the religious propaganda of the Christian missionaries. On his release from jail he was offered a Government post which he declined, and left for Mecca, where he died.
3. Maulvi Mehdee, a resident of Lucknow, was suspected because he had been "frequently admitted to the Royal Presence, when the king of Oude passed through Patna. (Patna Commissioner's letter No. 622 dated the 17th July 1857 to Government of Bengal).
4. Maulvi Muksood Ali was another Wahabee leader, then in Calcutta and "believed to have been very busy in the late conspiracy."—Tayler—July 15, 1857.
5. It corresponds to 22nd June 1857.
6. "This village belongs to one Kasim Sheikh (Sher?), whom I am hunting. He, it is said, was to have been made king of Patna (!) when the English were disposed of," W. Tayler dated 16th July 1857.
7. Imam-ud-deen was the wounded man seized by Captain Rattray's force on the 3rd July.
8. Waris Ali was later on brought to Patna and sentenced to death. When taken to the scaffold he shouted, "If there is any friend of the king of Delhi. let him come and help me." I.W. Kave, *History of the Sepoy War in India*, Vol. III, p. 80.

9. By Imam is meant Mahdi Imam. It is the religious belief of certain sects of the Moslem that he will appear to save the Earth when it will be filled with vices and corruption.
10. W. Tayler dated 14th July, 1857.
11. W. Tayler dated 19th July, 1857.
12. "He was tried and sentenced to death. Brought before the Commissioner and other English gentlemen, "heavily fettered, his soiled garments stained deeply with blood from a wound in his side," he was asked whether he had any information to give that might, induce the Government to spare his life. With dignified composure, such as our own people did not always maintain under exciting circumstances, he confronted his questioners, and replied : "There are some cases in which it is good to save life, others in which it is better to lose it." He denounced the oppression of the English, especially of the Commissioner, and added, "You may hang me, or such as me, every day but thousands will rise in my place, and your object will never be gained. Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War*, Vol. III-pp. 85-86.
13. This letter I have quoted in full in a different context.

Some unpublished records regarding the Sepoy Mutiny*

R.C. Majumdar

During my recent visit to London (June, 1956) I studied some records preserved in the Library of the Commonwealth Relations Office (formerly India Office). I came across many interesting documents which, to my knowledge, have not yet been published. As regards some of them, it appeared from some stray notes in the files that they were recently micro-filmed, presumably for the use of the official history of the Mutiny sponsored by the Government of India, though I have no definite knowledge on this point. I publish some documents which do not appear to have been so microfilmed, as they are of great importance and yet not utilised, so far as I know, by any historian. These are extracts from the correspondence between Major General T. Reed and Sir John Lawrence. Reed was the Provincial Commander in Chief and was appointed commander of the forces besieging Delhi in supersession of Sir Henry Barnard. He arrived at Alipur, near Delhi, from Rawalpindi, on 8 June, 1857, but, on account of his health, did not assume personal command of the troops till after Barnard's death on 5 July. Unfortunately Reed could not long continue in his office owing to his bad health and on 17 July, proceeded on sick leave to Simla. It was probably because of his short tenure of command, during which he could not make himself conspicuous, that his correspondence with Lawrence has not drawn much attention, from scholars. But the extracts quoted below reveal an interesting episode, otherwise unknown viz. secret intrigues carried, on by Bahadur Shah's most trusted lieutenant Hekim Ahsanullah Khan, with the British general during the siege of Delhi. It was proposed, on behalf of Bahadur Shah that if the British

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXIII, Part II, pp.115–119.

agreed to continue his pension of one lakh of rupees a month and secure his former status and position he would help the British to occupy Delhi by secretly admitting British troops into the fort through a particular gate.

Such an overture on the part of Bahadur Shah, at the moment when the fate of the Mutiny (or War of Independence as some would like to call it) hung in the balance and the Sepoys, were shedding their blood to defend the city of Delhi in his name, gives us a true insight into the character of the man who has been hailed as the great leader of the War of Liberation and whose tragic end has evoked much sympathy from Indians of all shades of opinion.

But although the conduct of Bahadur Shah might appear strange, and even incredible to some, it need not cause any surprise to those who have studied, in a dispassionate spirit, the part played by him since the very beginning of the Mutiny. In particular it is fully in keeping with the account given by Munshi Jiwanlal who was in Delhi during the siege and recorded the incidents from day to day in the form of a diary. It may be doubted by some whether Bahadur Shah was personally cognisant of the intrigues carried on by Hakim Ahsanullah in his name. In order to remove all these doubts it is necessary to make reference in some detail to the part played by both Bahadur Shah and Ahsanullah.

When the Sepoys, who had mutinied at Mirat on 10 May, arrived at Delhi the next morning, Bahadur Shah was completely taken unawares. He had no knowledge of the event, and was terribly afraid of the mutineers. Douglas, the British military officer in charge of the Police Guard, was with him at the time when the mutineers arrived at the Red Fort. Attracted by their uproar this officer wanted to go out to meet them, but Bahadur Shah held him by his hand as he was afraid that he might be killed. When the mutineers approached him with a request to assume their leadership he at first refused, but had ultimately to agree to do so much against his will.

The incident is thus described by Jiwanlal Munshi in his diary under the date, 11 May:—

“Later on in this day, the two Subahdars, who had been admitted to an audience with the King in the presence of Captain Douglas, were again admitted to a private audience as the representatives of the crowds of soldiery that thronged the neighbourhood of the Palace. They

formally tendered the services of the troops to the King. They were directed to take their orders from Ahsanullah Khan. They sought him out and gave their message. It is said that Ahsanullah looked much perplexed what reply to give. He looked upon the outbreak as a passing thundercloud, too black to last long.....Many of the men forcibly intruded into the presence of the King, who was seated in the Dewan-i-Khas. Ahsanullah sought a private audience of the king, and on his advice a camel sowar was sent off with a letter to the Lieutenant Governor at Agra. From time to time more troops arrived. The court of the Palace became a scene of the wildest confusion, quarrellings, and disputes. With a view to introduce discipline among the troops orders were issued by Ahsanullah Khan directing the different princes to assume command of the several regiments.”¹

The above extract leaves no doubt that Ahsanullah Khan was the conscience-keeper of Bahadur Shah and the *de facto* master of the situation. This is further proved by the following entry in Jiwanlal’s diary under the date, 23 May: “Seeing the atrocities the, mutineers were committing in the city, Hakim Ahsanullah Khan induced the King to issue an order commanding the troops to leave the city, on the ground that they would only plunder and cause blood to be shed.”²

But the most important for our present purpose is the following extract from Jiwanlal’s diary under the date, 16 May, which shows that the Sepoys had already begun to suspect the loyalty of both Bahadur Shah and Ahsanullah Khan to the cause of the mutineers :—

“The Sepoys assembled early this morning before the Palace, threatening the King and his officers, accusing them of saving the lives of European ladies and gentlemen and concealing them in the Fort, and through them communicating with the Europeans at Mirat.”

“I learned today that nearly forty Europeans were concealed in the King’s Palace. The Sepoys went to the Palace in great anger, as they said they had seized a messenger with a letter cursing the mutineers. The Sepoys threatened to kill Ahsanulla Khan and Nawab Mahabub Ali Khan, and also threatened to take away Zinat Mahal Begum Sahiba and keep her as a hostage for the King’s loyalty. There was a great uproar in the Palace, the Sepoys on the one hand, and the King’s household on the other, contending with violent language and harsh vociferations.”³

The suspicion of the Sepoy is confirmed by, and in a way confirms the truth of the extracts from the correspondence which form the subject-matter of this paper. Both receive further corroboration from the published letters of H. H. Greathed, the Commissioner of Mirat who was appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of N. W. P. as his political agent at Delhi, attached to the field force. The importance of his position would appear from a reference to him in the letters quoted below. The following extracts from his letters are therefore of great interest for our present purpose :—

I. Camp Delhi, 19 August (1857).

“I am beginning to get letters from the princes, declaring they have been all along fondly attached to us, and that they only want to know what they can do for us.”⁴

II. Camp Delhi, 23 August (1857).

“An emissary came out from Zeenut Muhul, the favourite wife of the King, a great political personage, offering to exercise her influence with the King, to bring out some arrangement.”⁵

Whether the treacherous intrigues of the favourite queen and the sons of Bahadur Shah with the British were independently conceived or were a continuation of those he had himself begun it is difficult to say. Perhaps we shall never know the links between the different types of intrigues which continued almost throughout the siege of Delhi ending with the surrender of the King on agreed terms after the fall of that city. But, in any case, all the different informations coming from entirely different sources so remarkably fit in with one another that there is hardly any room for doubt that Bahadur Shah and his family betrayed the cause of the Mutiny (or War of Independence) by secretly intriguing with the English. The extracts quoted above, by depicting Bahadur Shah in his true colours, would help us in making a proper assessment of the role he played in the great outbreak of 1857. They complete the chain of evidence of the great betrayal, by Bahadur Shah and the members of his family, not only of the mutineers, of whom he was the nominal head, but also of the whole country.

**Extracts from a letter dated Delhi, 4th July 1857,
from T. Reed to Lawrence**

“One of our Gomasthas who was in Delhi contrived to make his escape yesterday and brought a message from the king that if we would guarantee his life and pension he would open the gates for us; how far this is to be depended upon remains to be proved; but we have “been so busy with their attack upon our rear that there has been no time to consider it; he has evidently been made a tool of and it might stop an immense deal of blood granting his pension for the remaining years of his life which cannot be many.”

*

*

*

*

“The private statement of Futteh Mahomed Gomastha—4th July, 1857, has just been placed in my hands as follows:—

‘About a fortnight ago Boolakie Doss a Buneah and friend of mine hinted to me that the Hukeem Haissan Oollah Khan wished to come to terms with the British but I did not attend to him as I thought nothing would be done. However he came to me eight days ago and told me the Hakeem was most anxious to see me. Two days after I went to the palace to wait on the Hakeem who took me into a private apartment at the top of a high building; no one was present but the Hakeem, his mooktear Boolakie Doss and myself. The Hakeem at Once asked me if I fully understood what he had desired Boolakie Doss to tell me; I said that I did, but that I would, not give him much, hope of being able to do anything. Then he said that the king was most desirous of making terms with the British and that if a promise (a formal one) were given him that his pension of 1 lac of Rupees a month and his former position should be secured to him he would have the “Jerदारajah” opened for the admission of the British troops, the “Jerदारajah” is a private entrance into the palaces under the Summund Boorj on the river side. The king also offered to arrange to have any other of the city-gates opened at any time the British might wish. A written agreement to assist the British in every way in obtaining possession of the city would be given with the Royal Seal attached. I promised to submit the offer as it was made and make known the answer.’

“The substance of this will be sent to you by telegraph today so that you will probably have, replied to it before you receive this. Mr. Greathed has also been requested to make it known to the Lieutenant

Governor, N. W. Provinces. If we enter into terms with the king it will be necessary to obtain a material guarantee that his part of the conduct will be faithfully performed. I" doubt his (king's) ability to have one of the city gates opened as they are all in the hands of the insurgents whatever may be his power in the palace."

II

Extract from a letter, dated 9th July 1857, from Sir John Lawrence to General Reed

"I hope that unless the orders of Government prohibit it, that you will endeavour to come to an understanding with the king of Delhi. If he is sincere in his overtures and I am inclined to think that he may be, I should consider that by a little dexterity on our part, he could admit a regiment into the palace, and if we were fully established inside others could follow without difficulty."

III

Extract from a letter, dated Simla, 26th July 1857, from General Reed to Sir John Lawrence

"I am afraid the king of Delhi's overtures will come to nothing. I do not think in the first instance that he has the power of performing what he offers, to open one of the gates as the town is in the hands of the insurgents, and in the next he would always be influenced by the last report such for instance as the burning of the cantonment at Agra which they celebrated as victory at Delhi."

REFERENCES

1. *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*, translated into English from original Persian by C. Metcalfe, p. 83.
2. *Ibid.* pp. 101-2
3. *Ibid.* pp. 93-4.
4. *Letters written during the siege of Delhi*, by H. H. Greathed (London, 1858), pp. 205-6.
5. *Ibid.* p. 217.

Letters about the Mutiny of 1857 in Madhya Bharat*

Y. Bhargava

In the year 1954 a group of research workers of the Southern Division, History of Freedom Movement, Indore, Madhya Bharat, while tracing out old and rare books in the library of the Foreign Office of the merged Holkar State, noticed a small bundle of torn papers hidden in the lowest shelf of an old almirah containing some books covered with layers of dust. One of the bundles was found to contain some confidential letters and reports, written in the Modi script of the Marathi language to the Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II by certain persons during 1857-59 A.D. The existence of these letters convinced the research workers that there must be a regular secret correspondence about the Mutiny between the Holkar State authorities and the district officials as well as others. Numerous letters and reports concerning the Mutiny must have been exchanged individually as well as officially and the bundle of papers mentioned above formed only a link in this long correspondence. Consequently they made a vigorous search to trace out these letters and reports in the Government records at the Gopal Mandir and the Shiva-Vilas Palace, Indore, and other places in the districts. Though in the initial stages of their search they were greatly handicapped and often disappointed, ultimately their efforts brought to light heaps of letters and reports in the Modi script about the outbreak and progress of the Mutiny in Malwa. The Education Department, Government of Madhya Bharat, made special arrangements under the Divisional Office, History of Freedom Movement, Indore, to sort out and classify these Modi letters and translate them into Marathi and English. More than a

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXIII, Part II, pp.39-43.

thousand of such letters have been sorted out, read and translated and the work is still in progress.

The most important series of letters among these is a bundle of 160 letters from "the Indore Barnishi" written by Shri Rao Ramchandra Rao Bhau, the then officiating Minister of the Holkar State, to various subordinate officers of Indore State districts as well as indore city which witnessed a violent outbreak of the Mutiny and anti-British activity on 1 July 1857. These letters contain orders, instructions and inquiries. They also include a series of letters written to Shri Ganpat Sitaram, the then Indore Durbar Vakil posted at the British Residency, Indore. All these letters explain the Holkar's policy concerning the British as well as other affairs and indicate the Holkar Durbar's attitude towards Saadat Khan, the well-known ring-leader of the Indore Mutiny, the attack and loot of the Indore Residency, etc.

Next in importance is the *Dincharya* or Journal of Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II consisting of 234 pages. It contains a day-to-day account of the Indore Mutiny and the activities of the Holkar Durbar from 1 July to 31 August, 1857—the period of intense activity of the mutineers in Malwa. Besides this *Dincharya*, there is another systematic account of the Mutiny at Indore in great detail in chronological order from 1 July to 8 July, 1857. It is called the *Rojnamcha*.

Then there are eighty-two letters written by Shri Ganesh Ramchandra (Gogate), the Holkar's Vakil posted at Mhow, the British military station, to Shri Rao Ramchandra Rao Bhau Sahib, the then officiating Minister of Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II. They chiefly deal with the condition of Mhow, details about the movements of the British forces, the nature of help the Maharaja Holkar offered to the British, the Maharaja's real attitude towards the British, his keen desire to take advantage of the absence of the British forces for obtaining and collecting arms and ammunition, his concern over the return of Hamilton, the then Resident at Indore for Central India, etc.

Next to these letters in importance is a bundle of about fifty letters written in English by the British military officials posted at Mhow, particularly Majors Hungerford and Elliot. These letters indicate that the Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II was busy in cultivating personal relations with the British officers at Mhow for safeguarding his own interest and helping individual Britishers rather than protecting and promoting the British cause and suppressing the Mutiny.

After the outbreak of the Mutiny in Indore the insurgents remained in the city for some days and then marched towards Delhi after joining hands with other mutineers. Twenty letters from Tarana, despatched by Shri Ramakant Bapuji, the then *Mamaledar* of Tarana, and sixteen letters sent by Shri Shivachand Kothari, the then *Suba* (Collector) of the Rampura-Bhanpura District of the Holkar State including a few letters from Bandah Ali, a military officer of the Holkar, give a vivid account of the insurgents. They not only describe the general conditions of the districts, but throw light on the movements of the mutineers, their number, condition, discipline, and food supplies, the race and qualities of the enlisted sepoys, the activities of Taty Tope, and measures taken for protecting the districts from the impending danger, etc. But more important than these facts, is the attitude of the Maharaja Holkar towards the mutineers as indicated in some of these letters.

Mutiny broke out at Dhar, forty miles away from Indore. It was the seat of the Dhar State. The strong rebel force occupied the fort and the capital and contacted the mutineers at other places. They attacked, looted and destroyed the Bhopawar Residency near Amzera, a few miles away from Dhar. There are fifteen letters written by Shri Ganpat Sitaram, Indore Durbar's Vakil at Mhow, addressed to Rao Ramchandra Rao Bhau. The Vakil accompanied the British force which marched to Dhar to capture it and drive out the mutineers. Consequently these letters deal with the movements of the British force towards Dhar, their attack on Dhar, the siege and capture of the fortress, escape of the insurgents, loot and plunder of Dhar by the British soldiers, impressions of Shri Ganpat Sitaram about the Mutiny at Dhar, etc. These letters together with some others from the Indore Barnishi mentioned above throw light on the attitude of the Maharaja Holkar towards Dhar.

Mahidpur was a very important military station of the British in 1857. It was also a strategic town and the district capital of the Holkars with a strong fortress having a natural defence of river water on two sides. It was the scene of a decisive battle between the Holkar and the British in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The Residency of Mahidpur witnessed a violent outburst of the Mutiny. The explosive condition at Mahidpur preceding the Mutiny, the outburst of the Mutiny itself and after-events are very well described in about fifty letters despatched to Holkar's Minister at Indore by Gangadhar

Mukund, Holkar's Vakil posted at the Mahidpur Residency. Incidentally these letters, some of which were answered from Indore, throw light on the unfavourable attitude of the Maharaja Holkar towards the British. Besides this, a general picture of the economic and social conditions of the Mahidpur region is also provided by these letters.

Mandasor, the oldest town in Western Madhya Bharat, contributed its own valuable share to the Mutiny. It was at Mandasor that Prince Firuz Shah established his independent authority in 1857, invited other native princes to join hands with him to uproot the British power, collected 20,000 men under his banner and waged battles with the British forces. About half a dozen letters from Mandasor written by Vaman Rao Anna, Sindhia's Vakil, and Narayan Rao Babuji, Sindhia's *Suba* at Mandasor, sent to Indore authorities, describe the advent of Firuz Shah, his capture of Mandasor, various activities of the insurgents in Mandasor and its vicinity.

There are about ten letters written by Mr. Canning, Deputy Bheel Agent at Manpur. These letters narrate the anti-British activities of Bhima Naik, a strong leader of the aborigines in Southern Madhya Bharat, who raised the standard of revolt against the British during the Mutiny period, the British attitude towards Holkar about the Bhumia Chiefs, the activities, movements, and conditions of the mutineers at Satyaghat, Akbarpur, and Kukshi, the British forces and their movements, etc.

The Nimar region in southern Madhya Bharat was also the scene of the activities of the mutineers. There are seven letters from Khargone, the main town of Nimar. They were written to the Indore Durbar by Hari Trimbak and Bakshi Khuman Singh, Holkar's Vakil at Mandleshwar, the British military station in Nimar. These letters include a copy of the letter written by Taty Tope to the *Mamaledar* at Khargone asking him to provide food supplies and encampment for Taty's force. All these letters deal with the movements of the mutineers, local conditions and activities of Taty Tope after he crossed the Narmada and fought the battle of a Rajpur (Barwni).

Besides Khargone there were other important strategic towns in the Nimar region, namely Sendhawa and Bijagarh. About twenty letters were written by Khat Singh Thakur, Subedar of the Sarkar (District) Bijagarh, describing the activities of the Bhils, the way they helped the mutineers, the Holkar's feelings towards the British, the *Vilayatees*, etc.

There are five letters written by the authorities at Chandwad in Maharashtra about a rumour that the Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar had participated in the Mutiny and sent his trusted official Bakshi Khuman Singh to raise a large army.

Then, there are four letters from the Nawab of Jaora to Holkar's Minister at Indore describing the general condition of Jaora, the brisk activities of the mutineers, measures adopted for the protection of Jaora, etc. The brother of the Nawab of Jaora joined hands with the mutineers against the British. Two more letters were discovered which indicate that Taty Tope and the rebel-forces were helped, by the Bhils and the villagers.

Besides the above-mentioned letters, there are seven letters in the form of proclamations and circulars, the most noteworthy being the proclamations of Colonel Durand, the then British Resident at Indore, and the Nana Sahib Peshwa.

The letters referred to above do not exhaust the list; more letters are being traced out, translated and added to the list, and thus the work still continues. To sum up, these letters, rich in numerous interesting details and anecdotes, provide the following information:—

1. The Mutiny of 1857 broke out at various places in Southern Madhya Bharat. It was preceded by restlessness and anti-British feeling among the sepoys. They derived inspiration from others.

2. There were scenes of violence, loot, plunder, massacre and regular battles. Sometimes there was good planning and organisation on the part of the mutineers. They captured and held certain strategic places for days together.

3. At one time the British power was completely wiped out in Southern Madhya Bharat. Only a few Englishmen were left at Mhow and Neemuch and they too were in precarious situation, besieged by the hostile elements.

4. H.H. the Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar, to further his own cause, exploited the ill-feeling and strained relations between Hungerford, Commandant, Mhow Artillery, and Durand, the then officiating Resident at Indore and between Hamilton the then permanent Resident at Indore and Durand. Occasionally, the district officials also throw in their lot with the mutineers.

5. Sometimes the people sympathized with and helped the mutineers by providing them with money, food supplies and labour.

6. It seems that the activities of the British forces in their attempts to suppress the insurgents were predatory.

7. The aim of the leaders of the mutineers was not to molest or loot the villages and towns, but their activities were directed against the British.

A study of some mutiny letters of Sohagpur*

Kameshwar Jha

Originally Sohagpur Ilaqa. (Shahdol District of old Rewa State: South, Baghelkhand) was a portion of the Rewa State, but it had been seized by the Bhonslas of Nagpur in 1809, from whom it passed to the British under the terms of the treaty of 1826, The British occupation of Sohagpur was viewed with suspicion by the Rewa ruler and he and the Thakur of Sohagpur desired to come together for mutual benefit. The opportunity was offered by the Mutiny of 1857, when Thakur Garul Singh of Sohagpur, which then formed part of Mandla District of British India (Madhya Pradesh), with his brother, Bharat Singh rose in rebellion against the British. He had been managing the estate since the death of his brother Ram Singh, the Thakur of Sohagpur, leaving a widow and two daughters.

The Mutiny started with an attack on the *Thana*, at Sohagpur by Garul Singh with the help of the mutinous sepoys of the 52 Bengal Native Infantry. The police were put to flight. The rebels then joined the Lodhi Thakurs of Shahpura and pushed on to Mandla. In their action the Thakurs of Sohagpur also received cooperation from the Raja of Ramgarh, at present a village of little importance in Dindori tahsil of Mandla District. This is also supported by letter No. 4 below. The *Mandla Gazetteer* (p. 37) observes, "Shortly after Captain Waddington's appointment the Mutiny broke out. Mandla town was only slightly affected, the principal seats of rebellion being Shahpura, Ramgarh and Sohagpur. Sohagpur surrendered to the British; when a force from Rewa under Sipahi Singh; Dauwa attacked the Garhi on the, 11th June 1858."

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXIII, Part II, pp.105–108.

In 1859 Garul Singh was pardoned, paid up the arrears of revenue and continued to manage the estate. In 1860, Rewa got the territories of Sohagpur and Amarkantak for the services rendered to the British during the Mutiny.

Fourteen letters in original written in Bagheli dialect made available to the Vindhya Pradesh History of Freedom Movement Committee by Thakur Rajendra Bahadur Singh, M.L.A., of Sohagpur are sufficient proof that Maharaja Raghuraj Singh of Rewa was in league with the rebel Thakurs of Sohagpur. He incited as well as helped them. I give below the relevant extracts, from the more important of these letters.

Sohagpur Letters, 1857-59

1. From Maharaja Raghuraj Singh, dated Katik Sudi 10, 1914 V. S. (Nov. 1857). Your letter requisitioning help. Shri Bailonha Ramgulam Ram and Shri Bailonha Dalganjan Ram have been sent to you. Keep them hospitably and in nearness with..... (illegible)..... After 15-25 days Shri Kaka Sheobakas Singh and Shri Kaka Dilraj Singh are coming with 200 horse, 500 foot and four topes on behalf of the British. See that you don't quarrel. Write every thing with details. Received letter from the (Thakur of) Ramgarh. Treat with him. He should not worry. I am prepared to give all help.
2. From Maharaja Raghuraj Singh to M. K. Garul Singh, dated Agahan Sudi 15, 1914 (Dec. 1857). Your letter. What you have heard is correct. You write that you will do according to my instructions; so my opinion and direction is that you do what the Saheb Bahadur orders. This will lead to the welfare of all.
3. From Maharajkumar Shri Lal Sheobakas Singh to M. K. Garul Singh, dated Magh Badi 11, 1914, V.S. (1858). Heard about fight between you and Saheb's forces and that your forces retreated and that they carried away treasury. Write all things with details about the wounded and killed. Write the welfare of the Parihar of Bela who is there and the names of the wounded and killed and also about the Baghel of Bara Kalhari who was (a servant) at yours. After fighting you have to be very cautious. So keep your forces and the fort well protected. Ghats should be very carefully watched and guarded.

4. From Maharaja Raghuraj Singh to Maharajkumar Garul Singh, dated Magh Sudi 11, 1914 V. S. (Feb. 1858). Your letter. Came to know the condition as recorded. We have surrounded Bijera-ghogharh. When Saheb Bahadur will assign me Sohagpur then we (shall come to) Sohagpur.
5. (British) *parwana* to Lachhman Singh, Thakur of Nigwani, dated Sohagpur, the 1st June 1858, requisitioning his presence in the court of Sohagpur. Huzur came to know in Sohagpur that you did not put any pressure on ryots. You tried to convince those who betrayed the Government. But when they were adamant you remained quite aloof from them after some discussion. You wrote to Muhammad Husain of Tahsil Sohagpur about sending the *Jama* which was forcibly snatched by Reodawan Singh of Lalpur. Huzur is very much pleased with this. You come to Sohagpur without any fear. We shall arrive at some settlement after talks with you and if after the meeting you will want to stay here you will stay; otherwise, you will go to your home. Bring some provision for which proper charges will be paid. Do not fear those who are in the Garhi. They are surrounded from all sides. Tope is coming. All will be killed. Other Thakurs have been invited like you. All those who are loyal to the Government and are coming and those who are opposed but likely to come here for defence, are welcome. Or they may send their representatives for talks.
6. (Anonymous) I have been telling you from before hand that you should take to the hills, do not live near Rewa, (but) you did not comply. On the receipt of the letter wherever you may be start from there and go to the Maikal hills. Don't tarry in Itma etc., This will not suit you. If you are arrested there you will be hanged: The same advice applies to those who are inside the Garhi that they may leave the Garhi and fight back to the hill. You will not be a match from the Garhi. Escape from the Garhi. If you do not comply with our suggestion a lot of forces from Rewa will arrive, and in case you leave the Garhi you will be saved. So in no case is it advisable to stay in the Garhi. After reading tear off the paper.
7. From M. K. Kr. Shri Lal Jamadar Vishyoshar Singh to M, K. Garul Singh, dated Rima, Jeth Badi 1915 V. S. (June 1858). I had been to Nagod with the Saheb Bahadur. Have, now returned to Rewa with the Saheb. Saheb's letter had arrived that platoon

(*paltan*) and topes have come to Sohagpur for fighting, 11011* reinforcement is also coming to Sohagpur (in aid of the British). Write to brother Shri Bharath Singh to fight there as long as he can. When he can no longer hold on in the Garhi he will come out so that he may not be encircled. When life is saved the Garhi will remain. Once dead, dead for ever. Some settlement is sure to be made within one or two months. And then there will be no danger to life after that. The saying we have been hearing is this. Brother, this is not a false saying. The counsel of the king and the minister must be acted upon (if the king is saved so much the better, but your action counteracts it). You are yourself a clever man (and) do not require any one's advice. Live carefully. Rest is O.K. Oral information will be known from Bansi..... Blessings to children.

8. From Senyadhipati Kashinath to M. K. Garul Singh, dated Tala, Jaistha Badi 2, 1915 V. S. (June 1858). Man Rakhan Ram Tiwari of Paljha, Bhola Singh Dikhit of Dodka and Lachhiman Baniya complained here as follows. Your goodness have picked up quarrel with the Angrez and while you have been loyal to the 11011* (it is strange that) you have begun to loot 11011's "property. You have not done a good thing. Return the property to him whom you have deprived of it. If you are bent upon it, write frankly.
9. (British) *parwana* to Thakur Garul Singh, *Sarbarahkar* of Sohagpur, from Chandan Singh, Serastedar (Sohagpur, dated 4 Badi Phagun 1915 (21 Feb., 1859). Your application dated 10 Sudi Magh 1915 considered by Huzur. Before your application reached here the Tahsildar and Thanadar have (already) been sent to Sohagpur. You are also asked to settle down in Sohagpur and deposit the government *Jama*. Unless you settle down and deposit the government *Jama* you will be counted among the rebels. And when you will settle down, the matter will be reported to the Saheb Commissioner Bahadur. His order as received will be made known to you.

Sd/-Illegible.

It is evident from Letter No. 1 above as well as other letters that Maharaja Raghuraj Singh of Rewa feared to give direct and open help to

* 11011 is symbolic of Sarkar (Government)

the rebels. Openly he sided with the British and also sometimes asked the Thakurs to do what the "Saheb Bahadur" required them to do (Letter No. 2). Letter No. 3 and Letter No. 6 which bear no name show that the Maharaja always kept in constant touch with the rebels and sometimes gave directions to them. The letter (No. 7) from Shri Lal Jamadar Vishyoshar Singh Deva to Shri Maharajakumar Shri Lal Garul Singh Deva dated Rima, Jeth Badi 1915 (June 1858) also communicates some information and gives suitable directions.

From these letters it is obvious that in the Mutiny of Sohagpur the Maharaja of Rewa was the guiding hand, though outwardly he desisted from professing any alliance with the rebels. With the shrewdness of a diplomat he tried to put pressure on the British by creating disturbances from within while obliging them with military help. In the light of the above it would be incorrect to suppose that the sole aim of Rewa Durbar in encouraging the Sohagpur Mutiny was to get back the Ilaqa of Sohagpur. There is no denying the fact that Maharaja Raghuraj Singh coveted Sohagpur, but in assisting the rebel Thakurs he had no doubt been actuated by a national spirit.

A mutiny paper of Mirza Birjis Qadir Ramzan Ali Bahadur*

Nandalal Chatterji

I have recently come across a mutiny paper which is extremely interesting. The paper is dated 1273 A.H. (1857 A.D.) and is translated into English for the convenience of the readers. It is a petition of Army Officers of Lucknow and of orders of Nawab Birjis Qadir thereon. This shows the connection of the Army Officers with the Mughal Government of Delhi.

1. A petition of the Army Officers for appointment of His Majesty (Birjis Qadir) for the governance of this country would, be submitted to the Emperor of Delhi. It is expected that His Majesty's hereditary claims and the request of the most faithful petitioners would receive a favourable consideration.

Order.—Have faith in His Majesty's favours.

2. The increment, promotion and the rank of Officers of our Army may be determined according to the rules and regulations of the Army of the Emperor of Delhi.

Order.—Granted. In fact titles and honour would be in addition.

3. The gratuity and relief to all the officers and soldiers killed and wounded may kindly be sanctioned on the lines of Delhi army.

Order.—Sanctioned.

4. Besides the present army which is engaged in warfare, if further recruitment is desired, the officers for that army may be chosen from among us.

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXV, pp.64–65.

Order.—Those who are competent and capable of giving training would surely be appointed.

5. Our salaries and allowances like the salaries and allowances of the Delhi army may be sanctioned from the beginning of the month of Ramzan, 1273 A. H. (April 1857).

Order.—It should be done.

6. The officers who may be appointed in this Kingdom should be honest and men of integrity, not cruel to the subjects.

Order.—Gladly accepted. It has been the tradition and shall continue to be so.

7. Every officer of the army may be supplied with copy of the petition after having been signed and sealed.

Order.—Would be done, rest assured.

PETITIONERS

1. Shiv Din Singh, Subedar, (Signed in Hindi).
2. Ghamandi Singh, Sub., Nizamat Platoon Regt. II (Signed in Hindi).
3. Nepal Singh, Sub.; Regt. IE.
4. Shujat Ali, Sub., Regt., Nadiri Battn.
5. Bhawanidin Singh, Sub., Akhtari Platoon (Signed in Hindi).
6. Umrao Singh, Sub., Barlow Sahib Platoon (Signed in Hindi).
7. Raghunandan Singh, Sub. (Signed in Hindi).
8. Salig Ram, Sub., Ballam Ter Platoon (Signed in Hindi).
9. Raghunath Singh, Sub-Major, Regt II (Signed in Hindi).
10. Wajid Ali Khan, Risaldar, Regt. I, Hindustan Sawars, Colonelganj Cantt.
11. Aman Beg, Risaldar, Regt. I, Hindustan Sawars, Colonelganj Cantt.
12. Mahabali Singh, Sub., Magness Platoon (Signed in Hindi).

13. Saadullah Khan, Risaldar, Regt. XV.
14. Mohd. Saaduddin Khan, Risaldar, Regt. XV.
15. Debi Singh, Sub., Regt. X.
16. Thakur Singh, Sub-Major, Regt. III.
17. Sd. Barkat Ahmad, Risaldar, Regt. X, Hindustan Sawars.
18. Sd. Makhdoom Baksh, Sub., Commanding Officer, Regt. VIII.
19. Shaikh Bahadur Ali, Commanding Officer, Regt. No. I.
20. Dhani Ram, Commanding Officer.
21. Imam Baksh, Sub-Major, Civil Battalion.

Mutiny and titles with special reference to Bihar*

V.C.P. Chaudhary

I have come across several unpublished documents in the Central Archives, Patna, which deal with conferment of titles on various types of people, who helped the British Government in suppressing the revolt of 1857. The discussion which took place in 1858 shows that the revolt of 1857 was important in many ways. The British Government became conscious of the vital need of a loyal class to help them at critical moments and with this object in view they bestowed titles on certain people as a reward for their loyal services, in the hope that others might demonstrate their loyalty as a means of earning such titles. In other words, they wanted to make the bestowal of titles an "engine of power" to the Government.

The discussion on the subject started on the 2nd June 1958, in a letter of Dr. E. G. Balfour, Government Agent at Chepak and Paymaster of Carnatic Stipends, to T. Pycroft, Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras. He wrote, "On searching the Sircar Records, I find that since the 31st July 1801, the date of accession of the Nawab Azeem-ood-Dowlah Bahadoor, there have been 890 titles distributed by that Nawab and his successors, amongst 704 persons." They were conferred on all sections of people. In addition to these titles certain badges and emblems of different types of honour and rank were also distributed such as (1) Palkee Sada (Plain Palanquin), (2) Palkee Thallasdar (Mogaley Palanquin), (3) Chowur (Chowree of feathers), (4) Chutree (Umbrella), (5) Pesh Kuz (Dagger), (6) Siphon (Shield).

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXV, Part-II, pp.69-76.

The importance of the bestowal of titles was recognised not only by the Mughals and Indian princes but also by the British Government. "We know the full value of Orders of honorary distinction, for we have seen them so long before our eyes in Europe, and see so many of our countrymen decorated with them here, that the estimation in which they are held is quite familiar to us. We have also, by the formal Act of the Government of India, in establishing the Order of British India and Order of Merit seen that Government recognized the fact that the natives of these countries are susceptible of being influenced by the desire of distinction . . . this desire is great, if not greater, than that what influences ourselves."¹

Certain distinctions were, in fact, bestowed by the British Government in India, but due to certain restrictions governing their bestowal, full advantage could not be taken of them. These Orders were, for example, not bestowed on Englishmen and their exclusive character disappointed them. "In such matters as it is, it is not what is bestowed, but the motives for, and the associates in the bestowal, by which the value of the gift is estimated and proper selecting is alone required. I feel assured it will be allowed, that as a body of men, there is no government which had ever fewer sluggards, and no rulers have ever had so many earnest men, as amongst the Englishmen serving the Indian Government, and I know that the proudest amongst them would feel honoured, if he were recognized by the State as having been of use to India, and were granted either of the two Orders of British India (which are bestowed exclusively on Natives), in token of the state's recognition of his merits."²

The Order of British India and the Order of merit were conferred only on Indians serving in the array and due to their exclusive military character they never yielded the result for which they were introduced. The following paragraph pointing out the defects of the existing system of conferring titles is significant.

"By the Statutes, the Military only and even of this class of our servants, only the Native Soldiery are eligible to be elected Members of the two Orders. And though this is the case, it must be admitted that the Native soldiery are not the only servants of the State who best earn claims to distinction, and so to restrict admission into the Orders, has had a treble disadvantage, it creates a separation amongst portions of our servants, who should not be separated, but should all be stimulated by

one common zeal and aim, it lowers the value of the Order in the eyes of the Natives themselves, as they all must see that the bravest of the European Soldiers never wear to adorn it, and it creates amongst the Europeans in all branches of the Public service, as also amongst all the Natives in our Civil employ, the impression either that they are not deserving of the Orders of British India, and of merit, or that the orders are not worthy of them.”³

“Under these views alone, it seems to me that to restrict the Orders of British India, and that of Merit, to the Military servants of the state, was a mistake, but to restrict them to the Native soldiery, the least worthy part of the Military, was a greater error, and one which could only have the effect of keeping it as the lowest of the Orders granted for service by sovereign rulers.”⁴

The hesitation on the part of the Government to rouse loyal and better feelings by bestowing titles was a glaring defect. “Indeed, throughout the whole period of our rule, in our Eastern Empire, our governing has been particularly marked by our abstaining from efforts to rouse the higher and better feelings of the servants by the holding out to them the prospect of attaining such honours as ambitious and noble minds may ever legitimately feel desirous for, and strive to obtain.”⁵

It was argued that there were many persons who wanted to be elevated by title but being disappointed in their hopes looked for such favour to Indian princes who readily obliged them. This deprived the British of the loyalty of a section of people. One Streenavassa Pillay, a Hindu of high calibre and morality, wanted to obtain a title for himself and this he received from the Nawab of the Carnatic. He got the title of “Rajah Streenavassa Pillay Indian Bahadoor” for himself and “Rajah Shreeman Ranianooja Moonean Pillay Karan Wrint Bahadoor” for his adopted son who was at school. On being asked what induced him to seek, titles he replied, “I was desirous of having this mark of favour, from my sovereign, to elevate me in the favour of my countrymen.” “Yet who shall say but that, having felt he had exhausted all the favours of our Government he only resorted to a native court to get that which he so much had longed for, which we might have easily granted to men of his position but yet did not think of giving, or would not give.”⁶

Dr. Balfour also advanced other reasons in favour of his proposal of bestowing titles on all sections of the people of India. Firstly it would cost nothing but would create a loyal class of people in India.

"Sovereigns are enabled! by their means, to recompense merit of every denomination without making the gifts burthensome to their subjects, neither Treasure of the state, nor the Civil Pension list, being in any way affected by such royal benefactions."⁷ Then education had spread in India and it was necessary "to satisfy the cravings and longings of those amongst the educated of these people, whose minds are filled with ambitious views."⁸ The exclusively military character of the honours was doing more harm than good. "The Mutiny of 1857 had proved that the Army alone cannot save British Raj. It ought to have a loyal civilian class." So, the scope of honours should be enlarged. He made his purpose quite clear by making the following points, "My impression is, that the Orders of British India and Merit might be extended to all classes of subjects in India, Europeans, as well as Natives, servants of the State, as well as private gentlemen

The object of my present recommendation being to increase the power of our rule, it is a legitimate question to ask if the Native states, who have showered down with most open hands on their subjects, title and honors of every degree, have derived any advantages from their liberality in matters which cost them nothing of money value at least.

"For reply to that question, we may look to the results of our own rule, and recognize that though we are the power that has subsisted longer than any executive Indian Kingdom, we know that the Natives of the cotunry, whether Mohamedans or Hindoos, look to their Native sovereigns, whether Mohamedan or Hindoo, rather than to us, and in taking lessons how to rule in future, it may be advantageous to take into consideration the subject of granting titles to our own countrymen and to the people of 'their country.'"

He made it all the more clear in the following paragraph, "In my opinion, seeing a dynasty passing away, seeing six men with different titles serving under me and knowing from the sircar Records how liberally the Carnatic Nawabs have bestowed on their own relations, on their servants and even on our subjects, Mohamedan and Hindoo titles, it has seemed advisable to bring the subject specially to the notice of the Government, as I believe it would add greatly to our power of governing the people of these countries, were we to use other than the mercenary means, winch we have hitherto solely been employing. I can believe that there are many occasions where Government would find it useful to bestow titles amongst its servants...."

Certain other recommendations made by Dr. Balfour were as follows: poverty would be a disqualification for, claiming titles; in order to ensure loyalty of all generations titles should not be hereditary; there should be no financial drainage on the state treasury and as such there should be no money grant at the time of the bestowal of titles; and as the matter of bestowing titles was urgent in order to secure the loyalty of the people it should be decided "in all cases in this land of change without delay."

The Madras Government agreed with most of the suggestions of Dr. Balfour and forwarded the contents of his letter in full to the Central Government. The Central Government in its turn agreed to most of Dr. Balfour's suggestions.

"The President in council consider it highly desirable that the subject should be redeemed from its present state of obscurity and uncertainty and placed on the same clear and well understood footing as it was under the Mogul Empire and as the grant of honors and distinctions is in the United Kingdom, and he conceives that there could not be a more opportune time for carrying out such a measure than the present when the recent occurrences (Mutiny) have raised in many quarters a claim to the grant of honors from the Government, and when the administration of India has been transferred by Act of Parliament from the East India Company to the crown."¹⁰

They were of opinion that "in addition to the titles which the Government now bestows under general and somewhat vague provisions of the Resolution of the 30th May 1829, distinctions of a minor character for services of a civil and political nature should be systematically conferred."¹¹

The Government of Bengal also agreed with most of Dr. Balfour's suggestions. They also suggested that "There should be two classes of titles, hereditary and not hereditary; the former to be granted to persons of wealth and of a high social position in society", and that "the viceroy alone should have power to confer Indian titles."¹²

The Government of Bengal submitted a return of title owners in Bengal on 17 May 1860 and its thorough examination reveals interesting points about Bihar.

Maharajah Jaiprakash Singh, Bahadoor, of Deemoongah, a zamindar of Deo (Bihar) was conferred the title of Maharajah Bahadoor

on the 25th November, 1858 (Government order 3434 dated the 6th September, 1858). He "held the title of Rajah on succession but that of Maharajah Bahadoor was lately bestowed for good service to the State. He rendered conspicuous service to the state during the late disturbances, and has been rewarded with a Jagheer of rupees 10,000 per annum."

Rajah Sheo Nandan Singh Bahadoor, a Zainindar of Shedear (Champanan), was honoured with the title of Rajah Bahadoor on the 13th July, 1859 "for the good services during the late disturbances."

Rajah Raghunandan Singh Bahadoor, a Zamindar of Soorsund (Tirhoot). was honoured with the title of Rajah Bahadoor on the 14th October, 1859 "in consideration of the zealous services rendered by him from the commencement of the disturbance. A khillut was also granted to his brother Baboo Hur Prokash Narain Singh, who behaved well on the occasion of the outbreak."

Rajah Roy Mangal Singh Bahadoor, Zamindar of Pustundah (Gidhour) was honoured with the title of "Rufut o Aleo Murtubut" Rajah Bahadoor, on the 30th January, 1856 "in consideration of the services rendered by him during the late Santhal Disturbances."

Rajah Tribhoobun Deo Bahadoor, a tributary chief of Sambalporc, was honoured with the additional title of "Mushfig Mehrban Dostan" Rajah Bahadoor on the 13th May, 1848 by sanad "for services rendered by him in the operations against the rebel Rajah of Ungool."

The title of Rai Bahadoor was bestowed on the following persons for their good services during the Mutiny of 1857.¹³

<i>Name</i>	<i>Profession and place</i>	<i>Date of conferment</i>
1. Nundipur Mihta, Bahadoor	a Zemindar of Muzaffarpore.	23rd September, 1857.
2. Rai Mehup Narain Sing, Bahadur	Zemindar of Chundergurrh of Bihar.	19th July, 1859.
3. Rai Het Narain Sing, Bahadoor	"	"
4. Rai Lakshmi Narain Sing, Bahadoor.	"	"
5. Rai Rampartab Sing, Bahadoor	"	(Not yet personally conferred but will shortly be done.)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Profession and place</i>	<i>Date of conferment</i>
6. Rai Rajcoomer Sing, Bahadoor	"	"
7. Rai Shewgolam Sah	a banker of Golden-gunge (Jarun).	31st August, 1859.
8. Jhakoora Kishen Dayal Singh Rai Bahadoor	a banker of Lahardugga (Chhotanagpore)	30th November, 1839 with sanad
9. Thakoorai Rugghooburdial Sing, Rai Bahadoor.	"	"
10. Purgunnait Suggat Pal Sing, Rai Bahadoor.	a banker of Lahardugga	4th December, 1857.

The following persons got the title of Baboo Bahadoor in Bihar for certain services.¹⁴

1. Baboo Mohinder Kishore Singh, Bahadoor, a zamindar of Bettiah, received this title on the 9th September, 1859 "in consideration of the (excellent) service rendered by the Rajah of Bettiah during the recent disturbances." He was the younger brother of the Maharajah.

2. Shah Baboo Buss Warylooll of Zowbutgunge (Satan) was honoured with the title of Shah Bahadoor on the 20th January, 1859 "for having aided in the different charitable objects."

3. Koonwur Juggernath Singh of Serai Kella in Singhbhoom was honoured with the title of Koonwur "Rufut Awalee Punnah" on the 23rd of December, 1857 with sanad "for assistance afforded to the authorities in their operations against Urjoon Singh, the rebel Zemindar of Porhat in Singhbhoom."

4. Thakoor Loknath Singh, a tributary Chief of Keyra, was given the title of Thakoor "Rufut Awalee Punnah" on the 23rd December, 1857 with sanad "for assistance afforded by him to the authorities in their operations against Urjoon Singh, the rebel Zemindar of Singhbhoom."

Rajah Loll Soorujbhon Singh, a Zemindar of Bhagwanpore (Shahabad), was conferred the title of Rajah on the 22nd September, 1859 "as a reward for his conspicuous loyalty during the rebellion."

Huzrut Shah Kuburooddeen Ahmud of Sasseram (Shahabad) was conferred the title of Huzrut on the 17th September, 1859 "for

conspicuous loyalty and service during the late disturbances." He had helped the British Government with men and money. "He has done everything in his power to facilitate the march of troops along the Trunk Road. He has himself resisted Koonwur Singh, has induced the villagers and towns people to resist him; since the departure of Kooer Singh, he exerts himself (strenuously) to restore order around Sasseram, and has kept us regularly informed of the movements of the rebels in that quarter. For such services, "On the 2nd February, His Excellency the Governor-General in person gave an audience to Huzrut Shah Kaberoodeen Ahmad and with his own hand bestowed this sunnud upon the aforesaid Shah."¹⁵

From the Return it is clear that in bestowing titles the first and foremost consideration was given to services rendered during the Mutiny or some other disturbances. Exception was made in the case of Shah Babu Bunwary Lall of Saran who was honoured for an entirely different reason—"for having aided in the different charitable objects." After a few years, we come across a number of cases when people were honoured for their liberal donations to public funds. A striking point is that Dr. Balfour's suggestion that there should be no monetary grant was not heeded in certain cases and we find that Jugheerdarees were also granted.

It would be wrong to hold that Dr. Balfour was the first man to have suggested bestowal of titles for strengthening the foundations of British Raj or that the practice of bestowing titles on individuals was not known in British Bihar. As early as 1771 one of the ancestors of Rameshwar Nath Singh Rajah Tuhowur Dustgah of Dhunwar (Hazareebagh) received a parwanah from Captain Camac for services done during the Palamou disturbances in A.D. 1771 in which the addressee was styled as 'Rajah', "Even the grant of sanad could be traced back to 1783 if not earlier, when one of the ancestors of Run Bahadoor Narain Deo, Moharajah Refeut Awalee Murtubut of Dhunwar (Huzareebagh) obtained a sanad dated the 5th April 1810 for certain Nankar villages in consideration of the assistance rendered to Captain Brown and other Government Officers during the rebellion of Akbal Allie Khan, under the signature of Warren Hastings, Governor General. The earliest document in which he is styled Maharajah is a pottah for the Khalsa villages in 1810." "Doobraj Singh Rajah Tuhowur Dustgah of Seratnpore (Hazareebagh)" asserts that he himself holds a sanad for gnddec Serampore from the Collector of Zillah Ramgurh, dated 8th

November 1780, in which he is styled Rajah. He is, however, addressed as Rajah in the local court.

So, these things were not novel even for British Raj. What was new was their expansion. Titles were distributed on a larger scale. This, as has already been pointed out above, is due to the necessity felt after the mutiny for securing the support of influential Indians.

REFERENCES

1. Balfour to Plycraft, Letter No. 987, dated the 2nd June 1958.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. Letter dated the 3rd September 1858 from Cecil Beadon. Offg. Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, to G.F. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor General.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Letter dated the 15th May 1860 from A.R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Offg. Secretary to the Government of India, foreign Department.
13. The Return of title-owners submitted by the Bengal Government on the 17th May 1860.
14. *Ibid.*
15. From the Camp report dated the 2nd February 1858 of G.F. Edmonstone, Secretary to Governor-General, Camp, Jehanabad.

Some mutiny telegrams in the Bihar State Archives*

N. Saran

In the State Archives at Patna there are three volumes of telegrams received and despatched by the Commissioner of Patna Division during the critical period of 1857-59. The facts about the movement of 1857 have generally been published in various scholarly works, An authentic account of its rise and progress in Bihar may be found in the two recent works of Dr. K. K. Datta, namely, the *History of Freedom Movement in Bihar* and the *Biography of Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh*. None-the-less, these telegrams are of great historical interest in so far as they give a first hand account of day-to-day progress of the movement throughout the Lower Provinces and help in studying the nature of various campaigns hatched and fought by the English in suppressing the revolt. Besides, they also reflect the panic, vigilance and vindictiveness of the English authorities. They also give us an insight into the working of the English mind during those critical days.

The first volume contains 192 telegrams from the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Patna. They cover the period from 2nd October 1857 to 11th December 1858. The second volume has 209 telegrams received by the Commissioner of Patna from other civil and military officers, stationed in Bihar and the North Western Provinces. They range from 2nd October 1857 to 4th December 1858. In the third volume there are 225 telegrams, all despatched by the Commissioner of Patna to the various authorities.

A perusal of these telegrams in chronological order will help us in closely following the sequence of events connected with the movement.

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—XXXV, Part-II, pp.151-158.

It is clear that all these telegrams date after the first spate of the movement was over in Bihar, and the hero, Babu Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpore, had retreated from this province.

The first volume opens with a telegram from Beadon¹, dated Calcutta the 2nd October 1857 (7/20 P.M.) to E.A. Samuels, Commissioner of Patna, conveying news about Delhi. It runs:—"Message of this day's from Cawnpore—Delhi is entirely ours. God save the Queen—strong column in pursuit".

Another telegram communicates the news of the defeat of the Ramgarh mutineers at Chatra² on the 2nd October 1857. Another telegram of the 4th October elaborates the same news thus:—"The force by which Ramgarh mutineers were defeated consisted of 150 of the 53rd under Major English and 150 Sics (Sikhs) of the police battalion under Major Simson. 45 of these killed and wounded and the remaining force being too weak to escort the guns and ammunition through the Jungles, a detachment of the 95th had been stopped at Sherghatty³ and sent to their assistance under lieutenant Staunton".

Telegram, dated Thursday the 15th October 1857, informs the Magistrate of Gaya about the revolt of two companies of the 32nd N.I. at Deoghar and advises him to ask Major English to intercept them on the Nawadah Road. This detachment went to Nawadah and after a skirmish with Major English went towards the west. Another telegram of 24th October 1857 informs on the basis of a report from A. Money, Collector of Gaya, that the mutineers were going to Arwal, probably on way to Jagdishpore. The telegram of 20th October 1857 communicates the news of the revolt of another detachment of the 32nd N.I. at Rampur Haut in the Santhal Parganas and their march towards Deoghar. Subsequent telegrams detail, the progress of this detachment westward. One dated 9th November 1857 reports a skirmish fought at Dunchowah⁴—"Mr. Baker, Deputy Magistrate from Camp Dunchowah 7th November—Captain Rattray came up to the 32nd N.I. Muntineers very strong posted in and around the village Dunchowah at half past 3 P.M. yesterday. The enemy after defending there (their) possition (position) with the greast (greatest) obstinacy retired about 9 P.M. leaving 14 bodies on the ground and carrying away there (their) wounded and probably some killed. They have moved towards Peeroo. Dunchonwah is ten miles south west of Nonore. Our loss is Lieutenant Boyd and seven killed and seventeen wounded. The

detachment evaded further pursuit by the English and continued their activities."

In November 1857 there occurred the revolt of regiments stationed at Chittagong, Dacca and Jalpaiguri. This created alarm among the English about the safety of North Bihar. The following telegrams bear out the panic created in the minds of the English.

24th November 1857:—"The detachment of the 34th N.I. mutineed at Chittagong in the night of 18th there is reason to fear this example may be followed at Dacca and Jalpaigore and that the march of the mutineers will be westward through the districts north of the Ganges. Be on the alert and do not fail to report instantly intelligence you receive of their movement".

25th November 1857:—"The detachment of the 73rd N.I. at Dacca resisted the attempt to disarm them. Forty were killed and many wounded. In Naval Brigade 15 were wounded one has since died and two are not expected to recover. The rest seem to have got away and may join the Chittagong mutineers. This may bring matters to a crisis at Julpaigooree. Should the corps there join the Chittagong and Dacca rebels and go westward Tirhut may be invaded from the east-ward by 1200 infantry besides the troops of cavalry. What could you oppose (*sic*) to send a force. What force now present at Patna and Dinapore".

Subsequent telegrams reveal that there was revolt at Jalpaiguri and the rebels joined the Dacca mutineers who proceeded westward. Tirhut however could not be invaded and the rebels retired to the Nepal Tarai: Rana Jung Bahadur of Nepal had now become a staunch ally of the English.

Amongst the telegrams contained in the other two volumes the most interesting ones are those which relate to the last dash of Kunwar Singh from the North-Western Provinces to Shahabad in April 1858. For the last six months he had been moving from place to place in the North-Western Provinces. In March 1858 he had finally entrenched himself at Azamgarh. This caused great alarm in European circles all over Bihar and eastern U.P. The Governor General was requested by the authorities to take special measures for preventing Kunwar Singh's further onslaught and two armies under Sir E. Lugard and Lord Mark-Kerr were ordered from different directions to dislodge him from Azamgarh. A telegram of 1st April 1858 from Commissioner of Patna to

Commissioner of Bhagalpur details some of the measures approved by the Governor General in this connection. "The Lt. Governor authorises me to call for the Sailors and guns now with you. The rebels threaten both Chuparah and Arrah and our force is very small. Pray send the sailors by quickest mode of conveyance you can". Two days later he warned the Lt. Governor of Bengal against "the evils of a divided command in the district like Shahabad".

A telegram of the 5th April from Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Commissioner of Patna describing the situation at Azamgarh says:—"About five thousand rebels under Koer Singh hold the town of Azamgarh while, our troops hold the entrenchments to the south of it. Rebels can not get past and proceed towards Gazeepore. ...I expect the rebels fly down towards Arrah when our army approaches".

The Commissioner's reply of 8th reports further developments as follows:—"Just heard from Azamgarh dated the 5th—enemy had been reinforced by one thousand five hundred force with 2 guns and were very bold in consequence—Lord Mark-Kerr with 13th ten miles off".

The subsequent telegrams describe the rapid march of events as detailed below:—

"The 13th with convoy reached Azamgarh on the 7th after some hard fighting one officer killed and several men killed and wounded—enemy suffered severely—Gazeepore convoy expected next day—Lugard on the tenth—five hundred sepoy had embarked on the Gogra at Gopalpur on 7th and dropped down stream—great alarm in consequence felt at Sewan. Lynch's (Deputy Magistrate at Sewan) idea was to fall back on Hathwa with the levy if they heard of the enemy's approach. They have twenty five thousand rupees and much opium at Sewan. We shall hear tonight or tomorrow where the sepoy are going to. The residents at Chaprah are fortifying the Raja's house" (*To Government of Bengal dated 9th April 1858*).

"The convoy from Ghazeepore reached Azamgarh safely on the evening of the 9th without a man being touched. The rebels did not expect them till next morning Lugard had reached Jaunpore on 9th and 10th men and cattle much knocked up. They expected to reach Azamgarh on 13th all quiet in the division" (*To Government of Bengal dated 13th April 1858*).

"News from Azamgurrh dated 14th Lugard had dispersed the Tigra Rebels on 12th and killed about 80 taking their 2 guns. 2000 of the Azamgurrh rebels with 2 guns marched on 13th to Sugrea on Road to Ballia and it was thought might attack Chaprah. These men are under Nishan Singh⁵—Koer Singh was still at Azamgurrh with about 500 sepoys and some rabbles the rest having deserted. He was preparing to fly cavalry had been sent to Mhow⁶ to intercept him and Lugard was hurrying on. The reports in the Bazar have it that the rebels have fled to Oude" (*To Government of Bengal dated 16th April 1858*).

"The following message has been received from the Commissioner of Benaras dated yesterday five A.M. Tomorrow being an auspicious day Koer Singh expected to retire from Azimgurrh. His prepared movement not known" (*From Government of Bengal dated 13th April 1858*).

"All quiet in the Division. The arrival of the Naval Brigade has reassured the Chuprah people. Two thousand rebels are said to be on Deori Ghat⁷ attempting to cross the Gogra but cannot get boats and are afraid of the Jamuna steamer, Tuhseeldar of Nurhan reports that rebels had reached Nugra and that there was heavy firing in that direction from 4 P.M. to sunset of the 15th. Two companies of 54th foot have been sent from Benares to Ghazeepore. Sailors and Seikhs only left Sassaram Thursday. Some delay on account of tents. Trenchments at Arrah finished" (*To Government of Bengal dated 17th April 1858*).

"The rebels under Koer Singh are making for Naggra and Balliah Ghat where they hope to cross the Ganges with boats procured by their friends. Bragadier Douglas is in pursuit and had thrashed them 3 times" (*From Commissioner of Benaras dated 18th April 1858*).

"We have heard of Lugard's attack on the rear of Kuer Singh's force on 15th. I have a letter from the Commissioner of Jamuna setamer dated 16th that he had been obliged to drop down to Secunderpore from Balliah there 1500 sepoys and 4 guns being about 14 miles from him. He reports the rebels scattered over the whole country from Burhal downwards on the Azimghur side. If pursuit is not rapid much mischief will be done as the country in which they are is quite unprotected and though early care has been taken to remove boats they may get into Chuprah and sack Sewan and Hathwa. I have begged that troops may be sent from Gazeepore district by forced marches when it appears clear that

the object of the rebels is Chaprah and not Gazeepur" (*To Government of Bengal dated 18th April 1858*).

"No news of importance either from Chuprah or Arrah at both places the rivers are strictly watched and Koer Singh will find it difficult to cross. There is a report of his death in bazar but I do not believe it. The Chuprah residents have determined on moving up an entrenchment at Tilpah Ghat. They find the Rajahs house too much surrounded by bazar. They complain of the drunkenness of the Sailors. The Megna⁸ returned yesterday contrary to orders. I have sent her back to Ballia and the Brigadier has at my request put twenty five men and two officers on board. The Jamuna will cruise between Derowalee⁹ and mouth of the river" (*To Government of Bengal dated 19th April 1858*).

"Rebels after marching as far as Nugra in direction of Balliah turned off to Secundarpore which they reached on the Eighteenth. Jamuna has dropped lower down hearing that enemy had four guns. Enemy evidently intend on crossing Gogra which is believed to be fordable near Secundarpore they may either move on Chupra or Gorukpore. Express have been sent to hasten pursuing force and it has been proposed to Brigadier to send the Europeans and one hundred and fifty Seikhs with two guns from Arrah to Chuprah leaving sailors two guns and fifty Seikhs at Arrah. Also to bring Megna down to Gogra. Magistrate of Chuprah has been authorised to send ladies off whenever rebels cross the Gogra and secure treasures and all valuable records and books too. Entrenchment at river bank for Chupra will be ready tomorrow. Rajah's house found untenable". (*To Government of Bengal, dated 21st April 1858*).

"Rebels marched from Secunderpore to Banoder on 19th and were expected to go on Beyreeah and thence to endeavour to cross to Shahabad. Brigadier Douglas hopes to come up with them before they can cross every precaution has been taken to prevent them doing so they have two guns and thirty four elephants". (*To Government of Bengal, dated 21st April 1858*).

From information received by the Commissioner, Patna, from Buxar, Douglas appears to have attacked the rebels at Bansdee on the 20th and killed a number of them. He was pursuing them most energetically. In spite of this Kuer Singh and his men crossed into Shahabad on the 21st April 1858. The following telegrams describe this event:—

"The Meghna steamer with party of thirty-fifth on board under Lt. Davis met about two hundred rebels crossing into Shahabad at Huldee at seven yesterday morning. Party landed and drove them back killing six-only one boatload got across. A little below Bykuntapore came upon another very large body who all ran away on seeing the steamer. One boat with sepoys on board was sunk. Last night letters from Arrah mentioned that the firing had been heard and that the thirty-fifth and Seikhs with two guns were preparing to move to the bank of river. A party of rebels passing down right bank of Gogra have alarmed the Chuprah people. They have appeared at Manjhee¹⁰ (Monjhi) searching for boats. Hockley appears to have dropt down before them. They can have no guns and I have sent him orders to attack them and destroy any boats. They are probably merely sent as a blind. Kuer Singh is clearly passing into Shahabad and will I fear get over at night". (*To Government of Bengal, dated 22nd April 1858*).

"There is a report probably true that the rebels have got into Shahabad in force and that the natives are flying from Arrah. The sooner you reinforce us here the better. We have not a man for opium godown and only fifty Europeans for the foot here with no artillery men." Telegraph to Rattray and Corfield to look out". (*To Government of Bengal dated 22nd April 1858*).

"Letter just received from Magistrate Arrah, dated 22nd April. Expedition did not go out last night—fearful lest rebels might come by another road and attack Arrah—Kuer Singh is, at Jugdishpore with 2000 men. Lost his arm and wounded in the thigh.... Proposed plan to march for Jugdishpore in the evening of the 22nd and attack the enemy following morning" (*To the Government of Bengal, dated 23rd April 1858*).

This force under Legrand was completely routed by the army of Kunwar Singh and the following telegrams give a vivid picture of the events:—

"A note from Brodhurst has just been brought in by a jail Burkundaz I give it verbatim. . . I have only, just returned and so you will excuse my not entering into particulars in this letter I will tomorrow give you a full account in my humble opinion he retreated when we should have advanced and I can not but think that if we had done" the latter we should have been successful. We retired after merely a little fighting and immediately the order was given the Europeans

specially the 35th became panicstricken and went off as hard as they could go Number fell from fatigue or sunstroke and were killed where they fell by some sowars and other rebels who followed us close to Arrah. We have lost Captain Legrand Lieutenant Massey and Dr. Clark, Lieutenant Waller doing duty with the Sikhs was wounded but is doing well—but fifty of the 35th have not yet come back in. If it had not been for the Seikhs (Sikhs) I do not think one European would have survived.” (*To Government of Bengal, dated 24th April 1858*).

“The following is the Brigadier’s official list of killed and missing—One hundred and two of the 35th dead and missing Nineteen of the Naval Brigade dead and wounded—one sergeant and 3 gunners of artillery dead and missing. One Havildar and 9 Seikhs killed and 5 wounded 2 Hawitzers spiked and abandoned. Ten elephants, Enfield ammunitions tents and luggage lost”. (*To Government of Bengal, dated 25th April 1858*).

This was Kunwar Singh’s last victory. He died shortly afterwards leaving the command of the force to his brother Amar Singh. Lugard was already in hot pursuit. He arrived in Shahabad a few days later. The following telegram reports his arrival:—“Lugard has arrived with Cumberleges force I understand at Sinhaghat and Douglas advance is again delayed that they may all march together. This is to be regretted. Rumours of Koer Singh’s death still prevail. Ummer Singh is said to have joined. Parties of rebels five or six in number wander about and do mischief murdering and plundering. Otherwise the district quiet.” (*To Government of Bengal, dated 29th April 1858*).

As the events showed Lugard did not achieve much success in Shahabad and made a proposal to retire. The Governor General’s telegram to this proposal is significant. It is contained in the following telegram of Major Atkinson addressed to the Commissioner of Patna 24th May 1858:—“Letter of the 18th May to the Bengal Government has been laid before Government of India. The president in Council approves of the views therein expressed and strongly hopes that Sir E. Lugard may be able to force the rebels out of the Jugdishpore jungles very soon. Government entirely concur with you in the many bad political effects which would result from our retirement before the Rebel force is broken up. Col. Corfield and his troops are al (all) ready Sir E. Lugard’s orders having been placed by the president in Council on the 6th of May. Sir E. Lugard will doubtless bear in mind that the security

of the Grand Trunk Road is an object to be provided for as far as existing means allow but in the opinion of the president in Council the primary object of the moment is the early dispersal of the rebel force now in the Jugdishpore Jungle.

You are requested to send a copy of your letter of the 18th with transcript of this message to Sir E. Lugard."

The subsequent events leading up to the fall of Jagdishpur in October 1858 are also described in the telegrams.

REFERENCES

1. Cecil Beadon, Secretary to the Government of India.
2. In the Hazaribagh District, a Sub Divisional headquarters now.
3. Situated at the southern end of the present Gaya District on the Grand Trunk Road.
4. In the District of Shahabad.
5. Lieutenant, of Koer Singh.
6. In Gazipur District.
7. In Gorakhpur District.
8. Steamer.
9. In Gorakhpur District.
10. On the Gogra in Saran District.

Musai Singh—the last survivor of 1857 'Mutiny Convicts' released from Andamans after 50 years, in 1907*

V.D. Divekar

Source

It is a common knowledge, that, in the India Office Library & Records, London, records of great importance, from the point of view of contemporary history of India, are available in large numbers. The series 'Public and Judicial' (L/P & J) (1795-1950) (3866 volumes, 1269 boxes) are of special importance for political history of the times. The author of the present paper, while working in the IOLR, London,¹ 'discovered' an important and interesting file of papers in Series 'P & J', relating to the unique case of Musai Singh, one of the 'ring-leaders' in the 1857 Mutiny, or 'War of Independence' and who was transported to Andamans for 47 years. The present paper relates to this case.

II

Musai Singh—longest incarceration

Summary

During the War of Independence of 1857-58, hundreds of thousands of Indian 'mutineers', 'deserters' and 'rebels' were summarily sentenced to death, or to transportation for life beyond the seas, *en masse*, for their 'crime' of waging the war against the British Crown. Those who were sentenced to transportation, were promptly despatched to the Penal Settlement of Andamans, which was established then solely

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—LIV, Part-II, pp. 51-58.

for this purpose. Among those Indian freedom fighters who were convicted to long term imprisonment or transportation beyond the seas, the name of Musai Singh of 1857 occupies the unique place. He was incarcerated in Andamans for 47 years—the longest ever period for any political prisoner in India. Orders were issued for his conditional release only in May 1907. He was then the last surviving Mutiny convict to be released from Andamans. If the history of the 1857 war of Independence is considered to have commenced with the heroic act of Mangal Pandey of Barrackpore in March 1857, its last chapter could be considered as closed only by the release of the last Mutiny convict Musai Singh from the Andamans fifty years later, i.e., in May 1907. This last chapter of '1857' is, so far, hardly known to research scholars, not to speak of general readers.

It is the purpose of this paper to bring to light this unknown chapter in the history of freedom struggle in India. What is more, there may be very few cases even in the outside world comparable to that of Musai Singh, where a political convict was incarcerated for such a long period of half-a-century.

III

Bhadohi Rebellion, June 1857

Musai Singh was born in 1836. He belonged to Monas Rajput caste, and was a subject of Raja of Bhadohi, formerly, a pargana in Tehsil Korh in Mirzapur District.

The pargana of Bhadohi was bounded on other three sides by the districts of Benares, Allahabad and Jaunpur, where mutiny of the 47th Native Infantry broke out on 4-5 of June 1857. In 1744 the Pargana of Bhadohi had passed from a Monas Rajput ruling family into the hands of the then Maharaja of Benaras. Yet the erstwhile ruling family of Bhadohi had never abandoned its claim on it. On 7-8 June 1857, as the mutiny spread out in Mirzapur district, the head of the erstwhile ruling family of Bhadohi, namely, Udwant Singh assumed his ancestral title of Raja of Bhadohi, and appointed to Diwans, namely, Bhola Singh and Ram Bakhsh Singh. In order to re-establish and protect his principality, Raja Udwant Singh raised an army of about 2000 men, to which Musai Singh appears to have belonged.

The Raja of Benaras was an ally of the British. His principal Officer, Munshi Darshan Lal captured Raja Udwant Singh and his two

Diwans, "in some quiet and probably not very creditable way."¹ Darshan Lal had enticed them to go to Korh unarmed, where they were arrested deceitfully by him. Information of their arrest was immediately sent by Darshan Lal to W. R. Moore, The Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector of Mirzapur and also, the Superintendent of the Raja Benaras' domains. From 20th of June 1857, Moore was camping at Gopiganj, which was only three miles away from Korh. From there, receiving information about the arrests, Moore came to Korh promptly with Chapman, who was commanding the Irregular Cavalry, with a band of sowars, and took Udwant Singh, Bhola Singh and Ram Bakhsh Singh back with him to Gopiganj. On reaching there, Moore at once tried them in a court martial and hanged them.

Killing of Moore, July 1857

The execution of the heads of the Monas ruling family created strong feelings of revenge among the people of Bhadohi. The hangings of Udwant Singh and his two Diwans, far from intimidating the people, incited them to defiance. The widows of the hanged men took a vow not to eat or drink so long Darshan Lal, Moore and Chapman remained alive. Mabussiah, the widow of the late Raja of Bhadohi, declared a reward of Rs. 300 to the men who would bring her the head of Moore. The effigy of Moore was brought to trial before a *panchayat* where a death sentence was passed on him. Directions were issued to apprehend him and execute the sentence.

On the 3rd of July 1857, Moore received at Gopiganj a letter from Jones, the Manager of the Pali Indigo Factory. Jones had left Pali for Chunar on 10-11 June and returned on 1-2 July. In the meantime, his factory garden at Pali was robbed by Sarnam Singh Palwar and others. On receiving Jones' letter, Moore left for Pali to arrest Sarnam Singh and his accomplices. Moore arrived at Pali on 4th July and stayed there.

In the meanwhile, Jhuri Singh, a Monas Rajput leader, had assembled a band of about 300 armed men at Purupur. Musai Singh was one of Jhuri Singh's men. On 5th of July, Jhuri Singh with his armed men raided the indigo factory at Pali. Moore, Jones and the latter's brother-in-law, Kemp, went into the factory bungalow and closed the doors. Then they opened a small door at the back, and tried to run out. But they were pursued and killed in the premises of the factory. The bodies of Jones and Kemp were not mutilated by the rebels. But Moore's head was cut off and taken to Udwant Singh's

widow at Bhadohi, who was then fasting to avenge the death of her husband.

Ujahil Chamar, age 60, resident of Pali, while giving his deposition. later on 28 July 1857, said "I was present when Mr. Moore was killed in Pali godwoh. Jhuri Singh went there with 300 men armed with swords, guns and lathis. In my presence, Jhuri Singh severed the head of Mr. Moore and forced Munai Chamar, resident of Palipur to carry it. He was not willing to do this but when Musai Singh and Jhuri Singh threatened him with sword, he, at last, took it up and carried it with Jhuri Singh. I recognised four persons, namely, Musai Singh, Senwal Singh, Jhuri Singh and Najai Singh, son of Indrajit Singh among their group.....".

Question—Where are those people ?

Answer—They have fled away with the families²....

It appears that Musai Singh played a major role in this operation. Thereafter, Jhuri Singh and his troops moved from place to place and carried on war-like activities against the British. Details of their activities are available in the Mutiny Records of Uttar Pradesh.³ On the 8th of August 1857, a proclamation was issued stating that Rs. 1,000 would be given as reward for the apprehension of Jhuri Singh and Rs. 500 a head for the others implicated in the murder of Moore, Jones and Kemp.

IV

Musai Singh's transportation, 1860-1907

Following the sentences passed in the cases against Jhuri Singh and others, under Sections 114 of The Indian Penal Code and 242 of the Criminal Procedure Code etc., eight rebels were hung, eight transported for life, one transported for fourteen years, three imprisoned for seven years and one flogged, for their respective share in this Bhadohi rebellion.⁴

Musai Singh was 21 years of age when the acts of killings of Moore, Jones and Kemp took place at Pali on the 5th of July, 1857.

On the 15th of June 1860, Musai Singh, who was then 24 years of age, was sentenced to transportation for life on the charges of: (1) being a ring-leader in the murder of Mr. Moore, the Joint Magistrate

of Mirzapur, and two other Europeans at Pali Factory, in 1857; (2) arson and dacoity with murder; and (3) rebellion. On behalf of the government it was contended that, at the time of the murders, Musai Singh, being 21 years of age, was, therefore, fully responsible for his actions.

After the passing of the sentence in June 1860, Musai Singh was soon transported to the Penal Settlement at Port Blair in Andamans. There he was registered as Prisoner No. 4568A. As a prisoner, according to official reports, he had an excellent records. He appears to have earned the goodwill of the successive Settlement. At one time, even his release was recommended by W.R.H. Merk, Chief Commissioner of the Andamans, as Musai Singh had brought to light a poison case, where the poisoner, one Haji Karim Khan and his other accomplices were subsequently found guilty and hanged. However, the Government of India did not accept the recommendations of the Chief Commissioner, as it was thought that, on return to India, Musai Singh might again indulge in activities against the British.

In March 1884, that is, 25 years after Musai Singh's arrival in the Andamans, Lord Ripon's government, as a reward for his gallant conduct in saving the life of a woman from a murderous attack by another convict, sanctioned Musai Singh's partial release on the condition that he continues to reside in the Penal Settlement of Port Blair.

Musai Singh was then 49 years of age, and it appears that by then he had got himself married and had a son called Drigpal Singh. Musai Singh also got an employment in the Penal Settlement as a village *Chaudhury*. His son Drigpal Singh later settled in Burma, and was employed there as, a postal clerk In the General Post Office at Rangoon. Very little is known about Musai Singh's wife, about the date and place of his marriage, or, about any of their issues other than Drigpal Singh.

The question of Musai Singh's release from Port Blair was frequently brought before the Government of India. However, the local government of the United Provinces, under whose jurisdiction his case originated, declined on every occasions to agree to allow his return to those provinces.

The nineteenth century thus passed away. Queen Victoria, who had sanctioned the Royal Amnesty Act of 1858, herself passed away in

1901. At the beginning of the 20th century, the case was again fully considered in connection with the remission of sentences sanctioned in honour of the Coronation of the new King-Emperor of Britain. Lord Curzon's government, however, considered that Musai Singh was debarred from unconditional pardon under the terms of the Royal Amnesty Act of 1853, which specially excluded convicts sentenced for participation in the murder of Europeans from any claim the clemency. The matter came for consideration again before the Government of India in 1905. The Government of Burma was asked whether permission might be given to Musai Singh to stay with his son at Rangoon. The Government of Burma, however, advised that such a permission should not be given, as the antecedents of his son Drigpal Singh were those of a bad character. The proposal, therefore, was dropped.

Lord Minto's intervention for Musai Singh's release, May 1907

It was on this background that Drigpal Singh submitted to the Secretary of State for India a memorial, dated at Rangoon the 12th of February 1907, to release his father Musai Singh from Port Blair.⁵ In his memorial Drigpal Singh observed:- "He (Musai Singh) is now over 70 years of age..... A constant separation between the father and son in his old age..... is a constant source of mental worry to (him)..... as well as to me. (His release will) enable him to close his last days in peace with me and also afford me an opportunity to do filial duty." Further (and this is interesting) "A release to Burmah is all that is solicited. Government can have no apprehensions as Burmah is as much out of place from India as Port Blair is."

The Government of India in Home Department considered the memorial of Drigpal Singh. They reviewed Musai Singh's case again. However, by their letter dated at Simla, the 11 April 1907, to John Morley, the Secretary of State for India,⁶ in which they reviewed the case, they concluded : "...we have no recommendation to make in support of the memorial". Thus, the situation in regard to Musai Singh's release came back to square one, fifty years after the original event in 1857, He would have died in the Andamans as a lone surviving mutiny convict, had not Viceroy Lord Minto personally intervened in this case.

It is to be noted that the Government of India Home Department letter, dated 11 April 1907 to John Morley was 'signed' by the concerned members of the Viceroy's Council, namely. H. Adamson. J. F.

Finalay and J.O. Miller, and not, as was usual by Lord Minto, the Viceroy and other members of his Council like Kitchener, Richards etc. A copy of this letter was brought in a routine way to the notice of the Viceroy Lord Minto three weeks later, that is, on 1st May 1907. His reaction to Musai Singh's case was quite different. Thereupon, he hurriedly sent a telegram to London on that day and strongly recommended to the Secretary of State for India the release of Musai Singh from the Andamans. The text of the entire telegram is interesting enough to be quoted in full.⁷

"SIMLA, 1st MAY 1907. PRIVATE. PLEASE REFER TO HOME DEPT DESPATCH 11th APRIL REGARDING RELEASE OF MUSAI SINGH FROM ANDAMANS. I HAVE JUST SEEN DESPATCH AND CONSIDER THAT HIS CONDITIONAL RELEASE WITH PERMISSION TO RESIDE AT RANGOON UNDER POLICE SURVEILLANCE SHOULD BE SANCTIONED. HE IS LAST SURVIVOR OF MUTINY CONVICTS IN ANDAMANS WHERE HIS RECORD HAS BEEN EXCELLENT. HIS RELEASE ON 50th ANNIVERSARY OF MUTINY WOULD BE MOST APPROPRIATE & I STRONGLY RECOMMEND IT BE GRANTED. PLEASE TELEGRAPH REPLY."

This telegram was received in the London Office, at 2.16 p.m. Next day, on 2 May 1907, John Morley made this note on the telegram: "By all means let the recommendation be granted (Sd) JM 2-5-07".

Subsequently, a message to this effect was sent in code language from the Secretary of State for India, London, to Viceroy (Home Department) India, on 14 May 1907. Decoded, it read as follows :⁸

From S. to S. to Viceroy' (Home Dept), Your Police despatch no. 3 dated 11th April. Having regard to all circumstances, I think Musai Singh might be conditionally released with permission to reside at Rangoon under Police supervision.

It is worth to be noted here that, in the case of Mutiny convicts who were convicted for being involved in the killing of Europeans, it was only the Secretary of State for India in London, who could effectively take any decision regarding the clemency to be shown to them.

Probably, Musai Singh was released from the Andamans in June or July 1907, and by August 1907, he is likely to have reached Rangoon to

stay there with his son Drigpal Singh under police surveillance. It is necessary to search for documents relating to his actual release from Port Blair. He was then 71 years of age. We do not know at present any thing about his later life in Burma, about his wife and other relatives, and even about his death. How long was he alive after his release ? Was the condition of police supervision ever removed ? Did he ever have any chance to visit India?—these are some questions which it would be worthwhile to investigate into.

The name of Musai Singh, so long hardly known to scholars and general readers, thus, occupies a unique place in the history of freedom movement of India. He spent the longest period, that is of 47 years, from 1860 to 1907, as prisoner, and that, too, in the Andamans, under sentence of transportation for life, on charges of his rebellious activities in 1857 War of Independence. Even after this long period of incarceration, his release was on the condition of remaining at one place, Rangoon, under police supervision.

Before we close this paper, we may refer to an interesting aspect of the observation of 50th anniversary of the '1857' War in May 1907. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar wrote his famous work on the '1857' War of Independence, by way of observing its 50th anniversary in May 1907. For his researches on the subject, he used the old records in the India Office in London. (Savarkar's revolutionary activities were also then being Confidentially reported and currently filed there). But, naturally, he had no access to current files there. Otherwise; he would know about the release of Musai Singh in May 1907, and Viceroy's observation that, "his release on the 50th anniversary of the Mutiny would be most appropriate."

Also, Indian student patriots in London, under the auspices of "The Free India League" organised a meeting at Tilak House (78, Goldsmith Avenue, Action, London) on Saturday 11 May 1907 "to commemorate the golden jubilee of the patriotic rising of 1857." Neither in England nor in India anyone seems to be aware of the release of the last survivor of the Mutiny convicts, which was taking place just then in May 1907.

Only four years later, in 1911, Vinayak Savarkar was himself if sentenced to transportation for fifty years (two life terms) and was sent to Andamans. Tilak, in 1908, had been transported for six years to

Burma, where by then Musai Singh had arrived to stay with his son. No one then appears to have heard about this Musai Singh.

V

Conclusion

Musai Singh in no sense of the term, could be described as any 'hero' of the 1857 War of Independence. He was only a 'ring leader' as officially described, who operated under Jhuri Singh against the British in Mirzapur district in 1857. But he occupies the unique place in the history of the freedom movement in India. Till now his name is little known to history writers. If this paper brings to notice of the scholars and researchers his due place in history its purpose will have been served.

REFERENCES

1. Extracts from Narrative of Events dated 15 October, 1858 by Ribert Taylir, Offg. Joint Magistrate, Jaunpur, communicated by B. Gubbins, Commissioner, 5th Division, to William Muir, Secretary to Government, N. W. Provinces.
2. Almora Mutiny Basta—File containing reports, Depositions etc.
3. Diary of events in the Mirzapur District from 16 August to 4 September 1857; Almora Mutiny Basta File : 'Report regarding movements of Jhuri Singh and other Rebels'.
4. Trial Proceedings in the case Government Vs. Jhuri Singh and others, Mirzapuri Collectorate, Mutiny Basta.
5. India Office Library and Records, London (IOLR), Series L/P&J/6/808 Drigpal Singh's Memorial to the Secretary of State for India, dated, Rangoon, 12 February 1907.
6. IOLR, *Ibid.* Government of India, Home Dept/Police/Port Blair Letter No. 3 of 1907, dated, Simla, 11 April 1907. Received in the Indian Office, London on 27 April 1907 at 10 a.m.
7. IOLR, *Ibid.* (File 1323).
8. IOLR. *Ibid.* (File 1320).

American views of the Mutiny of 1857*

Rajiva Ranjan Mishra

The purpose of this topic is to discuss the American's concept of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. I consulted a wide range of literature, selecting from travel books, memoirs, United States Government documents & periodicals, those comments, which are especially significant & illustrative of the opinions expressed about Indian Mutiny.

A thorough examination of the voluminous consular reports disclosed that they were concentrated on economic matters and replies to inquiries regarding trade possibilities in India. Occasionally, consular officials included in their dispatches comments about the land and the people, but these insertions were rare. More rewarding were the writings of missionaries, which attempted to describe Indian life in all its aspects. Another fruitful source was published observations of travellers, statesman & generals, women on special tours in the interests of Sunday school groups and reform societies, and lecturers gathering data for their platforms in America. Other scattered sources included comments from newspapers and periodicals on events in India and Indian personalities, extracts from letters and reports to the United States Congress on subjects like taxation in India, irrigation, education and agriculture.

The results of this investigation have shown that the Mutiny of 1857 signaled the beginning of an era of greater American awareness of India because the conflict directly threatened the lives of American missionaries and posed a question as to the survival of American missionary establishments which had been operating in India since the first decade of the century. The Mutiny also represented a serious threat to the stability of the British position in Asia, a matter of concern to

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—LVIII, pp. 98–104.

many influential circles in the United States. This new awareness of India, hitherto an unknown land to most Americans, was marked by an increase in Indian scholarship. Churches accelerated their support of missionaries in the field. Popular weeklies & other periodicals carried large number of articles devoted to the life of India. A thorough search of the sources make it clear that humanitarian concern over the welfare of the Indian people were dominant throughout all American works on India. Gaps of information, faulty interpretation, and a general lack of insight into the problems of India were the features of the American writings of India. Generally the ore sensational aspects of India life & especially the ritualistic facets of religion, were described, thus reinforcing ancient stereotypes about the fantastic, mysterious Orient.

American Consul in Calcutta in 1794 and later on at Bombay & Madras used to write to the Secretary of State at Washington regarding Indian affairs. But the consular service in India represented neither profit nor glory. Consuls operated generally on a fee basis, collecting small percentages for their services on passports, ship duties and notaries functions. Commercial agents retained one half of everything they received upto \$1,000. Above this amount, all monies were forwarded to the U.S.Treasury.¹

The consular Dispatches from the poorer Consuls are full of complaints about the high cost of living in India. They pleaded several times for reimbursement of cash expenses. For example Consul Hans Mattson of Kolkata requested more money for postal expenses so that he could answer the letters received yearly from Americans. In September, 1855 Charles Huffnagle was commissioned as the first U.S. Consul-General to British India and he served this post till his death in 1860. Other Consular offices were sub-ordinate to his authority. In Consular service at Bombay Benjamin F.Farnham (1870-1889). Henry Ballentine (1890-01), and Colonel Samuel Comfort (1896-98) were famous.

However, history shows us how ill-informed some American Consuls were on Indian affairs. It is also surprising to know that even such a catastrophic event as the Indian Mutiny of 1857 didn't evoke one line of comment from the Consul at that time. People in Washington were also not fully aware of the political situation in India.

Since this study is based on American views of India, one must remember when reading the Consular dispatches that all Consuls were

not Americans. Homusee Bode, Vice-Consul at Bombay, 1857, was a parsee; Alfred H.R. Armstrong, Karanchi, 1898, an Irish; Henry Scott, agent at Madras, 1894, and R.A. Mactaggart, Consular Agent at Chittagong were Englishmen².

On the 10th of May 1857, Indian Army Units revolted at Meerut. Three weeks later, most of the northern India was aflame as Europeans and loyalist Indians fled in desperation before the enraged rebels. Thus began the great Indian Mutiny called by modern Indians "The First War Of Independence". Americans received their first news of the Mutiny on Wednesday, July 8 in an article from the London Times of June 27 reprinted in the New York Times, Other American newspapers and periodicals reported the Mutiny regularly, reflecting the public's interest in the event. Harper's Weekly, 'Journal Of Civilisation' published every Saturday morning for five cents a copy in New York devoted full-page engravings to the Mutiny. However, the religious press reacted sharply to the Mutiny. Of thirty publications in this country, it was reported that twenty-eight were unalterably on the side of England in the conflict, one presumably neutral, and only one, an abolitionist journal anti-English, 'the justice of its views... being easily tested by its further remarks concerning an oppressed race nearer home of whom it predicts a similar uprising'³. In the early part of the Mutiny, Americans were interested regarding the fate of the Presbyterian Mission at Farrukhabad. This prosperous community, near the fortress of Fategarh on the Ganges River in Oudh, northwest of Lucknow, was invested by the rebels in June 1857. The loyal 10th Native Infantry advised its officers to retire into the fort after the arrival of the 41st Native Infantry, a unit which had mutinied at Sitapur and killed its European officers.

Some 126 Indian Christians and a small group of English officers managed to flee to Cownpore where they were hacked to death on the parade ground by the orders of Nana Sahib, the Raja of Bithur.⁴ Fategarh's 33 men garrison resisted until July when it was finally captured and 21 Indian Christians incidentally tent-makers by trade were killed by the Nawab of Farrukhabad⁵. At least one American adventurer is known to have served with the Bengal Icoman cavalry, a 258-man group of volunteer militia but he left no record of his exploits⁶. American officials on the sub-continent paid the event little heed, for the Bombay and Singapore consular dispatches of the period didn't even mention the mutiny⁷.

Charles Huffnagle, the Calcutta Consul noted in his first discussion of political affairs in India, that this land, formerly held by the sword and by enlisted mercenaries in whom all confidence was now gone, must be reconquered by an army of Europeans and "must be held by a large European force"⁸. Further, he speculated, it would require two years of War-Fare, 80,000 men, and 200 million pounds before "this awful rebellion has been completely, subdued and India once more subject to British-laws"⁹.

In the eyes of Huffnagle many factors were responsible for the origin of the mutiny of 1857. Among them, the 74 regiments of sepoys recruited in Bengal largely from the higher castes of the Hindu population, and containing an impressive proportion of Muslims, who together with the Brahmins, were "notoriously and for obvious reasons hostile to the advance of Christianity"¹⁰. The famous "greased cartridge story" Huffnagle says, was merely a pretext used to inflame the common soldiers and that actually the disaffection had been developing and spreading for months under the aegis of the higher classes. The New York Times in an editorial on July 24, 1857 described the greased cartridge story as a genuinely fundamental cause of the Mutiny ascribing the rumor to have perhaps been planted by Russian agents, since "hardly anything is incredible in Asiatic politics". Harper's Weekly agreed that blaming the Mutiny on the enforced use of greased cartridge was absolutely ridiculous and mutiny was only the just penalty reaped by the English East India Company for past misdeeds, for a past filled with rape, rapacity, corruption, and ruthless expansion. A writer in the North American Review said it was a wonder that the Mutiny didn't breakout fifty or at least a twenty five years earlier considering the "rapacious oligarchy" of the company's despotic rule and cruel executions. It was a "well-attested" fact that in the Agra neighbourhood unscrupulous missionaries were buying children of poor families in the famine season for 2 to 10 rupees a head for the purpose of rearing them as Christians".

One American Observer J. Henry Jones wrote in the Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review that there was no secret about a long-planned "night of long knives" for the English had long received reports of the mysterious distribution of "chupatties" by village chowkidars and the lotus flower bearer"¹².

They also knew about secret meetings between sepoys and civilians. But the British officers themselves were of generally such a low quality, in addition to being hampered by an excess of administrative and official duties which militated against their training and leading troops properly. Most of them couldn't speak or understand the languages of their troops.

Furthermore, another American observer W.D. Whitney added, one had to consider Muslim hatred for both Hindus and Englishmen alike as a prepotant cause for the Mutiny, Rulers of India for eight centuries, the deposed chiefs, rajahs, nawabs, plus "old plunderers and banditti," itched restlessly for an opportunity to overthrow law and authority"¹³.

When the mutinous 19th Regiment was disbanded in late April at Barrackpore, this event too added to the dangers of the situation, said H.F. Malcolm, "The Sepoys were discharged to bear" germs of treason and revolt, to be presently scattered over the whole Presidency¹⁴. Having a similar inflammatory effect was the punishment and imprisonment of eighty-five insubordinate troopers of the 3rd Native Cavalry whose public humiliation created the reaction as well as compelled their comrades to come to their rescue¹⁵. The arrest of the king of Oudh was also responsible for the outbreak of the Mutiny H.F. Malcolm also supported it and placed the fault directly upon British policy in Oudh. In Bombay, long settled by the British, disaffection had long been disappeared. The conquerors had learned from experience how to live with their subjects. Even the military picture there was brighter because the army didn't encourage or tolerate the "absurd" caste system¹⁶.

It had to be admitted by the American observers that the origins of the Mutiny were much deeper, based on motives which might be traced back to the very beginning of British domination. Contributing to the general dis-satisfaction were the land policies in the various parts of the country, the evictions of farmers for non-payments of land-taxes, the levies on salt, the opium monopoly, the relentless process of annexation and expansion, the doctrine of lapse, and the Sikh and Maratha wars.

The disaster of the First Afghan War [1839-1842] might have inspired the sepoys distrust and contempt for British military power.

The memory of British retreat from Kabul in January 1842, as well as the indecisive display in the Crimean War, heartened the sepoys to the realization that the British Raj was not omnipotent.¹⁷

Some Americans also criticised the "hindsight" of the British public which tended to blame the Mutiny almost solely on the faults of the company or the incompetence of Lord Canning. James T. Dickinson called Canning "only the son of a great man". A great and strong man was certainly needed now to take command of a situation where 50,000 Englishmen were holding out against 15 million natives¹⁸. There were too those Americans who saw the problem in India as being wholly of ideological origin, as a war of religions. The real responsibility they said, rested upon the Government in India which supported Hindu "superstitions" by appearing ostensibly neutral in matters of religion¹⁹. Being neutrals in matters of religion, he continued, was like entering a black cave filled with bats and other unclean animals and carrying a darkened lantern so as not to disturb the occupants²⁰. The Mutiny marked to Walsh the beginning of the downfall of Islam, already doomed in the prophecy of the Apocalypse which declared that it came 'like a dark smoke from the bottomless pit'²¹.

By the end of 1857, after having received reinforcements from England, the British were in full pursuit of the rapidly diminishing rebel army. The "revolt of the Asiatic against European civilization" a struggle in which the "best" survived, ended less than a year and a half after it begun²². The question vexing England and interested portions of the American public was now, what to do with India?

It was generally agreed that reform was necessary in the army. The soldiery should be recruited from several classes, including smaller percentages of Muslims and Brahmins. As for political matters, Mr. Dall, the Unitarian missionary in Calcutta, approved of England's decision to terminate the East India Company's rule in India.

The Queen's Proclamation of November 1858, which promised the essence to respect treaties with native princes and to leave India alone generally in matters of customs and religion was criticised for its "insincerity". But the Queen's counsellors already made the declaration that England would not interfere with Indian religious practices, a "kind of Magna-Carta that might at least have practiced the wisdom of silence"²³. Mr. Dall also believed that England could not

handle India alone and should call on a "coadjutor", its "daughter" nation, the United-States.

Regarding the impact and nature of the Mutiny of 1857, Americans believed that it was not a revolt of any great significance, it was definitely not part of a nationalist plot nor was it the spontaneous uprising of a people against oppression. The Mutiny represented in simplest terms the revolt of an army against its officers when discipline breaks down. In larger scope, the Mutiny of the Sepoys was also the expression of the "fickleness" of Indian character after a thousand years of "superstition, faithlessness, and oppression" which had effected the "better lineaments of a nature originally noble"²⁴. The farmers, shopkeepers, and workers of India were generally not found in the train of the revolting forces; on the contrary, these classes, in many instances, were plundered by the sepoys²⁵. The soldiers, having no truly national grievances and constituting a favoured and petted class, were motivated by the real deep motive of desiring to expel European "foreigners" and restore "native" government in Delhi, a regime which would permit them to retain their special privileges²⁶. As proof of this belief that the mainspring of revolt lay in an emotional hate of aliens, Lowenthal alleged further that to his knowledge few missionary stations were molested as outposts of Christianity but rather as "foreign". Even Indian Converts were not harmed, with the exception perhaps of a scattered few falling into Muslims hands²⁷.

REFERENCES

1. Register of the Department of State published annually. Also see E.Griffen, *Clippers and consuls: American Consular and Commercial Relations with Eastern Asia, 1845—1860* for extensive explanations as to how early consulates in Asia operated. Another technical reference on the functions of Consulates is *Diplomatic and Consular Service of the U.S.* [May, 1891] which mentions Indian consuls specifically. The service was reorganized and revamped on a regular schedule and career basis in August 1906.
2. The U.S. had five English representatives at Colombo who at different times; Point de Galle, from 1877 to 1895, was represented by four Englishmen, and in 1899 two Swiss nationals. See, *Register of the Department of States* for names and dates.
3. Rev. I.Lowenthal, *Revolt of the Sepoys* (New York, 1858), 1.13. Booklet is a reprint of an article from the *Biblical Repository and Princeton Review*, 30 (1858), 27.

4. "The Present State of India", *Bibl. Rep. And Prince. Rev.*, 30:501, Members of the murdered Presbyterian Mission included the Rev. and Mrs. John E. Freeman, N.J. Rev. and Mrs. David A. Campbell, wife. Rev. and Mrs. Albert O. Johnson, Pa. and Rev. and Mrs. Robert E. Mullin, Philadelphia, Pa. Only one American escaped; the Rev. J.J. Walsh, author of "A Memorial of the Futtehghurh Mission.
5. *Ibid*, op.cit., 50.
6. Joseph c. Hill of Monterideo, Minnesota, who was awarded the Indian Mutiny Medal per Calcutta Dispatches, 12, letter September 7, 1882. The story of this volunteer unit may be read in John Tulloch Nash, *Volunteering in India* [London, 1893].
7. Other Indian Consular posts were established later - Akyab - 1866, Madras-1867, Colombo, 1870 and Karachi-1887.
8. Calcutta, 4, letter from the steamer Ava in the Red Sea, dated June 29, 1857. Underlined for emphasis by Huffnagle.
9. *Ibid.*, personal letter to Lewis Cass, Secretary of State, written from Springdale, Pa. December 28, 1857.
10. *Ibid*, June 29.
11. "The Rebellion in India", 86 "1858", 488-94. It is interesting to note that Judson obtained his first convert to Christianity by purchasing him in a slave market. See American Society publication, *The First Hindu Convet* (New York, 1852) for an account of same.
12. "The Sepoy Mutiny", *New Englander*, 17 (1859), 357-375. Chappatie. flat. unleavened bread; chowkidars, local police-man. HF. Malculm, India and the Mutiny (Philadelphia, 1859), 342, claims there were no known reasons for these rites, conjecturing that perhaps they were intended as a propitiation of Vishnu to avert a cholera epidemic.
13. "The British in India", *New Englander*, 16 (1858), 134.
14. *India and the Mutiny*, op.cit., 348-9.
15. *Ibid*, 139.
16. *India and the Mutiny*, 340.
17. *No. Am. Rev.*, 86(1858), 503.
18. "The Revolt and the English", *Christian Examiner*, 64(1858), 122.
19. *Ch. Examiner*, 64: 109-11, passion.
20. *Ibid*.
21. Walsh, op.cit., p. 309.
22. *zig-Zag Journeys*, op.cit., p.58.

23. AUAJ, 288, See Indian Constitutional Documents, edited by P.Mukherji, (Calcutta, 1915), 356-7, for the full text of the Proclamation.
24. "The British in India", New Englander, 16(1858), 139.
25. Revolt of the Sepoys, 11.
26. Ibid, p. 29.
27. Ibid., 13 No Statistics are readily available to either refute or verify this observation.

Madras in 1857 revolt as reflected in the Madras records

M. Sundara Raj

The immemorable event of 1857 revolt, popularly called the First War of Independence created plenty of records both in National and Regional levels. Many historians and writers highlighted the happenings of the 1857 revolt in North India but left out the South Indian role. Historical documents prove that South India pioneered the cause of Nationalist movement even from the middle of the 18th century by the native-ruling families such as Carnatic Nabobs, the rulers of Mysore, patriotic personalities like Kattabomman in Tirunelveli. Veluthambi Thalavai in Travancore and others. The Native rulers and the ruled represented their resentment against the British in the form of revolts which resulted in the out break of the Vizagapatnam Revolt of 1790, the Poligar wars of 1798, the Hyderabad Revolt of 1806, the Paliam-kotta Revolt of 1806, the Vellore Mutiny of 1806, the Travancore rebellion of 1809, the Kittur Revolt in Karnattaka by Rani Chinnama in 1824 again by Sangoli Rayanna in 1830, Secunderabad revolt of 1840, the revolt of the Madras troops at Bombay on 19th February 1844, Dipuji Ranaj Revolt in Goa from 1850 onwards and so on.

Regarding the documentation on the 1857 Revolt in South India, V.D. Divekar made an attempt, where he has given importance to Maharashtra, Karnataka and Hyderabad and given little importance to Madras¹. Hence in this paper, it is aimed to trace and analyse the role of Madras in 1857 revolt. Historically speaking the original English records pertaining to Madras and South India commence from 1670 when the Public Department was constituted and subsequently a

* Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings Volume—LVIII, pp. 105–108.

number of departments derived from the parent Public Department due to the growth of administrative transactions of the East India Company. The formation and functions of various Departments produced a lot of records which are the potential source of information for knowing the Socio-economic and political condition of South India.

Regarding the historical events of 1857 Revolt, a mine of information is available in the records of Military Department, Judicial Department, Public Department, Political Department, Fort. St. George Gazette, Madras Almanac, Madras Administration Report 1857-58. Selection from the letters, Despatches and other State papers preserved by the Military Department of the Government of India 1857-58 Edited by Forrest G.W. Vol. I-VI Government of India, Military press. Calcutta 1902, History of the Sepoy War in India by John William Kaye, A.H. Allen and co., London 1895 preserved in the Tamilnadu Archives, Chennai and others.

The Madras records reveal that revolutionary clouds of 1857 emerged even at the beginning of 1857 when the native rulers began to express their resentments against the British. For instance, the Hyderabad palace organized secret activities against the British by means of sending secret communications to the Zamindars of Poonganoor, Nagery, Carvennagger, Calokesty, Vengatagry and others through one Syed Mohamcd Auzurzah Hussain to organize and raise the banner of revolt against the British. From 17th January 1857 onwards Syed Mohamed Auzurzah Hussain approached a number of zamindars and other leading people in the North Arcot and Chittoor districts and instigated anti-British feelings among the natives².

At the outset, when the 1857 Revolt broke out at Barrackpore in North India on 31st May 1857, by the assault on Mangal Pandey, the news spread like a wild fire throughout India. The Governor General directed the Madras Governor to take effective measures to prevent sepoys from any oppression or revolt. As mark of protest against the British regime, the Natives in the city of Madras and other places in the Madras Presidency raised the banner of revolt.

In Triplicane, the Muslim who were mostly connected with the Nababs of Carnatic expressed their resentments against the British by making seditious propaganda. They urged the Hyderabad Nizam and his Minister to begin a holy war in which they were ready to join. Like Madras, in Masulipatnam District the Muhammadan Community

which had much connection with the Hyderabad Nizam hoisted a green flag on 10th July 1857 and made Proclamation urging the slaughter of the Englishmen. They also offered prayers in the Mosque for the success of the King of Delhi³.

As a mark of reaction, one Syed Hameed Jellah, propagated revolutionary reports containing the incidents happened in Bengal and other parts of India where the killings of the European soldiers and English officials as well as the torturing and killings of Native Sepoys were depicted. He collected information from newspapers and other means pertaining to the 1857 rebellion in North and conveyed them to the soldiers in Madras and Chingleput. For that he was arrested and sentenced with 7 years imprisonment with hard labour in irons under section 1 of Act XIV of 1857. During the course of the trial the native people and the officials gave witness against him⁴.

Such kind of anti-British activities occurred in Coimbatore, Salem, Malabar, Canara and the Northern Districts of Madras Presidency. For suppressing the Revolt, the Governor General in council enacted anti revolutionary Act (Act XV of 1857) to regulate the establishment of printing press and to restrain in certain cases the circulation of printed books and papers because pamphlets and posters arousing seditious activities against the British were distributed and displayed by the revolutionaries. Besides on 30th May 1857, the Governor General in council hurriedly passed an Act (Act No. XI of 1857) for the prevention, trial and punishment of offences against the State⁵. This was followed by another Act (Act No. XVI of 1857) empowering Commissioners and courts martial to punish summary all heinous offences in disturbed districts⁶.

The Madras administration made all possible resistance to prevent the spread of the revolt. Fort St. George Gazette (started in 1838), the official publication of the Government was used to make frequent announcement not only to threaten the revolutionaries but also to encourage the officials who supported the Government. For encouraging the European officials to quell the revolutionaries, awards and promotions were announced. Accordingly on 1st October 1858, two English officials - Monay and Hollings were honoured for their role in saving the lives of Military officials. Monay was promoted and Hollings was given increment to his salary⁷.

In order to get the confidence of the people, the administrative authorities asked the people to give Loyal addresses expressive of firm attachment to the existing Government, contentment with its rule and abhorrence at the Acts of the rebels. Besides the Native ruling families in the neighbourhood of Madras such as the Tondaiman Rajah of Pudukottai and the Rajah of Travancore gave Rs.3000 and 10000 respectively as aided funds to the British for the relief of the sufferers from the mutiny⁸.

In addition, the princes were asked to give assurance to the British that they were loyal attachment to the power with which they have so long been an alliance⁹. During the course of the revolt, the British showed their affinity towards their European traditional rival, the French. In order to safeguard the French settlement in Pondicherry and others from any native attack, the Madras administration sent large supply of ammunition from the arsenals of Madras and further assistance offered if required. A set of sepoys in the Madras Army too expressed their displeasure about the activities of the British when they were asked to proceed to Bengal. In June 1857, the 8th cavalry of Madras Brigade from Bangalore had to make its march to Madras for proceeding to Bengal. It revolted against the British officials who tactfully suppressed the revolt by removing their fire arms and horses. Some of the native officials and sepoys were dismissed¹¹.

Besides these, the Madras Government took series of precautionary measures to safeguard the European people from the sepoys or the Native people. Accordingly on 2nd July 1857, the Corps at the Madras Volunteer Guards was formed. It was the brain child of J.C. Boulderson, the Commissioner of police, Madras whose innovation was materialised by Lord Harris, the Governor of Madras. As a preliminary measure, Lord Harris organized a meeting in the Banqueting Hall on 30th June 1857 and was presided over by W. Arbuthnot. In the meeting it was unanimously decided to organize a volunteer Militia Force in Madras with the cooperation of the Military officers. The Governor in Council appointed Colonel M. Carthew to the command of the whole volunteer guards; Captain G.B. Roberts was assigned to be commandant of cavalry (A wing of the Volunteer, Guard A.C. Silver was entrusted to be commandant of Infantry with the Honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel and captain C.K. Drury and Lieutenant H.P. Hawkes as the Adjutants¹².

At the outset the establishment of the cavalry was fixed at 100 men and that of the Infantry at 700 men. The Governor in council considering it to be very desirable that the organization at the Volunteer Guards should be continued as a permanent arrangement, Rs.50 was sanctioned every three years for each cavalry man as tunic allowance and Rs.20 for the Infantry. The members of the cavalry volunteers should have their own horses. The cavalry was composed of great influential and wealthy men. They were given uniform and weapons. They were divided into companies and were assigned to patrol day and night during Muslim feasts and festival seasons besides their regular postings in the important and sensitive places. The Madras Volunteer Guards rendered meritorious service in the city of Madras during the 1857 revolt¹³.

Though a set of Madras Native people and few sepoys revolted against the British, the majority of the people and the sepoys supported the British. The Madras soldiers were used to suppress the revolt in Bengal and Central India. Neill, the Military Commander from Madras played a vital role for the suppression of the rebellion with the help of Madras Army. For that he was honoured posthumously by unveiling a statue on 24th August 1861 at Mount Road in Madras. This created aversion among the native people who wanted to remove the statue of Neill, the killer of thousands of Indians". At last the Madras administration in 1937 ordered to remove the statue from the Mount Road and to keep it in the Government Museum¹⁴.

REFERENCES

1. Divaker V.D., South India In 1857 war of Independence, Lokmanya Tilak to Smarak Trust Pune 1943, pp. x, xii.
2. G.O. 130 Judicial Department, 5 February 1857.
3. Report on the administration of the Madras Presidency, 1857-58, Government of Madras, 1858, pp. 84-85.
4. G.O. 1127, Judicial Department, 1st September 1857.
5. Madras Almanac and Compendium of intelligence for 1858, Asylum press, Madras 1858, p. 183.
6. Ibid, p.550.
7. Fort St.George Gazette, Madras Friday, October 1, 1858, p.758.

8. Report on the administration of the Madras Presidency, 1857-58, Government of Madras, Madras, 1858, p.02.
9. Ibid.
10. Political Department, record, 12th September 1858, p.27.
11. Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, 1857-58, Government of Madras, Madras, 1858, p.88.
12. James Robert Coomb. A short History of the Madras Volunteers Guards, Lawrance Asylum Press, Madras, 1907, pp. 1-2.
13. Ibid, pp.9-11.
14. G.O. 2603, Public Works Department, Confidential, 12 December 1937, Records of Fort St. George; Select Document Services, 1900-1947; Neill Status Satyagraha. Tamilnadu Archives and Historical Research, Tamilnadu Archives, Government of Tamilnadu, Madras, 1986, pp.V.56.