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## SOME OLD ACCOUNTS OF BHAGALPUR.

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The present work incorporates selection of reports some of which either lie buried in the archives of the District Officer of Bhagalpur or are scattered over the rapidly decaying blue-books and journals that are quite beyond the reach of the general public. It is to be admitted that the writer lays no claim to originality; he merely attempts to put together in a readable form and under one cover a mass of information that may help the picturing of a state of affairs that has long passed away. These documents bear witness to the enterprise and enthusiasm of the pioneer surveyors who revealed to us by their labours the old history of the country—a service on whose effects time can never efface the writing.

The first record in these selections is the journal kept by Capt. W. S. Sherwill, who made a geographical and statistical survey of the Bhagalpur district, south of the Ganges between the years 1846 and 1850. The second document is the report of J. J. Pemberton, who was engaged in the survey work of the district north of the Ganges during the years when Sherwill was occupied with his work.

With a scrupulous attention to accuracy in detail, the aforesaid officers made a close investigation and a deep study of the places within their field of operation and embodied these observations in a self-contained monograph entitled, "The Geographical and Statistical report of the district of Bhaugulpoor," printed at the Bengal Secretariat Press in 1869. The publication, in question, is now out of print and scarcely available. Sherwill's report also appeared in the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1851, and his "General remarks on the revenue survey of the Bhaugulpoor district" in the same journal for 1862.

The journals of Sherwill and Pemberton, are next in importance to Francis Buchanan's, whose statistical survey of Bhagalpur (1810-1811) is a reflex of the actual state of affairs then existing, throw-

## CAPT. SHERWILL'S REPORT

The district of Bhagulpoor, comprising 7,801.04 square miles of territory, is situated in the fertile valley of the Ganges, which river divides the district into two unequal portions, the larger portion lying to the south of the river.

The geographical position and extent of the district of Bhagulpoor.

..... The length of the district is 168 miles....; the average width south of the Ganges is 112 miles and north of the Ganges it has an average of 20 miles.

*South of the Ganges; area, 6,102.07<sup>1</sup> square miles. Thirty-three*

*Divisions.* Pergunnahs—Akbernuggur, Bhagulpoor, Buhadoorpoor, Cheetowizeah, Chundun Kuttooreah, Chundweh, Colgong, Danra Sukwara, Dhurarah, Godda, Hendweh, Huzzar Tukkee, Inayutnuggur, Jumoonce, Jehangoerah, Kutruckpoor, Kherhee, Kankjole, Lukhunpoor, Mukraeen, Musdee, Purburpara, Pussaye, Suhroee, Singhol Sukhurabadee, Sooltangunj, Sooltanabad, Suteearee, Teleeagurhee, Umloo Mooteeah, UMBER, and Waseela. *Four Tappetis.*—Belpurra, Munsibaree, Lodhweh, and Simroun.

*One Division.*—Known as the Damin-i-Koh, or the Rajmahal Hills.

*North of the Ganges—area 1,698.97 square miles.<sup>2</sup>*

*Four Pergunnahs.*—Chye, Mulhnee Gopal, Nareedeegur, Nursinghpoor Kooruh.

Under the Mahomedan kings, the district of Bhagulpoor formed the most eastern portion of the Soubah of Behar... in

	Sq. Miles
<sup>1</sup> Original area south of the River Ganges .. .. .	6,102.07
Deduct { Southal Pergunnahs .. .. . 3,634.90	} 4,210.36
{ Perg., transferred to Monghyr... 615.68	
	1,811.49
Add. Area of portion transferred from Purneah .. .. .	47.49
	1,898.98
Area of District Bhagulpoor south of River Ganges .. .. .	1,898.98
<sup>2</sup> Original area north of the Ganges .. .. .	1,698.97
Add transfers from Monghyr and Purneah .. .. .	700.57
	2,399.54
Area of District Bhagulpoor north of River Ganges .. .. .	2,399.54
Total area of District Bhagulpoor north and south of River Ganges .. .. .	4,298.52

The wild animals of the district are tigers, leopards, panthers, and all the smaller felinae; rhinoceros, elephants, bears, badgers, rusa stags, hog-deer, wild hog, barking deer, antelope, jungle fowl; of partridge there are the black, painted, grey, and double spurred; two sorts of quail, ortolan, boa constrictor, most of the deadly ophidia, water-snakes, turtle, a great variety of fish, two sorts of alligators, porpoises; besides numerous birds, reptiles, and smaller mammalia.

Wild Animals.

**KURRUKPOOR<sup>3</sup>.** This pergunnah is divided into two portions, the northern or hilly tract, the property of Roodur Buhaidoor Singh, the Maharaja of Dhurbanga, and the southern, or partially cultivated portion, also including a portion of the Kurrukpoor Hills, as well as a large portion of the plains at the foot of the hills and the capital town of the same name.

Its two divisions.

Northern.

The northern portion is a mass of hill and jungle, with a small belt of land below the hills on the northern face, containing two small hamlets of wood-cutters and gowallahs.

In the hills are seven small hamlets, containing about 250 hill men and their families who cultivate a moderate quantity of land, which produces junera, indian corn, capsicums, and beans: they are principally herdsmen, wood-cutters, or iron-smelters. The jungles afford excellent pasturage for cattle and produce good timber; the soil is rich in iron-ores: the iron is taken to Monghyr.

Of the Southern portion, only one-fifth of the whole area is under cultivation; the remainder is occupied by hills and dense jungle. The rivulet Mun flowing from the hills flows past the town of Kurrukpoor. The town is a fine substantial looking place. This part of the pergunnah was surveyed in 1839-40 by Lieut. Ellis.

Southern

**DHURARAH<sup>4</sup>.** This is a small pergunnah of ten and a half square miles lying at the foot of the northern face of the Kurrukpoor Hills.

<sup>3</sup> Kharagpur transferred to District Monghyr. Bachmann's Journal, p. 162 f.n.

<sup>4</sup> Transferred to District Monghyr.

The More river traverses the pergunnah from north-west to south-east, receiving within the pergunnah the Pipra, Bhoortooree, and Chupree nullahs, all of which are dry water-courses during the hot weather, though a small quantity of water may at any period of the year be obtained by digging in the sand.

The hills that lie scattered over the pergunnah nowhere rise into distant ranges except east of Noni Haut, where two small parallel and contiguous ranges are seen; the western one extending 4 miles north and south, the eastern one 5 miles north and south; the detached hills are in general bare and rounded masses of gneiss penetrated by caves and filled with numbers of the common black bears, who commit great devastation amongst the crops, principally devouring the junera. The jungles swarm with jungle fowl, black partridges, peafowl, and bush quail.

A good road runs from Noni Haut to Deoghur west, another through Sarai and eventually through the Rajmahal Hills to the east; another leads south to Soory, the same road travelling north, leads to Bhaugulpoor. The whole pergunnah is intersected with tolerably good village roads.

Madho Sing, Zemindar and generally termed Rajah, residing at Nugwan, pays rent to the Rajah of Dhurbanga and owner of the Mihal Kurruckpoor, the sum of Rs. 2,231-6 annas yearly for the greater part of the pergunnah, and collects from the ryots the yearly sum of Rs. 42,351.

The Luchmeepoor Rajah owns 14 villages, for which he pays Government the yearly sum of Rs. 182-9 annas, and collects Rs. 2,341. Rajah Bhowanee Sing, pays Government the annual rent of Co's Rs. 46 and 9 annas for a few villages, and collects Rs. 4,042-8 annas.

Zemindar Horil Narain Singh of Zhoopa pays Government Rs. 136-8 annas and collects Rs. 2,382.

KANKJOLE. About one-half of the whole pergunnah area is

liable to inundation from the Ganges, and there are extensive tracts of jheel which never dry up. Tradition asserts that these jheels occupy the former bed of the Ganges which flowed in that direction.

The principal produce of these pergunnahs is rice, indigo, indian corn, and junera, a small quantity of wheat, mustard and the pulses.

The jheels afford an abundance of fish, which are exported to Moorsheedabad, Jungipoor and other towns on the Bhaugerutty.

About 6,000 acres are covered with low bushes and tree jungle, the former habitation of rhinoceros and elephants, and still filled with pigs and deer; of the former large animals, the rhinoceros have retreated to the northern and north-eastern face of the Rajmahal Hills, where they find cover in the dense forest; the elephants have retreated to the south.

The principal towns and villages are Rajmahal, Sikree Gullee, Oodwanallah, Unmohobutpoor and Phoodkeepoor.

At Rajmahal there is a fine bazar for grain, iron-ware, cloth, fish, wood, toys and many other things found in native bazars.

There is also a police thannah, a moonsiff's catchery, post office, an indigo factory, a serai, several coal godowns, for the Government and private steam companies' coal; and a ferry across the Ganges; the ruins of the old Mahomedan city extend for about four miles in a westerly direction, mostly buried in rank jungle.

The pergunnah is owned by several Begums, who pay into Government the following yearly sums, viz.:-

	Rs.	a.	p.
Lan Begum	8,655	7	1¼
Kureem Ool Nissa Begum	4,796	2	8¾
Hafirun Ool Nissa Begum	2,708	3	4¾
	16,159	13	2¾