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THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF THE MUGHALS

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THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF THE MUGHALS [1526-1658]

By

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TO

Rt. Hon'ble Sir AKBAR HYDARI

NAWAB HYDAR NAWAZ JUNG BAHADUR

P.C., LL.D., D.C.L.

PRESIDENT, H. E. H. THE NIZAM'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PREFACE

The subject of Mughal Polity forms one of the most fascinating chapters in the history of the Mughal Empire. But an adequate treatment of this subject still remains a desideratum, although the importance of its study has long been realised. The present work is an attempt to supply this gap in some measure. It was undertaken at the suggestion of Dr. C. C. Davies, of the School of Oriental Studies, London (now Reader in Indian History, University of Oxford). But the subject being very vast I undertook the work with great misgivings. The study of Mughal political institutions is fraught with many difficulties arising as much from paucity of materials as from the obscurity of the data furnished by the extant materials. Despite these disadvantages I have endeavoured to reconstruct as complete a picture of the Mughal institutions as the extant materials would yield. Far be it from me, however, to claim finality for my conclusions or exhaustiveness for my treatment. Indeed, perhaps none realises more than I do now how much yet remains to be done in this field. My only hope is that my effort may stimulate further research in this subject which offers immense scope for work.

In the course of my discussions I have had often to differ with some scholars of repute who have written on the subject. I wish to take this opportunity to state that in doing so I have been actuated only by respect for scientific truth. I may also mention that no one is more sensible than I am of the many shortcomings of my work. I am still more conscious of the inadequacy of my exposition of the intricate texture of many socio-political institutions which had grown in Indian society by an unconscious process of evolution. I am keenly aware that the more

deeply a scholar enters into a science the less does he remain content with his researches. In direct relation to the profundity of his study is the swarm of problems which rise to his mind and were unforeseen at the initiation of his work. He, sooner than any reader, grasps the fact that his presupposed goal is visionary, and I am convinced that no conscientious author lets his work go to publication without a 'heart-throb'.

I have made certain additions and emendations in the original thesis which, however, only further confirm my conclusions and theories and have not materially affected the substance anywhere.

In the transliteration of Indian names and terms I have used these diacritical marks only in a few cases of difficult words when they first occur leaving their subsequent recurrences without any such encumbrance. In the case of place names I have discarded the atrocious spellings which have become current owing to the ignorance of the foreign writers and have unfortunately been indiscriminately adopted by Indian authors. I have spelt them as they are correctly spoken, *e.g.*, Gangã and not Ganges, Avadh and not Oudh, Mathura and not Muttra, Dihli and not Delhi. In many names and words such as Punjab, Turkish, 'u' is pronounced as in Akbar. This has now come to be so commonly used that it is more convenient to retain it than to change it.

In the preparation of this thesis my indebtedness to Dr. C. C. Davies, for his unfailing and keen interest in my work and his constant help, is too deep for words. Dr. Davies had entrusted this work to me with some hopes and he watched my steady progress through it with an interest bordering on enthusiasm. I am glad I did not belie his hopes. Indeed as a testimony of his high appreciation of my work he was kind enough to write to me that he regarded my thesis as 'the best written under me so far'. I think it my duty also to record that by his kind and friendly treatment he made me feel thoroughly at home and my sojourn in London most useful. My grateful

thanks are also due to the Senators of the London University for their kindly giving me a substantial grant-in-aid for the publication of the work.

I wish to also acknowledge the very valuable assistance rendered by my pupils U. N. De, M. A., Research Scholar, M. L. Mathur, B. A., and R. N. Saklani in the preparation of the maps. For nearly three weeks they toiled with me ten to twelve hours on end spotting the 2700 odd mahals given by Abul Fazl. But the contribution of young Shiva Datt Sanwal in the preparation of the maps deserves special acknowledgments. Possessed of a marvellous calligraphic faculty he did the entire drawing part of the work with great patience and industry. I desire also to convey my grateful thanks to my kind publishers who spared no pains in giving to the book an excellent get-up.

In fine, it gives me great pleasure to record that the affection of my gentle and loving daughters, Sarla and Jyotsna, has cheered my toilsome days and sustained me through a time of endless and ever-growing cares. They have also assisted me in looking over the proofs. Perhaps but for the encouragement thus afforded me this book might never have seen the light of day.

Benares Hindu University P. SARAN
Vasant Panchami
February 1, 1941

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbas.	Tuhfa-i-Akbar Shahi or Tarikh-i-Shershahi of Abbas Ahmad Sarwani.
Abbas, Ms. A.	Manuscript of the Tarikh-i-Shershahi in the Author's collection.
Add.	Additional (refers to manuscripts classed as Additional in the British Museum).
Ain. (Text).	Ain-i-Akbari of Abul Fazal Allami. In the text it is referred to as 'the Ain', and in the foot-notes as simply 'Ain'. Wherever in the text 'Ain' occurs, it refers to the Ains of Ain-i-Akbari. My references, unless otherwise indicated, are to the Calcutta (A.S.B.) text, edited by Blochmann.
Bad.	Al Badaoni's Mutakhab-ut-Tawarikh. Bib. Ind. Text. Translations. Vol. I by Ranking. Vol. II by Lowe. Vol. III by Haig.
Bird.	History of Gujrat.
'Ain. Tr. or Blochmann.	Translation of Vol. I of the Ain-i-Akbari by H. Blochmann, Second and revised edition by Phillot. 1939.
C.H.I.	Cambridge History of India.
Commentary.	Father Anthony Monserrate's commentaries. Eng. Tr. by Hoyland and Banerjee.
Da Costa.	English Translation of Diwan-i-Pasand of Chhatarmal by L. Da Costa.

Dorn.	History of the Afghans, Translation of Makhzan-i-Afghani.
Elliot.	Elliot and Dowson's History of India.
Embassy.	Thomas Roe's Embassy and Journal, Edited by Sir W. Foster (O.U.P.)
Encyc. Islam.	Encyclopaedia of Islam.
Erskine.	William Erskine's History of India: two Vols. Babar and Humayun.
Ethe.	Ethe's catalogue of the manuscripts in the Library of the India Office, London.
Fabvre.	A geographical Introduction to History by Lucien Fabvre.
Hedaya.	Translation of the Persian version of the Arabic original, Hedaya, by C. Hamilton and Edited by S. G. Grady.
Imp. Gaz. or I.G.	Imperial Gazette of India.
I.O.MS.	India Office Manuscript.
Jauhar.	C. Stewart's Eng. Translation of the Tazkirah-ul-Waqiyat by Jauhar Aftabchi.
Ain. Tr. II & III.	Trans. by H. S. Jarrett of Vols. I & II of the Ain-i-Akbari.
Jarrett.	It refers to Vol. II of the translation unless Vol. III is mentioned.
J.R.A.S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.U.P.H.S.	Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.
Lammens.	Beliefs and Institutions of Islam. Eng. Tr. by E. Denison Ross.
M.A.	Masir-i-Alamgiri, of Muhammad Saqi Mustaid Khan (A.S.B.).
Makhazan.	Makhzan-i-Afghani of Niamatullah.

Matthai.	Village Government in British India by J. Matthai.
Mirat (Bar. text)	The Gaekwar Oriental Series edition of the Mirat-i-Ahmadi of Ali Muhammad Khan, last Diwan of Gujrat.
Mirat. Supp.	Supplement (ضمیمہ) of Mirat-i-Ahmadi.
M.U.	Maasir-ul-Umara of Samsam Uddaulah Shah Nawaz Khan.
Mulakhkhas.	Shahjahan Nama of Inayat Khan.
Ojha.	Rajputane Ka Itihas by G. H. Ojha.
Or.	Manuscripts of the British Museum, classed as Oriental.
Rep. Com. of. Sec.	Report of the Committee of Secrecy, 1773.
Riyaz.	Riyaz-us-Salatin of Ghulam Husain Azad (called Salim Zaidpuri) Eng. Tr. by Mol. Abdul Salaam (A.S.B.).
Raj. Gaz.	Rajputana Gazetteers by W. Erskine.
R and B.	Memoirs of Jahangir. Tr. by Roger and Beveridge.
Rep. of the Ind. Hist. Rec. Com.	Reports of the Indian Historical Records Commission.
T.A.	Tabaqat-i-Akbari of Nizam Uddin Ahmad Bakhshi.
Tod.	Annals of Rajasthan by Col. J. Tod. Ed. by W. Crookes.
Von Kremer.	English Tr. of Von Kremer's Kultur Geschiechte de le Orient de Musalman, by S. Khuda Bakhsh.
Z and S.	Zat and Sawar (Rank).

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INTRODUCTION

The political history of Muslim rule in India has been studied by a number of scholars on a fairly extensive scale in recent years, but very inadequate work has yet been done on the institutions of that period. The only considerable exceptions in this branch are Irvine's 'Army of the Indian Mughals', a work of great erudition, and Moreland's admirable studies of the economic and agrarian systems of Muslim India.[1] The subjects dealt with by these scholars, however, present some of the most complicated problems to the student of the Muslim period and the nature of the available data on these subjects is such that they are always likely to remain controversial. However, the work done by Irvine and Moreland is of great value, but they also deserve our thanks for doing the pioneer work in these most difficult branches of Muslim history, and showing the way to the future workers in the field.

The only other work which deserves attention is Professor Sarkar's 'Mughal Administration', which avowedly deals with all branches of Mughal Government except the army. But this book I venture to say, contains a very inadequate treatment of the subject. For one thing, it touches few of the fundamental and important problems, much less the highly controversial and complex questions connected with Mughal Government.[2] In the second place the spirit underlying the work, as it seems to us from

[1] Since these lines were written some other studies of Muslim political institutions have appeared, among them, Dr. R. P. Tripathi's 'Some Aspects of Muslim Administration' being the most thoughtful and suggestive.

[2] Prof. Sarkar's critical and illuminating discussion of the system of escheat during the Mughal period is a substantial and useful contribution of his book.

the author's method of treatment, betrays an unfortunate lack of a sympathetic appreciation of the relative value of the mediæval political institutions and the environments in which they grew. Consequently the conclusions that have been drawn appear to be unfair and present an undeservedly dismal picture of the effects of the Mughal administration on the people.[1] In the third place, the conclusions which he has drawn from the conditions prevailing during and after Aurangzeb's period, in which the efficiency of administration had considerably deteriorated, have been held by him as representing the whole of the early Mughal period, a method which is hardly fair.[2] Among the briefer sketches of Mughal administration included in monographs on the Sur and Mughal Emperors, Vincent Smith's estimate of Akbar's administration as also his estimate of the spirit and effects of the Mughal government in general, in his Oxford History, are thoroughly unsound and misleading. But the most untenable conclusions and theories, based rather on a fond imagination than on facts, are those of Qanungo concerning the institutions of Sher Shah. Lastly I cannot help referring to such thoroughly absurd and unscientific views as those of Pant concerning, for instance, the Mughal judicial administration or his theories of Mughal taxation and of ownership of land.[3]

Thus the sum total of the work so far done on the administrative institutions of this period is comparatively meagre.[4] But a stage has been reached in our historical

[1] For instance, see (p. 5) his remarks on the aim of the Mughal administration, and his views regarding the attitude of the Mughal officers towards the villages, and his estimate of their judicial, police and revenue administration. Vide relevant chapters of the present thesis for a criticism and discussion of these views.

[2] See his chapter on "Taxation".

[3] See 'Commercial Policy of the Mughals' by D. Pant and relevant sections of this thesis.

[4] Since this thesis was written Vol. IV of Cambridge History of India has come out. It, however, contains only a chapter on

studies when the study of cultural, social and political institutions ought to be seriously taken up. The aim of history is to interpret human institutions, and to understand the laws which have governed man's progress through the ages, that is to say, to interpret human culture and civilisation in its various manifestations. Its function is to rationalise, so far as possible, and to trace the life of nations and the development of human genius. From this standpoint alone the study of the Mughal political institutions, both in theory and practice, must have a deep interest for us. But the fact that these institutions were the precursors of much of the framework of the modern administration, which has grown on their model, infinitely enhances the interest as well as the value of that study.[1] Any such study will miss its aim if it failed to bring out clearly the bearing of the past experience and institutions on the present ones and to show a living concatenation between them. For, without such a living picture in which the several aspects of social life and activity seem to occupy their proper places and play their part, history would become a mere catalogue of incidents and a pigeon-hole of files. In order therefore to understand the government of a country it is not enough, as Lowell says, to know the bare structure of its institutions. It is necessary to study the actual working of the system and 'although this depends chiefly on the character, the habits and traditions of the people, it is influenced in no small measure by details..... that are too often overlooked on account of their apparent insignificance'. Of no country has this been more true than of India. Here it was, more than anywhere else, that the social, cultural, and political institutions were so inseparably welded together into a synthesis as to present a

the Revenue system, but none on the political institutions and government of the Mughals.

[1] This is recognised by all modern students of Indian history. See, for instance Sarkar's 'Mughal Administration' (2nd Ed.), pp. 3-4; C. H. Hill's 'India: Step-Mother', pp. 16-17.

complete picture of the life of its people. I have endeavoured to draw attention to that web of life which was brought into being by the pressure of historical forces and to the fact that the administrative history of India, like the rest of it, during the period under study, was the product of a co-operative effort. Any study of the political institutions of India which excludes its time-honoured local institutions and the various incidents around which its social and religious life moved would convey but a very imperfect and inaccurate picture. I have, therefore, thought it necessary to devote adequate space to a discussion of these institutions.

One very useful service that the above-mentioned Western writers have rendered is that they have instituted a comparative method of study, and the example they have thus set is sure to prove of great benefit to us. For, the comparative method alone can enable us rightly to appreciate and assess the relative merits of the earlier and modern institutions. In this connection I venture to say that my study of the purely official as well as of the popular administrative institutions (the village and community panchayats) obtaining in the Mughal period has led me to feel that judged by the measure of their success in fulfilling the commonplace aim of the State—the aim, that is, of providing to the people protection and safety from external danger and internal oppression and of ensuring their economic welfare and freedom for self-improvement—these institutions were not so worthless as is the impression left on our mind concerning them by the study of the aforesaid writers. On the contrary I feel that judged by the same criteria, our modern institutions are not in all respects necessarily an advance over their predecessors. We will have to unlearn much of what we have mislearnt hitherto, in order to free ourselves from that bias which we have unconsciously inherited. Thus by bringing to bear a more detached attitude on our study we shall realise that in certain branches of administration, for instance, the judiciary, the police or local self-government, the basic principles of the system

that obtained during the Mughal times, may, at any rate, be applied today with profit. This consideration lends an additional importance to the institutional history of that period.

A word seems necessary also about the method of treatment and the standpoint followed in the present study. As regards the former I have ventured to depart from the beaten track traversed hitherto by practically all writers. Our past institutions have often been treated as a mechanical collection of a number of departments; they have been analysed, dissected, exposed and severally criticised, but no attempt has been made at that synthesis, that proper assimilation of the various parts which alone can enable us correctly to visualise the whole as a living organism. In the previous studies of these institutions the point has often been missed that the whole is not only greater but very different from the parts individually taken, and that the corpus of the socio-political institutions of any country in a particular age is the product of the genius of the race. Consequently to appreciate their merits rightly we must observe the spirit behind forms, that is to say, the psychology and the motives of the builders of those institutions. Two main factors have broadly determined the shape of things, *viz.*, man and his environment. In the development of the spirit and form of mediæval institutions, the influence of the man at the helm of affairs was of no mean consequence, while, of course, his personal predilections and instincts were inevitably and profoundly curbed by the immemorial and deep-rooted institutions and traditions of the soil, which in their own turn were largely shaped by its physiographical environment in the course of centuries untold. From this standpoint an attempt has been made in the present thesis to comprehend the grammar of the Mughal institutions and to present a synthetic view thereof.

In respect of the standpoint of study I wish at the outset to sound a note of warning. The right perspective in the study of history in modern times is often smothered

on the one hand by the attempt of one class of students to judge men and their creations by our present criteria, and either to condemn or belaud them by the same, and on the other by the counter attempts of what may be called the 'Defensive School' (which is now growing up in India chiefly in regard to what is called the Muslim period of our history) to justify everything of the past. The latter class are actuated by a curious feeling of gratification that by what they deem as a 'nationalist viewpoint' they are serving patriotic interests. The result, however, is bound to be and has been disastrous as would become obvious to any one who cares calmly to think over it.

Another cause which tends to vitiate our perspective is that we approach the subject with unconscious but deep-rooted predilections fed as we are, not unoften, on the theories and observations of interested writers. Thus we often fail to bring to bear on the study of our past the clear light of an untrammelled, independent faculty of observation and criticism. How often do we study a subject only to seek confirmation of the notions we have already formed? I have endeavoured to steer clear of these pitfalls, and to escape the tyranny of the subjective element so far as it lay within me, although in history a perfectly objective attitude is well nigh impossible of attainment.

The treatise embodies primarily a sketch of the Provincial administrative system of the Mughal Empire during its best period. But it is also an essay in interpretation. It includes chiefly the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and certain aspects of the administrative organisation of Sher Shah, which, forming as they did the substructure of the Mughal system, have had as well to be discussed in some detail. The territorial limitations are imposed by the extent of the empire and hardly need any explanation. Topically my main objective has been to confine myself to the extent to which the various branches of administration come under the provincial government. But by the very nature of the subject it has been impossible to avoid reference to, or occasionally a somewhat detailed

discussion of, those topics which would properly come under the central government. In the treatment of the military and revenue systems I have set myself certain definite limitations. The various controversial questions connected with the military system having no direct bearing on the provincial government have, of course, been excluded. Only the nature and strength of the provincial or local forces and of those contributed by the subordinate states, have been discussed. In the revenue system while the broader aspects and the very complex questions, such as, for instance, those relating to a correct interpretation of the various systems of assessment prevailing at that time, have been discussed fully, both time and space have forbidden going into the details of its working. Moreover, notwithstanding the most valuable contributions of Mr. Moreland towards the elucidation of the revenue and agrarian problems of Muslim India, that subject is so vast that it still requires a fuller treatment.

In the local administration of the period the village community system occupied a very prominent place. It is not a little curious to note that all previous writers have ignored this subject as if it had no relation whatsoever with the purely official machinery of administration above it. A careful consideration of the point, however, will reveal with what great advantage, both to themselves and to the people, those ancient popular institutions were retained and utilised by the Mughal rulers. It has, therefore, been deemed essential to include here a succinct discussion of the part played by the village communities in the administration.

A brief reference may now be made to certain noteworthy topics treated in the present essay, which were either not dwelt upon by my predecessors or in regard to which I have had to differ from them.

In the first chapter I have attempted to show that geography has not only exercised considerable influence in determining the boundaries of political divisions but also in shaping their administrative peculiarities. Moreover,

it has been pointed out that the political and strategic importance of a locality greatly depended on its geographical situation in those times of slow means of communication.

The second chapter is devoted to a brief resumé of the political and administrative organisation of northern India prior to the foundation of the Mughal Empire. The Mughal administrative structure was raised on the foundations of the preceding system which was thoroughly overhauled and refashioned to some extent by Sher Shah and largely by Akbar.

The third and fourth chapters comprise an account of the territorial divisions, there being two broad classes into which the whole Empire was divided, *viz.*, the territories immediately under the Imperial Government, and those ruled by the vassal and subordinate chiefs. The Imperial Dominions proper have been dealt with in the third chapter, in which Qanungo's theory of Sher Shah's original and ingenious scheme of political divisions has been examined and shown to be thoroughly untenable. But the most interesting part of this chapter is Appendix B, in which I have shown that Moreland's hypothesis that there were possibly two parallel classes of political divisions below the subah,—the Sarkar for revenue administration and the 'Faujdari' for purposes of general administration—is equally untenable.

In chapter IV an attempt has been made, for the first time, to subject to a detailed and critical examination the constitution and relations between the subordinate states and the Imperial Government. I have also discussed and compared these relations with those subsisting between the present native states and the British Government. In this connection I may be allowed to observe that much patient labour has been devoted to a critical and close study of the revenue, army and other statistics given in the Ain-i-Akbari, and these statistics have yielded very gratifying results. They have enabled us to understand the relations between the states and the Imperial Government, to inter-

pret the nature of several very baffling problems connected with the revenue system, and to understand the significance of obscure revenue terms. Moreover, they have helped us to estimate the strength of the provincial armies and of the quotas provided by the chiefs as well as of the forces maintained by them for their own purposes. They have also thrown considerable light on the internal administration of the states and many kindred questions.

Chapter V deals with the personnel and organisation of the Provincial Government. In this chapter, I have discussed the duties and functions of the various officials, which were in certain cases quite confused by previous writers. I have also attempted to reconstruct the rules, conventions, practices and conditions subject to which the higher government functionaries of the province had to perform their duties. A special interest in this chapter centres round the officials of the judicial department. Almost all previous writers have referred to the separate existence of the Qazi, the Sadr, the Mir, Adl, and the Mufti, as though these posts were always held by separate persons in all courts, from the highest to the lowest, and they have either confused or incorrectly described their duties and functions. A certain amount of obscurity hangs round the question undoubtedly. It has consequently been subjected to a thorough and critical examination for the first time and I hope considerably elucidated.

Chapter VI deals with the lower political divisions, that is, with the Sarkar and the Parganah administration. Further light has been thrown on the question whether the Sarkar was merely a revenue division or a division for general administration, and also the nature of the Parganah as an administrative unit has been fully discussed. A note-worthy conclusion to which the data on this point have led me is that the executive and magisterial functions of the Provincial Governor were divided between two officials in the Sarkar, the executive being entrusted to the Faujdar and the magistracy to the Kotwal. But in the Parganah they were again united in the Shiqdar.

Chapters VII and VIII deal respectively with the Provincial Army and Finance, of which the scope has already been indicated.

Chapter IX includes an account of the departments of Law and Justice, and Police and Jails. In this chapter I have also discussed the part played by the local popular bodies, the village Panchayats, in the administration of justice and maintenance of peace.

Chapter X is devoted to a brief account of Public Works and Famine Relief. In describing the ancient institution of artificial lakes and tanks in India which served not only the irrigation purposes but added in several other ways to the general happiness and prosperity of the people, I have had occasion incidentally to refer to the equally ancient institution of periodical fairs and social gatherings which were usually held near tanks, lakes and rivers. These popular institutions afforded various amenities of life to the people.

I have also added at the end three appendices and three maps, which I hope will be found interesting and helpful. The preparation of the maps has involved much patient and sustained labour owing chiefly to the numerous difficulties in the way of ascertaining the correct political boundaries. Nevertheless, I hope, I have succeeded in correcting the previous maps and making them as accurate as was possible with the materials accessible to me.

CHAPTER I

THE GEOGRAPHICAL FACTOR IN HISTORY

Natural Environments and Their Influence on Men and Institutions

Place of geography in history

Man and his environment are the two chief motive forces of human history which is but the result of the action and reaction of these two forces. The conduct and activities of man are conditioned by his natural or physiographical environment within which he must needs act and move. Hence the place of human geography and the important role it plays in moulding man's deeds and his destiny are being increasingly recognised in our day. The study of geography is now regarded as integral to the study of history and it is universally admitted that the significance of the institutions of any age or country cannot properly be appreciated without an adequate insight into the environmental conditions which have influenced their growth.

The geographical factors which have influenced human history are either of a permanent nature or temporary. Land including mountains, the distribution of water, seasons and climate, rainfall, etc., belong to the first category; and such incidental factors as earthquakes, floods, eruptions, famines, storms, etc., belong to the second. Diversities of land and surface and of climate have brought about corresponding diversities not only in the distribution of man's population, but also in his occupations and manner of life, and even in his habits and character.

Among the many factors which have played a part in human geography, land and climate have perhaps wielded the most far-reaching and conspicuous influence on both the physiology and psychology of man. Thus the real scope of human geography consists in the study of the relations between land and life, that is to say, between the natural environment and the human reactions thereto. Climate has a great influence on the physique, pigmentation, and the economic and mental conditions of human beings and so has land. Land, with its hills and glades, deserts and green pastures, fields and forests, its fertility or sterility, makes the inhabitants of a country in more than one sense, that is to say, it tends to determine the position of its inhabitants to the extent to which it offers them the facilities and means of progress and prosperity and provides stimuli to life and action. Hardihood and courage and capacity for suffering coupled with a spirit of struggle and effort against the hostilities of nature will considerably vary according to the above conditions. Even the faculties and dispositions are to an appreciable extent influenced by the environment. The influence of food and vegetables has also been greatly stressed by certain thinkers. And although it is impossible to agree with the determinism of Buckle or Ratzel, who reduce man almost to the position of a lifeless clod solely at the mercy of his physiographical environment, yet it cannot be gainsaid that the environment does exercise a very considerable influence on man and society. The fact is that history is the fruit of man's struggle against his environment. In other words, 'human geography must be considered as a study of the continuous relations of two associated elements.'[1]

'Men whatever they are doing, never get absolutely free from the grip of their environment, but they are never purely and simply acted on by it.'[2] 'The statement

[1] Lucian Fabvre: A Geographical Introduction to History.
[2] Ibid.

that man is the product of his surroundings is qualified by the fact that race has a great resisting power.'[1] The scope of human geography thus is the study of the utilization by man of his possibilities in his struggle for advancement.

The geographical factor in India

No other country in the world has perhaps been so deeply influenced by its geographical features as India. "Geography" says Patricia Kendall, "reigns supreme in India. It dictates political boundaries, determines social movements and limits ethnical expansion."[2] Geographical features have conditioned to a very great extent the development of its culture, its philosophy and imaginative faculties, its social and economic life, the composition of its inhabitants and above all its political destiny. 'In no country in the world', says Sir T. H. Holdich, 'has geographical position.....shaped the history and destinies of a people more surely than in India. A land of promise where nature offers her gifts with lavish hands, and where the soil is peculiarly favourable to the reproduction of mankind, yet forming a sort of geographical *cul de sac,* with a few notable gateways leading thereto from the north, and no exit, except by sea, to the east, south or west.'[3]

The boundaries of India

"The shape of India", to quote Sir T. H. Holdich again, "should be described as rhomboidal rather than triangular with an acute apex pointing southward into the ocean....Physiographically she is fenced round within a ring of sea and mountain. The north is bounded by the highest and most compact wall of the Himalaya which towers above the plains of Hindustan

[1] Holderness: Peoples and Problems of India, p. 8.
[2] India and the British, p. 18.
[3] India, p. 1.

in a continuous line of snowy peaks and is continued in an almost unbroken chain of its extensions on the north-east and north-west, reaching right up to the head of the sea on both sides from the foot of which the peninsula of India stretches away southwards. India is thus 'the greatest fortress ever created,.....protected on two sides by the sea and guarded on the third by the imperious wall of the Himalayas.'[1]

'The Himalayas are contained between the Indus where it bends and enters India on the west, and the Brahmaputra where it makes a similar bend and enters India on the east. In their length of fifteen hundred miles there are three or four points where a passage into Tibet or China is possible. Through these high passes races of Mongolian origin have filtered into Himalayan valleys and made their homes there.....But to an invasion in force the Himalayas as thus defined are an impassable obstacle. North and west of the Indus, however, the complete protection afforded by the Himalayas ceases.' Here the mountainous extensions spread out in a sort of tableland towards the west and contain open tracts inhabited by hardy and wild tribes, and are traversed by several routes 'which, though difficult, are quite practicable for large armies.' The importance of these gateways of India is difficult to exaggerate. Here 'Geography has remained in paramount control.'[2] Small wonder that from the mountains beyond the Indus all the great invasions of India in times past have proceeded, and that this is still its vulnerable point.

The north-east frontier of India is similarly protected by a mass of hill ranges which, however, are not so impassable as they seem. But they have hitherto not given much trouble to the rulers of India. 'But the position might change if China should in the future become an efficient military power like Japan.'[3]

[1] India, p. 18.
[2] India and the British, p. 18.
[3] Peoples and Problems of India, p. 22.

The natural divisions of India

It has hitherto been suggested by almost all writers that internally India falls into three great regions: the Himalayan region, the Indo-Gangetic plain, and the peninsula proper.[1] But besides these, there exists a fourth and equally important region, which has not received from scholars an attention commensurate with its importance in history. This region is formed by the confused mass of hill and forest fertilised by a number of river channels and it girts India like a belt right across from west to east, widening out in the centre and stretching northwards to the line of the Ganga near Ilahabad, whence it runs due east as far as Rajmahal, and falls sharply towards the south into Orissa. This belt I venture to suggest is not merely a sort of partition separating Northern India from the Deccan, but like the Himalayas it constitutes by itself an extensive region and has always wielded a great influence on the history of the whole country. Like the Himalayas, it has been the home of many small or large principalities which defied their powerful neighbours as effectively as the kingdoms of the Himalayas did. Like the Himalayas it has, since time immemorial, given shelter to a number of races which have maintained an isolated existence and have been impervious to modern influences.

The Himalayan region

The Himalayas are not merely a wall of protection. Within the country they spread their protecting influence over a wide region extending along the whole of their length. The southern slopes of the Himalayas send out several low ranges spreading fingerlike into a part of the plain and enclosing some of the most beautiful valleys in the world, which are inhabited by a considerable population. The enchanting valley of Kashmir is the most famous and largest of many similar valleys within them,

[1] Vide T. W. Holderness and Holdich, op. cit.

such as the Hazara, Kangra, Kullu, Siwalak and Dehra valleys, the Garhwal-Rohilkhand valley; Nepal, Bhutan, and the Darjeeling and Assam valleys. Every one of these valleys has been the cradle of independent kingdoms since time immemorial, which became the nuclei of provinces whenever the whole region came under the rule of one king. The contribution of the Himalayas, however, has been far greater than this. The mountains are of importance in all countries, but in India the Himalayas 'dominate the economic life of the people, that is to say, of the plains and even influence the methods of administration.....To them the vast plain below owes its rivers and streams, the distribution of her water supply, and in great measure, of her rains also, the varying fertility of her soils, the methods of land tenure and cultivation, the distribution and relative comfort of her population.'[1] They have the sources of the three great river systems of the northern plain, the Indus, the Ganga and the Brahmaputra and are an inexhaustible source of water supply.[2] Through their entire control of the distribution of rains as well as of the rivers of the plain of Hindustan, the Himalayas have been the source of the economic prosperity of its people, and of the fertility and beauty of its landscape.

The Indo-Gangetic plain

The Indo-Gangetic plain lies between the foot-wall of the Himalayas and the central region which separates it from the Deccan. East to west it extends from the Brahmaputra to the line of the Bolan pass without ever rising a thousand feet above sea. It is watered by two river systems, the Indus and the Ganga, which bring the silt of the mountains to make its plain fertile and productive. Being a very vast expanse of land, the

[1] Chailley: Administrative Problems of British India, p. 4.

[2] Two of these three great rivers, viz., the Indus and the Brahmputra which lend their names to their respective river systems, take their rise north of the Himalayas proper.

physical conditions of its different parts are much diversified. The western portion except where it skirts the Himalayas and draws more moisture from them is arid and more or less rainless as it goes southwards. Its south-west part is the dry and bleak desert of Thar and Sind and has almost no rain. This desert is marked off from the less dry and more fertile eastern half of Rajputana by the Arravali range, which cuts that historic land diagonally into two halves. East of Rajputana, the plain becomes narrower by the gradual encroachment of the hilly region of Central India. The Indus valley is generally a treeless, brown, flat plain, though the northern strip, about hundred miles wide, skirting the mountain is green, fertile and inviting. It is this region through which for centuries the invaders from the north-west penetrated into the land as far as Dihli. Beyond Dihli and Agra the river channels bend eastwards, and water the land of Aryavart, called Hindustan by Muslim writers. This region is the centre of the vast plain. Historically, from the Rajput period it was the chosen land of all great rulers and empire-builders, and has been the witness at once of some of the most magnificent achievements and glorious tragedies in the political annals of the world. It was the core of the empire of the Great Mughals who fondly cherished it and adorned it with some of the most magnificent edifices in the world. Within this region also lie the hoariest and the holiest cities of Hinduism. Here the soil is more fertile; it is full of green fields and pastures with an ample supply of water. The air is softer and damper. Towards the east the plain imperceptibly merges into Bengal where the landscape is covered with luxuriant verdure and clumps of plantain and cocoanut trees, the atmosphere being vapour-laden, moist and hot. The Ganga joins the Brahmaputra and both break up into a network of numberless streams forming the Ganga Delta at the head of the Bay of Bengal. To the north of Bengal is Assam which resembles Bengal in its heavy rainfall, its verdure

and luxuriant vegetation. The Brahmaputra which flows through it has added greatly to its importance. Assam also was the seat of independent kingdoms occasionally annexed to the empires of Northern India as provinces. Two more parts of Northern India must receive a word of notice in order to complete this rapid survey. Firstly, the rich alluvial half of Rajputana, that is to say, its south-west part, and its extension further west, i.e., the peninsula of Kathiawar. Secondly, the ancient land of Malwa which forms a plateau and lies wedged in between Central India and Gujrat. Both these lands have played, by their geographical peculiarities a part of considerable importance in the history of the country.

The central belt

Next to the plain we come to the central belt which forms the southern boundary of the former and separates it from the Deccan. This region may roughly be taken to begin in the west near Broach and Cambay where the Narmada falls into the sea. Rising from the very heart of the country near Jubbalpore it flows westwards through deep gorges and steep valleys and embanked on the north side by the Vindhya range, and on the south side by the Satpura. This range on its south contains again the channel of the Tapti, which flows about fifty miles south of the Narmada almost parallel to it and empties its waters into the sea near Surat. The Tapti valley sheltered the medieval kingdom of Khandesh. This belt of river and mountain is further buttressed by what is known as the Mahakantar forest in central India, which stretches eastwards across the country and finally merges into the hills of Chota Nagpur. The upper arm of the Vindhya hills takes a northerly direction and passing below Jhansi links itself up with the Kaimur range, which reaches the edge of the Ganga a little beyond Ilahabad and then runs parallel to the river for several hundred miles. Enclosed within this intricate mass of hill and glade lie the states of Central India which have survived the shocks of many an invasion and suc-

cessfully resisted many a conqueror. Even at the present day the states of this region are grouped into what is called the Central India Agency.

Beyond this region is the peninsula proper. Its physical features though equally important are beyond the province of the present thesis.

The influence of rivers on the Indo-Gangetic plain

This cannot be over-estimated. At a time when the means of land transport were not fast enough, the rivers served as the quickest and easiest means of communication, both for commercial and military purposes. On the other hand in the rainy season when the rivers were flooded they became a hindrance, although a resourceful and undaunted warrior like Akbar could turn the hindrance of the floods into a positive advantage, as he actually did in his expedition against Daud of Bengal.

As means of trade and commerce, and by bringing the soil of the mountains to make the lands of the plains fertile, the rivers have been a considerable source of its prosperity. The rise of large and wealthy towns on the banks of the rivers, in early times was due to the great advantages which such a site afforded.

But the most conspicuous influence of the rivers lay in their serving as the boundary lines of political divisions, and in the routes which they dictated to the armies marching from the north-west across the Punjab and from the Gangetic doab into Bihar and Bengal. For instance the boundaries of the provinces of Lahore, Dihli, Ilahabad and Awadh, and in many cases those of the sarkars and parganahs within the provinces were determined by the rivers. The five sarkars of Lahore afford the most conspicuous example of this influence, being the five doabs bounded by the rivers. Similarly the desert has had a perceptible influence on the course of history. The population of the Thar is hardly five persons to the mile. A desert becomes practically an isolated region. On the

movement of invasions of India from the north-west the influence of the desert has been perhaps the most conspicuous. No invader ever ventured to enter Rajputana straight downwards from the Punjab.[1] They had all to cross the whole of the Punjab and conquer Panipat and Dihli—the virtual bulwarks of the interior of the country—before they could penetrate into Rajputana. Here at Dihli they bifurcated according as they wanted to conquer either Rajputana or Ilahabad, Awadh and Bengal. This circumstance lent to Dihli its unique strategic importance, subsequently shared by Agra from the beginning of the 16th century, owing to the shifting of the political centre of gravity.

Influence of geography in determining political boundaries

The boundaries of the different states and political divisions have been, since ancient times, often determined

[1] Mahmud of Ghazni's expedition to Somnath (end of 1025 A.C.) is the only exception to this rule. But the circumstances under which it was launched, the extraordinary preparations that were made against the hazardous adventure and, despite all previous calculations and careful preparations, the tremendous hardships suffered by the army (Vide Nazim's 'Mahmud of Ghazna' and Habib's 'Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin') only serve to confirm the truth of this statement. Mahmud reached Multan on November 9, 1025 A.C., and halted there as long as seventeen days in order to make full enquiries into and acquaint himself thoroughly with the conditions of travel across the desert so as to make necessary preparations for the security of the army during the journey. Each trooper was provided with two camels to carry water besides corn and other provisions; and 20000 camels (Habib, p. 51, has 30000) were loaded with water as an extra precaution. All these extraordinary precautions notwithstanding, Mahmud's march was by no means easy or without grave risks. His force was confronted with incalculable hardships and suffered untold misery to which many of his men succumbed. Indeed, but for the supineness of the Rajput chiefs of the region around and the superstitious stupidity of the Somnath colony of worshippers which helped the invading army to emerge triumphant from this adventure, it would certainly have ended in an utter disaster and in the ruin of Mahmud's whole force.

to a large extent by the physical features of the country. The fact of a portion or tract of land being marked out by some kind of natural boundary imparts an air of unity and solidarity to itself and a sense of oneness and security to its inhabitants. The great Himalayan region of the north together with the valleys formed by its three great river systems, stretching out from its slopes over the plain of 'Hindustan', were destined by nature to be the cradles of more than one kingdom. The most conspicuous feature of the pre-Muslim or Rajput period was the existence of a multitude of independent states into which the country was generally divided. Even when some great monarch like Harsha or Bhoj Paramar of Dhar or later the Chauhan hero Prithwi Raj succeeded in uniting a large bulk of the country under a single banner and compelled the other chieftains to acknowledge his suzerainty, the identity and integrity of the component states was never obliterated. The unification of the country under a Rajput overlord implied little more than a theoretical acknowledgment of his supremacy, besides certain insignificant conditions such as the payment of tribute or levy of armies in the time of need. Beyond this the authority of these rulers was not touched, nor was any interference in their internal government attempted; and the slightest opportunity was enough for these loosely-knit parts to fall asunder again. These states in many cases provided the basis for political divisions under Muslim rule. For instance, the sarkars of the province of Ajmer were constituted out of one or more former Rajput kingdoms. In fact the sarkars of Chittor, Bikaner and Jodhpur were still nothing but the former states, and were only formally called sarkars. The sarkar of Sirohi was composed of four small states, viz., Sirohi, Banswara, Dungarpur and Jalor. In other provinces where the states were smaller in extent and importance they were constituted into mahals or parganas. This need not, however, imply that the boundaries were ever precisely defined in the case of the Rajput kingdoms.

Administrative peculiarities dictated by geography

On the administrative institutions of a country its geography wields an influence of very far-reaching importance. There are many examples of the manner in which geographical conditions have moulded the administrative organisation and the policy of a kingdom. On the other hand, the theory, which some writers have held, that the political and social institutions are determined solely by geography is much too exaggerated a claim. To ascribe the growth of Rajput or Mughal monarchies of India to its geographical features would not be any more reasonable than, for instance, to suggest that the democratic institutions of Great Britain owe their rise and development to the physical features of the island. The nature and spirit of the institutions of human society, whether political, social, or religious, depend more on the psychology and the genius of a people, than on its physical conditions. The real influence of geography on institutions should be sought rather in the actual working details and methods which the peculiar problems arising from the physical features of a particular locality dictate.

The states of Central India, now represented by the states of Rewah, Panna, Datia, Chattarpur etc., furnish another example of the same principle. Safely fortified within their hills and forests they were never completely subjugated during the Muslim period. Taking advantage of their natural defences they persistently created trouble and even when temporarily compelled to submit, were solely left their internal authority. It was this advantageous position which enabled the petty Bundela chief, Bir Singh, to waylay and murder the dearest friend and confidant of the Emperor and to successfully flout all his endeavours to capture and punish him.[1] The degree of

[1] A perusal of the manner in which the hills and forests of Bundelkhand helped Bir Singh and his Bundelas to adopt guerilla tactics against Akbar's force which was sent to extirpate him, and to frustrate all its efforts to capture him will confirm the truth

internal autonomy enjoyed by the chieftains of this region was only rivalled by those of the Himalayan region, while the chiefs of Rajputana, although possessing far more extensive states and resources, were much more under imperial control. This belt has also sheltered certain primitive races which continue to remain as uncivilised as ever and to adhere to their old traditions. These tribes were also never subjugated.[1]

The kingdom of Khandesh is another illustration of how the physical features of a territory, however small it may be, might help to build its prosperity and preserve its peace and independence. Akbar's conquest of Gujrat could not be easily followed by the conquest of Khandesh. How long he had to wait and how he had to strain all his resources in order to subjugate that kingdom is a matter of common knowledge. Kashmir and the Himalayan regions afford similar examples. For long after the Muslim conquest it remained independent and when Akbar conquered it it was constituted a separate province

of the above statement. The emperor sent constant expeditions and superseded unsuccessful commanders by new ones and yet "the Bundelas poisoned the wells, cut off the supplies of the Mughals, avoided a pitched battle and reduced their adversaries to sore straits." See B. Prasad's Jahangir (Ed. 1922) pp. 54-55. Shah Jahan's occupation of Bundelkhand too met with no better fate. The Mughals had to waste enormous resources both in men and money without succeeding to establish a regular and peaceful government in that part of the country. Sikandar Sur's temporary subjugation lends further strength to rather than weakens the point set forth here.

This same view is held by Atkinson, in his 'Statistical, Descriptive and Historical Account of N.-W. Province of India, Vol. I, Bundelkhand, p. 22), He says, "Though the Orcha Raja and other Hindu princes did from time to time pay tribute to the Mussalmans,.....*the Muhammadan power never seems to have been firmly established in Bundelkhand*....." Sir Alfred Lyall also expressed the same view in his "Asiatic Studies", (London 1882), p. 151:—"These regions of India," he writes, "so often invaded and thrown into disorder, but never subdued..".

[1] See Sir Alfred Lyall's lifelike description of these central Indian tribes in his Asiatic Studies (Lond. 1882), pp. 150-153.

divided from the others by its natural boundaries. Like Kashmir 'the Himalayas formed an impenetrable refuge for Hindu princelings,'[1] who continued in almost complete independence in the Mughal period.

To sum up; we observe the following consequences of the peculiar geographical position of the hilly and other naturally protected regions above referred to. They were either entirely independent or maintained, at least, a greater degree of independence than, for instance, those states of Rajputana which were less favourably situated. Secondly, those of them which were occasionally compelled to submit owned but a nominal allegiance and were constantly revolting and even creating trouble in imperial territories. Thirdly, no interference was ever attempted in their internal authority. Fourthly, they paid no regular tribute.[2]

The North-west Frontier

Of the influences referred to above the North-west Frontier of India affords by far the most conspicuous example. The peculiar situation and structure of that region has, since very early times, been a perennial and prolific source of danger from the other side. Ever since the decline of the Gupta Empire the problem of the defence and settlement of the north west grew more and more serious, but the early Rajput rulers of the 11th and 12th centuries never seem to have sufficiently appreciated the acuteness of the peril to which they were exposed from that quarter.[3] The rise at this time of some mighty

[1] Vide I. G. II, 356. Although these words refer to the Sultanate period, they are equally true of the Mughal period.

[2] A full account of these states and their relations with the imperial government will follow in Chapter IV.

[3] The problem of the Frontier Defence of India is as old as the hills. It offers to the student of history a highly instructive and fascinating subject of enquiry. In the ancient period the Mauryan emperors gave to this question the importance and the serious attention that it deserved and solved it effectively. After them the Kushāns, being foreigners themselves, held an empire which included

Turkish warriors and conquerors, fired with the zeal of new converts to Islam, and nurtured in the ambitious imperialism of Persia, brought into the field a power which it was impossible for the unwary conservative Rajput

the frontier region as well as the countries beyond, and thus the problem of frontier defence did not arise during their rule. After the decline of the Kushāns there was for a time a cessation of the *'volker wanderung'* from Central Asia. The great Guptas enjoyed comparative peace owing to the temporary calm in the otherwise agitated waters of the north-western regions. But the storm was not long to burst and when it did, the Gupta Empire was already showing signs of a fast decline. "The influx of Roman gold and the soft life of a century of peace and prosperity had enervated the people of Magadh. Consequently the great passes of the north west were not defended and the fertile valleys of Kapisa, Nagarhāra, and Gandhār were wiped out, as it were, from the map of India of the 5th Century". (R. D. Banerjee's "The Age of Imperial Guptas," 1924, pp. 47-48). Skandgupta stemmed the early onslaughts during the reign of his father Kumargupta, but the Hun invasions continued and Skandgupta spent his whole life in fighting the Huns. He was the last great hero of India, "who realised that it was his duty to defend the gates of India with the last drop of his lifeblood." (*op. cit.*) The post-Gupta period in India was marked by the rise and ascendency of an autocratic, irrational and exclusive Brahmanism (called Neo-Hinduism) as a result of the reaction which took place against the otherwise democratic and rational but now degenerate Buddhism, giving birth to a new ideology in religion which slowly but imperceptibly crept over the body social of Hinduism. This was the ideology of exclusivism, isolation and blind obedience to the monopolists of sacredotal authority. The rulers of the land who succeeded the Vardhamānas and later Guptas were thoroughly under the benumbing influence of this new ideology. The old order, however, struggled for a time. The Huns were successfully driven out and those who settled in the country were assimilated into the Indian society like their numerous predecessors who descended into the plains of Aryāvarta. But the ideology that succeeded rendered the Indian society and its rulers incapable of defending their frontiers, and killed its vitality of assimilating the newcomers. The result was disastrous.

Two cardinal principles of this new faith, viz., (1) that the touch of 'Yavan' or 'Turk' and (2) crossing certain territorial limits would destroy their caste and their dharma, had a far-reaching influence on the question of frontier defence. Witness, for instance, the following injunction;

knight to resist for any length of time.[1] Hardly, however, the new masters of the land had settled down, when they found themselves confronted with a far more formidable danger from their own homelands. The rise of Mongol leaders and the chaotic situation of the Central Asiatic politics became the source of an unceasing stream of Mongol invasions into the plains of Hindustan, which kept them occupied throughout the period the Empire lasted. During the Mughal rule the problem remained as fresh as ever, although its character was completely changed, and so does it continue up to our own day.

अंग वंग कलिंगेषु सौराष्ट्र मगधेषुच ।
तीर्थ यात्रां विना गत्त्वा पुनः संस्कारमर्हति ॥

Originally such restrictions were imposed on the Hindus by their Brahman mentors in order to avoid pollution by the touch of the hated Buddhists who had been instrumental in shattering their ascendency. Later on they came to be more widely applied. In consequence, the Rajputs, instead of fighting and digesting the foreigners as of old, began to avoid the touch of them and would not go near the frontiers for fear of losing their caste and dharma. (See Hammir Mahäkävya, edited by N. G. Kirtane, p. 22, and the treaty between Surjan Hädä of Bundi and Akbar after the former's surrender of Ranthambhor to the latter in 1569). One of the terms of this treaty was that they (the Hadäs) would never be asked to cross the Attock (Indus). This shows the narrowness of the ideals with which the Rajputs were imbued. Those few, however, who ventured to lead expeditions beyond the frontiers did so under exceptional circumstances. But left to themselves, perhaps, the Rajputs alone, of all the ruling races of the world, have had the singular gloty of never having had anything like a systematic and scientific policy of frontier defence. Invasion upon invasion came ceaselessly on and yet the brave Rajput chiefs looked on supinely until the invader penetrated their very homes. This was the root cause of the utter failure of the Rajputs to retain the independence of the country over whose destinies they presided for long centuries. The supine conduct and policy of Prithvi Raj Chauhan (the last and greatest of the Rajput heroes) in view of the frontier situation which should have been too obvious to any ruler and politician of the day, is a glaring illustration of the point.

[1] The utter lack of any frontier policy, offensive or defensive, among the Rajput states of northern India is an altogether unique

This frontier region separates the Punjab from the kingdom of Kabul. It is formed by a rugged stretch of mountainous country from Baluchistan to Kashmere, inhabited by ferocious tribes of Turko-Iranian origin, who have, with an amazing pertinacity, refused to be impressed by the softening influences of civilization. Unlike the Himalayan wall of the north this belt is pierced by a number of passes, chief of them being the Bolan, the Gomal, the Tochi, the Kurram and the Khyber. Now there is a twofold problem to which the configuration of this region has always given rise; first, keeping the tribes under control and second, guarding against aggression from beyond. Consequently every responsible administrator had to grapple with it and everyone endeavoured to find a lasting solution for it. During the

case of political shortsightedness for which history affords no parallel. When the Gaznavide raids began the rulers of the country could not have failed to realise that the trouble was not going to end with one raid or two. For close on thirty years raid followed on raid-in more or less quick succession every time doing incalculable destruction and havoc in the land. But nothing seemed to shake the Hindu chiefs out of their torpor into a consciousness of the need of organising a sound and permanent defence of the frontier. They never thought of it. On the other hand, as the invader covered more and more ground the Hindu chiefs receded more and more into the background. In the intervals when the Sultan returned to Ghaznin to make preparations for the next invasion these heroes of Hindustan rested languidly on their oars without moving their little finger either to retrieve their lost prestige and property or even to organise a strong defence against the next inevitable raid. With the decline of Ghaznin there was a cessation of these raids for about a century and a half. With the rise of the House of Ghor the same story was repeated. But the Rajput chiefs had learnt no lesson from past experience. They had remained as static and dormant as two centuries before. It is a most tragic feature of the history of Rajputs that while we never hear of a frontier policy in the Rajput period, it suddenly springs into great prominence within a short time of the foundation of the Turkish Sultanate of Dihli. There could be no stronger evidence of the woeful political stagnancy of these Hindu chiefs.

Turkish Sultanate of Dihli, however, the problem of the north-west arose mainly from the perpetual threat of Mongol invasions. The tribal region became a source of trouble only in the Mughal period. Even in modern times Lord Curzon thought it best to constitute the trans-Indus region into a separate province under the direct control of the central government. The solution was more or less anticipated by the Sultans. They used to appoint their most tried and veteran warriors as 'wardens of the marches', i.e., of the frontier outposts and erected a series of forts at strategic points.[1] The existence of this danger also greatly affected the internal administration of the Dihli Empire throughout the period. It compelled Balban to remain always near the capital thus greatly hindering him from extending his empire. It constrained the swelled-headed Ala-uddin Khilji to adopt cynical administrative measures of which the brunt had mainly to be borne by the provinces close to the capital.

Besides this, all the great warriors who eventually became Sultans during this period, had been at one time or another in charge of the frontier, and there they found opportunities of showing their prowess and valour which earned them the applause and devotion of the people and cleared their way to the throne. Sher Shah found the situation all the more perilous owing to the growing turbulence and hostility of the Gakkhars. He seems to have dealt with it in a characteristically thorough manner. No detailed account of the political divisions of Sher Shah's kingdom is available, but it is certain that he had constituted the frontiers of the kingdom into separate

[1] For instance the forts of Rohtas on the Jhelum near Balnath, that of Mankot in the Siwalaks, and that of Attock, built by Sher Shah, Islam Shah and Akbar respectively. A series of defensive forts had been built by Balban and the other Sultans of Dehli. Tried and able generals like Balban, Zafar Khan, or Ghazi Malik (the future Ghiyas Tughlaq) were appointed 'wardens of the marches'. Similarly in the Mughal period able warriors like Munim Khan (Khan Khanan) Raja Bhagwan Das, Man Singh, Zain Khan, Raja Todar Mal had charge of the frontiers.

provinces for the sake of defence. On the north-west the province of Multan extended from the Gakkhar country lying between the Jhelum and Indus in the north down to the north-east of Sindh or Bhakkar in the south-west. The frontier provinces were equipped with strong garrisons and placed in charge of capable military generals. In order to strengthen the frontier province as a bulwark both against the Gakkhars and foreign invaders, Sher Shah laid the foundations of the most massive of medieval fortresses, the fort of Rohtas, on the Jhelum near Balnath,[1] which was completed by his son Islam Shah. How great an importance he attached to it can be realised from the rebuke which he gave to Todar Mal who was in charge of its construction, when the latter represented what to him appeared insurmountable obstacles in the way of its erection. Moreover, he charged a lower rate of revenue from this province than the rest of the kingdom.[2] With a view to solve the problem of the Gakkhars, Islam Shah was driven to contemplate depopulating Lahore and shifting the capital of the Punjab province to the Siwalaks where he erected for that purpose the huge fort called Mankot.[3] But he died before he could fully carry out his plans. Similar measures had to be taken by Akbar and his successors, and almost every one of them had personally to shift his camp for long periods to the north-west in order to tackle the situation. Lastly the growth of the population of the country and its enrichment by the absorption of various races has been the result of the easy access which these gates of India offered to migrations from outside.

[1] For the tremendous massiveness and strength of this fortress, see Erskine's Humayun, p. 427; (f. n.) also R. and B. I., 96.

[2] Vide my paper in J. B. O. R. S., Patna, Vol. XVIII (1930-31) Part I, on 'The Revenue System of Sher Shah.'

[3] M. U. Vol. I. pp. 67-68 gives a picturesque description of the fort and a full explanation of why Islam Sur wanted to carry out the plan referred to.

The influence of the vastness of the country

Another factor of great political consequence, chiefly at a time when transport was comparatively slow, was the vastness of the land. It exercised a great influence on the politics of the outlying provinces of the empire which were remote from the centre. Firstly, it encouraged sedition and made revolt easier. Even during the hey-day of the Mughal rule the provinces of Bengal, Orissa, Gujrat or north-west were seed-beds of revolt. Nor were the distant parts of the empire held so firmly as the centrally situated ones. Secondly, it naturally hindered strict supervision and uniformity of control. In order to counteract the disadvantage of distance and ensure better government the central authority resorted to the device of grouping together more than one governorship into a single large province in charge of a viceroy, such as, for instance, the Deccan provinces, or Bengal and Orissa. It is fairly certain that these viceroys were given greater discretion and latitude in the administration, as will be shown in a subsequent chapter.

The Indo-Gangetic plain: a great natural fortress

Another very remarkable feature of the northern plain, which has perhaps with the exception of the north-west exercised the greatest influence in shaping the history of northern India is the fact that the latter has been, as it were, designed by nature to be a gigantic natural fortress. The political significance of this remarkable physical feature, however, has been entirely overlooked by scholars. This fortress is enclosed on all sides by an impenetrable wall of hills, forests and rivers, which is pierced only by a few passes. It is a curious coincidence that just like the larger fortress of the whole of India, the Indo-Gangetic plain also is, roughly speaking, an irregular triangle, with its base on the west and apex between Bihar and Bengal. The Himalayas form its northern boundary. At the extreme north-west angle of this triangle stands

Peshawar. If we draw from that point a line south-eastwards along the base of the hills through the Jhelum pass and reach the point where the river Kosi, about a hundred miles north of Rajmahal emerges into the plains, it will represent the north side of this triangle. Its base forms an irregular curve. It is formed by the line marked by the hilly range which commences from Peshawar and runs south-westwards up to a point west of Bahawalpur across the Indus, and then making a sharp loop up to the Bolan pass, runs due south right down to the mouth of the Indus commanded by the Lahari (Lahori) Bandar (modern Karachi). From this point the base of the triangle makes a bend inwards, running south-east up to the mouth of the Narmada near Broach (Bhrigukachh), and the Kathiawar peninsula jutting out into the sea in the form of a bastion, as it were. This portion of the base is protected by the sea. Broach stands at the south-western angle of the triangle, from where the southern boundary is formed by the parallel lines of the Narmada and Tapti, running eastwards through a gorge of the Vindhya and Satpura ranges with a mild incline upwards for about a hundred miles, and thence bending more sharply and reaching within visible distance of the Ganga below Chunar and Benares. From here the hills and the river run parallel to each other up to the head of the Rajmahal hills, leaving only a narrow passage between them, which opens out like a funnel into the broad plain of Bengal. The western mouth of this passage was commanded by the fort of Chunar, and its eastern mouth which is called the pass of Teliagarhi or Sakrigali, and which lies between the Rajmahal hills on the south and the river on the north, was commanded by two fortresses (now in ruins) on each bank of the river. The plain of Hindustan at this point between the Rajmahal hills in the south and the Tarai in the north converges to its narrowest width, which is only about a hundred miles. This seemingly open space, north of the Ganga is blockaded by a number of rivers traversing the whole plain, some of them being

very wide and deep, which rendered the transport of large armies extremely difficult. It was owing to this hindrance that all the campaigns which were carried from Dihli against Bengal or Orissa had to take the only convenient route which lay through the above-mentioned pass.[1] The great strategical importance of the forts which commanded this route was demonstrated during the war between Humayun and Sher Shah as also on several other occasions.[2] Until only a hundred years ago the main routes of communication and traffic between Bengal and Orissa on the one side and the north-western part of the country on the other lay through this passage.

Effect of this feature on history

Now this vast enclosure lends a sort of political and social compactness and security to the Indo-Gangetic plain. This circumstance combined with the fact that all the parts enclosed within it were within easy reach of the sovereign's arm from its centre at Dihli and Agra, facilitated the building up of a single kingdom and the establishment of a firm hold over it. A number of provinces and states lay outside the ambit of this fortress, such as Bengal, Orissa, the states of Central India, Khandesh and Kashmir; and it is a noteworthy fact that all these states were held comparatively in a looser control than the territories inside it. It may also be pointed out that the cause of repeated revolts in Bengal and the persistent turbulence of the Afghan chiefs in Orissa nearly up to the end of Akbar's reign, is to be found mainly in their physical isolation and not in mere remoteness from the capital.[3]

[1] Note the expeditions sent by Akbar against Daud of Bengal in 1574 and 1580 to suppress the revolt of officers. Both had to go through Teliagarhi.

[2] In our period, however, it was called the 'Gate of Bengal'. Vide Smith's Akbar, pp. 129 and 187.

[3] The military position of Orissa as determined by its physical situation marked it out as a natural and permanent basis of revolt (Vide Hunter's Orissa, II, 25); also R and B. I, pp. 314-6,

On the western side Akbar had to be content with the conquest of Gujrat for a long time owing to the same reason. He could not immediately undertake the conquest of the adjoining kingdom of Khandesh as has been pointed out above (p. 13). It was only towards the end of his rule, when he was at the height of his glory and prowess, that Khandesh succumbed before a power far out of proportion to its own, yet not without offering such a formidable resistance as to compel the Emperor to strain all his resources of wit and diplomacy. Lastly, the valley of Kashmir, which lay beyond the line we followed from Peshawar eastward, since time immemorial, had a history of its own, which was determined by its geographical situation. Its political boundaries were always defined by its physical features.

The Indo-Gangetic plain: Its Internal Features.

The internal features of the Indo-Gangetic plain also call for a short notice. It has already been said that this plain has much diversity of climate and landscape. The part which deserves to be considered foremost is Rajputana. It is divided into two almost equal halves by the Arravali range which cuts it diagonally from north-east to south-west. The western half is more habitable, not so sandy, and the lower part thereof which constitutes the state of Mewar and its suburbs is as fertile as the Gangetic doab and highly picturesque. This part has been for long centuries the home of the most famous and powerful royal houses among the Rajputs. The Arravalis, excepting at Abu, in the Sirohi state, i.e., at their southern extremity, never rise more than 3000 feet above sea-level, but are spread over this part of Rajputana in such a way as to form a number of natural fortresses, ingress into which is only possible through very narrow passes. The sites of

where Jahangir describes with great pride the conquest of Khokhara, the territory of a Hindu zamindar, south of Bihar, who had resisted all efforts to subdue him 'in consequence of the difficult roads and thickness of the jungles' in his country.

important cities like Ajmer, Udaipur, Jodhpur, owe their selection to their fine strategic situations being surrounded by hills. These hills and jungles were of incalculable help to the Rajputs in maintaining their independence. It was in great measure due to the intricate ravines and valleys of Mewar that the house of Mewar, even when reduced to the greatest straits, defied the mighty forces of the Muslim emperors. The character of their country gave to the Rajputs a great advantage over their enemies. The war of Aurangzeb in Rajputana against Jodhpur and Udaipur after the death of Raja Jaswant Singh furnishes an apt illustration of the way in which the Mughal forces were thwarted by the physical features of the land, in their efforts against much less numbers of the Rajputs.[1]

The western half is practically isolated from the rest of the plain, like an outer court, as it were, of the 'natural fortress' of Hindustan. It is more and more sandy as we go west and imperceptibly merges into the desert of Sindh called Thar. In it lie the states of Bikaner, Jodhpur and Jaisalmer. This part of Rajputana was perhaps the least under the influence of the Muslim conquerors. 'Here amid the hills and sandy wastes' says Holderness, 'they founded new homes, and were never completely subjugated.'[2] The necessity of maintaining and befriending this tract of the country was realised by Humayun and Sher Shah much before Akbar, who, of course, fully put it into practice.[3] And when that policy was abandoned it proved fatal to the empire.

Thus we see that the territories which fell within the compact circle described above constituted the main body of the Mughal empire. Their nearness and accessibility did not let the political atmosphere be contaminated with that poison in which the spirit of revolt and sedition readily thrives. This enabled Akbar and his succes-

[1] Sarkar (Aurangzeb, Vol. III) has a lucid account of the war with Rajputana.

[2] Peoples and Problems, p. 29.

[3] M. U. Vol. I, p. 693.

sors to establish in them enduring peace and security and an elaborate and well-organised system of administration. On the other hand the physical conditions of the other provinces constituted a perpetual obstacle to the achievement of similar results in them.

We may now sum up the influence of the geographical features on the political institutions of the country:

1. Geographical features have had a great influence in determining the boundaries of provinces and their divisions and sub-divisions.

2. They greatly add to the solidarity and unity of certain tracts, create a feeling of oneness and unity of interests and help the growth of well-organised governments.

3. In a vast empire as that of the Mughals was, the physical configuration accentuated the centrifugal tendencies of some parts and the centripetal tendencies of others.

4. The productivity, fertility, proximity to sea, possession of good harbours, large navigable rivers, lead to economic and commercial prosperity and thereby to the growth of strong and lasting political systems. They also excite the temptation of ambitious neighbours and become very often the source of a good deal of ruinous warfare.

5. The exposed or protected condition of the frontiers of a kingdom is always a great controlling factor of its policy and military strength. It also shapes the character of the administration.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-MUGHAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Background of Mughal Administrative Institutions

Section I—The Turko-Afghan Sultanate of Dihli

Introductory

The thirteenth century of the Christian era opened with the establishment, on the historic throne of Dihli, of the Turkish invaders from beyond the north-west frontiers of the country, who seriously set out to build up an empire. The following century and a half, after their conquest of Hindustan, was marked as much by the zeal for reconstruction as for expansion and destruction, though not by a far-sighted statesmanship. This period of an almost unbroken series of conquests was succeeded by another century and a half of a steady decay and decline. Even during the first half which witnessed the advent of certain great warriors and strong rulers the empire had several times come near destruction in consequence of the short-sighted policy or inefficiency of the rulers, but ultimately the narrow-minded and unstatesmanlike policy of Firoz Tughlaq brought it to the verge of ruin even before he was dead. The invasion of Timur invested what was already a moribund corpse with the glory of a great and painful tragedy. But the agony of the dying empire was somewhat too prolonged by external causes. A new power was needed to put an end to the old order and establish itself in its place. In the period intervening between Timur and his great descendant

Babar the political conditions of his Central Asiatic empire compelled a cessation of the exploits of the Mongol Khans into the plains of Hindustan. Among the indigenous powers the only one which could make a bid for the coveted-prize of Dihli was the Sisodia house of Chittor. But they were in the grip of a life-and-death struggle with their formidable neighbours, the rulers of Malwa and Gujrat. These circumstances combined to give the tottering empire much too long a lease of life, with the result that for over a century the throne of Dihli remained mostly in the hands of weaklings or *roi faineants*. The administrative machinery, indeed the whole system of the empire was, however, thoroughly outworn and incapable of being revived. It was inevitable that it should yield place to a new and healthy system. As an experiment of establishing enduring political institutions based on the good-will and confidence of the ruled and calculated to promote their interests, the Turkish Sultanate had proved a failure. The only alternative by which harmony and stability could be re-established was to replace the old by a new system informed with a broader spirit and based on healthier principles and policies.

But the prospect was not so gloomy as the political condition of the empire might lead one to imagine. For one thing, the experiment had left its lessons by which the succeeding generations did not fail to profit. Behind the painful scene of the political chaos of the 15th century, the cultural and social institutions were vigorously developing quite unaffected by the politics of the country. A spirit of give-and-take, of mutual appreciation instead of scorn and hatred and a broader outlook were gradually being nourished and nurtured. The fourteenth century simultaneously witnessed the crumbling of old political institutions and a re-birth in the religious and social sphere of the country. This re-birth was not without its repercussions on the moulding of the future political institutions which were to supplant the Turko-Afghan system. Its influence on

them was very distinct and far-reaching.

Establishment of the Dihli Sultanate

On the eve of Muslim conquest India was parcelled out into a congeries of Rajput states. Too fond of internecine warfare and the glory of mutual destruction and completely devoid of political foresight—a legacy of their age-long, blind faith in a dead *ritualistic religion* as taught by the selfish and hypocritical Brahmans—the Rajputs were never sensible enough to realise the extent of the danger to which they were exposed from the north-west. On the other hand the political situation in Persia and Afghanistan was becoming very favourable for the conquest of the teeming land of Hindustan. Many nomad peoples of Central Asia had embraced Islam which gave them 'precisely the stimulus, the ardour and the bond of unity that the enterprise required.'[1] What they needed was a hero to create in them the lure of conquest and lead them to war. This leader they found in Mahmud who founded the first independent Muslim sultanate in Asia. These circumstances—weakness of the Rajputs on the one hand and the emergence of a united community of Muslims fired with a common zeal on the other—made the conquest of India inevitable. Mahmud raided the country no less than seventeen times, leaving in his wake fire, rapine and pillage and ruin wherever he went. Spurred by a spirit of adventure and greed of gold, which the stories of the fabulous wealth had aroused in them, and fired by the zeal of new converts, the Muslims proved what good leadership and united and concerted action can do against a leaderless disunited community.[2] The

[1] Holderness: 'Peoples and Problems', p. 48.

[2] The story of the failure of the Rajputs is as instructive as it is tragic. Each winter Mahmud descended into India, filled his treasure-chest with spoils and amused his men with full freedom to pillage and kill; each spring he returned to his capital richer than before. Profiting by his example, others also repeated Mahmud's experiments with similar success, until about two centuries later

Rajputs presented the spectacle of a house divided against itself. Moreover, they cared for the attainment of merit in the world beyond rather than here, while for the Muslims the way to salvation lay in their conquest of this world and in the extinction of the infidel. Both were justly treated; both got what they desired: the Hindus, the other world and the Muslims, the rule of this.

Mahmud could not found a lasting kingdom in India. He was but a warrior, no constructive genius, and his successors lacked even that quality. Hence no less than two centuries elapsed before the foundations were laid of an enduring Muslim rule in India by Muhammad of Ghor assisted by a faithful band of capable and bold military adventurers among his slaves. In 1186 the last degenerate Ghaznawite ruler of Lahore was put out of the way and the Punjab passed under Ghorian rule. The most powerful Rajput hero and emperor of northern India was defeated and killed within a few years leaving the way clear for the conquerors from the north-west. Within a decade and a half from this, the whole country as far as Bengal fell into their hands, and on the death of their chief in 1206, his seniormost slave and viceroy of his Indian possessions, ascended the throne of Dihli as the first Muslim Sultan of Hindustan.

The year 1206, therefore, may be taken as the date of the establishment of the Muslim kingdom in India. The sway of the Slave kings extended as far as the

Muhammad of Ghor carried fire and pillage into the plains of India on as large a scale as Mahmud. But all these repeated raids were not enough to whip the Rajput chiefs into a realisation of the need of organising not only a defensive but an offensive so as to successfully check the advance of the raiders at the frontier gates of the country. They sat quiet and unconcerned until the enemy caught them napping in their kitchen-rooms. And yet they had a philosophy to salvage their conscience. Their religion forbade them to cross the frontiers into 'Mlecha' lands, and set kindred other ideals before them by which they could take refuge for all their shortcomings in supernatural consolations.

skirts of the hills in the north and as far as Ajmer, Ranthambhor, Kalanjar and a few other outposts in the south. But they were no more than mere conquerors and could do little in the way of consolidating or reconstructing a system of government. Moreover, when they lost power and capacity, they had to make way for others. In this way five successive dynasties sat on the throne of Dihli during the next three odd centuries.

The expansion of the empire beyond the barrier of the Vindhyas was begun by that soldier of fortune Ala-uddin Khilji, and at one time under the Tughlaqs for a little over a generation, the sway of the Sultans extended over the whole length and breadth of the country. But these unwieldy possessions never attained anything like a political solidarity or administrative unity. The whole of the Deccan as well as some outlying parts of the empire in northern India fell off even before the death of Muhammad Tughlaq, and the process of further disintegration was only temporarily and seemingly stayed until the death of Firoz Tughlaq. Towards the end of the 14th century the petty descendants of Firoz were scrambling over their petty possessions. The empire had dwindled down to the extent of only a few miles around Dihli, so aptly described by a contemporary poet in the following epigram:— حکم خدا وند عالم – از دهلی تا پالم (the dominions of the emperor of the world extended from Dihli to Palam: a village near Dihli).

The Saiyeds who succeeded as the nominees of Timur evinced neither the will nor the capacity to revive the empire. The Lodis did, of course, earnestly endeavour to restore the lost empire, but they failed to realise that the old policy and methods having proved altogether inefficacious as a solution of the Indian problem, a re-orientation thereof was needed to achieve the object they had in view. They had, therefore, to make way for a new force which possessed the rejuvenating seed of a freer and more liberal outlook and statesmanlike comprehension of the situation.

The task before the Sultans: their problems and difficulties

The problems by which the conquerors were encountered were of a very complicated nature. Muslim conquerors had never before had to deal with any situation arising out of such a diversity of circumstances. A country politically so ill-organised and divided against itself was easy to conquer, but difficult to reorganise. This difficulty was infinitely increased by the fact that the Indian people had ancient and deep-rooted religious and socio-economic institutions which proved to be ineradicable. In order to make the conquest of the country lasting and establish a firm rule over it, the warrior alone was not enough. He must be followed by the statesman possessed of a faculty to grasp the new situation and a readiness and capacity to mould his policy according to the circumstances. But it was precisely in producing a real statesman that the Sultanate failed. The Sultans of Dihli failed to appreciate to the last the nature of the problem they had been called upon to handle; and if the empire sustained through three long centuries it was due rather to favourable circumstances than to any far-sighted statesmanship or administrative skill evinced by the rulers, or to the intrinsic solidarity of their political edifice.

When the time came for reconstruction and consolidation, the early rulers found themselves faced with a threefold problem. First, for any rule to be stable in the India of the thirteenth century the foremost need was for the rulers to pacify the people, i.e., to reconcile to their rule the people in general and the warrior class in particular. But this point the Sultans completely missed. They seldom realised that it was necessary for them to create confidence in the hearts of the people or to befriend the warrior chiefs by peaceful methods. They rarely did anything to encourage the people to think that their rulers were part and parcel of themselves. They stuck to their military character holding the country by force not by friendship. They were in the land, but not of it.

They never abandoned their exotic outlook. Hence they completely failed to breed confidence in their subjects. The inevitable consequence of this was a scene of incessant revolts on the part of the Hindu chiefs and a general spirit of disaffection and mistrust among the people.

But this was not the only problem. The perennial problem of the defence of the north-west had assumed at this time a frightful aspect, quite unprecedented in the history of the land. Time and again hordes of Mongols from Central Asia poured like locusts into the plains of Hindustan, and more than once seriously jeopardised the very existence of the Sultanate. The last, though in some respects the most distracting problem, arose out of the turbulent spirit of the rival Turkish chiefs themselves, every one of whom cherished an ambition to make a bid for the throne, because among them the only principle that was recognised as entitling a person to the crown was the principle of the arbitrament of the sword.

These three problems kept them perpetually occupied and very greatly impeded the work both of consolidation and expansion. They never could overcome the difficulties arising from this situation, and hence they had to remain in a sort of camp in occupation of a hostile land seething with discontent and sedition within, and besieged by formidable foes from without.

Section II—The administration of the Sultans of Dihli : a brief review

The character of the Sultanate

The government of the Sultans was a composite structure, a product of several elements, both foreign and indigenous. It naturally took its colour from both the race and the creed of the rulers. Although the Sultans, explicitly or implicitly, professed to carry out the injunctions of the Prophet and the Quran, and to act as represen-

tatives of the Khalifa, the actual conditions were far otherwise. Dictates of religion had invariably to yield before the demands of expediency and personal ambition. Moreover they had brought with themselves a body of institutions which had already departed far from the Islamic theory and principles of government. The Caliphate had undergone a great transformation in its Persian home. It was this amalgam of Perso-Arabic institutions which the Sultans brought into India. Then again, the traditions of their Central Asian monarchies were not yet forgotten, and had their due influence on the new system that was struggling to be born. Lastly, there were the deeply rooted Indian social and economic institutions which it was neither easy nor advisable to uproot. They had inevitably to be incorporated into their system of administration. As a result the administrative system of the Sultanate was the product of an assimilation of the various elements above indicated. The process of assimilation was, however, essentially slow and unconscious, the result of an inevitable force of circumstances rather than of free will or of conscious design.

The administrative system

The monarchy under the Sultanate was a curious anomaly. It neither conformed to the Muslim religious law nor to Indian tradition or principles. The king was an autocrat, and owed his position to no recognised law of succession to the throne. It was only the law of might which entitled him to that office. Of course the Arabian custom of election hallowed by its acceptance in Islamic practice, struggled again and again to assert itself, but eventually the power of the sword supervened. Hence the interminable wars of succession and extreme insecurity of the Sultan's position, resulting in frequent usurpations of the crown and changes of dynasty.

The aims and policy of the Sultans

The professed aim of the Sultans was to propagate

Islam and wage holy wars upon infidel lands, and secondly, to use their unbounded resources for the welfare of their subjects. Practice, however, was far different from theory. Rarely was the welfare of his subjects the primary concern of any prince among them. Even the interests of the creed had to wait before self-aggrandisement and worldly ambition. On the whole the government of the Sultans was not for the people; rather the people were for the government.

The policy of the Sultans was dictated by a variety of circumstances. They were faced by the difficulty of satisfying two mutually hostile interests. Were they to adopt a policy of *laissez faire* in religion, amounting to toleration, they ran the risk of alienating the support and co-operation of the Faithful on which they mainly depended. Were they to carry on a policy of wholesale religious persecution, they would make their position extremely precarious in the country, the bulk of whose population consisted of non-Muslims. They could do everything with bayonets except sit on them. As Sir T. Holderness says, "The conquerors and the conquered never completely fused, but they came to know each other better, and the former found the latter too useful to think of exterminating them if that had been possible." Hence there was a sort of armed truce between the government and their subjects. The Sultans had to treat them, on the whole, with consideration and toleration, if only out of expediency and not from choice. Medieval Hinduism had to be tolerated by the Sultans as a necessary evil. They had no alternative.

The central government

The central government was modelled on the Persian system. The military which supported it was mainly based on the Turkish system. The council, which consisted of four ministers usually after the Persian model, was purely consultative and existed on the sufferance of the king. Though in actual practice the Sultans had often to

give due weight to the views and counsels of responsible ministers.

The imperial government's functions were very wide, which went to the extent of enquiring into the private life of the people. But there was hardly anything constructive. The emperor used to hold a court (Majlis-i-am) in which among various other things, the Sultan invited petitions from the aggrieved and appeals against qazis.

The four ministries were: (1) Revenue (Diwan-i-Vizarat); (2) War (Diwan-i-Arz); (3) Local Government (Diwan-i-Insha); and (4) Markets (Diwan-i-Riyasat). The division was not quite logical, but the Persian tradition was adhered to. Nor were the functions of the departments very definitely specified. There was no collective responsibility. The Vizir took precedence over his colleagues: but they were not his subordinates.

The ministry of revenue

The minister of revenues (Naib-i-Diwan-i-Vizarat) was the most important officer. In addition to his duties as the first adviser of the emperor he supervised the working of the Diwan or Revenue office. He examined and audited the accounts of the revenue officers and did not let the government revenue suffer by default. Several taxes were charged among which the land-tax was the main source of income. In this department the early Sultans had very greatly to resort to the aid of local machinery. They had no trained staff to do the work of assessment and collection. Hence it had to be left to the rajas, rawats, chaudhries and muqaddams. But under Alauddin Khilji government amils were appointed for the purpose and superseded the former functionaries. The incidence of tax varied greatly from time to time, between 25 to 50 per cent generally. It was first collected in the local treasury and after the deduction of the expenses of administration, the balance was forwarded to the imperial treasury.

The war ministry

The Minister of War (Naib-i-Nazim-i-mamalik) supervised the army organisation. He was not necessarily the greatest soldier of the day. There was no commander-in-chief in those days. The leader of every campaign or military action was appointed on the occasion. The Minister of War reviewed the army once a year. There was no department of supplies. The Banjaras, Sahukars and Mahajans were required to provide the armies with all necessaries. In the division of the spoils the rules of the Shariyat were, of course, discarded. Four-fifths could not be given to the army.

Ministry of local government

The minister of petitions and correspondence or local government (Naib-i-Diwan-i-Insha or Mushrif-i-mamalik) was the channel of correspondence between the local governments and the emperor, although questions falling under the purview of special ministries were sent to them direct. It was also the duty of this minister to communicate the orders and wishes of the Sultan to the governors and local officers, and place their petitions before the emperor. He had to be a clever and astute man as he had to deal with all manner of situations and persons and to handle them with tact and farsightedness. He had a considerable staff of secretaries and clerks all of whom were expected to be 'men of letters'.

Ministry of markets

The Naib-i-Diwan-i-Riyasat, or minister of markets, was in charge of the supervision of market and merchants. All the business of the realm was under his control. No competitive or monopoly prices were allowed to prevail. The Minister prescribed rules for weights, measures, etc., fixed prices if necessary and kept a strict watch that the rules were not infringed. He also raised a number of taxes.

The regent (Naib-i-Mulk)

This was an extraordinary office and was occasionally created either in case of minority or to show the great confidence of the Sultan in the person entrusted with that office. The regent was the deputy of the emperor and was above all the ministers, though in charge of no department.

The actual importance of the ministers varied according to the relative capacity and personality of the Sultan and his ministers.

Other departments

In addition to the ministries there were some other departments of a non-political nature, and occupied a lower status. The chief of these was the Department of Justice, presided over by the chief Qazi (Sadr-us-Sudur) of Dihli. Qazis were appointed in large and some small towns, but, perhaps, not in villages. Separate qazis were appointed for the army under the direct control of the Qazi-i-Lashkar. Besides the duty of settling disputes between Musalmans according to the rules of Shariyat they had also to maintain peace and settle petty quarrels. Appeals from the local qazi lay to the chief Qazi and from him to the emperor. But they might be taken directly to the emperor over the head of the chief Qazi. There is no mention in the chronicles of any fixed procedure. Besides this, appeals were allowed only rarely. There were no lawyers. The qazi gave his judgment then and there and in most cases it was immediately carried out. In the villages the machinery of village Panchayats was still retained, or to be more exact, still continued to exist uninterfered with, and the population of the villages in that age being mainly Hindu, there was no difficulty involved in its working.

In civil cases and administrative matters there was no difficulty. If the parties were Muslim, the case was decided according to the Shariyat laws, but in the case of

Hindus, Hindu Law also was consulted. Nothing, however, is clearly mentioned regarding the extent of the application of the different laws.

In the matter of criminal law, the state had to override the prejudices of the qazis and to make such rules as would bring within their purview the new cases for which the Qoranic laws were found to be inadequate.

There was an Amir-ul-Bahar also, not to supervise a naval fleet, but only a flotilla of boats on the rivers. Another small department dealt with agriculture, the officer being called Amir-i-Kho. He dealt with schemes of agricultural improvement which was always the chief concern of the state.

The government of the Sultans was in no sense feudalistic. It was a highly organised bureaucracy with a regular gradation of departments and officials, all of whom were appointed and dismissed or transferred at the will of the Sultan and were bound to render account of their activities to the higher authorities. There was no infeudation or sub-infeudation, no post was hereditary, and the jagirs were only a way of payment of salary or allowance for maintenance of specified troops. The governors or other servants of the state owed allegiance to no other master except the emperor. The sovereign was supreme over all classes. The army was not feudalised. The men were enlisted directly by the emperor and paid by him. The empire of Dihli was not an organised anarchy like the kingdoms of medieval Europe; it was a territorial state as understood in the modern times.

Extent of the empire: political divisions

No definite account of the administrative divisions of the empire of Dihli is given in the chronicles of the period which mostly deal with the story of wars and conquests only. When Alauddin Khilji carried his arms as far as Deogiri in the end of the thirteenth century the bulk of the intervening country, including Rajputana, Gujrat and Malwa, was still unreduced. It was after becoming Sultan

that Alauddin gradually attempted the conquest of Rajputana, Malwa, and Gujrat, but still his hold on these provinces was extremely feeble and even payment of the tribute was seldom made by the local chiefs except under compulsion. He, however, did make an earnest effort to consolidate the empire and reorganise its government. But the available data about his reign, like those of the others, are too scanty to enable us to fix either the boundaries or the exact number of his provinces. The boundaries of the outlying provinces were frequently receding and advancing. Under Muhammadbin Tughlaq we hear for the first time that his empire consisted of twenty-five provinces. And when the empire broke up the ancient natural divisions which more or less represented the provinces of the empire, became independent kingdoms, such as, for instance, Malwa, Gujrat, Bengal, Jaunpur. The Lodi episode was but a temporary flicker. The attempt at recovery of the lost territories of the empire had succeeded to a certain extent, but the policy and methods of the Lodi government were even more reactionary than those of their predecessors. Their system was not built on the enduring foundations of the goodwill of the people. Nor did they succeed in reviving even a semblance of its former solidarity. The fabric of the Afghan kingdom was shaky and nerveless. Its end was but a question of time.

To sum up the main features of the Dihli Sultanate, which had a bearing on the Mughal political institutions:

(1) The problem of the frontiers.

(2) The problem of internal peace, security and firm government.

(3) The problem arising out of two fundamentally contradictory ideals of sovereignty—one, the Afghan ideal in which the king was regarded only as a *primus inter pares,* occupying no inaccessible or sacrosanct position, the second, the Turkish principle of the empire of Timur in which the king was a divine agent and held a sacrosanct position.

The Mughals addressed themselves to these problems from a different angle and outlook. A fourth feature of the Turko-Afghan polity was the administrative machinery which they had built up. This had a considerable influence on the political organisation of the Mughals, but the policy underlying their government underwent a radical change.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF THE CROWN TERRITORIES

THE PROVINCES

Section I—Political divisions of Hindustan before the accession of Akbar

Northern India, on the eve of the Mughal conquest, was split up into a number of independent kingdoms, varying in extent and power. The remnant of the Dihli Sultanate was only one of these, having lost all her former prowess and predominance. Some of these kingdoms became the nuclei of the future provinces of the Mughal empire. It is therefore necessary to give a brief survey of these kingdoms by way of a background of the subsequent organisation.

The kingdoms which existed at that time fall into four well-defined groups. Enclosed within the valleys of the Himalayas there was a ring of chiefships which, until the Mughal conquest, remained entirely unaffected by the politics of Hindustan. Their geographical position proved their salvation. The foremost of these was the ancient kingdom of Kashmir whose political boundaries were clearly and permanently defined by nature. East of Kashmir there was a series of smaller kingdoms which remained autonomous even during the Mughal period, and successfully resisted all attempts to conquer them.[1]

[1] Numerous instances of these states are mentioned by contemporary writers. But a few will suffice to illustrate the point:—

(*a*) The disastrous campaign of Mirza Najabat Khan against Srinagar Garhwal (vide Manucci, I. 215-16; M. U. III, 822-'24).

South of this region the plains of Hindustan, excluding Rajputana, were parcelled out among Muslim kingdoms. Commencing from Multan in the extreme west and making a north-easterly curve, this group comprised Lahore, north-east of Multan, practically independent; then south-east of Lahore the remnant of the empire of Dihli, and further east, Bengal. Along the southern boundary of the plains of Hindustan lay the kingdoms of Khandesh, Gujrat and Malwa, besides the minor chiefships of the hilly region of Central India, known as Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand. Between these two belts of muslim kingdoms, on the western side, lay Rajputana, like a wedge, as it were, 'deathless and indomitable', itself broken up into a number of chiefships but rallying round the leadership of the house of Chittor which had risen at that time to the premier position among them. One very far-reaching result of this peculiar situation of the Rajput states was that it prevented the effete and miserable remnant of the empire from being swallowed up by Malwa and Gujrat.[1]

To attempt to specify the extent and precise limit of these kingdoms is a task of extreme difficulty, because their boundaries were perpetually changing. The provinces of Multan and the Punjab were very feebly

An account of how he joined Dara at first and then went over to Aurangzeb's side is given by Tavernier, p. 277; Bernier, pp. 51, 92. Lahuari and Mulakhas have also the same story. Peter Mundy (Hak) II, 75, refers to 'Kumaun Ghur (Kumaun Garh) not subject to the king.....' He only paid tribute occasionally. Kangra was an independent state and was only reduced by Jahangir. R and B. II. 184-186; M. U. (Tr.) I. 413.

Pelsaert says (p. 58) that the Himalayan states were completely independent. But, as we shall see in the course of this chapter, many of them gradually acknowledged at least the nominal suzerainty of the Mughals.

[1] There are instances of the rulers of Malwa having extended their sway as far as Kalpi near Qannauj, which was held by them for a long time. We also know that they had designs on Dihli. Had the Rajputs not been a stumbling block in their way, no wonder, they might have captured the throne of Dihli.

held and were, for all practical purposes, independent. The former consisted roughly of a long narrow strip of land along the eastern bank of the Indus, stretching from its mouth northwards to a little above the city of Multan, as far as the frontier of the Gakkhar land. On the south-east it was bounded by Rajputana and on the north-east by the province of Lahore. The Punjab or the province of Lahore was bounded on the west by the upper course of the Indus stretching eastwards as far as the Satlaj which formed its eastern boundary. On its north lay Kashmir and on the south Rajputana. Next to Lahore lay the remnant of the Dihli empire, representing the dominions proper of the Lodi sultans. Multan had never been recovered since the usurpation of the Langah's in 1451. The governor of the Punjab enjoyed virtually complete independence because the Sultans were too preoccupied with affairs in the east to be able to enforce on the former any more than a mere nominal allegiance. But towards the east Bahlol had extended the limits of the empire as far as Bihar by the annexation of the kingdom of Jaunpur, and Sikandar widened it further still by resubjugating Bihar on the east and annexing Marwar, Bayana, Chanderi, Dholpur and Raisen and Nagor in the west. Their control was, however, far from being well-established. The Sultan was kept incessantly occupied with the revolts of the turbulent chiefs throughout the kingdom.

Ibrahim Lodi had the credit of conquering the fort of Gwalior and annexing that state after the death of its powerful ruler Mansingh. But that was destined to be his first and last achievement. With the annexation of Gwalior was reached the culminating point in the expansion of the Lodi kingdom. But the centrifugal tendencies were already in evidence. The dissatisfaction of the nobles, culminating in open revolt, left him no time for further expansion or even for consolidation of his hereditary possessions. The consequence was that province after province began to fall asunder in quick

succession. Daulat Khan Lodi made himself independent in Lahore and began his intrigues with Babar. Darya Khan Lohāni threw off his allegiance to Ibrahim in Bihar and after his death his son Bahādur Khān proclaimed himself king and annexed the whole country as far as Katehar and Avadh.

The boundaries of the centrally situated provinces of the Sultanate, such as Sambhal, Badaun, Itawah, Agra, very likely followed the rivers wherever possible, but we have no evidence enabling us to determine this point with any degree of accuracy. Next to Dilhi was the kingdom of Bengal which had remained independent ever since 1338 A.D., when Fakhruddin the Silahdar (armour-bearer) of the governor of Sunargaon after his master's death killed the governor of Lakhnauti and subduing the provinces of Sunargaon, Lakhnauti and Satgaon combined them into one independent kingdom under his rule.

Rajputana was practically free from Lodi control. In the south-west of it the mighty chiefs of Chittor had been for generations struggling against their neighbours of Malwa and Gujrat. The lands of Gujrat and Malwa were both fairly well-defined geographically, but their political boundaries like those of other kingdoms and provinces of that period, were continually shifting. Both of these Muslim kingdoms had become independent towards the end of the fourteenth century during the chaos following upon Timur's invasion. In the middle of the fifteenth century Mahmud Khilji of Malwa extended his dominions upto the Satpura range in the south, to the frontiers of Gujrat in the west, to Bundelkhand in the east, and as far as Mewar in the north. In 1440 he had the audacity to march upon Dihli itself, but was repulsed by Bahlol Lodi. At a later period, the possessions of the rulers of Malwa extended as far north as Kalpi on the Jamna, which remained for two generations a bone of contention between that kingdom and Jaunpur.

Eventually in 1531 Malwa was absorbed by Gujrat. After this it rapidly changed hands until its conquest

by Akbar who in 1561 wrested it from Malik Bayazid, known as Baz Bahadur, son of Shujā'at Khān, who was governor of that province under Sher Shah.

The rulers of Gujrat were abler and more powerful than those of Malwa. They made extensive conquests and imposed their suzerainty over many neighbouring territories and kingdoms. At one time their sway extended from Mandu and Dhar to the peninsula of Kathiawar and from Chittor to Diu. The kings of Khandesh and the Rais of Junagarh and Girnar were tributaries to them. The culmination of Gujrat's ascendancy was reached when in 1531 Malwa was annexed to it. But in this case also as in so many others decline and decay were not slow to set in. The successors of Bahadur Shah (1526-36) were weaklings under whom the kingdom fell rapidly into a state of chaos, and became the prey of rival factions until its annexation by Akbar in 1573.

The kingdom of Orissa which, after its conquest by Raja Mansingh in 1592, was joined to Bengal, was a part of the ancient kingdom of Kalinga. On its north-east was Bengal and on the south-west the kingdom of Golkanda. On the western side it was bounded by the table-land of Chhota Nagpur and Gondwana which stretched right into central India.

Conquest of Hindustan by Babar

Such was roughly the political distribution of territories in Hindustan at the time when in the middle of 1526 Babar descending from his kingdom of Kabul, wrested the Punjab from Daulat Khan Lodi and destroyed the motley host of Ibrahim at Panipat. This victory was followed by the occupation of Dihli and Agra and by the capture of the imperial treasuries and forts. Such arrangements for administration as were possible under the circumstances were quickly made at Dihli before the conqueror proceeded to Agra to occupy which a party under Humayun had been despatched in advance. But the capture of Dihli and Agra by no means gave him

the mastery of the land. Everywhere the leaders of the Afghan tribes set themselves up as independent chiefs and fortified themselves in convenient strongholds. Dihli and Agra were surrounded by a ring of hostile Afghan chiefs from Mewat to Qannauj. But by far the most formidable of his foes was the leader of the Rajput league Rana Sanga who, realising that Babar was a serious obstacle to the realisation of his cherished dream of capturing the throne of Dihli, began making serious preparations to drive out the invader from the north-west. But Babar emerged victorious from the trial. Rana Sanga was defeated at Khanwa and the Rajput power was shattered. The Afghan chiefs seeing Babar's resolution to remain in the country came and made their submission. Within a short time the country from Dihli to Itawah and Dholpur came into his possession. On the east Humayun wrested the country up to Ghazipur and Jaunpur from the Lohani and Fermuli chiefs and took possession of Qannauj and Kalpi. After the defeat of Sanga Babar had time to consolidate his new possessions, but he wasted his time in erecting buildings at Agra and in enjoyments. He was a mere warrior, no constructive administrator.

Extent of Babar's kingdom

The dominions of Babar at the time of his death were very extensive, stretching from the Oxus in Central Asia as far as Bihar. Immediately beyond the Indus he held Kabul, Ghazni and Qandahar, and much of the mountainous country of the Hindu Kush, where the tribes acknowledged his nominal suzerainty. Between Kabul, Ghazni and Qandahar frontier on the west and the Indus on the east, he possessed the lowlands of Jalalabad, Peshawar and Kohdaman and also Swat and Bajaur. But the more intricate hilly regions in Afghanistan and the frontier belt remained independent and the tribal raids and counter reprisals never ceased. In upper and lower Sindh the Khutbah was read in his name and his supremacy was

acknowledged, but beyond that he commanded little authority there.[1]

In Hindustan, east of the Indus, he held the whole of the Punjab and Multan and the country lying between the Satlaj and Bihar. From north to south his sway extended from the foot of the hills up to Malwa and Rajputana, the southern boundary being marked by a line connecting Bayana, Ranthambhor, Gwalior, Chanderi, those being the furthest points of his conquests on that side. The southern part of Bihar, being hilly and wooded was not effectively subjugated and was still held by the Afghan and Hindu chiefs.

The dominions of Babar were surrounded by the independent principalities of Bundelkhand and the shattered kingdom of Malwa on the south, by Bengal on the east and by the petty Himalayan chiefships on the north.

After Babar's death Humayun lingered in his lethargy without doing anything either to consolidate or reorganise the government of his kingdom. Of course he made some additions to it by the conquest of Gujrat and Malwa in 1535, but only to lose them within a few months. His habitual sloth and easy-going, dilatory methods coupled with the faithlessness of his brothers precipitated disaster and eventually led to his expulsion from the country. He had been on the throne for close upon a decade and yet he left no traces of any constructive achievement in the political institutions of the country.

Political divisions under Babar and Humayun

Concerning the political divisions under Babar and Humayun we have almost next to no information. In his memoirs Babar gives a list of thirty sarkars and zamindaris under him extending from Bhira east of the Jhelum to Bihar. Nevertheless there are enough indications in the Memoirs[2] and other authorities to show that neither

[1] Memoirs of Babar, II. Erskine, I. 526-27.

[2] Memoirs of Babar, II, 520.

Babar nor Humayun made any alterations in the administrative arrangements of their predecessors. The sarkars of Babar must have been the same as under the Lodi Sultans. For administrative purposes the country may be said to have been divided into two main classes of political divisions: (1) The regular sarkars (2) The subordinate states and zamindaris[1] of subjugated chiefs.

Such of the old 'Zamindars and Rais' who acknowledged the conqueror were allowed to retain full internal autonomy on condition of paying some tribute. These states and principalities comprised about one-fifth of the whole kingdom, because Babar tells us that out of 52 crores of revenue, "parganahs to the value of eight or nine crores are in the possession of some Rais and Rajas, who from old times have been submissive and hence received these parganahs for the purpose of confirming them in their obedience."[2] The bulk of the remaining four-fifths of the kingdom was assigned to his followers soon after the battles of Panipat and Khanwa. Humayun effected no alterations in the arrangements of his father. These assignments made it obligatory on the assignees to maintain some forces for the help of the sovereign in time of need. Through these assignees also were the revenues realised and the rest of the civil administration carried on. These assignments were not hereditary, and were frequently transferred from one person to another. There was a third class of small territorial grants known as Suyūrghāls (later also called Madad-i-mā'ash) which were conferred for religious, charitable and educational purposes by way of maintenance upon individuals as well as institutions. No consideration in the form of military or any other service was expected from these grantees and though they were generally held for life, there was

[1] The word Zamindar was used by the Muslim rulers and writers for all the former rulers and chiefs who had acknowledged Mughal suzerainty and who fulfilled certain obligations towards the suzerain but otherwise retained varying degrees of autonomy.

[2] Memoirs of Babar, II. 520.

nothing to prevent the king from resuming them at will whenever he thought fit to do so.

This was the administrative organisation prevailing under the Afghan Sultanate and was adopted by Babar and Humayun without any modifications.[1] So they were by no means administrative innovators. Humayun had planned to re-organise his kingdom after recovering the throne in 1556 but his ambition did not materialise.

Extent of Sher Shah's kingdom

Sher Shah ruled a far wider territory than his Mughal predecessors. Before he finally drove Humayun out of India he had already subdued Bengal. Within a few years of his victory over Humayun near Bilgram and Qannauj, he made himself master of the whole of Northern India. His dominions extended from Sunargaon in the east to the Gakkhar country in the north-west, the western boundary being formed by a line joining Balnath Jogi on the Jhelum in the north and Khushab nearly a hundred miles south-west, and thence running across the Jhelum along the bank of the Indus down to Bhakkar.[2] On the south his territories were bounded by the Vindhya and Karakoram ranges, as he had brought within his sway practically the whole of western Rajputana, Malwa and Kalanjar. No further territorial accessions took place under his successors. Qanungo wrongly supposes that the fact 'that Sher Shah's empire extended as far as Mount Abu and Sakkhar Bakkhar (in Sindh), is known only from his coins' and that these facts 'have escaped the notice of all professed historians'.[3] Abbas has a clear reference to the manner in which the two provinces were acquired. The kingdom of Marwar had been extended by Rao Maldeo to include the territory

[1] The above summary is based on Babar's Memoirs, Gulbadan Begam, Memoirs of Jauhar, and Tarikh-i-Rashidi.

[2] While Sindh had been surrendered to Sher Shah by its Afghan chieftains, the desert-states of Jaisalmer, and Bikaner remained out of the sway of the Sur Government.

[3] Sher Shah, 382-383.

upto Abu and beyond. Vanquished by Sher Shah he took refuge in Sewan (near Abu) on the borders of Gujrat and thus the whole of his possessions including Abu fell into the hands of the victor. As regards Sindh (Sakkhar-Bakkhar) we are told that it was surrendered by its chiefs when they learnt that Sher Shah was preparing to attack them. In his triumphal march from Qannauj he swept right across the Gangetic Doab and the Punjab up to Khushab in the north, capturing towns and subjugating provinces. At Khushab he made a halt and sent forces to hound Humayun who was at Multan out of the country, and to occupy that province. Here Ghazi Khan, Fateh Khan and Isma'il Khan came and waited on him and gave proofs of their firm loyalty to him. The King was much pleased and confirmed Isma'il as ruler of Sindh.[1] Subsequently during the Ujjain and Sarangpur campaign when Sheikh Bayazid, grandfather of the author of the Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi, came to see Sher Shah, the latter promised that after the fall of Kalanjar, he would give him the provinces of Sindh and Multan, the country of the Baluchis.[2] From the contemporary accounts we learn that the administrative machinery was restored in these places as soon as they were conquered—an achievement which was the unique credit of Sher Shah.

Administrative divisions

Sher Shah was a veteran and skilled administrator and had attained the ripe age of sixty-eight[3] when he

[1] Abbas (MS. A.) p. 178; Elliot, IV. 388.

[2] Op. cit. p. 180; Elliot IV, 389.

[3] A very common but serious misapprehension exists regarding the date of Sher Shah's birth, created by Mr. Qanungo's absurd suggestion to place that event about 1486 A.D. But in a paper on 'The Date and Place of the Birth of Sher Shah' published in the J. B. O. R. S. (March 1934, Vol. XX, pt. I) the present writer has conclusively shown that Sher Shah was born in the year 1472 A.D., Qanungo's hypothetical date being late by no less than a period of 14 years. Consequently at the time of his enthronement Sher Shah was not 54 but 68 years old. It may also be observed here

became king. What was more, he was possessed of a keen sense of duty and of extraordinary energy in organisation. He had been a careful critic and observer of the shortcomings inherent in the systems of Babar and Humayun; and finding now an opportunity to remedy them, addressed himself to the task with characteristic earnestness and enthusiasm.

Concerning the administrative divisions of Sher Shah's kingdom the contemporary chronicles yield, even to a very close scrutiny, extremely scanty information. We are left to make inferences from indirect and incidental observations only. Sher Shah seems to have retained more or less the former limits of the provinces, sarkars and parganahs. A modern writer has fabricated a fantastic theory about Sher Shah's political divisions, viz., that he discarded *the principle of dividing the kingdom into provinces* and although he had nominally to retain some provinces, he dispensed with them altogether so far as administrative purposes were concerned. The writer contends that the largest political unit into which Sher Shah's kingdom was divided was the sarkar.[1] The existence of the provinces and provincial governors which is clearly

that he had a long experience of administering his father's Jagir, extending over nearly 25 years in the first instance, and then several years again after his death.

[1] From pp. 241-243 of his 'Sher Shah' Qanungo laboriously develops his theory that Sher Shah 'substituted in Bengal a completely new mechanism', viz., that he broke up the province into a number of separate and smaller governorships. Qanungo fixes their number at nineteen, on the ground that 'as we learn from Abbas that the largest administrative unit of Sher Shah's Empire was a sarkar (MS. p. 249—Elliot, IV. 414), it would not be very far from the truth to say that about this time, the 19 sarkars of Bengal proper enumerated in the Ain-i-Akbari were constituted by Sher Shah'. This new system, that is to say, of dividing a province into separate governorships which were coincident with the sarkars of later times, 'was' Qanungo contends, 'Sher Shah's ideal of provincial organisation' (vide 'Sher Shah' p. 357). It will be presently shown, however, that his contention is quite unwarranted. But it may be pointed out here that the statement which he ascribes to Abbas

mentioned in the chronicles is explained away by suggesting that these were meant either to 'preserve the administrative unity of the whole province' and to prevent quarrels among the governors[1] as in the case of Bengal, or from military necessity, as in the case of the Punjab, Malwa and Ajmer, Jodhpur and Nagor.[2] His conclusion, however, would seem to be based rather on imagination than on facts, and he does not hesitate to twist the meanings of passages to suit his purpose.[3] Although no detailed statistical account like the Ain-i-Akbari is available for Sher Shah's kingdom, we have unmistakable evidences that the empire was divided into regular provinces. Bengal was the only province which is said to have been split up into smaller governorships ostensibly with a view to minimise the chances of rebellion. These divisions have been assumed by Qanungo to be identical with the nineteen sarkars of Bengal under Akbar, an assumption no better grounded than his theory and arguments. For Abbas on two occasions uses the distinct words:[4]—

و ملکِ بنگاله را ملوکِ طوائف ساخت و قاضی فضیلت را . . . امین بنگاله نمود

viz., that the sarkar was Sher Shah's largest administrative unit does not exist either in Elliot or in any of the five MSS. in the Br. Museum and the India Office, nor in my copy. I find no statement of Abbas' capable of yielding the sense which Qanungo has discovered.

[1] Sher Shah, 243.

[2] Ibid. 357-358.

[3] For instance, he further supports his theory (loc. cit.) by a quotation from Abbas (Elliot, IV. 432) viz., "He (Sher Shah) intended to remove Azam Humayun (Haibat Khan) from his government of the Punjab, but had no time before he was glorified in martyrdom." This sentence has been torn out of its context and twisted to yield the desired sense, which, however, happens to be just the contrary of what the passage really conveys. Read with the context it only means that Sher Shah wanted to remove the governor as a punishment for certain acts of high misdemeanour and not in order to abolish the office itself.

[4] Abbas (MS. A.) p. 183; I. O. MS. fol. 87-88; Elliot IV, 391.

translated by Elliot: "And he divided the kingdom of Bengal into different provinces and made Qazi Fazilat *Amir* of Bengal", and again:—

و ملوکِ بنگاله طوائف ساخته بود قاضی فضیلت را امینِ بنگاله ساخته بود

translated by Elliot: "The kingdom of Bengal he divided into parts, and made Qazi Fazilat *Amir* of that whole kingdom."[1] The meaning of ملوک طوائف is thus given by Steingass: 'The kings of those provinces into which the empire of Sikandar (Lodi) was broken up'. From the nature of Afghan polity in India it is only too well-known that it was composed of a number of tribal, more or less autonomous, leaders who continued to enjoy their privileges till Sher Shah's time. Instead of giving the province of Bengal to one of these Sher Shah divided it among several of them. In this way he satisfied the powerful and ambitious Afghans and rendered them incapable of rebellion as well. This view is fully supported by Badauni, who writes: ".....Sher Shah imprisoned Khizr Khan and taking possession of the country conferred it by way of Jagir upon several of his trustworthy Amirs, and appointed Qazi Fazilat.....superintendent of the eastern Rohtas fort."[2] This view is also borne out

[1] Ibid. (MS. A.) p. 225; I. O. MS. fol. 108 b.; Elliot, IV. 417. It may be noted that Elliot's MS. seems to have had the word 'Amir' and not 'Amin' which is found in all other MSS. known to me, in India and England, although curiously enough an abridged redaction of the Tarikh-i-Sher-Shahi, (Or. 1782) which belonged to Elliot and was copied by his munshi, has also the word '*Amin*' and not '*Amir*'. It may, therefore, be safely presumed that his rendering was an error.

[2] خضر خان.....محبوس گشت و شیر شاه ضبطِ آن ولایت نموده بچندی از اُمرای معتبر جاگیر ساخت و قاضی فضیلت ناظمِ مهماتِ قلعهٔ رو هتاس شرقی گردانید –

Badauni, 364-365. It will be remembered that Badauni was a contemporary of Abbas and had personally been witness to Sher Shah's administration in his boyhood. He is as valuable an authority for the great Afghan's reign as Abbas.

by the Makhzan-i-Afghani.[1] According to Qanungo each of these jagirs into which Bengal was thus divided represented a sarkar. Had it been so there seems no reason why Abbās and the other writers quoted above should have refrained from directly stating them as sarkars, and given them instead a misleading and incorrect name. But what Sher Shah really did was that he divided that province into a few smaller jurisdictions and gave them by way of Jagirs to the powerful local Afghan leaders, as is clearly mentioned by Badauni, Makhzan and other authorities alike. It was only a device to minimise the possibilities of revolt and at the same time to satisfy the Afghan chiefs who might have been clamouring for jagirs. That Sher Shah did divide his provinces into sarkars is quite certain although it is nowhere definitely stated. The point to which I wish to draw attention here is that the passages under consideration do not refer to any such division. On the other hand, the only reasonable inference from them will be that out of the Bengal province Sher Shah placed a territory comprising a few sarkars in charge of each of a few tribal chiefs who were, of course, all politically equal in status and independent of one another, but responsible to the Central government through the Amin, as to whose functions and powers Qanungo has again lost touch with facts and given free play to his imagination. He contends that 'this office carried no military command and no great adminis-

[1] I quote the relevant passage from the Makhzan-i-Afghani and Khan Jahan Lodi of which the different MSS. I have carefully compared and collated both in the Br. Mus. and the India Office.

مخزن افغانی (Or. 1636, fol. 216 *a*) و آنجا حاکم دیگر تعین فرمود و قاضی فضیلت را امین بنگاله فرموده

تاریخ خانجهانی و مخزن افغانی (Ethe, 1705. fol. 158 *a*, *b*) بنگاله را چند بچند کس از امرای معتبر خود جاگیر کرد و قاضی فضیلت را امین آن ولایت ساخت و سلاح و سداد و فساد آن ملک را در قبضهٔ اقتدار او مسلّم نهاد --

trative duties except *that* of supervision and prevention of quarrels which were sure to arise among a number of officials of equal status.....', (p. 357). This view would seem to be quite untenable in the light of the passages quoted above from Badauni, Makhzan, and other authorities, in which the position and functions of the Amin have been defined in no uncertain terms. This piece of evidence, however, Qanungo has completely ignored. But even the rather scanty observations of Abbas on this point would be found on a careful consideration to lend no support to his theory. In Abbas the passage in question occurs as a conclusion to the account he is giving of the measures taken by Sher Shah for the maintenance of internal peace by stationing a certain number of troops and garrisons in different places in the country. Hence he says: 'He appointed Qazi Fazilat.....*and in every place where it suited his purpose, he kept garrisons*[1]'. The only reasonable sense which, in this context, these words can bear is that Qazi Fazilat was like others, who were stationed in other localities, also responsible for defence, that is to say, for war and peace, as Badauni clearly says, in addition to his duty of supervising and controlling the general administration according to the policy of the Central Government and also of suppressing and punishing the contumacious whenever necessary. The designation Amin used in preference to Faujdar or Qiladar which should have been appropriate for an officer restricted simply to military duties, signifies the wider scope of his duties. Hence it has been translated by Elliot as 'manager' (IV. 391), by Dorn as 'Trustee', and by Maulvi A. Salaam in his translation of the Riyaz-us-Salatin, as 'Overlord'.[2] Thus the Amin's office roughly resembled that of the later Mughal viceroys of the Deccan under whom several minor provinces were combined into a single viceroyalty with the same object in view, namely

[1] و قاضی فضیلت را.....امین بنگاله ساخته بود در هر مکان که مناسب حال او دید قوچها نگاشته بود

[2] Dorn, pp. 131-132; Riyaz (Tr.) p. 145.

to facilitate the control of a distant province and keep in check the fissiparous tendencies of the local chiefs. It was ostensibly with the object of keeping internal turbulence in check and of protecting the province from ambitious neighbours that the post of Amin was created. As "trustee" he was responsible for the province as a whole to the King. 'Prevention of quarrels' would thus come incidentally within the scope of his duties, but the possibility of occasional quarrels among officers would not necessitate or justify the creation of such an important office. In all likelihood the Amin's duty was also to intervene in the internal administration whenever necessary, in the interests of peace and security. Indeed the Amin's jurisdiction and authority was so wide that it soon enabled him slowly and imperceptibly to assert his power as a full-fledged governor with the result that Islam Shah, on his accession, appointed Muhammad Khan Sur governor of the whole province in the same way as in other provinces and the tribal jagirdars or chiefs among whom Sher Shah had divided it were completely lost sight of (Riyaz, p. 148). He was followed by Shahbaz Khan, governor of the Province under Muhammad Shah Adil (Riyaz, p. 150). Hence it seems reasonable to conclude that the governors (i.e., the several jagirdars among whom the province was divided) were left to carry on the administration as they thought fit. Thus while the extent of the Amin's authority to intervene in their affairs cannot be estimated with any degree of precision, yet the nature of his responsibilities would seem to suggest that he must have been in control of the main strings of administrative policy. Hence we may reasonably conclude that although the peculiar circumstances of the province of Bengal necessitated its division into what we may call sub-provinces its essential unity was maintained, and, for purposes of administrative policy, it was treated as a single province.[1]

[1] The changes involved in the nature of the administration do not fall within the scope of this chapter: they will be discussed in their proper place.

No such complication, however, arises in the case of the other provinces of which we find a clear mention in practically all comtemporary authorities. But it should be carefully noted that the extent of some of Sher Shah's subahs seems to have been determined by local considerations.[1] We may now cite some cases to illustrate the existence of subahs. His first subah extended from Dihli to the western boundary of Rohilkhand, and the second from Rohilkhand as far as Awadh and Jaunpur. The first he entrusted to Ahmad Khan Sarwani whom he made, in view of the difficult circumstances of the time, like Qazi Fazilat, Amin of Dihli[2], and the second he entrusted to Masnad-i-Ali Isa Khan. As soon as he occupied Dihli after defeating Humayun at Qannauj, he was faced with the problem of maintaining order in this region which was the heart of the kingdom and was to serve as the base of his military advance into the Punjab. The Sarkar of Sambhal (i.e., Rohilkhand) was the home of the most implacable rebels, and hence the governor of this territory was asked to make Sambhal his seat. The latter was expected only to restore order and peace first by suppressing the insurgents with a ruthless hand. This was an emergency step, for we are told that when he had dismissed Isa Khan to the Sarkar of Sambhal Sher Shah felt at his 'ease regarding the whole country from Dihli to Lucknow'. He was asked to maintain 5000 horse for whose maintenance a suitable jagir was assigned. Nasir Khan was made his deputy.[3] Moreover even a cursory reading of the chronicles would reveal the existence of the provinces of Lahore, Multan including the Gakkhar country, Sindh, Ajmer including Jodhpur and Nagor, Malwa and Bihar.

[1] It may also be noted that Sher Shah could never think of disrupting the provinces into completely isolated fragments, a measure which would have resulted in the destruction of the whole economic and political solidarity of the realm.

[2] I. O. MS. fol. 107*b*; MS. A. pp. 221-223.

[3] MS. A., pp. 171-172; Elliot, IV. 383-384 and p. 416.

During his first march to the Gakkhar country in pursuit of Humayun he had hardly settled the country before he had to return to Bengal to deal with Khizr Khan. But he had started building the Rohtas fort with great expedition, and the Baluchi chiefs of Sindh, Fath Khan and Ghazi Khan having made their submission were confirmed in the governorship of that province. While leaving for Bengal he had left the country between Lahore and the frontier in charge of Haibat Khan Niazi, Khawas Khan, Isa Khan Niazi, Habib Khan and Rai Hussain Jalwani.[1] After returning from Bengal Sher Shah took Gwalior and Malwa and 'assigned the country of Mandu to Shuja'at Khan'.[2] Shuja'at was soon after degraded and again restored with *a mansab of* 1200 horse, and 'became ruler of the whole country of Mandu'.[3] Shujaat Khan had authority even to distribute jagirs throughout the whole province.[4] This was followed by the siege and treacherous capture of Raisin during which news came of the quarrel between Khawas Khan and Haibat Khan Niazi. The country between Lahore and Multan was yet far from being subdued, much less well-settled. The Baluchis in Multan and the Jats between Lahore and Panipat were devastating the land. Sher Shah recalled every other officer and 'confirmed Haibat Khan Niazi in the government of the Punjab', (Punjab is evidently used here to indicate the whole territory of the five rivers including Multan)—and made Fath Jang Khan his assistant. When Haibat Niazi established peace and restored Multan to its former prosperity, Sher Shah sent him instructions regarding the revenue administration of Multan, that being a special case. Haibat Niazi put Fath

[1] MS. (A.) pp. 181-183. Elliot, IV. pp. 388-390.

[2] MS. (A.) p. 187. Elliot, IV. p. 393.

[3] MS. (A.) pp. 191-'92. Elliot, IV. pp. 396-397. There is a mistake in Elliot here. The command of 12000 was conferred on Shujaat Khan and not on Haji Khan who was only a faujdar. See Elliot, IV. p. 395.

[4] MS. (A.) pp. 235-236; Abbas, I. O. MS. fol. 114*a*.

Jang in charge of Multan and returned to Lahore. Thus these two officers ruled the provinces of Lahore and Multan.[1] Next followed the capture of Jodhpur, Nagor and Ajmer which was entrusted to Khawas Khan and Isa Khan Niazi assisted by some other chiefs.[2] Sulaiman Khan was appointed governor of the Bihar province.[3] These instances should suffice to show that no new mechanism 'at once original in principle and efficient in working' (see 'Sher Shah' p. 241) was created by Sher Shah. Nevertheless Mr. Qanungo would have us believe that Sher Shah's ideal of provincial organisation was that of Bengal. As we have shown, Bengal was not organised as Mr. Qanungo conceives it. Nor was even the expedient of appointing an Amin to it made the ideal for the rest of the kingdom. The case of Bengal was an exception rather than the rule. Sher Shah never gave any indication, either by design or by practice, of introducing the same system in the other provinces. Their governors were not so limited in the scope of their functions and were moreover called *Hākims* (حاکم).

The existence of regular subahs is further corroborated by subsequent evidence. Ahmad Yadgar tells us that when Firoz Shah son of Islam Shah was placed on the throne orders were sent to the governors of the subahs.[4] We have no reason to suppose that any such radical reorganisation as the reconstitution of subahs was undertaken by Islam Shah. The province of Malwa was still governed by Shujā'at Khan who was succeeded by Taj Khan the Vazir.[5] Islam Sur had appointed his kinsman Muhammad Khan to succeed Qazi Fazilat as

[1] MS. (A.) pp. 193-195; Elliot IV, 397-399.
[2] MS. (A.) pp. 207-208. Elliot IV, 405-406.
[3] Riyaz, p. 153.
و در اوایلِ حال سلیمان خاں یکی از امرای شیرشاہ بود – شیرشاہ او را بحکومت صوبہ بہار سر افراز ساخت –
[4] Elliot V. 43.
[5] Op. cit. 44.

governor of Bengal.[1] He was succeeded by Shahbaz Khan under Muhammad Adil Sur.[2] In the light of the above evidence Mr. Qanungo's theory that Sher Shah dispensed with the province as an administrative unit, would seem to be entirely groundless. Incidentally we have also shown that the governors of Mandu and Multan enjoyed, among others, the usual authority of dealing with revenue administration. Yet we find Mr. Qanungo making a still bolder assertion that even while Sher Shah was compelled by military necessity to keep governors in Malwa, Ajmer and the Punjab, 'the central government controlled finance and justice in these parts as in the rest of the Empire'. A more unwarranted statement it would be difficult to find.

Further from the evidence of Akbar's reign also Mr. Qanungo's theory would seem to be quite untenable and self-contradictory. He contends that the great Afghan (Sher Shah) was responsible for the creation of 'the imperial edifice which the stupendous literary activity of Abul Fazl has misled the world into regarding as the sole creation of his royal patron'. In order to be consistent with this theory Mr. Qanungo ought to have shown that until his reorganisation of the Empire into provinces in 1581, Akbar had no provinces, working, as he should have done (according to Mr. Qanungo) till then, the machinery bequeathed to him by Sher Shah. The baselessness of this position is too obvious to need comment.

The real nature of the pre-Mughal provinces

While the evidences adduced above would show clearly the existence of provinces in the pre-Mughal period, it is necessary to note that these provinces represented only the earlier stages in the evolution of territorial organisation which attained full maturity under Akbar. The Turko-Afghān empire in the first century of

[1] Ain, I, p. 415, ll. 20-23; also Riyaz, p. 148.
[2] Riyaz, p. 150.

its existence was a bundle of semi-independent territorial units ruled by the military chiefs who had conquered them or by their descendants. These warrior chiefs owned a nominal allegiance and occasionally paid tribute to the Lord of Dihli. In their internal government they enjoyed complete liberty of action and policy. There was thus neither administrative homogeneity nor political solidarity in the kingdom. The security of the chiefs depended on mere force even as the security of the central authority depended on its power to force allegiance and tribute from them. These warrior kinglets maintained in big towns garrisons to keep turbulence in check and to help in the realisation of revenue. Nor were the provincial boundaries well-defined. They were ever shifting and vague. These provinces were called Iqta's and their governors Muqtis. In the Khilji Period an attempt was made to introduce uniformity in some departments of administration but these measures never went beyond the Doab. The Iqta's seem to have still remained as before. The revolutionary schemes of Muhammad Tughlaq did not make any headway for lack of response. The century and half following the great Tughlaq was a period of administrative decline, and instead of any constructive achievement, was characterised by chaos and disorder. Nor were Babar and Humayun endowed with that genius and experience which was required to build up a well-organised administrative structure.

It was Sher Shah who for the first time essayed seriously and with success to define the territorial limits of the provinces and to establish a uniform system of government. In the sphere of national reconstruction too, although some abortive attempts had been made during the Tughlaq period, it was Sher Shah who greatly widened the scope of state activity by recognising that the concern of the ruler was not mere policing or revenue realisation but it was above all to serve the people by ameliorating their general lot and providing them means for further progress. Sher Shah also consolidated his government

by making his provincial governors (called Iqta-dars or Muluk-i-Tawai'f) realise that they were liable to punishment for the least violation of government regulations and that they had no hereditary claims to any particular Iqta or jagir. Thus under Sher Shah the provinces attained, both territorially and administratively, a definite stage in their evolution, which became the substructure of Akbar's administrative edifice.

The Jagir system

The Afghan polity was based on the conception of the kingdom being tribal property. From Bahlol Lodi down to Sher Shah and even Islam Shah all had to invite their Afghan kinsmen, and in recognition of their right to a share in the kingdom, to give them some part of its income either in the shape of cash or jagir. Besides, they had to divide almost the whole kingdom among the leading Afghan nobles and chiefs. This system was not in the least altered or modified by Sher Shah. But by his great experience, dominating personality and astuteness in dealing with them, he succeeded in introducing most remarkable improvements into both the spirit and the machinery of government. The bulk of his kingdom was also assigned in jagirs to Afghan nobles. But while they still retained their theoretical rights and privileges, their actual position under him had become greatly reduced. The Lodi Sultans had to keep cajoling them in order to retain their co-operation and help and even Sikandar had no control over his provincial governors. But under Sher Shah they had to be thoroughly submissive and obedient and even the smallest act of inefficiency or dereliction of duty never went unpunished. Islam Shah acted on the general principle of abolishing jagirs, so far as was practicable, and substituting instead the system of cash salaries, but he could not accomplish much.

We find references also about the native chiefs many of whom were forced to acknowledge allegiance to the ruler of Dihli. For instance the Raja of Lakhnor, to

the east of Sambhal, was allowed to retain his estate and evidently enjoyed a very influential position under the protection of the governor of Sambhal.[1] Abbas incidentally refers to the attendance of zamindars for interviews with the king, every morning.[2] But the nature of the treaties and obligations of these zamindars and Rajas can only be a matter of conjecture.

Section II—From the accession of Akbar

When by the sudden death of Humayun the young prince Akbar was called upon to assume charge of the kingdom, his position was precarious in the extreme and even over the limited territories under his rule at that time, he had but a nominal hold. But the situation was far more serious and difficult to handle owing to the complete breakdown of Sher Shah's administrative machinery during the chaos following his death. Although his son Islam Shah was a strong ruler and strove to strengthen the work of his father, he had to devote much of his time to keeping under restraint the refractory Afghan chiefs. And he did succeed, to some extent, in his endeavour. But after him the storm burst with all the ruinous violence of a suppressed force. 'The whole kingdom' says Erskine (Vol. II, p. 461) 'was in flame in consequence of the diversity of interests and the number of pretenders to the throne'. The consequence was chaos. Rival claimants and provincial governors declared themselves independent and rebellions broke out everywhere, paralysing the government. Three members of the Sur family simultaneously proclaimed themselves

[1] Elliot, IV. 384; MS. A. p. 172.
[2] MS. A., p. 220.

و عرضِ اُمرا یا وکیلِ امرا یا زمیندار یا وکیلِ بادشاهان دیگر دیار که باردوے ظفر قرین می آمدند – هم دراں مکاں می شنید –

Sultans. The internecine struggle that followed provided an opportunity for Humayun to return and recover his lost kingdom. But he was hardly six months on the throne when he met his tragic end. Akbar was thus left to confront the threefold task of territorial expansion, consolidation and establishment of an efficient and enduring system of government. Hence although he changed the policy of government[1] from the very outset and made certain efforts to systematise the various departments, he had to wait for more than two decades after his accession before he could undertake a systematic reorganisation and division of the empire into subahs after his own plan.

By the year 1580 Akbar's empire comprised about the whole of northern India excepting Kashmir and other Himalayan states[2] in the north, Orissa in the east and Sindh in the west. These too were either annexed or subdued within another decade. In that year the work of re-organisation was carried out with the help of a very able body of ministers among whom the most notable was Raja Todar Mal who re-organised the revenue system on what is known as the 'ten-year settlement'. When the 'ten year settlement of revenue was made' says Abul Fazl, "His Majesty apportioned the empire into twelve divisions, to each of which he gave the name of subah and distinguished them by the appellation of the tract of the

[1] The policy of a non-communal or national kingship as opposed to the sectarian sovereignty of the Sultans of Dehli, had been initiated already by Humayun, but he did not live to give full effect to it. It was he who commenced the practice of entering into matrimonial alliances with the Hindu chiefs, (vide M. U. Vol. I, 693; and Vol. II, 619) with the ostensible object of creating confidence in and conciliating the martial races of India. But Akbar's state was built on the conception of universal kingship as expounded by Abul Fazl.

[2] The Raja of Kumaon acknowledged overlordship of the Emperor as late as the year 996 H. (1587 A.D.); Badauni, II, p. 365. The Raja of Tehri still continued to be independent and Kangra was acquired only under Jahangir.

country or its capital city. These were Ilahabad, Agra, Awadh, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Bihar, Bengal, Dihli, Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Malwa: and when Berar, Khandesh and Ahmednagar were conquered their number was fixed at fifteen".[1] When subsequent annexations took place Kashmir and Qandahar were included in Kabul,[2] Sindh or Thatha in Multan and Orissa in Bengal which enlarged the size of the three provinces concerned. In the detailed account of the Subahs in the Ain Ahmadnagar does not find mention because the whole of that province was never conquered nor annexed under Akbar,[3] much less surveyed or organised so as to yield any regular revenue to the Imperial Exchequer which fact alone would have justified its inclusion in the said account which admittedly treats of the revenue administration of the empire. While enumerating the provinces Abul Fazl includes Ahmednagar in the list because here he is concerned with the entire dominions over which the sway of the emperor extended. But in the statistical account it naturally drops out of notice as no statistics of it were yet on record.[4]

[1] Ain. p. 386; Jarrett, p. 115.

[2] Smith wrongly says (Akbar, p. 189, 2nd Edition) that Kashmir was included in the province of Lahore. It was definitely treated as a sarkar of the province of Kabul (Jarrett, II. 347).

[3] Berar was ceded in 1595 by Chand Sultana and became a regular province of the empire, though, as we shall see later, it was never peacefully settled like other provinces. In the second war, when Akbar went to the Deccan, he resubjugated Berar and Khandesh, but of Ahmadnagar he could only nominally annex the north-eastern part known as Bālāghāt, which was enough excuse for Abul Fazl to reckon it as a part of the empire.

[4] Prof. Sarkar has made a confusion (vide India of Aurangzeb, Topography, etc., 1901, pp. XXV, XXVI) in calculating the number of subahs on the basis of Abul Fazl's statement, which he has not interpreted correctly. After quoting the list of the subahs given in the Ain (II. p. 115, Jarrett's Tr.), he writes: "The above list omits Kashmir, which was conquered in 1586. In the detailed account of the 15 subahs given in the Ain, Vol. II, no mention is made of Ahmadnagar, but Kashmir is added to complete the tale of 15 subahs. In the *Chahar Gulshan* Ahmadnagar is included in the subah of Aurangabad.....We may, therefore,

Thus towards the close of his reign Akbar's empire stretched from the Himalayas to the Narbada and from the extreme east of Bengal as far as Kabul and Kandahar in the west.

Jahangir made no additions to the territories but for the single exception of the Kangra district; and, although in 1616 Prince Khurram compelled Ahmadnagar to surrender, the victory was far from effective, the final

conclude that Ahmadnagar did not form a subah by itself. It should also be noted here that in Abul Fazl's time Orissa and Thatta were included in Bengal and Multan respectively, though they were afterwards constituted into separate provinces. Indeed, even Abul Fazl himself in the detailed account of the subahs speaks of Thatta as a subah and not sarkar (Ain, II, 339). Akbar's 15 subahs were therefore equivalent to 17 of later times".

The omission of Kashmir and inclusion of Ahmadnagar in the list on p. 115 (Jarrett) and vice versa in the detailed account is not because of an oversight on the part of the compiler of the Ain-i-Akbari, as Prof. Sarkar would seem to suggest. He did it deliberately and a closer attention will at once reveal the reason of it. Kashmir is omitted from the list of provinces—like Orissa and Thatta—for the simple reason that it was never a separate, independent province under Akbar. In the detailed account it finds mention in its relevant place, i.e., as a sarkar (See Jarrett, p. 347) and is definitely included among the sarkars of Kabul. It would appear that Prof. Sarkar has, by oversight, supposed Kashmir to have been mentioned as a separate province in the detailed account in the Ain (Vol. II). Nor was a separate mention of it needed 'to complete the tale of 15 Subahs', the omission of Ahmadnagar being but natural, as explained above in the text of this chapter. It gives rise to no discrepancy in Abul Fazl's account. Subsequently when the whole of Ahmadnagar territory was annexed by Shah Jahan it was constituted into a separate province. From that time there were four instead of three provinces of the Deccan all combined into a single viceroyalty. But we know on good authority that Ahmadnagar having lost its importance its place had been taken by Daulatabad as early as 1609 (A. H. 1018). In that year, says the Mirat-i-Ahmadi, Malik Ambar the regent of the Nizam Shah ruler of Daulatabad invaded Gujrat.

در سال هزار وهیجده ملک عنبر مدار کار نظام‌شاه حاکم دولت آباد در سرکار سورت و بژوده آورده شد —

(Mirat, Bar. Text, I, 189).

annexation of that province not taking place until 1633 after he had become Emperor. Shah Jahan failed to recover Qandahar which had been lost in 1622. But the rupture between the able Persian commandant, Ali Mardan Khan and his master, the Persian Emperor, led to the delivery of the fort by the former into the Mughal Emperor's hands. The possession was, however, only temporary as the Persians recovered it again in 1648, and although Shah Jahan recklessly drained the resources of the empire in a vain attempt to reconquer it, all his efforts proved futile.

The kingdoms of Bijapur and Golcunda were however, forced to acknowledge the Mughal suzerainty, and dragged on a feeble and miserable existence only to be eventually swallowed up by Aurangzeb in 1687 and

And when Aurangzeb was first appointed viceroy of the Deccan in 1635, 'the capital of this province which belonged to Nizam-ul-Mulk was formerly Ahmadnagar and afterwards Daulatabad' (Lahori in Elliot, VII. 58). Or. 175, foll. 165*b*-166*a*. Evidently the capital was again transferred under Aurangzeb from Daulatabad to Aurangabad on strategic grounds. Aurangzeb had found it the most suitable place as a base for his military operations in his long-drawn Deccan wars. Manucci calls it the province of Aurangabad or Daulatabad (II. p. 414). This explains why in the Chahar Gulshan we find the name Aurangabad instead of Ahmadnagar or Daulatabad.

Secondly neither Orissa nor Thatta were treated as separate provinces under Akbar. Once again Sir Jadunath has curiously misunderstood the Ain. True that Thatta and Orissa were constituted into separate provinces after Akbar, but Abul Fazl nowhere 'speaks of Thatta as a subah and not a sarkar'. On p. 339 Vol. II, referred to by Sir Jadunath, the Ain clearly says: 'This country (i.e.) Thatta is the fourth sarkar of the subah of Multan.' On pp. 325-6 Abul Fazl gives the dimensions of the province of Multan both as it was before the annexation of Thatta as well as after its inclusion and concludes it by the explanatory note that 'for facility of reference the two territories are separately described'. This explains why on p. 328, while enumerating the sarkars of Multan, he says 'this subah comprises three sarkars', and not because Thatta is treated by him as a separate province. Indeed in order to avoid any confusion he takes care to point out the reason why he is describing the two territories separately and while describing

1688 respectively. On political grounds Akbar had initiated the policy of combining the different provinces of the Deccan into a single viceroyalty. He had entrusted the three provinces of Ahmadnagar, Berar and Khandesh to Prince Daniyal. Under Jahangir the Deccan was in revolt and required repeated expeditions to subjugate it until 1616 when Shah Jahan forced the ruler of Ahmadnagar to surrender and to acknowledge Mughal suzerainty. At the end of Jahangir's reign Khan Jahan Lodi was viceroy of the Deccan and was confirmed in that office by Shah Jahan on his accession. Soon after followed the conquest of the whole province or the kingdom of Ahmadnagar in the ninth year of reign and prince Aurangzeb was appointed to the viceroyalty of the Deccan, now comprising the four provinces of Daulatabad (formerly Ahmadnagar), Telingana (Balaghat), Khandesh and Berar.

Administrative divisions

Rennell's estimate is only partially correct when he says (vide Memoir, p. XLII) that 'many of the old Hindu

Thatta, again reminds us that this country is the fourth sarkar of the subah of Multan (p. 339). Thirdly there would be only 14 subahs under Akbar, if Kabul is excluded, as Sir Jadunath has done, and not fifteen, and those 14 would be equivalent to 17 of later times, because like Thatta and Orissa, Kashmir which was not a separate province under Akbar as Sir Jadunath wrongly assumes, likewise came to be constituted into a separate province subsequently. Thus if Kabul also be included the number of provinces would be fifteen under Akbar, without Kashmir being reckoned as a separate province, and equivalent to 18 of later times. The official manuals called Dastur-ul-Amls, of which there are many copies extant, all give detailed statistics of the empire at different periods and naturally differ from one another, as the number of political divisions was always changing. It may also be pointed out here that Sir Jadunath has made another incorrect statement (India of Aurangzeb, p. XXVI) viz., that "the Ain in the preliminary statement gives the number of the sarkars of Berar as 16, but in the detailed account only 13 sarkars are named....." This error occurs only in Jarrett's Trans. and not in the text where clearly سیزده i.e., 13 and not شانزده i.e. 16 occurs. But

kingdoms bore the same names as the present subahs (or viceroyalties) do; and had probably nearly the same limits..... Those kingdoms under the Pathan emperors became subahs'. As we have seen in chapter II, geographical conditions had a considerable share in determining the limits of the Hindu kingdoms prior to the Mulsim conquest, and these kingdoms became, in some cases, the nuclei of the provinces of the Turko-Afghan empire of Dihli. But considerations of military defence or of administrative convenience led to the creation of certain provinces, such as Bayana (later Agra), Badaun, Jaunpur, Kara, the frontier province of Dipalpur. None of these represented any former Hindu kingdom. The limits of the subahs, however, were never quite definite since they were always fluctuating owing to constant wars leading to the acquisition of fresh territory or as a result of administrative reorganisation. But the limits of the subahs remained practically unchanged after Sher Shah and even Akbar seems to have maintained the status quo until he undertook a systematic reorganisation of the empire into provinces.

Many of the provinces and sarkars and even sub-divisions were bounded more or less by rivers or mountain ridges, such as the provinces of Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Gujrat, Malwa, Bengal and Orissa, the sarkars of Kashmir, Qandahar and Sindh, the sarkars comprising the Punjab and Multan provinces and a large number of smaller sub-divisions. It must not, however, be imagined that these boundaries were absolutely rigid for, with the expansion of the empire and the growth of administrative efficiency, there was further sub-division of the territory. The number of sarkars and mahals was constantly increasing as the figures quoted by Sarkar show (India of Aurangzeb, p. xxvi). Even in the extent of the subahs changes were constantly taking place. Although the main body remain-

a real error of the number of mahals being given as 142 instead of 242, both in the text as well as translation, escaped the notice of Sir Jadunath.

ed unaltered, sarkars or parganahs were often detached from one province and joined to another. This is amply borne out by a comparison of the mahals of the various sarkars during the period from Akbar to Aurangzeb. We frequently come across examples of such changes in the chronicles. When 'Itmad Khan was appointed to the governorship of Gujrat he severed Sirohi from Sarnal and entrusted it to Jagmal, brother of the Rana.[1]

Administrative Divisions Classified

Two broad classes of political divisions

The political conditions obtaining at the time when Akbar gradually extended his sway over the country naturally led to the emergence of a variety of administrative divisions. Much in the same way as at the present time the country is divided into British India proper under immediate British administration, and the Indian States whose rulers enjoy varying degrees of internal autonomy, under Mughal rule too, the country was broadly divided into what may be called '*Mughal India proper*' and the *Subordinate States*, enjoying varying degrees of independence. This comparison, however, cannot be carried too far. The relations between the suzerain power and the vassal chiefs were not so elaborately defined and recorded as at the present time, although the extent of internal freedom and control of their own affairs enjoyed by these chiefs varied in proportion to the importance of the individual chiefs.

1. *The imperial territories or 'Mughal India'*

The imperial territory was divided by Akbar in 1595 into twelve subahs, which became fifteen when Khandesh, Berar and Ahmadnagar were subsequently annexed. These provinces varied greatly in status according to their extent and resources, or military and strategic importance. In view of their importance and status, they

[1] Badaoni, II. 327.

may be classified into 1. major provinces and 2. minor provinces. Perhaps there were no definite rules for such classification. Nevertheless the Imperial Government adopted, in regard to each individual province, administrative measures, such as the appointment of governors and other high officials, in keeping with the status of that province. The charge of the major provinces was given to princes and nobles of the highest rank.[1] Of the fifteen subahs of Akbar's Empire the twelve original ones came under the category of major provinces, although among them too there were senior and junior grades. Subsequently when Orissa, Kashmir and Sindh were conquered and annexed, and Qandahar was surrendered by its commandant, they were treated as sub-provinces and appended for purposes of administration and supervision to the adjoining major provinces. As we have seen Abul Fazl has made it perfectly clear that while they were recognised to have had historically and geographically a distinctive identity, under Akbar they were, for the sake of administrative convenience, joined to Bengal, Multan and Kabul. The three Deccan provinces of Khandesh, Berar and Ahmadnagar, were, on account of their remoteness and the political unsuitability of their being amalgamated with Gujrat or Malwa, constituted into a single viceroyalty of the Deccan. Subsequently under Jahangir Orissa,[2] Kashmir and Sindh

[1] Tavernier, p. 42.

[2] Orissa was never effectively subjugated during the time of Akbar. It had nominally become a part of the empire on the fall of Daud Kararani, but the Afghan chiefs continued to resist the attempts of the Mughal governors of Bengal to conquer it. In 1590 a treaty was made between Isa Khan and Raja Man Singh by which it was settled that the Khutba would be read and coins struck in the name of the emperor of Dihli.....The temple of Jagannath, with its environs was to be made crownland, and no harm was to happen to the loyal zamindars.....etc. (Akbarnamah, III, (Bev.) pp. 878-880). But the treaty was broken by his successors after the death of Isa Khan and Raja Man Singh was again despatched to subjugate the recalcitrant chiefs. (Op. cit. pp. 934-

were detached and made separate provinces. Except for a time when it was divided into two viceroyalties, the Deccan was always treated as a single satrapy.[1] But Kashmir, Orissa and other minor provinces were occasionally entrusted to the viceroys of the adjoining provinces even under the successors of Akbar. This was done either to show special favour to a person or for the sake of better supervision and control. In such cases the governor as a rule governed the minor province through a deputy appointed by himself with the approval of the emperor. In 1634 Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian commandant of the fort of Qandahar, was made governor of both Lahore and Kashmir which post he occupied until 1640, so that he might have both a summer as well as a

936). Man Singh scored a victory, but only the northern portion of the country was annexed and was divided into five sarkars. The central portion remained in the hands of semi-independent Hindu chiefs (whose status and position will be hereafter described); and the southern portion was held by the Qutb Shahis of Golcunda. It was under Jahangir, in 1607, that the first separate Mughal subahdar of Orissa was appointed, and the rest of the province gradually conquered.

[1] During Jahangir's time the Deccan provinces threw off their allegiance under the lead of Malik Ambar, and his whole reign was passed in a half-hearted struggle on the part of his generals to recover the lost provinces. But Shah Jahan addressed himself with greater vigour to the subjugation of the Deccan as soon as he was well established on the throne. In the 6th year of his reign (1633 A.D.) his generalissimo Khan Khanan Mahabat Khan finally took Daulatabad, the Nizamshahi capital, and ruled the Deccan provinces from Burhanpur through his deputy Khan-i-Dauran. (Or. 175, fol. 102*a*,*b*). Next year (7th year of reign) Mahabat Khan died whereon the emperor divided the Deccan into two provinces, viz., (1) Balaghat, comprising Ahmednagar and Daulatabad, with all their territories and dependencies and (2) Painghat. The government of the first he entrusted to Khan-i-Zaman (son of Khan-i-Dauran) and of the second to Khan-i-Dauran (Or. 175, fol. 123). The two vice-royalties remained separate for a couple of years only and were re-amalgamated in 1636, when after the subjugation of Shahji and submission of Bijapur and Golcunda, Prince Aurangzeb was made viceroy of all the four provinces of the Deccan. (Or. 175, foll. 165-166).

winter resort and spend both the hot and cold weather in comfort.[1] In 1618 Ibrahim Khan Fateh Jang was appointed viceroy of Bengal and Orissa by Jahangir. He appointed his nephew Ahmed Beg Khan as his deputy-governor of Orissa.[2] In order to illustrate the difference between the status of major and minor provinces a list of the governors of Gujrat and Orissa, with their *mansabs* is given in Appendix A to this chapter.[3] It may also be noted that even after Orissa had come to be treated as an independent province by Jahangir, it seems still to have been subject to supervision by the governor of Bengal. At any rate, the governor of Orissa was often appointed on the recommendation of the viceroy of Bengal.[4] A comparison of their revenues will also help us in forming a rough idea of the grades of the provinces. Then again there was an order of senior and junior grades within the major class of provinces. We know, for instance, that the transference of a viceroy from Malwa to Gujrat or from Bihar to Bengal was distinctly treated as 'promotion' and on such an occasion usually his rank was also raised.[5]

[1] M. U. II, 798.

[2] Riyaz, 181.

[3] Tavernier (p. 95) recognises this fact when he says that the governor of Ilahabad, an important province, is one of the greatest nobles in India. In another place with respect to the Deccan he says (p. 42): 'The government of this province is so important that it is conferred only upon a son or an uncle of the emperor.....' and that the province of Bengal is considered the most important.

[4] Raja Kalyan was appointed governor of Orissa in 1611 on the recommendation of Islam Khan, viceroy of Bengal (R and B. I., 202). In 1618 Ibrahim Khan (see above) governor both of Orissa and Bengal, put his nephew Ahmad Beg Khan in charge of the former province.

[5] There are numerous instances to illustrate this, but a few will suffice. Shahab-Uddin Ahmad Khan was promoted from Malwa to the viceroyalty of Gujrat in 1577, and his Mansab had been raised only a year before (M. U. II, 569). Islam Khan was promoted from Bihar to the viceroyalty of Bengal and his mansab raised to 5000 (R and B. I., 208; M. U. I., 118).

Lastly the strategic position of a province determined its status and importance, in spite of the fact that economically and in extent, it might be very inconsiderable, such as the subahs of Kabul, Lahore and Multan were. These provinces were invariably entrusted to men of great experience and talent, enjoying honourable positions in the state. Among the viceroys of the Frontier and Kabul we have such names as Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, Rajas Man Singh, Bhagwan Das, Todar Mal and Zain Khan, and later, Rajas Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh, all of them the highest and most capable among the nobles of the state. It was this which dictated to the emperors the advisability of entrusting the administration and defence of important localities to persons who would prove equal to their responsibilities, although no formal classification of provinces seems ever to have been made. It is only fair to point out, however, that the emperors, advised by their ministers, were thoroughly conscious of the varying degrees of importance of the subahs, and that they were possessed of sufficient insight to select the most suitable and well-qualified persons for the responsible office of provincial governor.

It should, nevertheless, be admitted that while this policy was generally adhered to, it was by no means strictly observed. Often a viceroy was reverted to a junior charge for some fault or simply because he had incurred the displeasure of the sovereign, or even to re-settle the affairs of a minor province which task needed an expert. Occasionally men who commanded special favour or influence with the emperor were entrusted with duties for which they happened to be quite unfitted. The appointment of Raja Birbal for the Frontier defence affords perhaps the most glaring example of such occasional favouritism towards an entirely unqualified person. But in such cases if the appointee proved himself to be either incapable or oppressive, he did not escape censure or even chastisement. Moreover, officers found incapable

were immediately removed.[1]

Divisions and sub-divisions of a province

According to the Ain-i-Akbari each province was divided into a number of sarkars and each sarkar into parganahs.[2] The parganah was the unit of general administration under Sher Shah and his successors, and the sarkar, which was a group of parganahs, represented more or less something like the present-day commissioner's division,[3] serving as a medium of communication

[1] *Abdulla Khan Firoz Jang* was removed from office for mishandling his news-writer who had recorded certain facts disparaging to the governor. (R. and B. I., 330-'31).

Qasim Khan, governor of Bengal was superseded because of his inefficiency. 1618. (Riyaz, p. 181).

Muqarrab Khan, governor of Cambay was degraded for oppressing a woman. 1610. (R and B. I, p. 172).

Murtaza Khan Bukhari, viceroy of Gujrat (1609-11) was superseded for incapacity and weakness in administration. (R and B. I. 153).

Mirza Rustum was punished for oppressing the people of Thatta (R. and B. I. 262).

Jahangir Quli Khan, governor of Bihar, was recalled for inefficiency (R. and B. II, 37-38).

Azam Khan in Bengal was superseded by Islam Khan, under Shah Jahan for not discharging his duties properly. (Riyaz, pp. 207-8).

Hafiz Muhammad Nasir, governor of Gujrat, was punished for exactions and misgovernment by Shah Jahan. (Manucci, I. 198).

Izzat Khan, governor of Sindh was punished with dismissal from his office for trying to debauch a rich merchant's daughter. (Manucci, II, 218-20.)

These instances can be multiplied indefinitely.

[2] Elliot and Jarrett (see Ain. II, p. 114) have taken *dastur* to mean another subdivision or more correctly a group of parganahs. But this interpretation is incorrect. I agree with A. Yusuf Ali and Moreland's interpretation, that 'dastur' was the technical name for schedules of rates to be charged on different products. There is no instance in the Ain where the dastur indicates a local area. (See J. R. A. S. 1918 Jan. pp. 12-13).

[3] It is necessary to point out that this analogy while it seems to be fundamentally correct, cannot be carried too far in matters of detail, one conspicuous difference being that no strict rules as to the limits and jurisdiction of sarkar or parganah officials were

between the provincial government and the district (parganah) and as an agency of general supervision over the parganah administration.[1] The executive head of the sarkar was the chief shiqdar (with whom the office of faujdar also was generally combined). The chief munsif or amil had charge primarily of the revenue side, besides having to assist the parganah officials in the maintenance of peace and order. These two officials were assisted by an adequate staff. The actual administration was carried on by the parganah officials, the shiqdar and the amin

observed by Muslim rulers. Nor were necessarily the communications between them and the district authorities carried on through the sarkar officials. Indeed, Sher Shah encouraged direct approach on the part of the parganah officials and frequently dealt directly with them. It was in matters of routine that the sarkar authorities exercised a sort of general control over them.

[1] That the parganah and sarkar of Sher Shah were not merely revenue divisions is quite clear from the Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi. Abbas in his Khatima, while giving an account of Sher Shah's administrative measures, says that Sher Shah enjoined upon his officers (عاملان و حکّام) the duty of protecting the people from robbery and theft and punishing the evil doers (MS. A. p. 228). They were also to see that the *muqaddams* and headmen of the village performed their duties towards the people. While the main duty of the *amil* was revenue assessment and collection with the assistance of his staff, he had also some executive authority in maintaining the security and peace of the country. But the executive officer of the parganah was the *shiqdar* who was invested with the duty of general administration. He was the agent to execute the orders of the king. Finding the imams fraudulent and corrupt in the management of assignments granted for religious purposes, Sher Shah, instead of sending the farmans direct to the imams, put all the farmans into an envelope and sent them to the *shiqdar of the parganah* with instructions to give them personally to the assignees. I quote the words under reference:—

شیرشاه آن فرامین را در خریطه انداخته مهر خود میکرد بکسِ اعتمادی خود میداد که فرامین را بهر پرگنه که مندرج بود پیش شقدار پرگنه .....

(MS. A. pp. 233-34).

This question will be discussed in detail in Chapter VII.

or 'āmil, assisted by both an official and semi-official[1] staff for the different branches of government.

It was this administrative organisation which Akbar found in existence when he ascended the throne, and we are not told that he made any noteworthy modifications in it. Nor was it possible or necessary for him to do so as Sher Shah's machinery was a very elaborate and well-tried one. Subsequently Akbar found it necessary to reorganise the military department, to make a redistribution of the empire into provinces and to make improvements in many other branches of administration, but he does not seem to have thought it advisable to make any material alterations in the framework of the sarkar or parganah government, excepting the adoption of new names for certain old offices and the introduction of some new functionaries. There were over a hundred sarkars and three thousand parganahs or mahals in the empire in the year 1596 (40th regnal year).

The nature of political divisions

The omission of any specific statement on the part of contemporary writers as to the nature of the political divisions of the Mughal empire renders the treatment of this subject very difficult. Modern writers on this subject have usually assumed the provinces and the smaller political divisions to be of a general administrative nature, without entering into anything approaching a thorough examination of the question. But this question has sprung into prominence lately since the notice of scholars was drawn to a topographical list of the Mughal empire sent to England by Sir Thomas Roe while he was ambassador at the court of the emperor Jahangir (1615-'18). Several other contemporary European visitors to India have given similar lists all of which, however, seem more or less to be derived from Roe. Foster, editor of Roe's Journal,

[1] The headmen, the chowdharies and muqaddams were semi-official functionaries.

suggests that the list 'seems to have been of a historical nature enumerating roughly the states which had fallen under the sway of the Mughal Emperors.'[1] 'That is why', he adds, 'we find several petty-Himalayan States, such as Siba, Jaswan, Chamba, Nagarkot, figuring on the same plane as Gujrat and Bengal.....'. An alternative hypothesis is suggested by Moreland, viz., 'that the list in question gives the administrative charges to which the appointments were made by the Emperor himself'. Moreland has set forth the reasons for his thesis in a closely argued paper in the Journal of Indian History (1927, Vol. VI, Pt. II), and he arrives at the conclusion that the sarkars and their subdivisions represented only fiscal divisions, while the administrative divisions were altogether different from them, and that it is these divisions or, to use his own expression, 'charges', which Roe's list represents. Nevertheless, he himself recognises certain very serious obstacles to his thesis for which he admittedly fails to find any solution. But I venture to think that the obstacles are infinitely greater than he imagines. Indeed the discrepancies in the list under consideration are so great that Moreland's hypothesis does not seem to have the remotest chance of being accepted. Nor does Foster's suggestion seem to have hit the mark. On the contrary the contemporary chronicles furnish quite clear evidences of the provinces, sarkars and parganahs being all administrative and not merely fiscal divisions. But as the problem raised by Roe's list and in particular by the elaborate treatment thereof by Mr. Moreland,—a treatment which has bestowed on that list an altogether unmerited importance—calls for a detailed and thorough examination, I have relegated it to Appendix B of this chapter, for a full discussion.

Khalsa, jagir and suyurghal: another basis of territorial divisions

The Mughals, following the practice of their predecessors, the Sultans of Dihli had divided their territories

[1] Embassy, p. 489.

on another basis by which the administrative activities of the government were somewhat shared by what may be called an extra-state or indirect agency. This new basis of division may be called the 'Assignment system'. The actual working and detail of the assignment system of the Mughals was, however, greatly modified and was very different from that of their predecessors. Under this system the imperial territory proper (apart from the hereditary states and zamindaris) was divided into:—

(*i*) Khalsa land or lands reserved for direct administration by the Imperial Government.

(*ii*) Jagirs or assignments of land made to the officials of the state by way of payment of their remuneration.

(*iii*) Suyurghal, i.e., lands and subsistence allowances granted to pious or learned persons, poor and indigent people and men of honourable rank who had no means of subsistence.

We find no definite account of the departments by which either the khalsa or jagir lands were managed. But it would appear that there were separate *diwans* with, of course, the necessary secretariate establishment for each. The bulk of the Mughal territory was made up of jagir lands: about one-tenth of the total consisted of suyurghals, and the rest (a very small portion) was khalsa. This was, for fiscal purposes, that is to say, for assessment and collection of land revenue, directly under the state administration.

The exact implication of *jagir* has been very excellently summarised by Moreland:[1] 'As the designation implies, the essence of the system was to set aside particular items of recurring revenue to meet particular items of recurring expenditure, usually, but not invariably, the salaries and expenses of the Imperial Service. In the Mughal period, it is correct to speak of a *Service* and not of Services,[2] because

[1] "The Agrarian System of Moslem India," p. 93.

[2] The only exception was the religious and charities department, including partly the judiciary also, because the qazis and muftis who

at this time there was practically no differentiation in regard to functions. Once appointed, an officer's time was entirely at the emperor's disposal; he might be employed on military duties or in civil administration; and if he had no specific employment, he was required to remain in attendance at court, unless he obtained permission to go elsewhere. In addition to this general obligation of service, he was under the liability to maintain at his own cost a definite force of cavalry available at all times for the emperor's needs; and an officer who did this was entitled to receive an income, defined exactly in money, corresponding to his rank. Some officers received also recurring sums by way of reward, that is to say, an addition to their *income* with no corresponding liability for expenditure. An officer's *income*, including any reward he might receive, was thus always defined in money, but the actual payment might be made either in cash from the treasury, or by assignment of the revenue of a specified area, or partly in one way and partly in another'. The words Iqta and Tuyul were also used as synonyms of *jagir*.

Suyurghal, as already said, signified allowance given to a certain class of men, either cash or in land. It carried no corresponding obligation of any kind on the recipient, except perhaps good behaviour so as not to involve forfeiture of his allowance. Thus the land in almost every sarkar, or even parganah sometimes, as we know from the Ain-i-Akbari, was partitioned off into these three classes.

In connection with this system of land revenue administration we are faced with a number of difficulties on a satisfactory solution of which depends a full and clear understanding of its bearings on the administration in general. These may be briefly stated as follows. First, did the assignee assess and collect revenue from his jagir according to the rates prescribed by the government or did he enjoy a free hand in regard as well to the basis and

were in charge of disputes which came within the purview of religious law, were regarded as belonging to the religious department.

mode of assessment as to the methods of collecting? 2. How and from what source were the qanungo, patwari and other establishment of the districts comprising the jagirs, paid? 3. To what extent, if any, the assignee could exercise executive or judicial authority over his charge and did an assignment entail upon the assignee the duty of policing his *charge* or undertaking responsibility of any public works or of any other public service? A detailed consideration of these questions must necessarily be relegated to their relevant places in the chapters on land-revenue and executive administration. But it seemed necessary to anticipate them here because they have a bearing also on the nature of the political divisions which the jagir, suyurghal and khalsa lands represented. Unfortunately no other scholar—not even Sarkar—has cared to touch upon any of these essential features of Mughal administration.[1] Regarding the first question I think that the jagirdar did not carry any authority beyond that of assessing and collecting through his agents, the amount that was estimated and fixed according to government regulations. The jagirs were in no sense like fiefs of the feudal lords of Mediaeval Europe which carried all the authority of sovereignty in miniature. They (jagirs) represented no political charge. Sometimes whole provinces were assigned to officers of high rank. That did not confer on them the authority of all appointments, e.g., that of appointing the diwan, sadr, qazi or faujdar. Nor could any assignee alter the rates of assessment and mode of collection of revenue. The very fact that the jagir which was assigned to an officer carried an income equal to his salary, shows that the revenue of that jagir was calculated according to the government rates and the jagirdar was not expected to enhance it arbitrarily. Moreover, the giving to the assignee of the sole authority of assessment

[1] Moreland (Agr. Sys. pp. 138-'39) refers to the powers of jagirdars in this respect during the reign of Aurangzeb but as regards the other questions he is also silent like others.

and collection would be tantamount to 'farming' out the land. In other branches of administration, the assignee had no authority whatsoever in his capacity as assignee. Any such system would mean a complete abdication by the government of all its authority over the greater bulk of its territories and a cessation of much of its activity. That such a thing never existed is also clear from the fact that very often the assignees were posted on duty very far from their assignments. And in such cases we hear only of their sending their diwans and agents for the collection of revenue, and never of any other officers, such as the faujdar, qazi and kotwal, being appointed by them. Instances of this are too numerous to need any mention.

APPENDIX A TO CHAPTER IV

VICEROYS OF GUJRAT WITH THEIR MANSABS

No.	Name and Title	Mansab	Dates	Remarks
1	Mirza Aziz Koka .. (Khan-i-Azam)	5000 (title conferred later)	1573-1575	No mention of the time when he was given rank. He was Akbar's foster brother and the emperor had unusual regard and consideration for him. His case was, therefore, a special one.
2	Mirza Khan .. .. (Abdur-Rahim)	5000 (later, see below No. 5)	1575-1577	Mirza Khan being yet very young Wazir Khan was appointed his deputy to carry on the administration, in his name.
3	Shihab-uddin	5000 (rank conferred 1576)	1577-1583	Wazir Khan, M. U. II, 569, being unsuccessful was replaced by Shihab-uddin, governor of Malwa, who was thus promoted. Transferred after serving out his full tenure.

No.	Name and Title	Mansab	Dates	Remarks
4	Imad Khan Gujrati ..	4000 (According to the T.A.)	1583	His was a special case. He belonged to the service of the old rulers of Gujrat and had long petitioned to be entrusted with governorship of his own province. But before he had taken charge there was an insurrection and he had to be replaced.
5	Mirza A. Rahim (Khan-i-Khanan) ..	5000 (rank conferred after his victory over king Muzaffar Gujrati)	1583-1587	On hearing of the insurrection the emperor appointed Mirza Khan as he had had an experience of the administration of that province.
6	Ismail Quli Khan ..	4000 (rank conferred 1593 A.D.)	1587-1588	Superseded after only a few months' service (due to incapacity ?).
7	Mirza Aziz Koka (Second time) ..	5000	1588-1592	When orders of recall, at the end of term, were issued, the Mirza did not like it, and disobeying orders, delayed for some time and then went away to Mecca. The emperor was much annoyed at this unruly conduct.

No.	Name and Title	Mansab	Dates	Remarks
8	Sultan Murad Bakht ..	8000	1592-1600	In 1594, Prince Murad Bakht was deputed to Deccan campaign, though still remaining viceroy of Gujrat. Suraj Singh was appointed his deputy in his absence. Murad died, 1600.
9	Mirza Aziz Koka .. (Third time)	5000	1600-1606	Sent Shams-uddin-Hasan as his deputy to Ahmadabad, his second son Khurram as gov. of Junagarh, Sayyid Bayazid as minister.
10	Qalij Khan	Was a commander of 6000/5000 (Z and S) at his death: end of 1613.	1605.	Never proceeded to take up his duties. Allowed Aziz Koka to continue as his deputy. Koka transferred to Lahore, 1606.
11	Sd. Murtaza Khan Bukhari	5000 (rank conferred by Jahangir on his accession)	1606-1609	Was rather a scholar than administrator. Owed his appointment to special favour. Rebellions during his reign were suppressed by Rai Gopi Nath, son of Raja Todar Mal, and Suraj Singh of Jodhpur. Transferred because he could not restrain his relations from oppressing the people (R & B. I, p. 153).

No.	Name and Title	Mansab	Dates	Remarks
12	Mirza Aziz Koka .. (entitled Azam Khan) (Fourth time)	5000	1609-1611	Was allowed to remain at court and depute his son Jahangir Quli Khan to act in his place. (R & B. I, p. 153).
13	Abdullah Khan, Firoz Jung		1611-1616	Removed from office for mishandling his newswriter because he recorded events disparaging to the Govt. (R & B. I, pp. 330-31).
14	Muqarrab Khan ..		1616	
15	Prince Shah Jahan ..	20000, later 30000.	1616-1622	Chose to remain at Ujjain. Selected Rustam Khan as his deputy. But the emperor disapproved him, and deputed Raja Vikramajit (Brahman Sundar). Revolt of Shah Jahan in 1623. Raja Vikram killed in battle.
16	Sultan (Prince) Dawar .. Baksh.		1622-1624	Khan-i-Azam Koka was sent as guardian and guide.
17	Rustam Khan	Mansab raised from 60[1] to 5000 by Prince Shah Jahan (Riyaz, p. 187).	1624	Appointed by Shah Jahan who was viceroy of Deccan, Malwa and Gujrat.

[1] The reading varies in different Mss. M. Abdus Salaam thinks that the word سه هسپی is a misprint for 'Sihaspi.' (See Riyaz. Trans. p. 185, f. n. 4).

VICEROYS OF ORISSA

(With Mansabs)

No.	Name and Title	Mansab	Dates	Remarks
1	Hashim Khan	3000/2000	1607-1611	Transferred to Kashmir.
2	Raja Kalyan	2000/1000	1611-1617	Removed and recalled to court to answer charges which were found to be false. Acquitted.
3	Mukarram Khan gr. grandson of Sheikh Salim Chishti	3000/2000	1617-1620	
4	Hasan Ali Khan Turkman	1500/800	1620	
5	Jalayer Khan			
6	Mirza Ahmed Beg Khan	2000/500	1621-1624	Fled. Then interregnum.

Note—It will be remembered that in the time of Jahangir the status of the ranks (mansabs) had undergone a great decline; that is, for instance, the rank of 4000 or 5000, which was rarely conferred by Akbar and hence enjoyed only by a few nobles of the state, did not carry the same status and was far more freely bestowed. Consequently the ranks of 3000/2000 represented a status much lower than that of persons holding the same rank under Akbar.

APPENDIX B TO CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

Note—In the course of the following discussion Moreland's article in the J. I. H. (Madras), Vol. VI, Pt. II, which is the subject of examination, has been referred to as 'Journal'.

The question of the nature of the administrative divisions of the Mughal Empire has only recently received from scholars the attention that it deserves. The few writers who have dealt with the subject of Mughal administration seem to have assumed that the provinces, sarkars and their sub-divisions were political divisions for purposes of general administration. But the question has come into prominence since the notice of scholars was drawn to a topographical list of the Mughal Empire sent by Sir Thomas Roe to England while he was ambassador at the court of the Emperor Jahangir (1615-'18 A.D.), under the title "The Kingdomes and Provinces subject to the Great Mogoll."[1] Sir Wm. Foster suggests that the list in question 'seems to have been of a historical nature enumerating roughly the states which had fallen under

[1] Text reproduced in 'The Embassy of Sir Thos. Roe to India', edited by Sir Wm. Foster (O. U. Press 1926) pp. 489 et seq. Edward Terry, Roe's Chaplain, and several other European travellers have given similar lists which differ greatly from one another. Terry's list, as Sir Wm. Foster has shown, is based on Roe's account and Baffin's map of India (without acknowledgment), published in 1619, and has no independent value, nor does it contain any new information. (Vide 'Early Travels in India' Ed. by Sir Wm. Foster, p. 489). The other lists too are no better and hence do not deserve any separate notice.

the sway of the Mughal Emperors'.[1] 'That is why', he adds, 'we find several petty Himalayan states, such as Siba, Jaswan, Chamba, Nagarkot, figuring on the same plane as Gujrat and Bengal.'

As against this Moreland suggests an alternative hypothesis 'that the list in question gives the administrative charges to which the appointments were made by the Emperor himself'. Moreland has set forth the reasons for his thesis in a closely argued paper in the Journal of Indian History (1927), Vol. VI, Pt. II, and he concludes that the 'Sarkars' under the Mughal government represented merely fiscal divisions, while the administrative divisions were entirely separate and different from them. It is these "charges" which, he supposes, Roe's list represents. A critical examination of the case, however, fails to lend support to either of these views and leads to a quite different conclusion.

Mr. Moreland's hypothesis, as stated above, having been very elaborately argued, demands consideration first. As a corollary to his hypothesis that 'the list in question consists of the general administrative divisions, he further concludes that 'while a Faujdar was sometimes in charge of the area of a sarkar, the relation was by no means invariable, so that the local unit of general administration within the province could be described only as faujdari, while the sarkar must be regarded as belonging definitely to the revenue department'. In other words, Moreland holds that within the subah there were two separate classes of administrative divisions, entirely distinct from each other: one, the sarkar, intended only for fiscal purposes, and the other, a general administrative division under a faujdar. He has calculated that roughly there were 'something like sixty separate charges of this class' (p. 2) during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

First let us ascertain what would have been the average area or extent of Moreland's "charges" or "Faujdaris". Making due allowance for the fact that Moreland's list, as

[1] Embassy, p. 489, f. n.

he himself admits, could not be quite complete, we may put the number at 70, at the most, since, if the number were assumed to be much larger, it would in proportion lessen the chances of its concurrence with Roe's list and thereby aggravate the obstacles to his proposition. Now the number of sarkars, according to the Ain-i-Akbari,[1] was 105, in 1593 A.D. In Shah Jahan's time, consequently, it must have been somewhat larger. Thus the "Faujdari" or "charge" of Moreland would be, in area, considerably larger than the sarkar.

Coming next to Moreland's arguments and conclusions, they may be briefly analysed thus: he says that (1) Roe's list bears distinct resemblance to a list of administrative charges which I compiled for my own use from the chronicles of the period'; (2) that there was an administrative dyarchy in the central government, that is to say, the administrative authority (sovereignty) was divided between two main branches of government, *viz.*, (*a*) the Diwani or Revenue department, in charge of a separate ministry, and (*b*) the 'Huzur' or General Administration, in charge directly of the Emperor advised by the vakil (later vazir), the Diwani standing in relation to the Huzur 'much as the Board of Revenue stands to the government in some provinces at the present day'; (3) that the list of provinces, *etc.*, set out in the Ain came from the Register of the Diwan, as referred to by Pelsaert; (4) that Roe's list was drawn avowedly from the 'King's Register' and represents, therefore, the Huzur list, *i.e.*, the list of the administrative divisions, or the Faujdari 'charges' of Moreland.

With the above prefatory arguments Moreland proceeds to compare the list of 'charges' which he has prepared from the chronicles of the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Although in the course of his comparison of the two lists he is admittedly confronted with insurmountable obstacles, he still thinks that his hypothesis is a very probable one and could be fully established if the slight

[1] Henceforward referred to as 'Ain'.

discrepancies, referred to above, were got over. His conclusion is based, it may be noted again, on the fundamental fact that the Faujdar, who is usually supposed to be the head of a sarkar is not invariably so; and that a list of Faujdari charges referred to in the chronicles bears a distinct resemblance to that of Roe.

This conclusion, however, does not seem to stand even on the ground of the resemblance of the two lists, much less on any other basis. For, on a closer examination, we find that the discrepancies are far too great to warrant our building any such conclusions on their partial concurrence, if mere concurrence were enough for the purpose. First of all Roe's list has two very serious omissions, *viz.*, the country between Agra and Bihar, and the major part of Rajputana. Moreland ascribes these omissions to accident and oversight. I would only add a rider to this suggestion. The omissions are of course due to oversight, not however, of the copyist from the King's register, but of Roe himself, who very probably wrote the list from memory, as I shall show in the sequel to this discussion. But if these gaps in Roe's list were to be supplied after the manner in which he has treated the other large provinces, such as Bengal, Gujrat and Multan, the discrepancy between Moreland's and Roe's lists is likely to increase rather than decrease, because the country between Agra and Bihar comprised only the two provinces of Illahabad and Awadh, in which Moreland has as many as seventeen charges, a number which Roe's list could not have contained in view of the fact that for the rest of the entire empire he has only 39 charges all told. As regards the omission of some important charges in Rajputana, it is not at all unlikely that it has also been treated like the other larger provinces, only a few names which occurred to Roe at the moment, having been included. Next let us see how far the identification of the remaining charges, leaving aside the provinces of Illahabad, Awadh and Ajmer *etc.*, is tenable. The first discrepancy which strikes us in this identification by Moreland is that while the

latter takes up the provinces (including the sub-provinces and minor provinces as well) and distributes his charges according as they fall within each province, Roe treats all the individual names on his list as though they were either 'kingdomes' or 'provinces' altogether independent of one another, that is to say, in Roe's list each individual 'charge' was a separate and exclusive jurisdiction. For instance, Roe has Atack (9),[1] Kakares (10), and Penjab (11), all the three considered as quite independent and exclusive of one another. But Moreland takes up the province of the Punjab and includes his Attock within it, and does not treat Punjab and Attock as separate charges as Roe has done. In other words while Roe has Punjab and Attock as two separate 'charges' Moreland has no 'charge' of the name of Punjab. He only takes the Punjab province and then enumerates the charges that come within it, and yet he identifies his 'Punjab' which is certainly not one of his Faujdari charges, with the Punjab of Roe's list. Similarly in the case of Bengal, Roe has Gor (25), Bengala (26), Roch (27) treating the three as separate jurisdictions as usual. But Moreland treats Bengal as the headquarters charge placing the others, *i.e.*, Gor, Roch, *etc.*, within the province of Bengal. This is quite unjustifiable. Then again his list has three charges in Bengal, *viz.*, Dacca, Rajmahal and Kuch Bihar. Out of these he identifies Rajmahal with Roe's Gor, but he forgets that Roe mentions Rajmahal with Dakaka (Dacca) (26) as one of the two chief cities of Bengal, quite distinct from Gor. Lastly his identification of Roch with Kuch Bihar is, at best, extremely dubious. This method of identification which has been followed throughout by Moreland, is utterly unsound. But even assuming the identification to be sound in method, it does not take us far enough. Of the total 58 names in Moreland's list 17 are excluded, falling as they do within the territories omitted by Roe. Of the remaining 41, he thinks 29 can be identified in Roe's list. But at least nine

[1] The figures given in brackets refer to the numbers of these places in Roe's list.

of these are very doubtful.[1] Then the remaining 12 in his list still remain to be identified, and there are a few names in each list not found in the other. Thus the discrepancies pointed out above should in themselves constitute a sufficiently strong obstacle to the acceptance of any identity between the two lists. But they become all the greater by the discovery of several other "charges" in the chronicles which are to be found in neither of the two lists under consideration. Some of these new Faujdaris were: Mathura, Mahaban and Jalesar;[2] Bhilsa;[3] Bareilly;[4] Moradabad;[5] Tirhut;[6] Darbhanga;[7] Sultanpur Bilehri;[8] Ghazipur-Zamaniah;[9] Benares;[10] Palamau;[11] *etc.*, to mention only a few. There is nothing in Roe's list with which to identify these names. Let us now examine Morcland's explanation

[1] These are: (1) Jammu, (2 & 3) Kangra (consisting of two charges as Moreland arbitrarily assumes. See Journal, p. 7, para, VII). (4 & 5) the 'northern hills' (This is also assumed by Moreland to be equal to two charges), (6) Jamnapar (one of the two Agra charges, Jour. p. 7, para, IX), (7) Rajmahal, (8) Kuch Bihar (Jour. p. 8, para, XIII), (9) Baroda. Of these he identifies Jammu with Roe's Jenba (12) but Jenba is more probably Chamba which is not in Moreland's list. One of his two Kangra charges is Roe's *Nugarkutt* (14) and the second Kangra charge and the two charges of the 'northern hills' are identified with Roe's Peithan (13), Syba (15) and Jaswal (16). But he himself admits that in that hilly country small charges were numerous (Loc. cit.). Are they all to be identified with the three charges of Roe's list mentioned here? Jenupar is identified with Jamnapar (the second Agra charge) but it may as well be Jaunpur; and the Agra charge was not always a separate charge. Rajmahal is suggested to be Roe's Gor (25) but the discrepancy in accepting this has been shown above. How could 'Gor', an earlier name, continue to exist in the 'King's Register'? Baroda is attempted to be identified with 'Narwar' of Roe's list, but there is no such place in Gujrat. Baroda could not have been near Agra. The extremely uncertain and hypothetical nature of the above identifications is thus apparent.

[2] M. U. II, 33; I, 594.
[3] Ibid. II, 296.
[4] Ibid. III, 33-34.
[5] Ibid. II, 868.
[6] Ibid. III, 33-34.
[7] Ibid. III, 33-34.
[8] Ibid. II, 870-871.
[9] Masir-i-Alamgiri, 209.
[10] M. U. III, 351.
[11] M. U. II, 36.

of his eight surplus charges. He says that (1) Qabula and (2) Uch (in Multan) are entered on the basis of a single reference and were either temporary charges or had been 'absorbed before Roe's time'. But the real fact was as we shall show in discussing the duties of the faujdars, that the frontier outposts like Qabula and Uch were entrusted to officers who were also called faujdars, but they had no territorial divisions such as sarkar or parganah under them, excepting a few miles of land around their forts. For the omission of (3) Doab, (4) Pattan and (5) Broach, Moreland has no explanation and they 'must stand as obstacles to the hypothesis' he has suggested (Journal, p. 10). (6) Hissar and (7) Sirhind are supposed to have been in the charge of the revenue officer and hence excluded from the 'King's Register', a very flimsy explanation. (8) *Sarangpur* is not in Roe's list because Moreland found its reference at a later period than that of Roe's list and hence it 'may be a later creation'. But it was a 'faujdari' as early as the time of Sher Shah (Vide Abbas MS. A, pp. 188-189) and continued to be a sarkar under Akbar (Ain. I, 461). Moreland finds it at a later period than Roe's list, from which it is clear that it continued to be a faujdari since Sher Shah's time. Its omission from Roe's list, therefore, cannot be explained.

There are a few more points worth considering. In Ajmer Roe's list has only Chytor (37) and Bakar (20) while Moreland's has Ajmer, Sambhar and Ranthambhor and is yet admittedly incomplete. This omission in Roe's list cannot be explained on the same ground on which the omission of the country between Awadh and Illahabad has been explained away. Moreland's explanation that there are very scanty records about the province of Ajmer does not justify the omission of a record from the 'King's Register'. Even if the scantiness of records be supposed to be the cause of the absence of many 'charges' at least those of Moreland's list must have been in the official list. Another point worth noticing is that while on the one hand whole provinces such as Bihar, Malwa, Kabul, Kashmir, Khandesh,

have a single charge, as though there was only one *faujdari* (or administrative division) in the whole province, on the other, in some places such as the Punjab hills and Agra several charges are crowded up within a small space. This would imply that while in some places the 'faujdari charges' were coincident with or even smaller than a sarkar and perhaps even a mahal, in others they were as large as the whole province. There are many more similar objections to which Moreland's thesis is open.

Then Roe's Bakar and Bando are an 'entire puzzle' to himself.[1]

The above discussion shows that the resemblance of Mr. Moreland's list with that of Roe is more plausible than real and it does not afford any support to his hypothesis.

The second basis of the hypothesis under consideration is twofold: that the faujdar is not specifically mentioned to be the executive head of a sarkar by Abul Fazl or other authorities; and that, besides sarkars, there are certain other posts which officers bearing the designations of Faujdar and Qiladar, are found to occupy. Of these two facts which have provided Moreland a basis for his conclusions the first is incorrect, as I shall presently show,[2] and of the

[1] It is not difficult, however, to identify 'Bakar' and 'Bando' (Nos. 20 and 23 respectively of Roe's list) for which Moreland fails to find an explanation. Bakar is 'Bagar', (بگھ), a well-known and current expression in northern India for that part of the country of which the centre is Bikaner. Roe himself says: 'The chief city is called Bikaner'. This is confirmed by Cunningham (Ancient Geog.); Erskine (Rajputana Gaz. Vol. III A, p. 315; and Imp. Gaz. Vol. VIII, p. 202). Bando is in all likelihood Bundi, the territory of which at that time extended to the confines of the province of Agra on the west. The Hada chief had extended the boundary of his state up to Ranthambhor, which is due west of the line joining Agra and Gwalior. The situation of 'Bando' in Baffin's map also lends support to this view. These two do not occur in Moreland's list, however. But if its direction to the west of Agra as stated by Roe be regarded as unreliable, Bando might be identified with Bandhogarh, the stronghold of Raja Ramchandra of Bhatta (Rewah).

[2] References to the faujdar as head of a sarkar are frequently to be met with in the chronicles of the period *e.g.*, Jahangir promoted

second he has failed to understand the significance. There were two classes of posts to which faujdars had been appointed as far back as the reign of Sher Shah. First, as regular heads of districts or sarkars, and secondly on special duty, either in cases of emergency or for purposes of military defence to forts and frontier outposts. It may be pointed out that the Faujdar in those days was, as we know from his duties and functions detailed in the Ain, both an executive and a military officer. He was the backbone of the administration and was deputed for practically all kinds of duties in the empire, in accordance with his status. The existence of faujdars in frontier outposts, such as Attock, Peshawar, Ranthambhor, Etawah or Dholpur[1] or of two faujdars occasionally appointed in one sarkar owing to the extraordinary importance of certain places—just as it happens even at the present day—need neither cause surprise nor lead one to suppose that such faujdaris represented any separate territorial jurisdictions.

It will not be out of place to consider the question from another standpoint. Assuming that there were separate faujdari and sarkar (administrative and revenue) divisions under the provinces, would this fit in with the general scheme of administrative structure or would it involve further complications? Of the three grades of political divisions in the empire, the subah at the top and the parganah at the bottom, had no parallel division for general administration corresponding to the faujdari, and there was no ostensible occasion for introducing an unnecessary complication by creating a parallel administrative division to the sarkar. Such an arrangement, moreover would have hampered the working of the administration.

Rustam Khan to the faujdarship of the sarkar of Qannauj. (R. and B. II, 286).

[1] The existence of semi-military faujdars (called ghatwals) on the frontier outposts is mentioned as late as the later part of the 18th century when those officials were superseded by the new police organised by Cornwallis. See Annals of Rural Bengal, Vol. I, by W. W. Hunter, pp. 123 *et seq.*

That the parganah was, unlike at the present day, the Mughal unit of general administration is clear from the fact that its executive head was the shiqdar whose functions comprehended all aspects of general administration. This had been the case from the Sur period onwards.[1] Now, as we have seen, according to Moreland's calculation the area of a faujdari would generally be larger than a sarkar and we know that one of the very important duties enjoined upon the faujdar was to assist the amalguzar in the collection of revenues whenever the latter requisitioned his services. It is, of course, beyond question that the faujdari area would rarely have comprised two full sarkars. The result of such an arrangement would be that many of the sarkars would fall partly under the jurisdiction of one faujdar and partly under that of another, and thus the amalguzar would be thrown on the mercy of more than one faujdar in the execution of his duties. Moreover, it seems highly improbable that while the unit of revenue administration (assuming the parganah to be this unit, as Moreland thinks) was so small, that of general administration, which involved much heavier duties, should have been larger than even a sarkar. This would make neither for facility nor efficiency of administration. On the contrary it would place rather too heavy a burden on the head of a single officer. Furthermore, is it not a little curious that Abul Fazl should altogether ignore such an important fact of administrative organisation while he took care to describe the revenue, military and other departments so minutely, and some of them in great detail? Nor do we find any reference to such a separate class of divisions in any other contemporary authorities, indigenous or foreign, who avowedly give details of general administration. The preceding considerations have, however, been given here only to explore the probabilities or otherwise of the case in the light of the general conditions of Mughal administrative structure.

[1] Ain, I, 301.

The most important and fundamental basis of discussion, however, must be the actual facts which may now be allowed to speak for themselves. The source of the trouble is the absence in the Ain of any direct reference to the faujdar being in charge of the sarkar. But such references are by no means wanting in other chronicles of the period in which 'faujdar-i-sarkar'[1] is an expression of frequent occurrence. But there is a passage in Qazvini's Padshahnama[2] which so clearly states the position as to solve the whole problem finally, leaving no room for doubt. On his accession to the throne Shah Jahan revised the civil list of the empire and made many alterations, transfers and new appointments of ministers, viceroys, diwans, faujdars and other officials, Qazvini, in the passage referred to, gives a detailed account of these changes and appointments which includes as many as six appointments of 'faujdars of sarkars' (فوجدار سرکار) and concludes it with a highly significant remark which further corroborates the meaning, if that were necessary. The text of the relevant passage will make this clear:

و مرزا خان ولد شاهنواز خان بن عبدالرحیم خان خان خانان را فوجدار سرکار قنوج – و دلاور خان بریچ را فوجدار سرکار میوات – و صفدر خان را فوجدار سرکار سرونج – و سید بهوه مخاطب به دیندار خان را فوجدار سرکار

[1] R and B. II, 286—Jahangir says "Having promoted Rustam Khan to the Faujdarship of the Sarkar of Qannauj I sent him there"

دیانت خان را فوجداری و امینی و فوجداری سرکار سر هند از تغیر رای کاشی داس نامور شد –

M. U. II, p. 37.

It is clear that *faujdarship of the sarkar* was a permanent office, which was previously held by Rai Kashi Das and on his transference Dianat Khan was appointed to it in the fifth year of Shah Jehan's reign.

[2] Padshahnama of Mirza Aminai Qazvini, (Or. 173) foll. 131 b-132 a. Aminai was the first person who received orders from the emperor Shah Jahan to write a history of his reign and his history has been the model upon which most of the histories of Shah Jahan, including that of Abdul Hamid Lahori, are based.

میان دوآب – و مختار خان را فوجدار سرکار مونگیر – و جانثار خان را فوجدار سرکار مندسور نمودند – و خواجه جهانرا خدمت دیوانی گجرات فرمودند – و باقی صوبها و سرکارها را بحکّام و عمّال سابق نگاشته آمد –

Translation—The emperor appointed Mirza Khan, son of Shah Nawaz Khan son of Abdur Rahim Khan Khan-i-Khanan to the faujdarship of the sarkar of Qannauj, Dilawwar Khan Barich to the faujdarship of the sarkar of Mewat *etc.*, and Khwaja Jahan he invested with the office of diwanship of Gujrat, and the remaining *subahs and sarkars* were (written down) *confirmed in the charge of their former officers*. Thus by reporting that so many *faujdars of sarkars* and so many other officials were appointed and the remaining posts were continued in charge of their former occupants, this passage leaves no room for any further controversy or speculation. It is scarcely necessary to point out that these measures pertained to the general administration and not to any single aspect of it. It is also significant that Qazvini does not—nor does any other contemporary writer for that matter—refer to any other kind of administrative divisions. Then too, the term Faujdari, as an official name for any executive territorial jurisdiction is nowhere used. Moreland, however, suggests that the term "Naheti" which occurs among the names of officers for whose appointment the "Farman-i-Sabati" was issued,[1] was the official designation of the "administrative charges" which were under the faujdars. His reasons for this view are that while all other high officers and ranks are clearly mentioned among those appointed by that farman, the terms "Faujdari, Qiladari, and Jagirdari" are not mentioned, and that Naheti, like other names mentioned there, must be the formal designation of the officer appointed by the farman. But Moreland is mistaken in supposing that this lends support to his theory. His difficulty of finding the term that was used for the "administrative charge" remains unsolved. He has, curiously enough, understood

[1] Vide Ain I, 194.

the term "Naheti" to mean both the office as well as the administrative charge of the faujdar. But it will be noted that "Naheti" refers to an officer and not to his "charge". All the names mentioned in the list from which that word has been taken are those of officers or rank-holders. Of course the "faujdar" is the only high official, who was appointed by the king, who is missing from that list, and hence it is reasonable to assume that *Naheti* is the designation used for "faujdar". It is true, as Moreland says, that 'Faujdaris, Qiladaris and Jagirdaris are not in the list'. But that does not imply anything. The list does not include the names of the territorial divisions; it consists only of names of the officers who were appointed by that farman. Thus the occurrence of the word "Naheti" does not prove the existence of any "administrative charge" apart from that of a "Faujdar", which was none other than a sarkar.

Next we may consider, for a moment, Moreland's list on its own merits. Only a cursory glance through that list will reveal that out of the 59 'charges' which it comprises (including Ajmer) no less than 45 are seats of sarkars definitely mentioned in the Ain and referred to also in subsequent authorities.[1] All the remaining fifteen fall into either of the two classes, *viz.*, (1) frontier outposts and (2) places of great strategic importance, such as Etawah, Dholpur and Fathpur Sikri. The officers in charge of some of these were usually designated faujdars,[2] and in some cases qilahdars, but all belonged to the same grade. Thus, leaving out the frontier and military faujdaris, all the inland charges of Moreland's list were the same as the sarkars. It would be physically impossible, under the circumstances, to assign to the faujdaris, in general, a

[1] Moreland himself elsewhere recognises this fact. He says 'An examination of the appointments recorded in the Tuzuk shows that so far as the faujdar is concerned his jurisdiction was usually but not invariably the sarkar'. (J.R.A.S., 1922, p. 23).

[2] The designation faujdar, like darogha, amin and diwan was applied to several offices of a similar type of duties, but varying greatly in status. This will be explained later.

different and larger area than that of the sarkars. A classified list of Moreland's charges is subjoined for convenience of reference.[1] Lastly it may be observed that, there being no separate divisions such as sarkar and faujdari under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, no drastic modification or overhauling of the administrative organisation such as would be involved in abolishing the two distinctive political divisions (in case it were suggested that they might have existed under Akbar) was ever attempted by those two emperors or even by their successors, for that matter. Akbar's successors only worked the machinery set up and bequeathed to them by him.

A word also regarding the 'administrative dyarchy' in the Mughal Empire, seems necessary. There was no such dyarchy at the centre, and the existence of different ministries to deal with different portfolios does not imply what we understand by the term dyarchy. At the centre all final control as well as all the important appointments were vested in the emperor. The appointments of the *Mali* (مالی) *i.e.*, the Diwani department were made by him no less than those of the 'Mulki' (Executive), military and other departments. At the centre all final control was formally vested in the emperor.

There was, of course, an effective administrative

[1] Charges which were sarkars; Kandahar, Tatta, Multan, Bhakkar, Sivistan, Qabula (was a sarkar in the time of Sher Shah: Abbas, MS. A., p. 193), Kabul, Kashmir, Lahore, Dihli, Doab, Sambhal, Hissar, Sirhind, Rewari (Mewat); Agra, Alwar, Marwar, Kalpi, Koil, Qannauj, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Bahraich, Illahabad, Jaunpur, Karra, Monghyr, Tirhut, Dacca, Rajmahal, Orissa, Khandesh, Sarangpur, Berar, Ahmedabad, Sorath, Puttan, Baroda, Broach, Surat, Ajmer, Ranthambhor, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, (Jaipur was included in Ranthambhor), Gwalior.

Charges that were either forts, frontier posts or points of strategic importance: Uch, Peshawar, Attock, Jammu, Kangra, 'Northern hills', Fathpur Sikri, Dholpur, Etawah, Kalinjar, Chunar, Kuch Bihar, Gondwana, Sambhar. It will be noticed that, by virtue of their situation, a few places like Ranthambhor, Gwalior, Qandahar, were both seats of sarkars as well as military stations.

dyarchy in the provinces, as well as in the sarkars in which the faujdar and amalguzar corresponded to the subahdar and the diwan, both of whom were appointed by the emperor and were independent of each other.

It now remains to examine the nature and value of Roe's list. But before turning to it a brief reference may be made in passing, to the various implications of such terms as faujdar, diwan, darogha and mutsaddi. These terms were used in their generic sense, for a great variety of offices from the highest to the lowest, and not restricted to any particular office like, for instance, the terms wazir and subahdar. For example diwan was used for the imperial and provincial finance minister as also for the private manager of a zamindar's or jagirdar's property. The word darogha was still more widely applied. The imperial and provincial postmasters-general were called daroghas as well as many officers in the police and in almost all other departments. There were daroghas of markets, of offices, and of stables. In fact the officers who were entrusted with the general superintendence of any department were daroghas. Mutsaddi is a well-known word commonly used for the executive officials of any province or district. Faujdar was similarly applied to all those officers who were entrusted with any kind of military duties. The general maintenance of peace and order, of frontier defence, of suppression of rebels and disturbers of public peace, of leadership of certain military contingents were among the duties which were entrusted to the faujdars. Even the head of certain troops of elephants were called faujdars.[1] In the time of Sher Shah the executive head of a sarkar was called shiqdar-i-shiqdaran (chief of shiqdars); but he was invested precisely with the same duties as the faujdar of Akbar's time, a term which was substituted by Akbar for the rather inconvenient and cumbrous word shiqdar-i-shiqdaran, perhaps as well from facility of use as from the

[1] Vide Ain. I, 135. It will be interesting to note that the elephant-keepers (Mahawat) are called 'faujdars' up to the present day.

fact of that officer being in charge of a fixed quota of forces for the sake of the maintenance of law and order and for carrying out any other functions with which he might at any time be entrusted. Thus other officers of the grade of faujdar who were deputed on any military or special executive duty, were also generally called faujdars.

I turn now to an examination of the nature and value of the list supplied by Roe. On a careful scrutiny of the names in that list it appears to me to be no better than a random, illogical assortment of places and names which it is impossible to assign under any single category. It is difficult to characterise it even as a historical account, 'enumerating roughly the states which had fallen under the sway of the Mughal Emperors', as Foster has suggested.

At the very outset what strikes us as strange is the title of the list itself. If Moreland's theory be accepted, that it has been copied from the King's register, then it could be reasonably expected that Roe's title would be only a faithful rendering of the original one. The territories of the vassal chiefs, even the greatest, were officially called 'zamindaris', and 'kingdomes' could not conceivably be a translation of that word. Moreover he uses the word 'kingdome' for Bengal, Gujrat, Khandesh, Hajkan, Kakares (the Gakkhar country) and Chittor, out of which the last is the only one which any official list in the imperial secretariat could have put under that category. Again assuming Moreland's hypothesis to be correct, the official names of faujdaris could not have been Bengal, Punjab, Gujrat, Malwa, and there seems no reason why Roe should have changed certain names in the list, while he avows it to have been taken from the official register. Then the order in which Roe's list is given is not likely to have been the one in which an official list for purposes of administration would be kept. The order of names in the list would be determined by two considerations: either historical, that is to say, the order in which they were acquired, or more likely their political and economic importance. Thus in the

Ain the list of subahs begins with Ilahabad in one place and with Bengal in another. There seems to be no reason why Roe should have changed the order of the list without mentioning the alteration, if at all he did so.[1] The extremely heterogeneous nature of the list has already been noticed by Foster. It would appear therefore to be a most puzzling team which it is impossible to assign under a single or even two or three classes of political divisions. It comprises names of provinces, sarkars, frontier stations, fortresses, minor provinces, vassal states, and so on. The following analysis of the list is given (in modern spellings) in order to illustrate the point:—

Major provinces—Multan (4);[2] Kabul (6); Kashmir (7); Punjab (11); Dihli (17); Agra (21); Patna (24); Bengal (26); Malwa (32); Gujrat (34).

Minor and sub-provinces—Tatta (2); Orissa (28); Khandesh (31); Sorath or Kathiawar (35).

Sarkars—Qandahar (1); Bhakkhar (3); Hajkan (5); Jaunpur or Jamnapar (?) (22); Gwalior (30).

Frontier stations—Bankish (Peshawar) (8); Attock (9); The kingdom of the Gakkhars. This was a part of the province of Multan (10); Chamba or Jammu (12); Paithan (13); Nagarkot (14); Syba (15); Jesual (16). Jammu, Jaswal and Nagarkot were frontier forts under Sher Shah also. (See Abbas, I. O. MS. fol. 107a).

Vassal States—Bagar, or Bikaner (20); Bando (or Bundi ?) (23); Narwar (36); Chittor (37).

Uncertain—Gor (25); Roch (27); Gondwana.

Let us briefly scrutinise each of the above heads. The names of the major provinces, with the single exception of Patna, could not be included in any official list as those of faujdaris. One could reasonably expect names like, for instance, Dacca and Lahore, to be included among fauj-

[1] This unexpected order of the original list is also perceived by Foster who says that 'he seems to have arranged them in what he understood to be their geographical order'. (Vide Embassy, p. 489, f. n.).

[2] The numbers in parentheses refer to those of Roe's list.

daris. In view of this it is inconceivable how Roe's list could be based on any official list. Moreover, did that list contain the names of provinces also, or are we to suppose that the provinces were revenue divisions and hence did not find place in the 'King's Register'? Furthermore the inclusion of Chittor alone from Rajputana and of Gaur from Bengal is highly significant and gives a sure clue to the nature of Roe's account. Chittor had been already restored to the Rana before Roe's list was drawn up, and it did not occur to him that though Chittor was a prominent name, it no longer formed a part of the Mughal dominions which were directly administered by the Imperial government. But supposing he was also mentioning the states of Rajputana he should have also mentioned Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and other states. The mention of 'Gor' is all the more striking. That city had already been deserted and was in ruins, the capital having been moved to Rajmahal by Raja Man Singh. It was no more even a parganah. Only its name continued in common parlance for that part of the country. Roe evidently heard it in this manner and formed a vague impression that it was still a separate province or kingdom. The name of Gaur could not have possibly occurred among the political divisions of Bengal in any official register of Jahangir's time. Then again Roe's 'Roch' has been identified by Moreland with Kuch Bihar on the probable ground of the misreading of the script which is quite possible in Persian. But granting that Koch (کوچ) was read as Roch (روچ), how can we account for the absence of the second half 'Bihar'? Moreover Roch is mentioned by Roe to be in the S. E. of Bengal, while Kuch Bihar is in the extreme north. Finally Gondwana was never any regular part of the Mughal dominions, though it was for some time a frontier faujdari. This analysis should be enough to show that it is impossible to find any relevancy in Roe's list and that like so many others of its kind, it is of no value and adds but little to our knowledge of the history of the subject in question. Nor shall we be justified, in view of the

confused order and variety of its contents, to regard it as a list of a 'historical nature'. For why should, for instance, Attock and Peshawar be enumerated as apart from the Kabul or Lahore provinces, Gaur from Bengal, Sambhal and Mewat from Dihli and so on? These facts lead to the only possible conclusion that in preparing this list Roe drew upon his imagination and trusted to his memory of the accounts of the empire that he had heard during his stay.

One last yet important question remains. Roe remarks that he has taken this list from 'the Kings' Register' and this, Moreland says, is the dominant fact, and anybody rejecting his hypothesis must suggest an alternative explanation. It has been shown above that considered on its intrinsic merits there is not the slightest ground for accepting the list as being even a rough copy of any official list, like the 'King's Register', or even a uniform account of any class of political divisions. Its very heterogeneity constitutes too serious a drawback for it to have had the origin claimed for it by its author. In view, therefore, of the considerations detailed above the only possible solution of the problem would be in either of the following alternatives:

Either Roe saw, with the help of some interpreter, one of the numerous statements, inventories and lists, which must have been in the records of the imperial secretariat, the interpreter having read out to him the names on the list, which Roe, after returning to his residence tried to reproduce from memory. That is why, instead of beginning the names in the order of their political importance, he begins at one convenient end and proceeds in a topographical order, according to his knowledge. It is not unlikely that he included many names which were not in the list he was reproducing. Hence probably the confused collection of names we find in the list. But this alternative is highly improbable.

The second and more likely, because more logical, alternative is that Roe never saw any list or register at all, but drew up a list from whatever he had heard and remem-

bered of the territories comprising the empire. The fact that the selection of names in his list is so haphazard, and that these names are very often not the official or even current designations of the jurisdictions they refer to, affords an almost irrefutable support to this view. However, it need rouse no surprise how Roe could have solemnly declared such a list to have been drawn from the 'King's Register'. Some other European writers who have supplied information about the political organisation of the Mughal empire have similarly given unauthentic data. Terry is a case in point. Roe was also a bit of a braggart, and was somewhat pompous about his importance and dignity, and where choice lay between creating an impression and veracity of statement, he would certainly favour the former.[1] Indeed, considering the circumstances of the case, it would seem quite natural that Roe, in order to make it appear in keeping with his dignity and influence at court, gave to a list prepared at random from memory, the importance of a document emanating from no less a source than the 'King's Register' itself.

A copy of Roe's list is given here for convenience of reference.

[1] It has been shown by Foster that he was not above telling lies when he thought it expedient to do so. His bragging conduct as well as writings throughout his stay in India are only too patent to need repetition here. Moreover, Moreland, himself admits that although Roe's assertion that he took the names of the kingdoms and provinces from the King's Register suggests that Roe saw the Register himself but "judging from his own account (Embassy, p. 340) he had made little progress in speaking Persian and there is no reason to suppose that he had studied the written language, so it is more probable that he sent an interpreter to copy out the names". (Vide Journal, p. 1). This affords further evidence of the fact that Roe was not very particular about accuracy of statement.

Roe's Account of the 'Kingdomes and Provinces of the Great Mogoll'

Note—The names in the following list are copied in Roe's spelling, but their modern spelling, where necessary, is included within brackets against each.

1. Candahar (Qandahar), the chief city so called.
2. Totta (Thatta, or Sindh), the chief city so called.
3. Buckar (Bakkhar-Sakkhar) the chief city called Buckar Suckar.
4. Multan. The chief city so called.
5. Haagickan. The Kingdom of the Baluchis west of Thatta and Bakkhar.
6. Cabul (Kabul). The chief city so called.
7. Kyshmir (Kashmir). The chief city is called Srinagar.
8. Bankish. The chief city is called Beishur (Blochmann identifies Bankish with Bangash, in N. W. Kohat, on the Punjab border, and Beishur with Bajaur, a district still further north, possibly, however, Peshawar is intended (Foster's note)).
9. Atack (Attock). The chief city so called.
10. 'The Kingdom of Kakares' (Gakkhara) lies at the foot of the mountains. Principal cities Kankley (Dangali) and Purhola (Pharwala).
11. Penjab (Punjab).
12. Jenba (Chamba). The chief city so called.
13. Peitan (Paithan). The chief city so called, East of Jenba.
14. Nakarkutt (Nagarkot). The chief city so called. The north-easternmost confine of Mogor.
15. Syba (Siba). The chief city so called.
16. Jesual (Jaswan). The chief city called Ragepur (Rajpur).
17. Delly (Dihli).
18. Mewat. The chief city called Narnol.
19. Sanball (Sambhal). The chief city so called.

20. Bakar (Bagar, the country comprising Bikaner and Jodhpur states). The chief city is called Bikaner.
21. Agra. The chief city so called.
22. Jenupar (either Jaunpur or Jamnapar). The city so called.
23. Bando (?) The chief city so called.
24. Patna. The chief city so called.
25. Gor (Gaur). The chief city so called.
26. Bengala, a mighty kingdom; the chief cities are Ragemahall (Rajmahal) and Dekaka (Dhaka).
27. Roch (?). It has no city of note.
28. Vedeza. The chief city called Jekanat (Orissa).
29. Kanduana (Gondwana). The chief city is called 'Kerhakatankah' (Garhkatangah).
30. Kualier (Gwalior). The chief city so called.
31. Candes (Khandesh). The chief city called Burhanpur.
32. Malva (Malwa). The chief cities called Ugen (Ujjain), Narr (Dhar ?) and Seringe (Sironj).
33. Berar. The chief city is called Shahpur.
34. Guzratt (Gujrat). The chief city is Amdavaz. (Ahmedabad).
35. Sorett (Sorath, in Kathiawar). The chief city called Gunagur (Junagarh).
36. Norvar. The chief city called Ghehud (Gohad ?).
37. Chytor (Chittor).

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL ORGANISATION—(*concld.*)

SUBORDINATE STATES AND DEPENDENCIES

Introductory

The Muslim conquerors of India had early realised that it was impossible for them to wipe out the numerous Hindu (Rajput) chiefs whose possessions were generally scattered all over northern India, but mainly in the hilly regions of Northern and Central India and Rajputana. The Sultans of Dihli had, consequently recognised many of them who had made submission and acknowledged the suzerainty of Dihli. In addition to these there were also many others who maintained, by an incessant struggle, a state of precarious independence. When Babar conquered Hindustan he found many Rais and Rajas who had been subordinate to the Sultans of Dilhi and many who had never been effectively subdued. The turbulent chiefs of Mewat, for instance, and those of Sambhal, Etawah and several other regions in the plains had offered a most stubborn resistance. The Rajas and Rais in the hilly regions of the North and Central India were more or less left to themselves. These rulers and chiefs had been suffered to exist from necessity and not out of willingness or generosity on the part of the Sultans.

When Akbar succeeded to the kingdom of Dihli, he adopted a new attitude towards them. Far-sighted and liberal though he was from the very start, he must have been greatly encouraged by his father's policy on which he had already begun to act according to the wise counsel which Shah Tahmasp of Persia had given him.[1] Akbar's

[1] M.U. I, 693 and II, 619.

object was therefore only to make the whole country acknowledge his suzerainty and to bring it under a single banner. It was no part of his design to completely wipe out the states and principalities which existed at the time. Possessed of a keen insight, Akbar had recognised the inevitable necessity of leaving these chiefs in virtual enjoyment of their internal authority over their respective territories, for the sake of establishing his rule on firm and enduring foundations. Thus a very considerable part of the Mughal dominions remained under the rule of their old hereditary chiefs and was never directly administered by the Imperial Government.

Difficulty of a common term

These states (zamindaris)[1] varied so very widely in their status and their position in relation to the suzerain power and in several other respects that it is extremely difficult to find one common term to include the whole class. Some of them were almost entirely independent paying but a nominal allegiance to the emperor, as a price of which nearly all the conditions they demanded were conceded to them. The most conspicuous example of this was Mewar which, even when at last it yielded from sheer force of circumstances, still retained a far greater independence and a more honourable position in relation to the suzerain power than all the rest. But there were many states, chiefly in the Himalayas, which were repeatedly subdued, though not without very costly expeditions, only to show open defiance again as soon as the imperial armies retired. They did not even pay regular tribute. On the other hand there were some states, large as well as small, which were fully controlled by the government which on occasions even interfered in their internal affairs. Thus the only common feature of them all was that at one time or another

[1] Abul Fazl and following him the later chroniclers preferred to use the term 'Zamindar' for all hereditary chiefs who had submitted to Mughal overlordship. We shall, however, generally use the word states instead.

they had all recognised the overlordship of the emperor, and, moreover, have been treated as such by Abul Fazl. Hence we would characterise them by the wide term 'Subordinate States'.

An estimate of the extent and importance of the states

No definite information is available to enable us to ascertain either the exact area or number of these states, and the fact that both these items were constantly undergoing alterations in our period, makes the task all the more difficult. Interspersed in the texts of contemporary chronicles and other accounts there are incidental references to numerous states which would require much labour and time to glean and classify. But occasionally we find lists of some states existing in a particular locality, such as, for instance, those on the Himalayan slopes. The most important source, however, is the Ain, in which, in the lists of the parganahs, Abul Fazl has also included these states and there are in it enough indications to help us to distinguish them from the regular imperial parganahs. While the number of all the small and large states was very great, there were several very important ones in each of the following regions: the Himalayas, Rajputana and Central India, Orissa and Gujrat. These may serve as typical examples in any sort of classification.

Classification

No official classification of the states and zamindaris seems to have been made beyond the different degrees of honour and rank which the chiefs and princes received at Court, if that could be taken as a criterion of the comparative importance of the states. This classification was based on the same principle on which the Indian States are at present divided into three classes, the states of a higher status alone being entitled to a salute of guns. A systematic classification of them, however, in accordance with their intrinsic importance and status, was, even under the British Government, suggested for the first time by the

authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report as late as the year 1918. This was to be based on the degree of internal autonomy enjoyed by the states. But it is not possible to adopt this basis in the case of the Indian States of the days of Akbar. In the matter of internal authority they all stood more or less on the same level. Normally the understanding seems to have existed with all of them of non-intervention on the part of the Government in their internal affairs, but wherever any occasion arose for actual interference it sprang from political expediency rather than from legal right.[1] But of course in matters of a more formal nature, such as the chief's obligation to regular attendance at Court or the emperor's control of the right of succession, the emperors asserted their authority and made clear distinctions between state and state. And this may help us to some extent in adjudging the varying degrees of their importance, which thus received a public recognition. A second and somewhat more sound principle may be to classify them according to the rank and position enjoyed by the chiefs at Court, or according to the extent of territory, economic resources and military strength of the different states. Yet another basis of classification and perhaps a still sounder one, might be the extent of control and concrete obligations which the imperial government could impose on them. The extent of control and obligations varied from nothing more than a nominal allegiance, such as that of most Himalayan states, to a very wide one including personal service and regular attendance at Court,

[1] On the question of the authority exercised by the Central Government in the internal affairs of the States (subordinate or vassal), a clear light is thrown by the following incident of Aurangzeb's reign. As a result of the War of Succession the economic ruin of the country was complete and grain was selling at famine prices. The evil was aggravated by inland transit duties, called Rahdari and Pandari, which Aurangzeb abolished in 1559, after his second coronation—many other cesses were abolished in 1773—in the Reserved areas, and *requested* the jagirdars and zamindars to do the same in their estates. The emperor's wish was complied with. (Vide, Sarkar's Aurangzeb, Abridged, p. 107).

money contribution and military service, and in many cases an implied obligation to establish matrimonial relations with the Royal house. Those chiefs, whether great or small, who could keep themselves immune from such obligations—particularly the last one—took a legitimate pride in maintaining what they considered a more dignified and honourable position than that of the chiefs who subjected themselves to such obligations, although they attained thereby very high ranks at Court. Thus it is not possible to find a simple uniform principle on which all the states of that period can be classified. We shall rather have to estimate the comparative status of states situated within each separate region, such as the Himalayan or the Central Indian hilly belt. They were the least affected by the might and influence of Dihli, taking advantage as they did of their natural fortifications of hill and jungle which made them almost invulnerable. This is invariably admitted by all contemporary writers, Indian as well as foreign. Thus even petty states in these regions maintained a greater degree of independence than most of the largest states in Rajputana and other parts of the country. These states were characterised in general by the following features:—

1. They enjoyed full sovereignty both internal and external with the limitation that they could not enter into alliance with the enemies of the crown.[1]

2. They seldom paid any regular tribute. As a rule most of them seem to have been free from all such contributions.

3. They did not, with rare exceptions, contribute any military levies, nor render any personal service.

4. Their succession was never controlled by the emperor.

5. They did not hold any ranks in the imperial army.

6. All the states had, at least formally, to surrender and hand over their territory to the emperor and then receive it back from him, resembling in this respect the rule

[1] None of these states, however, were allowed to coin money.

of feudal Europe in which the client had to relinquish all his rights over his land to the overlord and then receive it back from him. But here the analogy ends and it would be dangerous to push it any further, because the chiefs in no way resembled the feudal tenants of medieval Europe. This rule seems to have been universally applied, as we know from two instances under Akbar and Jahangir; and it was maintained by their successors.[1]

7. Such of the chiefs as had been subjugated were obliged to pay homage to provincial governors, and if they refused or failed to do so, they were severely censured or even punished.[2]

But there could be a fourth basis of classification which was implicit in the fact that while the major states had direct dealings with the Central Government, minor states were usually attached to the provinces within or near which they happened to be situated. Such states may justly be reckoned to belong to a junior class and may be called 'minor states'. They are not distinctly indicated in all the regions. A few typical cases, however, from each region, will now be discussed with a view to illustrating the above analysis.

The Himalayan slopes sheltered many rajas and chieftains who successfully defied the Muslim rulers of Dihli for several centuries before Akbar. The Akbarnamah mentions fifteen states[3] in the north of the Punjab and Dihli provinces, and Finch gives a list of nine states scattered from west to east[4], among which there are three new

[1] A.N. III, 728; R and B. I, 227. The cases of the Rajas of Panna and of Kumaon respectively.

[2] See for instance the case of Raja Madhukar of Orcha to be described hereafter. A.N. III, 604-605; Tr. III, 922-924.

[3] A.N. III, 583. These states were: Nagarkot; Koh-i-Jammu; Man; Jeswal; Kahlur; Gwalior; Dahpal; Sibah; Mankot; Jasrota; Lakanpur; Sharkot; Fort Bhita; Sukat Mandi; Dhamri.

[4] Finch, pp. 179-183. Of these nine states two were beyond the frontiers of Akbar's empire, and four were the same as in Abul Fazl's list. Besides these we find references to many petty zamindars, some independent, some subordinate to their more powerful

names, thus making eighteen altogether. Some of these, as well as some new ones are also mentioned in the Ain. The Himalayan states were able to maintain the greatest degree of independence as Abul Fazl himself recognises in several places in the A. N. and the strength of their position mainly lay in their hilly situation. We will briefly discuss only three typical cases, *viz.*, Kangra (Nagarkot), Srinagar (Garhwal) and Kumaon.

Nagarkot

This ancient and powerful state, situated in the Kangra valley in the north-eastern hills of the Punjab, had repulsed many an invasion of the Muhammadan rulers of Dihli. The Raja of Nagarkot was recognised as the most prominent among the many chiefs who ruled small states in the vicinity.

In the first year of his reign Akbar's forces pursued Sikandar Sur into the Siwalik hills whither he had fled. In the course of this expedition the fortress of Dhamri in Kangra was occupied by the imperial army. At this time many landholders (zamindars) did homage, among whom was also Raja Dharm Chand (Ram Chand of T.A.) of Nagarkot. Nothing more than a mere nominal submission seems to have been enforced at this time and this course was obviously dictated by considerations of expediency.[1] But in the eighteenth year of Akbar's reign Husain Quli Khan, governor of the Punjab, under imperial orders besieged the fort of Kangra and reduced the Raja to submission. Although complete conquest of the state was interrupted owing to the outbreak of Husain Mirza's revolt in the Punjab, yet Husain Quli Khan succeeded in extracting the following terms from the Raja: (1) that he would send his daughter to the royal harem, (2) that he would pay a suitable tribute, (3) that he would send with

neighbours, and holding just one or more forts together with the surrounding land.

[1] A.N. II, 19-20.

the officers responsible persons from among his sons and other relations, so that if the emperor did not approve of the peace, those men should remain as hostages until the delivery of the fort, (4) that as the province had been given to Raja Birbal as his jagir a large sum should be assured to him. The Khan-i-Jahan added a fifth condition that the Raja should come to his camp and pay due respects, which the Raja did after proper assurances for his safety had been given.[1] It seems, however, that these conditions were never carried out because we know from the Ain that while Dhamri or Dhamiri paid the round sum of 1,600,000 dams as tribute,[2] there is no mention of Nagarkot among the tribute paying mahals. That was why Akbar had to move in person against it in the twenty-sixth year again: but once more his attempt proved abortive owing to other preoccupations and the speedy submission of the Raja Jai Chand who was accepted among the vassals of the empire. No mention of any tribute or other conditions on this occasion occurs in any of the authorities.[3] Finch also states that the 'Prince Tilok Chand of Nagarkot was powerful and secure in his mountainous position, not once vouchsafing to visit Shah Salim' (Jahangir)[4]. Then the fort was finally taken after a siege of 14 months by Jahangir's forces, in 1620.[5] Ever since, the chiefs of Nagarkot seem to have remained tributaries of the Mughal emperors, for we learn that in the fourteenth year of Shah Jahan's reign the Raja of Kangra, who had been appointed 'Faujdar' of the hill-border of the Kangra region, to realise tribute from all the zamindars of that quarter, began to

[1] A.N. III, pp. 36-37; Tr. 50-52; T.A. II, pp. 256-260. The Tabaqat also gives an account of several other hill chieftains around Kangra reduced to submission in the course of this campaign, *e.g.*, Dhamri; Kutila—which were restored to their former Raja of Gwalior and Bhun or Bhawan (بهاون).

[2] Ain, I. 543.

[3] A.N. III, 348.

[4] Wm. Finch (Foster), 180.

[5] R. and B. II, 185-186.

put his fortresses in repair and showed signs of rebellion. Prince Murad, viceroy of Kabul, was ordered to undertake the reduction of the Raja at once. A protracted and exhausting siege had again to be undertaken before the Raja was compelled to capitulate and supplicate pardon through the intercession of prince Murad, which was granted. Najabat Khan was appointed faujdar of the conquered territory, and the Raja and his sons were brought to court, and the forts of the Kangra region were all demolished.[1]

Srinagar-Garhwal

Srinagar affords an example of a state which maintained complete independence until the time of Shah Jahan. Finch speaks of its ruler as a mighty prince and very rich, his state being situated between the Ganga and Jamna. For the first time Najabat Khan, faujdar of the hill-border of the Punjab, made an attempt in the eighth year of Shah Jahan's reign to conquer the state but was repulsed and the whole of his forces destroyed, for which he had to lose both his rank and office and suffer disgrace. But we are told that one Madho Das represented Srinagar as the Raja's vakil at Court even before this time. It appears that there were diplomatic relations between these states and the empire even before they were subjugated.[2]

Another expedition was sent against Srinagar in 1655 under Khalilullah Khan 'as that zamindar had never cared to pay homage'. This attempt too was not fully successful. Only a few forts in the Dehra valley were taken some of which the Raja recovered soon after, but Srinagar proper still remained unconquered. We are told, however, that later on Medni Singh, the son of the Raja, came and paid homage and begged pardon. He was received well and allowed to return.[3] Subsequently when the young

[1] Or. 175. fol. 248 b.
[2] Or. 175. fol. 132 b; M.U. III, 822-824; Manucci, I, 378-381.
[3] Or. 175. fol. 427 b; 431 a; and 451 b.

prince Sulaiman sought shelter at Srinagar, the old Raja spurned the overtures and threats of Aurangzeb to surrender him. But his son, placing expediency above honour and self-respect, treacherously handed over the prince to the tyrant, in order to please him.[1] This constituted an acknowledgment of his inferiority, although his secure seat in the hills still enabled him to continue to enjoy immunity from encroachment upon his authority or possessions.

Kumaon

The Rajas of Kumaon remained quite independent up to the thirty-third year of the reign (A.D. 1587). Once in the twenty-sixth year there was a revolt in Sambhal and the hill chieftains Ram Sah of Kumaon, Mukat Sen, Ram Karan and many others had joined it, but they were repulsed,[2] and retreated within their mountain shelter. Up to the thirty-third year the Raja of Kumaon used to send presents though he had never come to court to pay homage. In that year, Mathura Das, the new faujdar of Bareli persuaded him to come to court. The Raja did not rely on Mathura Das for protection in Court and asked that Todar Mal should guarantee his safety. The latter sent his son Kalyan Das who escorted the Raja to Court. He brought various presents and was received among the vassals of the empire.[3] In the Ain Kumaon is included as one of the sarkars of Dihli, but the revenue figures are given in even thousands for all parganahs and there are no area figures, showing thereby that that was the stipulated sum which the Raja undertook to pay as tribute. A further proof of this is that no (دستور العمل) dastur-ul-aml is mentioned in the case of Kumaon, in the Ain (see Cal. Text, Vol. I, p. 370). In addition to that 3000 cavalry only and 5000 infantry was to be supplied by him.[4]

[1] Bernier, 59, 92, 105; Tavernier, 277.
[2] A.N. III, pp. 348-349.
[3] A.N. III, 533; Bad. II, pp. 365-366; also R. and B. I, 218.
[4] Ain. p. 521.

There was no extra jagir or cash allowance given to the Raja for the maintenance of this contingent; and it appears that this levy represents rather what was theoretically expected than what was actually supplied or enforced.

These friendly relations continued till the time of Jahangir who hints at the nature of the treaty between the Raja and the Imperial Government. Jahangir gave him rich presents and 'presented him with his territory according to previous engagements.....'.[1] It seems, however, that the Raja of Kumaon ignored his treaty obligations under Shah Jahan because he had to be reduced to formal submission again in 1654 by Khalilullah Khan.[2]

These three states we may assign under the category of major states in view of their having direct relations with the central government. But as a matter of fact no such division is necessary in the case of these states, as it seems that none of the Himalayan principalities was attached to any province. No doubt the 'Ain' includes Kumaon as a sarkar of the Dihli province and Jammu as a mahal of the Rechnu Doab sarkar of Lahore, but that does not imply that the states in question were politically under the authority of the provincial government. We have numerous other similar cases. The states of Bikaner, Jodhpur and Sirohi are mentioned under Ajmer, while in practice the Ajmer government had no authority over them. The former two had direct dealings with the central government and Sirohi was attached to the province of Gujrat.[3] It is evident that in the Ain

[1] R. and. B. I, 227.

[2] Waris, Or. 1675, foll. 142 b-143 b.

[3] See Ain. I. p. 511. The sarkar of Sirohi had six mahals among which the state of Sirohi was represented only by two parganahs or mahals, *i.e.*, Sirohi and Abugarh. For revenue administration Sirohi seems to have been counted as a sarkar including four other mahals. But as a state it is clearly mentioned as one of the feudatories of the province of Gujrat. While his private force was only 2000 horse and 5000 foot (Ain. I. 492) he was expected to provide to the emperor 3000 horse and 15,000 foot, in time of need (Vide Ain. I. p. 511).

the territorial limits of the subahs are given and the account of the states which fall within their limits has therefore naturally come under them. But this need not mislead us to suppose either that the internal administration of these states was carried on directly by the government or that they were under the authority of provincial governors.

The States of the central hilly region

The central Indian hilly tract comprised the country between Rajputana (Mewar and Bundi) on the west, the province of Ilahabad on the north-west and the river Ganga and the districts of Bihar on the north-east, and Orissa and Gondwana on the east and south. This tract had always been the despair of conquerors. Studded with a number of large and small chiefships, its mountains and jungles and deep ravines together with its numerous impregnable fortresses, had defied the mightiest invaders. The far-reaching influence of its geography on the destinies of this land is admitted at every step by Abul Fazl and other chroniclers of the period. Even the hold of the great Mughals, although they reduced some parts of it to submission, remained very precarious as is clear from the constant revolts of the chiefs.

Orcha

The chiefs of Orcha (or Undchah) were the most powerful during our period. Akbar sent a force for the first time in the eighteenth year (1574 A.D.) against Raja Madhukar Bundela, and silenced his turbulence for the time being.[1] Then in 1578 Madhukar was defeated after a hard struggle and reduced to submission.[2] The subsequent relations of Orcha with the Mughal government afford a very interesting as well as illuminating instance of how the junior class of chieftains had to pay

[1] A. N. III, p. 77.
[2] A. N. III, pp. 209-210 and 229-231 and 261.

homage to provincial viceroys. When in the year 1592 (36th year of reign) prince Murad was appointed viceroy of Malwa, all the local zamindars came to pay him homage on his arrival. But Madhukar of Orcha did not come. The prince sent a report to the central government and Madhukar was severely reprimanded and ordered to do obeisance to the new viceroy. He went to meet the prince but becoming suspicious fled once more. On this the prince became angry, pursued Madhukar and, in spite of his submitting and sending his sons, plundered his home. This was going beyond his authority. For this act Murad and his companions were not only severely censured but ordered to redress Madhukar's losses and to immediately return to Malwa. Madhukar was then given assurances and Baz Bahadur was deputed to convey him to the prince so that he might pay him due homage. This incident also shows that the provincial governors were not authorised to attack the zamindars without the imperial government's sanction, except in cases of emergency.[1] When Madhukar's son Bir Singh Bundela murdered Abul Fazl, Akbar sent an expedition against him but it failed to capture him. Under Jahangir he was rewarded with high honours for his services and remained loyal. His son Jujhar Singh was first confirmed in the rank of 4000 zat and sawar (beginning of 1628) but was soon driven into rebellion by the imprudent policy of the emperor who ordered an enquiry into the unauthorised gains of his father.[2] Very strong and prompt action was taken against him, and Jujhar Singh was compelled to submit. He was restored to his rank but deprived of a part of his jagir and ordered to join the Deccan campaign with 2000 cavalry and 2000 infantry.[3] Here his meritorious services won him still higher honours and he was promoted to 5000 zat and 5000 Sawar, and the title

[1] A.N. III. pp. 604-606; Trans. III, pp. 922-924.

[2] Or. 173, fol. 168 b; Lahori, I, p. 203 assigns no reason for his rebellion; M.U. II, p. 215.

[3] Or. 173, fol. 173; Lahori, I, pp. 254-255. .

of Raja was conferred on him.[1] Jujhar Singh returned to Orcha in 1634 and in order to extend his territory treacherously killed Prem Narayan chief of Churagarh and seized his territory and treasure. No attempt was made to punish him for this outrage against Prem Narayan who was a loyal dependent. However, when Jujhar refused to share the spoils, a great offensive was again prepared against him and he was compelled to sue for pardon. The negotiations, however, failed and Jujhar Singh was destroyed with all his family except two sons who were captured alive.[2] Datia, Jhansi and other forts of Bundelkhand were soon occupied and great enormities perpetrated in the name of the Faith. The cause of the house of Orcha was taken up by Champat Rai, a chieftain of Mahoba who although reconciled for a short time, remained a constant source of trouble. After him his great son Chhatra Sal proved even more formidable a foe and was never subdued.

Bhatta or Bhatkhora.

Raja Ram Chand Baghel of Bhatta always made excuses and never came personally to pay homage. In 1584 he sent his son to represent him at Court.[3] On his death in 1593 the emperor appointed his son Birbhadra to succeed his father and conferred on him the title of Raja. Birbhadra was allowed to assume charge of his state.[4] It seems that shortly after this the ruler of Bhatta refused to own allegiance to the emperor for we learn that in 1598 an expedition under Rai Patra Das and others was sent to subdue him. The seat of the chieftain was at that time in the fortress of Bandhu (Bandogarh of Imp. Gaz. VI, p. 358, now in the Rewah State) which was a very mighty stronghold. It took the imperialists many a year of besieging to starve the garrison into submission.[5]

[1] Lahori, I, pp. 296 and 303.
[2] Lahori, II. p. 106.
[3] A.N. III, p. 420.
[4] A.N. III, p. 630.
[5] Ibid., p. 728.

The rulers of Bhatta seem to have remained loyal ever afterwards. In the year 1601 Darjodhan the young son of Birbhadra was installed on the gaddi and invested with the command of the fort of Bandhu. Bharati Chand was appointed his guardian.[1] In 1634 Amar Singh the ruler of Bandhu helped the imperial commander Abdullah Khan Firoz Jang in suppressing the rebellious zamindar of Ratanpur near Bihar.[2]

The state of Bhatta was perhaps the only exception in Central India which remained unswerving in its loyalty to the Mughals. Many other chiefs, such as those of Ujjainia, Gidhaur, Palamau, were constantly causing trouble.

In the detailed account of the subahs in the Ain there are no mahal-wise details of revenue, or militia, showing thereby that like many other states Bhatta also enjoyed internal autonomy and owned only a formal allegiance to the emperor. The cavalry and revenue figures shown in the Ain represent what was expected rather than what was actually contributed as I have elsewhere shown[3]. The assistance given by the ruler of Bandhu (Bhatta) to Abdullah Khan seems rather to have been of a voluntary and friendly nature than in fulfilment of any stipulated obligation. But Orcha is not at all mentioned in the Ain, a fact which raises the presumption that although Orcha was attacked and seized in 1577 by Sadiq Khan, it asserted its independence again and was never included among the regularly tribute-paying states.

The above illustrations will suffice to show that in these two regions the various chiefs and zamindars, with one or two exceptions, were never fully subjugated and the sway of the Mughal emperors never spread over them in the same sense in which it extended over the principalities of Rajputana.

[1] A.N. III, p. 788; Tr. p. 1180.

[2] Or. 173, foll. 339 b-340; Lahori, I, Pt. II, pp. 74-76 and Or. 175, foll. 125.

[3] See infra, pp. 181-183; 378-383.

The states of Rajputana—the country

The land of the Rajputs is divided into two nearly equal parts by the Arravali Range which cuts diagonally across it from the north-east to the south-west. The western half is a vast desert, and has exercised a considerable influence on the destinies of its people. Of the eastern half a small part is somewhat sandy, but the rest is fertile and rich in material resources. Besides this it occupies the most important strategic position, second only to the north-western passes. It has therefore always been the objective of all the conquerors and rulers of northern India.

Although owing to the weakness of their organisation and a complete lack of the progressive spirit, the Rajputs had lost the possession of northern India, in Rajputana they were proof against the most formidable and resolute conquerors. The Sultans of Dihli had left the western half of Rajputana to itself. The eastern half was invaded many times and subjected to ruthless devastation. Still, but for the temporary occupation by the invaders of a few border outposts and forts, it maintained its independence.

Akbar's policy: submission of Rajputana

The defeat of the Rajput confederacy at Khanwa was an event of the most momentous and far-reaching consequences in the history of India. But even that failed to transfer the possession of Rajputana from the Rajput chiefs to the Mughals. It was not the rattling of the sabre but the gentle hand of friendship and persuasion which could take the sturdy Rajputs. Gifted with an inherent statesmanlike insight and a liberal outlook, Akbar grasped from the very start the essence of the politics of Rajputana and endeavoured to win the support and co-operation of the Rajput chiefs in his great project of building a national empire in India. His method was to persuade them by favour and not by frown to recognise his paramountcy.

He, therefore, scrupulously and studiously abstained from any undue interference in their internal affairs.

The states of Rajputana as treated in the Ain.

For a study of the political status of the principalities of Rajputana the account of the subah of Ajmer given in the Ain is extremely valuable and illuminating. A careful analysis of this account reveals the following facts.

It has already been noticed in the last chapter that the tributary states throughout the empire were all included within the subahs, at least so far as revenue administration was concerned, that is to say they were treated as if they were sarkars and parganahs of the imperial territories proper, and not apart from them, as they are treated today. Thus the major part of the subah of Ajmer was composed of the tributary states of Rajputana, only two out of its seven sarkars, viz., Ajmer and Nagor, being directly administered. Now it will be remembered that in the case of the imperial territories proper, the Ain gives the area, suyurghal and revenue figures, but in the case of territories outside the jurisdiction of the imperial government these statistics are generally very incomplete. There are no suyurghals in the tributary states and the reason is that no suyurghals could be granted out of the territories of the chiefs, and excepting those few who seem to have chosen to organise their revenue administration according to the Zabti system lately introduced in the empire, the rest adhered to their old system of sharing, and hence no area statistics for such states are available. Then the revenue figures for nearly all of them are given in even thousands, a fact which shows that a fixed round sum was paid as tribute by each state. The government had no hand in realising the revenue from the ryot. The army figures are equally significant, in the form in which they are given.

Taking the sarkars of Ajmer we notice that there

are no suyurghals[1] in Bikaner, Jodhpur and Sirohi, and in the remaining four sarkars only a few mahals have suyurghals. This fact shows that even in these four sarkars most of the mahals were still held by petty tributary chiefs, and only a small part of them was administered by the provincial government. This conclusion is strengthened by the nature of the other statistics. Firstly several mahals in these four sarkars are not measured, and the revenue of all such is stated to be 'in money' (نقدی) which probably means a certain fixed *cash sum* (or perhaps its equivalent in kind). Secondly about eighty per cent of the mahals in Ranthambhor and Chittor, about 25 per cent in Ajmer and a few in Nagor paid their revenue in round sums. Thirdly, the army figures of Ajmer, Ranthambhor and Chittor, are not stated mahal-wise, but only their totals are given instead, while in Nagor only two out of its 31 mahals furnished the whole quota of the sarkar, the remaining 29 being free. Thus the local militia also was raised by chiefs and not through government agency. Fourthly we also observe that some of the well-known states are included in these sarkars, the most conspicuous being Amber which was a mahal of Ajmer and comprised more than one-fourth of its total area which consisted of 20 sarkars.

In the remaining three sarkars, viz., Jodhpur,[2] Sirohi

[1] The following statement shows the number of mahals in these four sarkars:—

In Ajmer	..	there are	suyurghals	in	6	mahals	out of	28	mahals.
,, Chittor	,,	,,	,,	,,	4	,,	,,	,, 26	,,	.
,, Ranthambhor	,,	,,	,,	,,	5	,,	,,	,, 73	,,	.
,, Nagor	,,	,,	,,	,,	9	,,	,,	,, 31	,,	.

[2] Ibid, 364, mentions one dastur-ul-aml for the sarkar of Jodhpur, which is an exception in the case of a non-zabti area (as has been shown by Moreland and Ali in J. R. A. S. 1918, pp. 12-14). Moreover we know that its zamindars paid fixed tributes. The explanation of this discrepancy may be that the chief of that state had introduced some sort of *dastur* after the manner of the zabti areas. This is, however, a mere conjecture.

and Bikaner[1], there are, of course, no area figures, and for the last one only the totals of revenue and army are given and no other details at all. For Jodhpur the revenue figures are given mahal-wise, but they are nearly all in even thousands and show that fixed contributions were realised from the many petty zamindars under the chief of Jodhpur. In the case of Sirohi detailed figures are given mahal-wise and the reason is not far to seek. This sarkar is composed of four separate chiefships. It has six mahals in all, of which Sirohi and Abugarh represent the state of Sirohi for which the revenue and army figures are jointly given. The sarkars, Dungarpur and Banswara, each constituted a state and furnished its own quotas of army and tribute. The fourth state was made up of Jalor and Sanchor mahals combined, contributing their own quotas.[2] It is worth noticing here that while for purposes of revenue accounts and perhaps also for its realisation these states were combined to represent a sarkar of the Ajmer province, politically they were all attached to the viceroy of Gujrat.[3]

Relations of the states of Rajputana with the province of Ajmer

When we consider the relations between the states of Rajputana and the Mughal provincial government of

[1] Ain, I, p. 365; also mentions no dastur-ul-Aml's for Sirohi and Bikaner

سرکار سروهی و سرکار بیکانیر – دستورالعمل این سرکار مشخص نیست –

Trans. Sarkars of Sirohi and Bikaner for which no Dastur-ul-Amls are specified or ascertained.

[2] All the four principalities, Banswara, Dungarpur, Sirohi and Jalor lay on the borders of Gujrat (see Ain. I, p. 485, l. 13 and p. 492, ll. 15-18). It is highly interesting to note that the chief of Jalor was an Afghan and not a Rajput. This was the only state to be ruled by an hereditary Afghan chief. In the 21st year of Akbar's reign the ruler Taj Khan turned recalcitrant. An expedition was at once sent against him and Taj Khan repented and made submission. At the same time Taj Khan was also ordered to render military service in Gujrat (Vide A.N. III, p. 189 and Mirat (I.O.MS) I, fol. 100 b).

[3] Mirat (I.O.MS.) I, foll. 78-80.

Ajmer we notice that there existed certain striking resemblances as well as differences with the relations which now obtain between the British Ajmer Division and the states of Rajputana. The centre of the imperial government's authority in order to keep a general watch and supervision was then as now at Ajmer. But the viceroy of Ajmer might have had, in addition, to do something with the realisation of the tributes, which is not the case now. The chief commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara does not enjoy any such powers. The contrast, however, does not end here. While theoretically almost all the states were at that time included in the province of Ajmer, now they form no part of any province, but stand as isolated political units by themselves. On the other hand the political representative of the British Government, known as Agent to the Governor-General of India, who resides at Ajmer, exercises full control over them, while the Mughal governor of Ajmer had no authority over them, and any interference on his part in their affairs would have been resented as an encroachment upon their rights and privileges. The present states of Rajputana have to deal with the central government through the Agent to the Governor-General, while those of the Mughal period had direct dealings with the central government. The only agency of control and watch over Rajputana maintained by the government was created by stationing a number of faujdars and qiladars in a few border outposts and forts, as for instance, Ranthambhor. A small part of the country in the vicinity of their respective charges was assigned to them as jagir, of which they were also the administrative officers.

The above analysis elucidates the conditions of the political relations of these states with the Mughal government and in the light thereof we can essay an estimate of their position.

Although generally speaking all the major states enjoyed an almost equal status, there were palpable differences in the extent of their obligations, their freedom

of action, and the honour and rank they enjoyed at Court. These considerations may reasonably serve as criteria for a classification of these states.

Among the features common to them all the first was that all of them possessed full internal powers[1] and the second that they had to furnish contingents for the imperial army and pay tribute regularly, both of which varied according to the circumstances and importance of the individual states. They imposed customs and transit duties on merchants passing through their states. Peter Mundy mentions several chiefs to whom his party had to pay customs while moving from Agra to Surat in 1633.[2] They also enjoyed complete religious freedom in their

[1] Peter Mundy mentions the case of a camel of their company doing some damage to the crops while they were passing through the state of Kishangarh (near Ajmer). The officers of the state captured the camel and demanded a fine of 100 rupees. But Baqir Khan the newly appointed governor of Gujrat wrote a letter recommending pardon on which Mundy and his companions had only to pay a fine of 20 rupees. Mundy, II, 280. Another instance is mentioned of how they had to pay a heavy fine for mishandling an officer who had come to demand customs. Ibid. 263. But in their external relations with other states or even with smaller chieftains partially subordinate to themselves they were not quite free. When Jujhar Singh Bundela returned from the Deccan and destroyed Raja Prem Narayan of Chauragarh without permission, he was punished. (Qazvini, Or. 173, fol. 343; Lahori, Vol. I, part II, 95). A more apt example is provided by the case of Rana Jagat Singh of Udaipur who punished his tributary chiefs of Banswara, Partapgarh, Dungarpur and Sirohi for revolting against him. But these chiefs were under the protection of the Mughal emperor. Consequently the Rana was severely reprimanded and had to relax his authority over those chieftains. See Ojha, 831-835. See also R. and B. II, 100; for Jahangir's testimony of their internal authority.

[2] Vide Mundy, II, pp. 255, 293, 258-59, 263, also Tavernier, pp. 47, 69. In the matter of customs the exemptions which the emperors occasionally granted to certain European merchants were not applicable to the states. A request for exemption at Datia was met by the reply that the prince (Shah Jahan) could not interfere with the Raja's collections. See 'India from Akbar to Aurangzeb', p. 287. This privilege seems to have been exercised only by smaller states.

states. No one dared even kill a bird within their boundaries.[1] Thirdly in the matter of succession the emperor claimed, in theory at any rate, the right of full control and regulation thereof in all the states. On such occasions they usually exacted homage and offerings from the new chief, formally returned to him his territory (or jagir as they called it), invested him with the title which his ancestors enjoyed and formally installed him on the gaddi.[2] But as we shall see these rights were not asserted over every one with the same strictness. So far as payment by them of tribute is concerned we have no other evidence except that of the Ain in which the various states have been treated as either sarkars or mahals, with their revenues stated against each, which may be assumed to represent their tribute.[3] As regards the contingents of the local militia too, it is equally unsafe to assert that the figures given for each division in the Ain indicate the actual quota maintained and furnished. It may be that they represent merely the number which a particular area or division was supposed to be capable of supplying. The lack of any specific information as to the exact significance of these army figures gives rise to the problem of correctly interpreting them. But the investigation of this question belongs elsewhere and will be discussed in its proper place. Suffice it to say here that we are inclined to the view that the figures represent the expected rather than the actual quotas.

Another important question is whether or not these

[1] Tavernier, pp. 57-58. "You must be careful not to kill a bird or any other animal in the territory of the Rajas where the idolators are masters.....". A rich Persian merchant was severely flogged to death by the Banians of the state of Danta (in Bombay) because he had killed a peacock.

[2] See infra, case of Jaisalmer; also R. and B. I, p. 325.

[3] A possible difficulty, however, in accepting these revenue figures as representing the tributes paid by the chiefs arises from the fact that the amounts shown are so large (cf. for instance the revenues of the sarkars of Ajmer) as to look rather like their total income than the tribute which could have been only a fraction of it.

chiefs enjoyed the power of coining money for their states. Of the 42 mint towns mentioned by Abul Fazl[1] all belonged to the crown, and only three of them, viz., Ajmer, Ranthambhor and Nagor, were within the territories of the chiefs. Similarly several places mentioned in other works where mints were established were within the imperial territories.[2] This fact coupled with one of the main terms of the treaty made with the Jam of Navanagar in 1642 by Shah Jahan being that he should close down the mint in Navanagar and stop coining money,[3] provides enough ground to conclude that, as a rule, the subordinate chiefs were not empowered to coin money. Of the three places within the territories of the chiefs where imperial mints existed Ajmer was indeed the seat of the imperial subahdar and outside the jurisdiction of the chiefs. In Ranthambhor and Nagor there were only copper mints. These were obviously opened for the sake of giving facility to the people of Rajputana and also probably due to the proximity of several copper mines in the vicinity. We know for certain that the authority of coining money was extended to none of the subordinate chiefs by the Mughal Emperors. The mints of all the Rajput chiefs, irrespective of their rank or status, not excepting even Mewar, were closed down[4] and the imperial currency was put into circulation throughout the empire. It was as late as the middle of the XVIII century that the chiefs of Rajputana obtained from the emperor Muhammad Shah and his successors permission to open mints in their respective states on the condition that they had to inscribe on their coins the name of His Majesty the Mughal

[1] Ain. I, 27 Blochmann, Sec. Edition by Phillot, p. 32.

[2] Mirat (I.O.) fol. 125a.

[3] Ibid (I.O.) fol. 125b; also Or. 175, fol. 238.

[4] But perhaps an exception was made in the case of the chiefs of Orissa by Raja Man Singh when he conquered that province. The Raja allowed the chiefs to retain the privilege of coining provided they inscribed the Emperor's name and figure on their coins. See Orissa, Vol. II (Vols. II and III of Annals of Rural Bengal) by W. W. Hunter. 1872. pp. 16—20.

Emperor in recognition of his suzerainty which practice continued down to the middle of the XIX century when the name of their Mughal suzerain was replaced by that of their new master the British Queen, on their coinage.[1] Thus so far as the above-mentioned obligations were concerned the states were all on about the same footing. But some of them maintained a greater degree of freedom from obligations of a more formal sort, such as an implied obligation to enter into matrimonial relationship. Apart from these there were no more substantial differences to serve as a basis of classification. The relations between the Imperial Government and these states, with the single exception of Jaipur, were not quite steady. There were frequent occasions of conflict and re-settlement between them. It is therefore necessary to trace briefly the history of their contact with the empire.

Mewar : an exception

The case of Mewar both as regards its relations with the empire as well as its political status was altogether unique. During the first half of Akbar's reign it remained independent. When it was conquered, the Rana receded into the jungles and the greater bulk of his territories were constituted into the sarkar of Chittor of the province of Ajmer. Thus the real history of Mewar's relations with the Mughal empire begins in the year 1615 when Rana

[1] The Muslim Sultans of Dihli since the establishment of their rule denied to the Hindu chiefs who were subordinate to them their ancient right of coining money. This is corroborated by the fact that of the period between the last quarter of the 12th and the second quarter of 18th centuries no coins of the Rajput chiefs are known to exist. And the reason is obvious. The two primary incidents which signified the sovereign authority of a Muslim ruler were the reading of the Khutba and the striking of coins in his name. Coining money thus constituted one of the two fundamental prerogatives of sovereignty neither of which could conceivably be conceded to any subordinate chief.

For the history of the restoration of the right of coining money to the Rajput chiefs, vide Erskine, Raj. Gaz., and W. W. Webb's Currencies of the Hindu States of Rajputana.

Amar Singh made peace with the emperor Jahangir. We shall first deal with Mewar and then proceed to discuss the other major states of Rajputana.

But one more point demands attention before we proceed to give an account of the states. Some of the chiefs—mostly the smaller ones—are known to have been so independent of the imperial control as to have imposed customs on merchants passing through their territories. Moreover, they often molested the caravans and merchants passing by those routes because though 'vassals of the Mughals they are yet generally unwilling to recognise them.'[1] They did not allow anybody to kill animals within their borders and the transgressors were severely punished, as we have noticed above. These occurrences, however, took place long after Akbar; and it would seem that they were the result of refractoriness on the part of the chiefs and not of any legal rights which they enjoyed.[2] The larger states such as Amber or Bikaner never indulged in plundering or molesting merchants passing through their territories. Nor, perhaps, did they insist on realising customs on merchandise. But on the other hand it is almost certain that the killing or injuring of animals was forbidden everywhere in Hindu states.

Mewar

The state of Mewar lay in the south-east of Rajputana. From the antiquity and pre-eminence of the house of Sisodias who ruled there, it occupied the premier position among the states of that country. From the moment of the establishment of Muslim power in Hindustan Chittor had been the target of their ambitions and had seldom known rest. It had to bear the brunt of an unending series of invasions from Dihli which frightened the craven Udai Singh into moving his capital to a safer place

[1] Tavernier, 31; 41; 47; 57-58; 69.

[2] Peter Mundy, II, 255; 293; 258-'59. The chiefs of Sirohi, Kalabagh (near Gwalior) and several others were involved in these affairs.

protected by a natural fence of surrounding hills. This led to the foundation of the city of Udaipur. Yet Chittor, though deserted in this manner, never fell into the possession of the Dihli Sultans for any considerable length of time. Akbar, however, stormed and captured the mighty fortress, but nothing could bend the Sisodias, and with more logic than discretion they tenaciously maintained a position rendered altogether unique by the grimness of their determination to court endless sufferings out of loyalty to the traditional dignity and honour of their house. A tragic failure as a far-seeing statesman, the hero Rana Pratap, champion of the liberties of his land and her peoples, refused to bend before the entire resources of the mighty Emperor even under the stress of incalculable sufferings and privations, with an undauntedness and fortitude of which history can scarcely furnish a parallel. And when at last his son, Rana Amar Singh, from a sheer feeling of pity for his woe-stricken people and devastated land,[1] was prevailed upon to sue for peace, he still held his head high and as a price of peace, demanded terms such as should in no way compromise his own position or the honour of his ancient house. Some of these conditions were altogether unprecedented and yet they were all gladly and unflinchingly accepted by the emperor Jahangir who issued a farman,[2] impressing it with the mark of his own 'auspicious palm' and authorising Khurram to conclude a treaty with the Rana.[3] The terms of the treaty were:—

1. The Rana will never be expected to attend court

[1] The emperor's army were not only devastating the land, but capturing women and children wherever they could; hence the Sardars implored the Rana to make peace with the Emperor in order to save their families from being subjected to disgrace. Ojha, p. 806, Tod, I, p. 419.

[2] This farman was wrapped in a piece of Dacca muslin and bore the impression of the King's hand in saffron colour. It is still preserved among the archives of the Udaipur Darbar. Vir Vinod, Pt. II, 236, quoted in Ojha, 808.

[3] R and B. I, 274; Tod, I, 420.

in person.

2. The Crown Prince of Mewar, Karan Singh will represent the Rana at the court.

3. The Prince will maintain at his own expense a contingent of 1000 horse to serve in the imperial army whenever required.

4. The fortress of Chittor will be restored to the Rana, but its walls will never be rebuilt or even repaired.

Imposing a tribute on the Rana was out of the question[1] and any suggestion of matrimonial relationship, of course, inconceivable. Jahangir was too sensible to raise such risky questions. On the contrary, when the prince Karan Singh, after the conclusion of the treaty, went to the imperial court at Ajmer he was given an unprecedented ovation. In the words of Tod 'seldom has subjugated loyalty met with such consideration', and 'to win his heart', the emperor bestowed on the prince Karan Singh every day the richest presents of all sorts so that by the time of his departure after a stay of nearly four months,[2] his presents amounted to the value of more than

[1] "Khurram" says Tod "demanded but the friendship of the Rajput as the price of peace, and to withdraw every Muhammadan from Mewar if the Rana would but receive the emperor's farman outside his capital.....and though the Rana visited prince Khurram as a friend, he spurned the proposition of acknowledging a superior or receiving the rank and titles awaiting such an admission." Vol. I, p. 426.

Mewar was allowed to enjoy a position and privileges altogether unique among the chiefs of India who had submitted to the Mughals. In Akbar's time practically the whole of Udaipur territory had been overrun, the Rana driven to take refuge in obscure jungles and the country constituted into a regular sarkar, that of Chittor, as we know from the Ain-i-Akbari. At that time the various zamindars living in that sarkar were made to pay tribute. But the whole of the Rana's kingdom was returned to him as soon as the treaty was made and thereafter no tribute was demanded.

[2] He stayed at Court from February 19 to June 5, 1615. Jahangir ascribes his extraordinary courtesy and liberality of behaviour towards Karan Singh to the 'wild nature of the prince' (R and

200000 rupees, besides numerous elephants, horses and other things presented by Khurram and the empress Nur Jahan and other ladies of the royal harem. In addition to these presents he was made a commander of 5000 both Zat and Sawar[1] and was assigned a place in the foremost row of the mansabdars on the right, that is to say, among the highest nobles of the empire.[2] One important result of this treaty was the restoration to the Rana of all those parts of Mewar which had been conquered by the Mughals since Akbar's victory over Chittor. This was effected by a farman of the emperor addressed to Kunwar Karan Singh dated May 11, 1615.[3] In addition to this the outlying parganahs of Phulia, Ratlam, Jiran, Nimach, Arnod, Mandalgarh, Bhainsror together with supremacy over Deolia (Partapgarh) and Dungarpur[4] were also made over to the prince. These additional parganahs were not a part of the treaty. They were probably assigned by way of allowance for the troops which the prince was to maintain for service in the imperial army. Roe seems to refer to this assignment when he speaks of additional tribute being paid to the Maharana by the emperor.[5]

Thus the Maharanas of Udaipur alone enjoyed the exceptional privilege of being 'exempted from attendance at the imperial court and service in the imperial army in person, and permitted to do these services by deputy, usually a younger brother or son, or oftener a paid

B. I, 277), but the truth rather seems to be as Tod thinks (I, 426) that in spite of the exceptional honours and courtesy showered on him, the prince felt uncomfortable owing to a biting sense of humiliation at having had to accept an inferior position 'which nothing could compensate'. Hence Jahangir was at pains to assuage this feeling and he tried to overwhelm it with the richness of his presents and extreme courtesy of behaviour.

[1] R and B. I, 281; Tod, I, 422.

[2] Ojha, p. 809.

[3] This farman is still extant in Udaipur Darbar and is reproduced in Vir Vinod, II, 239-249. Ojha, 814-815.

[4] Ojha, 814-815; Tod, I, 422; foot-note.

[5] Embassy, 90.

agent'.[1] Other Rajput rulers, even the greatest, for instance, Jodhpur and Jaipur,* were not exempted from these services. Moreover, it were the rulers of Udaipur alone to whom the emperor used to send the farman of investiture and mansab, on the occasion of their accession, without their having to attend court.[2]

Tod rightly admires the emperor Jahangir for the far-sighted generosity with which he accepted all the conditions desired by the Rana when he sued for peace. Nay more: he made every effort to lighten the chains of the vanquished by showing all manner of courtesy and consideration to the Rana's representative. The emperor proudly says that the Rana's forefathers had never surrendered to or obeyed any emperor of Hindustan.[3] No wonder that he felt so exultant in his triumph, and was so full of admiration for the Rana and his son that he erected two life-size statues of them before the gate of the fort at Agra. Indeed he became so considerate to them that when Karan Singh drove out Shaktawat Narayandas from the Jagir of Begun (بیگون) and Ratangarh, which he had received from the emperor for helping him against the Rana during the war, Jahangir made no objection to Karan Singh's rather high-handed proceeding and in order to compensate Narayandas gave him a jagir near Ajmer.[4] Moreover the farmans and other communications to Udaipur were invariably sent in charge of personages of high rank and status in keeping with the dignity of the Sisodia house. On the death of Rana Amar Singh in 1619, Karan Singh's son, prince Jagat Singh, aged 12, who was at Court with his uncle Bhim Singh, was sent back under the escort of Raja Kishan Das[5] (Kishore Das

[1] Later Mughals, 43, foot-note by Sarkar.
[2] Ojha, 813.
[3] R and B. I, 274.
[4] Ojha, p. 816.
[5] Raja Kishan Das of Dihli was a great confidant of the emperor and held the command of 2000-3000 (R and B. II, 111). Similarly on the death of Karan Singh in 1628 A. D., the farman

*Amber.

in Tod, 1, 425) with whom was also despatched a farman of condolence and congratulation to Rana Karan Singh. The above discussion shows the extraordinary respect that the Rana's house commanded at the Mughal Court and the scrupulous care with which the emperors always tried to keep them satisfied, and to avoid any injury to their sense of dignity.

The friendly relations thus established between Dihli and Udaipur subsisted unimpaired for nearly a generation. The Rana's forces fought in the imperial army in the Deccan and other places. The Sesodia princes used to visit the court and were always received with unabated zeal and courtesy.

After the death of Jahangir, however, a temporary rift was brought about by the refractoriness of Rana Jagat Singh. He quietly repaired the fortifications of Chittor and erected several new gates in violation of the treaty. Shah Jahan sent a force under Saadullah Khan. The Rana thought it unwise to court disaster by offering resistance and withdrew his men. Saadullah demolished the walls of the fort once more. The Rana begged pardon and sent his son to Court with Sheikh Abdul Karim under the escort of eight sardars. The Rana was pardoned but deprived of the districts in the neighbourhood of Ajmer, which were placed under direct administration.[1]

The subordinate chieftains of Banswara, Partapgarh (Deolia), Dungarpur and Sirohi, which were tributary to Mewar began to throw off its yoke, being encouraged by the protection of the emperor. The Rana sent expeditions and punished them, and exacted tribute, without taking permission from the emperor. This offended the latter and the Rana had to reconcile him by relaxing his authority

of investiture together with a robe and other presents befitting the Rana's position were sent with Raja Vir Narayan, father of Ani Rai Singhdalan. Ojha, 831.

[1] The parganahs thus taken under imperial control were: Mandal, Khairabad, Mandalgarh, Jahajpur, Samar, Phulia, Banera, Harda, Badnor. Ojha, 844-'45.

over those chiefs and begging forgiveness again.[1] The war of succession among the sons of Shah Jahan afforded the Rana an opportunity again of recovering all that he had lately lost. But political expediency compelled Aurangzeb to confirm him in the possession of all his acquisitions.

Bundi (Harauti) and Kotah

Harauti was originally a single state. In the beginning of the 17th century a part of it got separated and became the future state of Kotah. The rulers of the principality of Bundi which stretched north and east of Udaipur and Ajmer, belonged to the Hada clan, a branch of the Chauhans. At first they held a small jagir from the rulers of Mewar, but early in the 16th century they became more powerful and founded a separate principality of their own, owing only nominal allegiance to Mewar. After the fall of the Surs they took possession of the country as far as Ranthambhor including that fort, which had long been an outpost of Dihli. When Akbar undertook the conquest and reconciliation of Rajputana he persuaded the Hada chief Surjan Singh to transfer his allegiance from Mewar to Dihli. Surjan surrendered Ranthambhor to the emperor (1570)[2]. He as well as his descendants alternately served and revolted against the Mughals and were met with favour or otherwise accordingly. But they seem to have enjoyed a more independent and honourable position in the empire than the otherwise more important states of Amber and Jodhpur, and perhaps more than all others except Mewar. Like the latter they refused to establish matrimonial relations with the Mughals.[3] If the Ain figures represent their contribution they paid fixed

[1] Ojha, 831-'35.

[2] Ranthambhor with its suburbs became a sarkar of subah Ajmer and an important military outpost of the empire, in charge of a faujdar.

[3] The terms of the treaty between Rai Surjan and the emperor as given by Tod are obviously a later fabrication.

quotas of tribute, but whether the state supplied any army or not is more than we can say. Surjan occupied responsible positions under Akbar, and, like other mansabdars, received suitable jagirs for his contingents. He once held the governorship of Garh-Katanga and subsequently that of Chunargarh.[1]

The small principality of Kotah was an offshoot of Bundi. Rao Raja Ratan Singh, chief of Bundi, gave to his son Madho Singh the town of Kotah and its dependencies in jagir in the beginning of the 17th century. Not long after when Prince Khurram was rebelling against his father the Hadas sided with the imperial forces. As a reward for this service Jehangir conferred on Ratan Singh the governorship of Burhanpur and confirmed Madho Singh in permanent possession of his jagir to be held by him and his descendants direct from the crown, thus making him independent of Bundi. This provides an instance in which the emperor asserted his authority of making a permanent grant of a part of an old state to another person and making it independent of its former chief and placing it on an equal footing with its parent. This is the first notable example of an *altamgha* grant.

Subsequently the Hada chiefs fought against Aurangzeb on behalf of Dara, and the former made vigorous efforts to destroy Bhao Singh but in vain and eventually decided to utilise his abilities by making him governor of Aurangabad. The chiefs of Kotah also maintained the same freedom from interference in their internal affairs or from obligations of an objectionable nature as those of Bundi.

Amber

Amber was a very petty principality subject to Jodhpur till the beginning of the 16th century.[2] Nevertheless

[1] Ain. I, (Blochmann), p. 409.

[2] M. U. (Tr.) I, 409. 'Amber was a dependency of Ajmer', and the latter being a district of Maldeo's kingdom prior to the Mughal conquest, the Amber chiefs must have been subject to the

it deserves to be dealt with before the others because it led the way in the policy of making submission to the Mughals and forming friendship with them. Raja Bihari-mall Kachhwaha showed by action that he suffered neither from the recklessness nor the suicidal idealism of the typical Rajput. On the contrary he evinced the rather un-Rajput virtues of prudence and self-preservation. He saw the inevitable tide of Mughal expansion[1] and, realising that to resist would be to court certain ruin, he availed himself of the first opportunity of entering into an alliance with the great Mughal. In order to prove his friendly attitude Bihari Mall in the very first year of Akbar's reign, helped his commandant Majnun Khan Qaqshal to effect his escape from the fort of Narnaul[2] where he was besieged by an Afghan rebel. Qaqshal commended his loyalty to Akbar. Bihari Mall was invited to court and dismissed with a promise of friendship and kindness. The Raja had suffered oppression at the hands of Muhammad Sharif Uddin Mirza of Mewat who had imposed a contribution on him and taken two of his sons as hostages. The Raja had a very small army and being unable to oppose the Mirza, had hid himself in the hills. In 1561 when Akbar was proceeding to Ajmer the Raja thought it the best opportunity to seal his alliance with the King in order to secure his territory against his ambitious neighbours.[3] No price was considered too great for self-preservation. He therefore approached the King and sought his protection by offering him, among other things, his daughter in marriage. The offer was, of course, graciously accept-

rulers of Marwar. It comprised only one of the 28 mahals of the sarkar of Ajmer, but covered a little over one-fifth of its total area. (Ain. I, p. 508); A. N. II, 155 also testifies to this.

[1] Within a year of his accession Akbar had captured Nagor and Ajmer and shortly after a number of other forts had been taken. By 1562 Merta had fallen.

[2] A. N. II, 20; and 44-45; Trans. II, 36 and 70.

[3] A. N. II, p. 155. The M. U. I, (Tr.) 409 says that Bihari Mall had been driven by the goveror of Ajmer to seek shelter in flight.

ed, in consideration whereof Bihari Mall received exceptionally liberal conditions of vassalage, which originated from a far-sighted statesmanship and not because the status or importance of the Raja deserved such a recognition. Akbar was aware that his possessions were yet limited and far from being firm. Consequently he was anxious to grasp every opportunity of enlisting the support of the Rajput chieftains, by whose co-operation alone, he knew, the empire could be secured. He therefore welcomed the unsolicited offer of a matrimonial relation as the strongest bond of friendship with them. And by his generous treatment of one of the chiefs and bestowing on him the high rank of 5000 he stimulated a desire in others to win similar honours. The Raja was thus returned loaded with honours and his state was constituted a dependency of the empire. Further, his son and grandson and several other kinsmen were taken into service and endowed with suitable ranks and jagirs. The alliance thus made remained unimpaired till the reign of Aurangzeb.[1]

By his policy Bihari Mall raised his petty state to the position of a first-class state in Rajputana, a position which the Kachhwahas have maintained to this day. The Kachhwaha princes, Rajas Bhagwan Das and Man Singh rose to the highest situations in the empire and in this respect their state may be said to belong to the foremost states of Rajputana in that period. While like all other chiefs they had to pay tribute and supply a local force, they enjoyed the unique privilege of being the Rajput chiefs who were most trusted by the Mughals.

Jodhpur

The famous Rawal Maldeo carried on the struggle with the Mughals. When he died in 1581, civil war ensued between his sons. His son Udai Singh (known as Mota Raja, because he was unusually obese; 1581-'95) entered into an alliance with the emperor, the usual tie

[1] See Bernier, p. 209.

being the marriage of his sister and daughter to the emperor and the prince Salim respectively. But the other terms are interesting. All his possessions which had been captured were restored to him with the exception of Ajmer, and, as if by way of compensation, he obtained several districts in jagir in Malwa and, in addition, the title of Raja.[1] He received the rank of 1500 according to Nizamuddin.[2] His son Sur Singh, though not mentioned in Abul Fazl's list is said to have risen to the mansab of 4000 or 5000. He and his descendants rendered great services to the Mughals. Sur Singh reduced the chief of Sirohi on behalf of the emperor, and for services rendered in the Deccan and Gujrat, under the princes Daniyal and Murad, received five jagirs in the latter and one in the former province.[3] His son Gaj Singh too (1595-1620) for similar services, received the mansab of 3000, 2000 (personal and horse),[4] with a standard and the title of Raja. Jahangir incidentally tells us also that these Rajas retained sole authority over the internal administration of their states.[5] As usual Jodhpur is also reckoned by Abul Fazl among the sarkars of subah Ajmer, providing 15000 cavalry and 50000 infantry.

The rulers of Jodhpur continued to enjoy this position and rendered meritorious services to the Mughals upto the time of Aurangzeb until by the short-sighted policy of that monarch, they were driven into a war with him.[6] Rawal Gajraj received some unusual honours and privileges under Shah Jahan. His soldiers rendered such faithful and valuable service that the emperor conferred on them titles and honours and, as a special mark

[1] Akbar Nama.

[2] T. A. II, 444.

[3] Rajputana Gazetteers, Vol. III A, p. 59. Jahangir says: His territory surpassed that of his father and grand-father. R. and B. II, 100.

[4] Raj. Gaz. says that he held the rank of 4000 and later 5000. See Vol. III A, p. 59.

[5] R. and B. II, 100.

[6] Bernier, 209.

of favour and trust, the horses of his cavalry were exempted from the branding regulation.[1] Gajraj Singh's son Jaswant Singh rose to fame under Aurangzeb and attained the exceptionally high rank of 7000. The events following his death brought about the rupture which led to the prolonged Rajput war with Aurangzeb in which the hero Durgadas played such a noble and brave part that his name has become a byword all over Rajputana as the very ideal of chivalry, patriotism, fidelity and self-sacrifice.

Bikaner

This state was an offshoot of the Rathors of Jodhpur, having been founded by Bika, son of Jodha. During Sher Shah's time its chief came into contact with the Muslim rulers. Kalyan Singh (1541-71) owing to his hostility with Maldeo had allied himself with Sher Shah. Realising the advantage of the Mughal alliance, in 1570, Kalyan Singh with his son Rai Singh waited on the emperor at Nagaur[2] and presented tribute. Both father and son accompanied the emperor up to Ajodhan (Pakpatan); from that place the Rao was allowed to return, but his son remained in attendance. The emperor being pleased married Kalyan's daughter.

Kalyan Singh's son Rai Singh rendered very loyal and valuable services to the emperor in various parts of the country. As a reward he received the title of Raja and a jagir of 52 villages worth more than ten lakhs yearly. His brother was made a mansabdar. Rai Singh subsequently served in the imperial wars in Bengal, against the Baluchis in Sindh and in the Deccan, and was made governor of Burhanpur and then of Surat in 1596. He held a mansab of 4000 in 1605, subsequently raised by Jahangir to 5000.

The next chief Dalpat Singh (1611-13) proved very powerful and of an independent nature. He discarded

[1] Raj. Gaz., Loc. Cit.

[2] T. A. II, 229-230; Elliot, V. 335-336.

Mughal suzerainty and inflicted a crushing defeat on an army sent against him. He was therefore treacherously captured and slain. After him a chequered state of relations went on between the Bikaner chiefs and the Mughals. Karan Singh (1631-69) sided with Aurangzeb in the war of succession, but the emperor's attempt to convert the Rajputs offended him and he assumed an attitude of armed indifference. The emperor conciliated him and made him governor of Aurangabad. On his son Anup Singh Aurangzeb conferred the title of Maharaja.

Jaisalmer

The position of Jaisalmer in its relation to the Mughal Empire underwent several somewhat remarkable changes from time to time. The chronicles do not help us to know exactly when the Rawal became a vassal of the empire. But we find Bhim Singh's name among the list of commanders of 500 in the Ain[1] and Jahangir refers to him as a man of distinction. Bhim's brother was summoned to the Court. He waited on the emperor and presented tribute.[2] Jahangir also refers to having taken his daughter in marriage when 'I was prince'..... and 'called her by the title of Malika-i-Jahan.' On the death[3] of Bhim about 1616 Jahangir summoned Kalyan, through Raja Kishan Das of Dihli, and 'exalted him with the tika of Raja and title of Rawal'[4] that is to say, confirmed his accession to the gaddi of his state.

So far, it would appear, the Rawals of Jaisalmer enjoyed a position of equality with the three above-mentioned states. But within a few months of Kalyan's accession we have another statement from Jahangir which clearly put the Rawal in the rank of jagirdars quite different from the other states, retaining, however, the right of hereditary succession of the house intact. 'The man-

[1] Ain. I, 477. (Blochmann).
[2] R. and B. I, 325.
[3] Not in 1624, as the Raj. Gaz. has it (see Vol. III A, 13).
[4] R. and B., I, 326.

sab of Rawal Kalyan of Jaisalmer' says the emperor, 'was fixed at 2000 personal and 1000 horse, and it was ordered that that province (Jaisalmer) should be assigned him as *tankhwah*. As the auspicious hour of his departure was on the same day, he took leave to depart for his province, well pleased and exalted.....'[1] Tod says that Bhim Singh's great grandson Sabal Singh (1651-61) was the first prince whose dominions were held as a jagir of the empire.[2] The Rajputana Gazetteer, however, differs from Tod and holds that the state was never held as a jagir of the empire by its chiefs, saying that Tod's opinion is not in accord with Jahangir's statement.[3] This is evidently a mistake as Jahangir's statement quoted above clearly shows, the only discrepancy in Tod's account being that he puts the date two generations later. Thus from its position of a subordinate vassal like Jodhpur, Jaipur, or Bikaner, which it was under Akbar, Jaisalmer was reduced to that of a jagir, held by the chief as equivalent of his salary. Indeed, under Akbar Jaisalmer was treated as a more independent state than the others. It was not included in the province of Ajmer, but formed its western boundary.[4] The house of Jaisalmer remained loyal to the Mughals until the break up of the empire.

Some of the minor states attached to provinces

There were three more important regions in which the tributary states were conspicuous by their numbers as well as importance, viz., Gujrat, Berar and Orissa. But the other provinces also were bestrewn with a considerable number of petty zamindars. With a few exceptions which refused to pay homage to provincial governors, almost all of them were what we would call the minor class of states, because they were governed through

[1] Op. Cit., 333-'34.

[2] Tod II, 1225. The Mulakkhas, however, says that it was Rup Singh who succeeded to the Rawalship at this time.

[3] Raj. Gaz., Vol. III A, 13.

[4] Ain I, 505.

the agency of the provincial governors and had, in normal circumstances, no direct dealings with the central government. We shall give a brief review of a few typical cases so as to show their peculiarities and to estimate their status. These minor Rajas and chieftains were usually allowed to retain full internal powers over their ancestral possessions. Their relations with the Mughal government were more or less of the same kind as those of the major class states. But there were some variations in the extent and even in the nature of their obligations as well as privileges, which should be noted here.

The province of Gujrat had several states which may serve as typical examples of the class under reference. According to the Mirat-i-Ahmadi the Muslim rulers of Gujrat had greatly extended the bounds of the province so that it included no less than 25 sarkars. Their administration also bore the same features which remained in essence unaltered under Mughal rule. The whole territory was divided politically into two main parts: 1. The Khalsa, that is to say, the territory directly administered by the central authority.[1] 2. The territories administered by their old rulers who had owned allegiance to the Sultans. The conditions of their allegiance, that is to say, the amount of the tribute they had to pay or the personal service they had to render varied according to the terms granted to them at the time of their making submission, and not entirely in proportion to their extent or resources.

When Akbar conquered the province he carried out a redistribution of the divisions and restored the outlying parts to their former jurisdictions. Thus reduced the province comprised ten sarkars of the crown territories plus six sarkars into which the tributary states of the province were divided, thereby making altogether sixteen. They were left in possession of their territories

[1] Here the word Khalsa has been used in a wider sense and signifies all the territories, i. e. both the Khalsa as well as assignments of the Mughal empire, as distinguished from the hereditary states and Zamindaris of the Rajas and chiefs.

as well as their internal powers; but they were put under the provincial government to which they were ordered to pay tribute as well as render military service.[1] The states of Sirohi, Banswara, Dungarpur, Nawanagar, Ramnagar and Edar had some interesting peculiarities which call for a brief notice.

Out of these Sirohi, Dungarpur and Ramnagar submitted to Mu'atamaduddaula Raja Todar Mal while he was deputed to put in order the affairs of Gujrat which had been hopelessly mismanaged by Wazir Khan, deputy to the young Mirza Abdur Rahim who was governor (1575-'77). The Raja bestowed on each of the three zamindars fitting robes and presents after they had paid tributes and formally acknowledged imperial suzerainty. Sirohi brought 50,000 rupees and 100 gold mohars. He was asked to serve the governor of Gujrat with 2000 horse.[2] Ramnagar brought 12,000 rupees, four horses and two swords. He was allowed to assume the rank of 1500 horse and asked to serve the governor with 1000 horse. It will be observed that the chief of Sirohi was not given any rank. There is no mention of any tribute from Dungarpur chief. Perhaps he did not bring anything worth mentioning. But to him was assigned the rank of 2500 and he was allowed to depart on agreeing to serve in the province of Gujrat. It is not clear whether in addition to the military service to the Gujrat viceroy any regular tribute was also a part of their obligations, and it is difficult to assume that mention of such an important condition could have been omitted if it had been actually imposed. The author of the Mirat says, with respect to the time when he wrote, that the tribute from the six zamindars, namely, Dungarpur, Bansbala,

[1] Mirat (I. O. MS.) fol. 15a b; Baroda Text, I, 224.

[2] The Mirat account of Sirohi somewhat differs from that of the Imp. Gaz. But we are told that the chiefs of Sirohi soon threw off their allegiance to the Mughals and trusting to the natural strength of their hilly country, successfully defied the imperial attempts to subdue them.

Kach, Sirohi, Sont and Ramnagar was realised by the governor by force. This may mean that when the Mughal government was strong enough the tribute must have been realised without employing force. The tribute of Ramnagar was allotted to the mutsaddi of Surat. (Bird, p. 136, wrongly says that the tribute of all the six was allotted to Surat). The Ain, however, (in the account of sarkar Sirohi, subah Ajmer) has 12,000,000 and 8,000,000 dams as the revenue of Sirohi and Dungarpur respectively, while Ramnagar does not find mention there. These sums represent probably the revenue proceeds of the states themselves and not their tribute. Concerning Banswara the Imp. Gaz. states that it was never subject to the Mughals. This is evidently incorrect, because 'Bansbala' was one of the 25 sarkars of the former kingdom of Gujrat, under the Sultans (Mirat, Baroda Text, I, p. 17; I.O.MS. I. fol. 15a) and also one of the six tributary states representing the six out of 16 sarkars of the province as reconstituted by Akbar (Mirat, Baroda Text, I, 25; I.O.MS. I. fol. 15b). Moreover, it also formed one of the mahals of Sirohi in Ajmer province (see Ain) and its revenue as given there was 8,000,000 dams. Three of the above-mentioned four states, viz., Dungarpar, Bansbala and Sirohi are formally included in the Sirohi sarkar in Ajmer province. It is difficult to ascribe this to any specific reason except that it was done for convenience of general supervision or of keeping revenue accounts.

The chief of Edar, according to Abul Fazl, was a very remarkable person and was held in high esteem by the Brahmans for his saintliness. He was also very powerful, says Abul Fazl, and had a force of 500 horse and 10000 foot.[1] Edar is mentioned as forming the northern boundary of the subah of Gujrat,[2] and was probably never subdued under Akbar. Indeed the hills of Edar served as shelter to many a rebel who issued frequently out of

[1] Ain. I, 486, ll.18-20.

[2] Ibid, 485, l.13.

them and created trouble in the province. Nor is Edar mentioned among the mahals or sarkars of any province. But we learn that when in the year 1609 A.D. (A. H. 1018) Malik Ambar raided Surat and Baroda, Jahangir ordered 25000 troops to be sent to remain on the Surat frontier near Ramnagar. This force was to consist of contingents of the governor, of the amirs holding jagirs and the chiefs of Salher Malher, Ramnagar, Navanagar, Edar, Rajpipla, Dungarpur, Banswara, Kach, Ali and Mohan; the number supplied by Edar being 2000 horse.[1]

The Jam of Navanagar also was, according to the Ain, a powerful chief. He commanded 7000 cavalry and 8000 infantry. This too is not mentioned among the mahals of any province. But there are conflicting accounts about it. The Mirat[2] says that it remained independent under Akbar and was for the first time subdued under Aurangzeb, and that on the recommendation of Raja Jaswant Singh, governor of Gujrat, the Jam was recognised and nine parganahs given to him as jagir. But the account of the Masir is evidently more correct, that Sundar Das Brahman (entitled Raja Bikramajit) when he was acting as deputy of prince Khurram, viceroy of the province in 1617, led an expedition against the Jam and compelled him to pay homage.[3] But he was finally subdued in the 14th year of Shah Jahan's reign and forced to accept a treaty of which the terms were: 1. He had to present a peshkash of one elephant, 100 horses, and 3 lakhs of Mahmudis coined in his mint. 2. He had to close down his mint and stop coining money. 3. He had to send back the peasants who had run away from the imperial territory and taken shelter in his state. 4. He had to pledge himself to despatch his own son with a proper force to assist the royal troops whenever required.

After the treaty was signed the Jam paid a visit

[1] Mirat (Baroda Ed.) I, 189.

[2] Mirat, Supplement, (Baroda Text), 219; I.O.(MS.) fol. 754a.

[3] M. U. (Tr.) Vol. I, 413.

to Azam Khan, the governor, who had subjugated him.[1]

Orissa

A few of the vassal chiefs of Orissa also deserve notice. That province had never been fully brought under direct administration during the reign of Akbar. But "the final conquest of Orissa by the Mughals under Man Singh" says Prof. R. D. Bannerjee "inaugurated a new era in the history of the country by the establishment of a new dynasty of Hindu kings in that country under the suzerainty of the Mughal emperors".[2] The same writer tells us that there were seven feudatory chiefs in 1592, paying tribute to Akbar.[3] Some of them were very powerful, and one, the Raja of Kharda, had a command of 3500 horse and 200 forts and 31 smaller zamindars paid him tribute. Another, the chief of Mayurbhanj, had 12 zamindars under him and 42 forts. We have sufficient evidence to prove that the chiefs of Orissa did not pay homage to the provincial governors either of Orissa or even Bengal. Nor did they care to obey their orders. They had direct dealings with the imperial government. They enjoyed thorough immunity from any undue interference with their authority or encroachment on their rights, which were secured by special farmans of the emperor. A very interesting case of how the privileges and self-respect of these chiefs were protected by the emperor is mentioned by Abul Fazl.[4] When Raja Man Singh in 1593 (37th year of reign) became viceroy of Bengal, he summoned Raja Ram Chand of Kharda to attend on him. Ram Chand protested against this demand of the viceroy as beyond his authority. Man Singh sent an expedition against him and his forces occupied several fortresses. "On hearing this", says Abul Fazl, His Majesty—who

[1] Or. 175, fol. 238 ab.
[2] Hist. of Orissa, II, 9-10.
[3] Ibid. II, 23.
[4] A. N. III, p. 631; Trans. III, p. 968.

appreciates dignities—became angry and censured Man Singh for this act of superciliousness". Man Singh recalled his troops and apologised. Impressed with the graciousness of the emperor Ram Chand of his own accord came and attended on Man Singh and was received with due honour. Another instance which shows that these Rajas brooked no encroachment on their internal powers is cited by Manrique.[1] The Portuguese missionaries wanted to build a church at Bandel for which they managed to get a farman of permission from the Nawab (the governor) of Katak. They did not, however, think it advisable to build it without the permission of the Raja in whose territory it lay. When Manrique went to the Raja and told him that they did not like to build the church without his approval although they had the Nawab's permission, the Raja replied that he had a farman from the emperor in which 'these Nawabs were warned not to introduce any innovations into his territory', and that the Nawab's farman was therefore of no use to them. He, however, from considerations of courtesy granted their request. This instance shows that even those smaller chiefs, who were otherwise under the supervision of the local authorities, were scrupulously protected from any encroachment on their internal authority, and were not left to the tender mercies of governors.

The greater bulk of the province of Orissa was thus ruled by these chiefs some of whom were quasi-independent and the other feudatory. There is no mention of Kharda in the Ain and it would appear that the ruler of this state was not bound to pay any regular tribute or supply a levy of troops. Many of these zamindars are named in the Ain as 'Mazkuren' (مذکورین) translated by Jarret as 'independent taluqdars'. (See Ain, Tr. Vol. II, p. 143). They contributed their shares of revenue which are individually mentioned in the Ain only for the three sarkars of Jalesar, Bhadrak and Katak, the totals alone

[1] Manrique (Hak.) Vol. I, 432.

being given for the two other sarkars of Kalang Dandpat and Raj Mandrak.

'Mazkuren' was, according to Wilson, applied in old revenue accounts to "small and scattered estates not included in the accounts of the districts in which they are situated, and of which the assessments were paid direct to the government officers." Thus it is clear that, just as in Rajputana, in a formal manner and perhaps for the sake of political supervision these zamindaris were divided into separate sarkars, and many of them were free from any control of the district authorities.

Regarding the contingents which they had to supply it is well-nigh impossible to discover any rational connection between the totals given for the whole sarkars and the details given for each mahal or group of mahals. In the case of Jalesar the totals given and the actual totals very nearly tally, but in Bhadrak, while the two totals of cavalry tally, the actual total of the infantry is nearly twice the totals given, and in Katak there is still greater discrepancy between the two totals of both cavalry and infantry. Further we see that together with the figures of infantry and cavalry the number of forts of each mahal is bracketed. It is, therefore, not possible to say how much of these forces were actually supplied, as the figures stated in the Ain seem to us rather to represent the forces which they kept for their own use.[1]

[1] There are many errors in Jarrett's translation of the Ain, chiefly in the transcription of statistics, for which it should never be relied upon without reference to the original.

CHAPTER V

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT: STRUCTURE AND WORKING OF THE EXECUTIVE

Two main factors

In an account of the provincial government of the Mughals two main questions should be primarily considered: (1) the position of the provincial authority in relation to the sovereign, and (2) the spirit and form of the administration. Each of these aspects was the result of a process of evolution and growth which again was conditioned by two basic features of pre-Mughal polity, viz., (1) the character and principle of the monarchy, and (2) the executive machinery built up by the first two Mughals and by the Surs.

The principle of Afghan monarchy

The monarchy of the Lodis derived its authority from their tribal customs and organisation and not from the law of Islam to which in practice they seldom conformed. It had been a kind of hegemony exercised by the leading chieftain of the tribe, who happened to be the most dominant or the most clever. But still they were all his equals in power if not in prestige and influence. They were all members of a community or family and the Sultan was, as it were, only a *primus inter pares*. They could not tolerate the idea of the Sultan being an overlord whose position and prerogatives were unique and inaccessible to the other members of the community. As a consequence of this all the members were supposed to be entitled to a share in any lands newly conquered by the leader. 'The monarchy of the Lodis' as Rushbrooke

Williams aptly puts it, 'was not a divine inheritance, but a human compromise'. Indeed the secret of Bahlol Lodi's success in establishing his dynasty was a full and frank recognition of his position as only the first among a body of tribal chiefs who otherwise claimed an equal status with him. Herein lay the essential weakness of the Lodi monarchy. Sikander Lodi showed some strength but he too had to bow to the time-honoured traditions of his community.[1] Ibrahim tactlessly defied this cherished tradition of the Afghan chiefs and found himself in deep waters.

The position of the provincial and local administrators under such a system was bound to be very strong and the control of the central government extremely loose. It was limited only to the right to demand a certain quota of men in time of war. For the rest, they were, more or less, miniature kings within their own jurisdictions, and were apt to reckon their jagirs as hereditary. The central executive was thus completely paralysed; the elements of cohesion which kept the local administrators bound to the sovereign were rendered entirely impotent. Besides a certain quota of armed men perhaps they could also demand a certain money contribution and enjoyed some loosely-defined powers in matters of general administration. But they had always to be careful not to go counter to the will of the powerful section of their chiefs on whose support their position and authority rested. The machinery of administration elaborated by the Khilji and Tughlaq Sultans had crumbled to ruins during the chaos following the invasion of Timur, never to be revived until Sher Shah's time. It appears, however, that the masses of the population remained, on the whole, unperturbed and unconcerned despite the political convulsions and consequent chaos prevailing for more than a century and a half. The Muslim government had never interfered with the life and institutions of the coun-

[1] See Elliot, IV, 376.

try people beyond demanding a certain amount of revenue which being realised, they left the people in peace. The village communities responsible to their own people carried on the work of justice, police, and other important branches of administration.[1]

The Turkish principle of monarchy

Quite contrary to the Afghan monarchy in its origin and basis was the Turkish monarchy, and when Babar supplanted the last Lodi monarch the political atmosphere of the country was altogether unfavourable to the recognition of a sovereignty which derived its authority from a divine source. A descendant of the great Timur, Babar had inherited all the claims to an absolute authority and position,—a position neither to be questioned nor attempted by any other member of the community—and it was this new principle of monarchy which he imported into the land. According to this principle the person of the monarch was sacrosanct, hampered by no limitations like the Lodi monarchy and placed by the Divine will on a position of such towering eminence that even the highest chiefs and Amirs could never presume or venture to aspire to it. Babar had conquered the kingdom. That was comparatively easy. He was now confronted with the more difficult task of making the chiefs and amirs of India reconcile themselves to the new ideal of sovereignty under which their status and privileges were to be degraded to a far inferior level. They were now to be the unquestioning and obedient servants of an absolute sovereign without presuming to be his equals, and to carry out his

[1] There are ample evidences to show that the ancient village communities of India continued undisturbed throughout the Muhammadan rule. Several scholars have traced the existence and working of these communities down to the beginning of the 19th century. Early British administrators like Sir Thomas Munro have testified to their efficient work. See Altekar, 'Village communities in Western India'; Baden Powell, 'Land Systems of British India'; J. Matthai, 'Village Government in British India'.

bidding without murmur. It was no easy task to achieve such a revolution in the politics of the country. A great effort, an overhauling of the whole existing machinery which was altogether unsuited and far too inadequate to achieve the above purpose, was required. Far more even than this was the need of bringing about a change in the psychology of the people. Two fundamental points needed to be attacked primarily. The Afghan chiefs claimed a share both in the territories and possessions as well as in the powers and authority of the sovereign. The Afghan polity was a sort of joint stock company of the tribe: the Sultans had always, on the occasion of any new acquisition of territory, to invite the members of the tribe to receive their shares.[1] The provincial chiefs were ever striving to establish a hereditary right over the province which they were sent to govern. Even such control and restraint as could have been exercised under the circumstances was rendered impossible by the administrative machinery which had become too shaky and outworn. Thus the task of the future administrator was twofold. He had to pull down what might be called an organised anarchy somewhat resembling that of the Rajputs, minus its virtues and strong points, and in its place to erect a centralised and compact monarchy by concentrating the elements of power in the state and making the sovereign the fountain-head of all authority. It was necessary for him to wipe out the age-long superstition jealously cherished by the Afghans that the kingdom was communal property, and that every member of the community could claim a share in it as a matter of indefeasible title. In order to vindicate and assert the new ideal of monarchy it was further necessary for the future sovereign to make the

[1] See Abbas (I. O. MS.) fol. 113b, where it is stated that Sher Shah granted money exceeding his expectations to every Afghan who came from Roh and settled it on him as an annual stipend and asked him to come and receive it annually, saying: 'this is your share of the kingdom of Hind which has fallen into my hands'. (Elliot, IV, 424).

chiefs and amirs forget their erstwhile notions of equality with the Sultan, and to acquiesce in a position which required them to obey and not to question why.

Secondly he had to reorganise and consolidate the administrative machinery into a sufficiently strong instrument for achieving the object in view. A renovated and rejuvenated system of administration was needed not only for good government and the prosperity of the people, but also for assuaging and suppressing the turbulent propensities of the chiefs and amirs and gradually making them settle down peacefully to their altered position.

Now such a radical change in the political atmosphere of the country and in the minds of the men who were being robbed of their power, prestige and privileges which they had long enjoyed, was not easy to effect. It could only be brought about by a gradual process of evolution, a process which was, however, greatly accelerated by the extraordinary energy of Sher Shah and Akbar. Thus there were two main fruits of the period of transition which may be taken to commence with the advent of Babar : (1) A new monarchy, and (2) a reformed administrative machinery. In bringing about this consummation the contribution of Babar and Humayun was but little, because it was not lasting; that of Sher Shah was quite considerable though only one-sided and indirect, inasmuch as, while by making the authority of the sovereign strong he created the necessary situation in which alone the Turkish principle of sovereignty could eventually fructify, he himself stuck to the purely Afghan tradition of sharing his kingdom with the members of the community. The work of establishing the dominance and authority of the Sultan over the turbulent chiefs and governors was carried a stage further by Islam Shah Sur.

The contribution of Babar and Humayun

Old prejudices die hard, and the hardest to die perhaps are political prejudices. It was not without its tra-

vail that the new age was born. Babar had been a warrior all his life. The India of that time offered the finest opportunity for a conqueror and Babar was not the man to miss it. But the conquest having been made, he was faced with the task of reconstruction. Herein he was found wanting. He had had no schooling in the arts of political reconstruction and statesmanship. He squandered away the intervals of respite and leisure, which he had in between his wars, in erecting buildings in Agra instead of addressing himself to the more imperative task of reorganising and reforming the administration which demanded immediate attention. He only contented himself with working the old and obsolete Afghan system. The Turkish chiefs who had come in his train were sent to take charge of some of the provinces of the kingdom and to trust to their own individual resources and ingenuities to maintain peace and realise the revenue through such agencies as had survived the preceding chaos. A postal scheme was launched but beyond that no other improvements or reform, worth the name, were even thought of. Nor did Humayun evince any enthusiasm in this direction. He did devise a new scheme of administration and initiated a conciliatory and far-sighted policy,[1] departing from the policy of the former Muslim rulers of India, but that was during the second period of his rule when fate overtook him too soon to carry his plan into execution.[2] During the first period when he could have achieved something he was either too lazy or too busy with the troubles which he had brought on himself by his own follies.

Thus the contribution of the first two Mughals in the direction of establishing the new ideal of monarchy was practically nil. The number of the Turkish chiefs was naturally small. Most of the provinces and districts had still to be left in charge of their former Afghan officers.

[1] M. U., Vol. I, p. 693.

[2] See Stewart's Jauhar, pp. 112-115. Also Erskine, Vol. II, pp. 520-523.

But they sullenly brooded over the loss of their liberties and made no secret of their defiant attitude.[1] The Mughal conquerors could defeat them time and again on the battle-field but they had failed to create a machinery to keep them under restraint and make them settle down quietly and acquiesce in the new order. Under such conditions the people were naturally in a state of fright and mistrust. Nothing was done to restore their confidence. The local governors and chiefs remained as free as ever. The central authority had forged no means to enforce its will on them or to supervise and restrain their activities. Thus the constructive achievement of Babar and his son was of little consequence.

Contribution of Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah

The contribution of Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah was, in this direction, far more remarkable and real, although only indirect, as has been said above. Sher Shah did not modify or alter the Afghan principle of monarchy. On the contrary he openly recognised it. But he breathed new life into the system of administration and overhauled the whole machinery. He made improvements and reforms in almost every department and wiped out the corruptions and evils which had grown up everywhere owing to the incapacity of his predecessors. By improving and perfecting the machinery he very greatly minimised the chances of turbulence on the part of his Afghan chiefs. No sooner was any one of them found in the slightest degree remiss in his duty than he found himself severely reprimanded. Recalcitrance or dereliction of duty or injustice was never tolerated or overlooked. All cases of official neglect or deliberate mischief were promptly and severely dealt with. He proved himself a mighty and terrible leader of the tribal order of the Afghans. By his extraordinary energy, resourcefulness and tact and personal attention to the smallest details, he cowed the Afghan

[1] Memoirs of Babar, II, 528; Bad. I, 337.

chiefs into submissiveness and reduced them, for all practical purposes, to the position of provincial governors or jagirdars as they came to be under the Mughal sovereigns. Thus the system worked most efficiently, peace and security were restored and the people prospered. This was no mean achievement. He established a tradition of the loyalty of the chiefs to the Sultan even though he was only one of their group. He prepared thereby the ground for the gradual acceptance of the new principle of kingship. Nevertheless it is clear that he did not attempt to modify the theoretical basis of Afghan sovereignty even in the slightest degree.[1] He had ascended the throne by the explicit consent of the Afghan chiefs and fully acknowledged his indebtedness to them in elevating him to that exalted position. He unequivocally recognised their equality of status when he said: 'It does not become me to send farmans to you and to seat myself on the throne while you stand around me'. The greater chiefs still constituted a sort of oligarchy, looking upon the king as only a member whom they had themselves

[1] After the battle of Chausa Sher Shah asked his munshis to write letters describing his victory to all parts of the country. The Masnad-i-Ali Isa Khan said to him: "You should write letters describing your victory in the style of farmans", to which Sher Shah replied, "You, who formerly were nobles of Sultan Bahlol and Sikandar, have, for the cause of the Afghans, done me the honour of joining yourselves to me. It does not become me to send farmans to you, and to seat myself on the throne while you stand around me.....". When after great persuasion and assurance of support from the leading Afghans he agreed to assume the royal title, he said: "The kingly name is a very exalted thing.....but since the noble minds of my friends have decided to make me king, I agree"; and further he said to Isa Khan, "You have induced me to strike coins and have the Khutba read in my own name; write one letter descriptive of the victory in your own hand, the munshis will write the rest". We have also seen above how he invited Afghans from Roh and gave them money or jagirs and told them to receive it every year as their share of the kingdom which had fallen into his hands. Abbas (I. O. MS.), fol. 113; Elliot, IV, 376-377.

elected to the premier position. Consequently the position of the provincial governors who were all members of this oligarchy was not that of mere creatures of the sovereignty which it was to be under the Mughals, but that of chiefs holding their territory by much the same right as the king. Sher Shah never ventured directly to shatter this cherished prejudice of the greater chiefs, but he neutralised their ascendancy very tactfully by a policy of sternness combined with courtesy and kindness of behaviour and magnanimity and regard for their feelings. The whole of his kingdom was distributed in jagirs to the Afghan chiefs. But he rendered one most remarkable service. He yoked power and privilege to duty and responsibility. He made every Afghan chief holding a jagir clearly understand that with his privileges and authority went also equally important duties and responsibilities, a loyal and efficient performance of which would be the *sine qua non* of his enjoying his privileges.

His son Islam Shah acted on a different policy. As soon as he was well established on the throne he took drastic steps to crush the power of the nobles who had almost overshadowed the throne.[1] It would appear that Islam Shah took a bold and long stride forward in shattering the pride and power of the greater chiefs and establishing a very strict discipline in the working of the government. He thus further prepared the ground for the acceptance of the Divine monarchy of the Mughals of which unquestioned obedience was the foremost condition. He also tried to carry further the work of organising the administrative system so admirably reared

[1] Elliot, IV, 504. "Islam Shah was at this time so desirous of overthrowing the great chiefs that he thought of nothing else even for a single moment". Badaoni, I, p. 385 gives a detailed and eye-witness story of how Islam Shah had issued a full and detailed code of regulations, to be observed and followed by every department, and how strict he was in enforcing them, and again how every Friday the chiefs and officers of every district used to assemble under a canopy to do obeisance to his shoes and arrow and to hear the regulations read out to them.

by his father, and perhaps not without palpable improvements in certain departments, at least. Thus the restoration of strict order and discipline among the higher servants of the state, and establishment of a thoroughly efficient and rigorous system of government, was the proud achievement of the first two Sur Sultans. It was, however, reserved for a future generation to witness the gradual and almost imperceptible transformation in the political psychology of the people. The transitional period from the advent of Babar up to the accession of Akbar was too stormy and unsettled and too anti-authoritarian for such a seed to thrive. It needed not only the congenial soil of a well-organised machinery of government, but also the watering of a well-established and enduring security and peace-conditions which it was the rare merit of Akbar to bring about. Moreover he was—what the Surs could never be—the embodiment of that divinely gifted monarchy which the tradition of his house had bequeathed to him. From his Turkish and Persian governors and chiefs and Hindu vassals he had no serious trouble. But wherever an Afghan chief had survived, e.g. in Bengal or Gujrat, he never, till the end, gave up his struggle for independent sovereignty. As time passed the unquestionable and supreme authority of the Mughal emperor went deeper and deeper into men's minds and the old memories were forgotten. Akbar's task was that of the mason who rears up the edifice. His successors reaped the fruits of his labours.[1]

In the light of the foregoing discussion we can make an estimate of the exact position of the provincial governments and governors in relation to the central authority from Babar down to Akbar and his successors.

[1] Some scholars, chiefly Qanungo, have exaggerated the achievements of Sher Shah out of all proportion to their real worth and value, and baselessly ascribed to him practically all that was done after him by Akbar. See 'Sher Shah' pp. 241 and 347.

The nature of local government under the Mughals

Like all other institutions of the period the character of the local government under the Mughals was determined by a variety of circumstances. Two main factors influenced the growth of the Mughal local governments: (1) The aim and object of the sovereign, that is to say, the Mughal ruler's ideal of government. (2) The existing institutions of the country when its administration fell to the lot of the Mughal rulers.

The aim of the Mughal ruler was to be 'continually attentive to the health of the body politic' and to remedy its diseases and evils, so as to bring about perfection of life, and assure its happiness, strength and prosperity. The king should accomplish this end by wisely making use of the four classes of men into which society can be divided, viz., warriors, merchants and artificers; the learned men and the husbandmen and labourers, by whose exertions and co-operation is ensured the progress and happiness of the 'world', i. e. the kingdom.[1] The spirit of the Mughal rule was born of the belief that royalty is a light emanating from God....., the farr-i-izadi (the divine light).....Hence many exçellent qualities flow from the possession of this light, of which 1. 'a parental attitude towards the subjects', and 2. 'a large heart'[2] are the two

[1] Ain, (text) 3-4; Blochmann's Tr. I, Abul Fazl's Preface, pp. IV-V.

[2] Vide Ain text, 2-3: (Tr.) Vol. I, iii (A. F.'s Preface) for the aims and objects of the Mughal administration which were an outcome of the lofty and noble ideals of sovereignty explained by Abul Fazl. Writers like Moreland and Sarkar have done far less than justice to the character of the Mughal administration in saying that its objects were only the assessment and collection of sufficient revenue and the supply of adequate contingents for the army. These were means to a higher end and not ends in themselves. The Mughal administration was not so ignoble or sordid in its aims and objects nor so devoid of the humaner ideals of social obligations, as it would be if it had no objects other than those stated by Moreland. Vide 'India at the Death of Akbar', 31-32; Sarkar in Mughal Adm., 2nd Ed., p. 5 says: 'The aim of the

foremost, as enumerated by Abul Fazl. Thus the Mughal government—from the time of Akbar, at any rate—was conceived in a spirit of benevolence, and in the attitude of a parent. The king regarded the subjects as his children and hence felt himself responsible for their safety, health, happiness and progress.

This being the spirit and aim of the Mughal sovereign, the subjects naturally had no hand in the creation of administrative institutions and agencies. No doubt the king had to resort to the help and counsels of some ministers who may be justly regarded as voicing the feelings of the subjects inasmuch as they were expected to assist the king in his duty of doing good to his subjects. But there was no element of any kind of conscious popular control either in the policy or the structure of the administration. The assumption was that the sovereign was the best and infallible judge of what was in or against the interests of the people and he therefore created the whole machinery of local administration, including the province, the sarkar and the parganah.

The village community

But besides the machinery created by the sovereign for local administration, the original village community system had a very great and vital share in the actual work of rural administration, a fact which has not yet received its due share of attention from students of Mughal institutions. It is a curious fact and sounds so paradoxical that in an age when popular institutions were otherwise unknown, such a popularly controlled institution as the

government was thus extremely limited, materialistic, almost sordid', a quite unfair estimate, as I shall show in the following pages.

It may also be noted that the nature of the state as conceived by Abul Fazl was universal in the sense that it was intended to include all human beings as such, to whichever sect or creed or nationality they might belong. It was not confined to any particular class of society as the pure muslim state was.

village community should have been left absolutely undisturbed to carry on its work smoothly. The contemporary chroniclers say nothing of the government's attitude towards the village community, but their appreciation of it was written in their silent but unmistakable recognition of its value and advantages. They did not destroy it because they realised, as we are entitled to conclude, that they had no better alternative to substitute in its place, which would be calculated to serve the interests of the people so well. Hence they gave it a sort of legal standing by their tacit recognition of it, and encouraged it to co-operate with the government in its functions. It was in no spirit of nonchalance, much less neglect or scorn, that the rural institutions were left to render administrative and 'socialistic'[1] services to the rural population. Existing from time immemorial, they had proved their efficiency and worth and interference with them did not promise any improvement. No better substitute to perform their comprehensive functions could be devised. It may be imagined that the great Mughals realised the harm that might ensue if they attempted centralisation of the administrative powers that were enjoyed by the rural communities. Even Professor Sarkar has appreciated the wisdom of this policy.[2] These communities were not isolated in their jurisdiction or powers. Hence all matters pertaining to any department, either justice, defence or even public works, which they were incompetent to deal with, were attended to by a hierarchy of officials ascending right up to the sovereign himself. The rural population were not left to sink or swim according to their own resources, as would seem to be the impression conveyed by some writers.[3] Thus there were the above-

[1] I use the word 'socialistic' in the same broad sense in which it has been used by Sarkar in his Mughal Adm., 2nd Ed., p. 5.

[2] Op. cit., p. 246. See the following foot-note.

[3] But Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his Mughal Administration, p. 55, et. seq., says that 'the Mughals were essentially an urban people in India and so were their courtiers, officials, and.....The villages

mentioned four gradations of the administrative agency by which the government of the country was carried on.

The scope of the Mughal government

The Mughal Government did not undertake such wide functions as modern governments do. The entire work of government was divided into a few well-defined departments, but no specialised departments of education, medical relief, or even public works, in the modern sense, existed. And yet these functions did not suffer by default. There was no dearth of schools, or medical aid. Indeed we learn that there were hospitals receiving government aid, in which Ayurvedic and Yunani physi-

were neglected and despised.....No doubt the villages were the places from which their food and income came; but that was their only connection with them'. In support of his theory Sir Jadunath quotes a couplet from a certain poet of Aurangzeb's time, who says زاغ دم سوئی شہر و سر سوئی دیہہ – دم آن زاغ از سر او بہہ

Trans: 'The tail of a crow was turned towards the city and head towards the village; surely the tail here was better than the head'.

These lines were repeated by the emperor Aurangzeb on the occasion when Nasrat Jang Bahadur after his humiliation was allowed by the emperor to present himself, and in his extreme nervousness he behaved as if he had forgotten all court etiquette. (See Anecdotes of Aurangzeb, pp. 83-85). To draw from this incident and from the context in which this couplet was repeated by the emperor such a conclusion about the administrative policy of the Mughals, and what is more, to credit the whole period of Mughal rule with that policy, seems quite unfair and unwarranted. Equally groundless is it to support this view by arguing that the Muslim officials and aristocracy never liked to live in the villages. In what age or under which government, it may be asked, do the higher officials, or even the lower ones, live in the villages? If from the Governor-General down to the petty tahsildar and parganah official in India today do not live in the villages and the latter only occasionally visit them on duty, just as the faujdar, the amin and his assistants did under Mughal rule, shall we be justified in crediting the British government with the same policy which Sir Jadunath ascribes to the Mughals? Shall we be justified in saying that they 'despise and neglect' the villages?

cians were employed.[1] Education was a part of the religious and charities department and was in charge of the sadr. Every mosque and temple was also a school where instruction was generally imparted free. While the country was covered with such innumerable institutions which received aid from the state, every important town possessed a college for the imparting of higher education, in arts, philosophy and sciences, as we shall have occasion to show more fully in a later chapter. It is, however, undoubtedly true that many functions of a socialistic character were left to private initiative and enterprise.

The personnel of the provincial government

The student of the administrative machinery of the Mughal Empire is primarily confronted with a twofold difficulty. First, at almost every step he is faced with a paucity of materials precisely bearing on the subject. Secondly he is faced with the still greater difficulty of correctly interpreting the import and significance of such

The real question is whether or not the rulers had any concern for the welfare and happiness of the people. Let us see what Prof. Sarkar himself has to say on this point. On p. 246 of the same book he says that one of 'the elements of the strength of the Muslim position was that the rulers of Muslim India wisely retained the old system of village administration and method of revenue collection of Hindu times unchanged, and even employed Hindu officials almost exclusively in the Revenue Department. The result was that the lives of millions of our villagers were undisturbed by the dynastic changes at the capital, and they had no reason to be discontented with their new masters and to rise against them'. In this passage Sir Jadunath clearly admits that the Mughal rulers left the old village system undisturbed for purposes of local administration not from a callous indifference towards them but deliberately and wisely, from a consciousness of its efficacy as the best means of ensuring their welfare. And this system would have failed of its purpose if the necessary protection from the rapacity of the oppressive government official or the brigand had not been extended by the government. This was all that the country people mainly needed and the great Mughal rulers never lacked this sense of duty.

[1] Mirat, (I. O.) fol. 731a.

terms or statements as he may cull together from the general histories. He finds the Ain-i-Akbari equally difficult to interpret, and yet it is the Ain supplemented with the Akbar Nama (which is quite rich in such information) which mainly helps him to build a fairly accurate and complete picture of the administrative system.

Principal officers of the province

The head of the province, under Akbar, was officially styled the Sipah Salar.[1] (He was popularly called Subahdar and later, only 'Subah'). Under his successors he came to be called Nazim.[2] The Sipah Salar was the vicegerent of the sovereign.[3] Next to him in official rank, though not in any way subordinate to him, was the Diwan. These two principal officers of the province between them shared the responsibility of practically the whole administrative machinery. The Sipah Salar was responsible for the executive, defence, criminal justice,[4] and general supervision. The Diwan was responsible primarily for revenue administration and civil justice, besides, it seems, for the general oversight of the department of which the Sadr was in charge.[5] They were assisted in the work of administration by (1) the Bakshi or paymaster, who had a multiplicity of duties to perform, (2) the Sadr who was the head mainly of the religious department, charities and grants, (3) the Qazi, that is, the chief judge of the province, (4) the kotwal, who had charge of internal defence, health, sanitation and all other municipal functions, (5) the Mir Bahr who was in charge of the port duties, customs, boat and ferry taxes, etc., and (6)

[1] Under the Lodis and Surs the provincial governor was called "Hakim".

[2] Riyaz, p. 170.

[3] جانشین خدئیو عالم است (Ain. I, p. 280).

[4] This becomes clear by a careful study of his duties and functions as described in the Ain.

[5] See Mirat, Supplement, fol. 721a (I.O. No. 3599).

the Waqia' Navis (News-Recorder of the court).[1] In addition to these, another official called Amin was occasionally appointed in some provinces. In 1579, when Muzaffar Khan Turbati was appointed governor of Bengal, Rizwi Khan was made Bakhshi, the Divani was entrusted to Mir Adham and Rai Patr Das, while Hakim Abul Fath was made Sadr and Amin.[2] Similarly in 1575 when the young Mirza Abdur Rahim was made viceroy of Gujrat, Mir A'lauddin was made Amin of the province.[3] In the year 1586 when Itmad Khan Gujrati was given the governorship of Gujrat, Mir Turab Wali was appointed Amin.[4] It is difficult to say what the nature and functions of this office were. The contemporary sources do not say anything about his precise duties. But we fully know the duties and powers of Sher Shah's Amin of Bengal (Qazi Fazilat). Later in the 17th century he was a revenue assessor under the provincial Divan,[5] and in the 18th and beginning of the 19th century under the company's rule the Sadr Amin was a judge.[6] Amin was a term applied to a great variety of offices and it seems that in the above three cases the Amins had different duties. In the first case the same person was Sadr as well as Amin, and his latter title probably indicates only his additional office as a judge dealing mainly with religious endowments and claims, an office which was usually combined with that of the Sadr. In 1586 Akbar had appointed Mir Sharif Amuli as Amin and Sadr of Kabul.[7] In the second case also it may be assumed that the word Amin has been used for

[1] Abul Fazl (Vide A. N. III, p. 282)] enumerates the above-mentioned eight officials appointed to each province by Akbar, but in place of the Qazi, he has Mir Adl, which we have purposely changed. This point will be fully discussed in the chapter on 'Judicial Administration.'

[2] A. N. III, pp. 265-266.

[3] Mirat (Baroda Text), Pt. I, p. 133.

[4] T. A. II, p. 368; A. N. II, p. 403.

[5] Moreland, Ag. Sys., p. 270.

[6] Wilson's Glossary.

[7] A. N. III, p. 477.

Sadr as we find that the other two important appointments are stated to have been filled but sadr is not mentioned. But in the third case the circumstances raise a strong presumption that Mir Abu Turab Wali's office of Amin was meant to be probably that of a trustee and counsel, because 'Itmad Khan was appointed out of consideration for his earnest desire which the emperor had hesitated to fulfil so long owing to his lack of confidence in 'Itmad Khan's capacity and perhaps loyalty as well. In the circumstances an Amin was perhaps thought necessary both as a check and a help.[1]

In addition to these officials, it was customary for the emperors to send a number of other nobles, who were usually assigned jagirs in the same province, for the assistance of the governor. These together with the officials constituted a sort of informal council of the governor for consultations and discussions of important affairs.

Deputy governor as Ataliq

As a rule only responsible persons of the highest qualifications and experience, worthy of that high office, were appointed governors. An exception, however, to this rule was sometimes made in the case of royal princes and sons of nobles of high rank. These were occasionally made governors of even the most important provinces. But in such cases a capable and experienced person was invariably sent as Ataliq (guide and preceptor) to the young governor, who was instructed always to follow the Ataliq's advice. Sometimes, because of the extreme youth of the governor, the Ataliq was the de facto governor. Besides the governor a committee of several high officers was also appointed to assist the viceroy.[2] There were

[1] A. N. III, p. 403 (Tr. III, pp. 596-'97) Itmad Khan was in failing health and considered incapable by the ministers, but he was allowed to go because orders had been passed. Hence Abu Turab was sent as Amin.

[2] (a) Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan Khana was appointed viceroy of Gujrat in 1575 and a committee of four nobles was sent to assist him,

several objects of this policy of appointing young princes to viceroyalties. On the people the presence of a prince among them had a great moral effect and created confidence, while for the prince it provided an opportunity of administrative experience and training in the art of government. It also developed in him a sense of responsibility and gratified his sense of dignity.

The administrative efficiency, however, was not suffered to deteriorate in the least in such provinces. The Ataliq who was also supposed to act as deputy-governor was held fully responsible for any maladministration or inefficiency. The moment he was found incapable or guilty of deliberate neglect of duty he was removed from office. As soon as it came to be known that Vazir Khan Ataliq of Mirza Abdurrahim had thrown the administration of Gujrat into a state of chaos, not only was he degraded to the faujdarship of the Idar border, but the whole of his staff was recalled.[1] From the Deccan both prince Murad and his Ataliq were removed for similar reasons[2] (1651).

one of whom was the Ataliq (see ref. above) Text:—

وزیر خان و علاالدین قزوینی و سید مظفر و پیاگداس را بمرافقت او رخصت فرمودند

(Mirat (Baroda Text) Pt. I, p. 133).

(b) Prince Daniyal was appointed viceroy of Ilahabad in 1598, and a committee of nobles including Qalij Khan as Ataliq was sent along with him. A. N. III, p. 722.

(c) In 1600 the same prince was sent as viceroy of the Deccan and Abul Fazl was made his Ataliq; A. N. III, p. 577.

(d) In 1598 Sadiq Khan and then Mirza Yusuf were Ataliq of prince Murad, then viceroy of Gujrat. A. N. III, p. 724.

(e) In 1648 prince Murad was made viceroy of all the four provinces of the Deccan, and his father-in-law Shah Nawaz Khan was his vakil and Ataliq (chief minister and guide) Or. 175, fol. 349a.

(f) Prince Dara was the Ataliq of his young son Sulaiman who was governor of Kabul, in 26th year. Or. 175, fol. 402a.

[1] Mirat (Bar. Text), Pt. I, 137; A. N. III, 217-218.

[2] Or. 175, foll. 376 and 379b.

Officiating viceroys

A. Agents of Absentee Viceroys

In some cases we notice that the man who was appointed viceroy sent an agent of his own choice, subject, of course, to the approval of the emperor, to administer the province in his name, while he (the viceroy-designate) himself remained behind, either in attendance,[1] in obedience to the emperor's orders, or sometimes for personal reasons[2] through the indulgence of the emperor. Sometimes he also had to absent himself on public duty, as on a campaign, and a deputy was appointed to act in his place during his absence.[3]

B. Interim Viceroys

When a young viceroy was transferred to a very distant province which required sometime for him to assume charge or if he was delayed for certain other reasons, or detained at court, the office was not left vacant.

[1] (a) In the first year of Shah Jahan's reign when Mahabat Khan was appointed viceroy of the Deccan he sent his own son, Khan-i-Zaman as deputy to that province and himself remained in attendance on His Majesty. Or. 174, fol. 9a.

(b) See T. A. II, p. 162, Munim Khan, Khan Khanan appointed Haidar Muhammad Khan and then his own son Ghani Khan as his deputy to govern Kabul, while he had come to Court.

[2] Peter Mundy, II, p. 235. Baqir Khan sent his son to take charge of Gujrat of which he was appointed viceroy.

[3] (a) Or. 175, fol. 102. Mahabat Khan appointed Nasrat Khan to the fort of Daulatabad (1633 A. D.).

(b) Ibid., fol. 124b. Khan-i-Dauran of Malwa went to suppress rebels in Balaghat during absence of Khan-i-zaman, the governor (1635 A. D.).

(c) Ibid., fol. 286. Inayat Khan Tahir, author of Mulakkhas is despatched to act in his place at the request of his father, governor of Kashmir, who had gone on an expedition to Tibet. (1646).

(d) R and B. I, p. 345. Fazil Khan acts in place of Itmad-ud-daulah, as governor of the Punjab.

(e) In 1601 Raja Man Singh, viceroy of Bengal comes away to Ajmer but continues to hold his office, and sends his son who is allowed to officiate on the Raja's request. A. N. III, 763-770.

Some able officer was despatched to hold charge and carry on the administration till the arrival of the new incumbent.[1] In Agra and Dihli governors were appointed only during the absence of the Imperial Court.

Governors of sub-provinces

The governors of the sub-provinces, such as Orissa and Sind, were appointed usually on the recommendation of the viceroy of the major province to which they were attached, or else the viceroy appointed his own man either by the express permission of the emperor or subject to his approval.[2]

Institution of joint-governors

In the thirty-first year of his reign Akbar found it necessary, after due scrutiny, to appoint two men to each province, one of whom was of course the assistant or

[1] (a) Nawab Saif Khan officiates as interim governor of Bengal before the arrival of prince Shah Shuja (1639). Riyaz, p. 209; Or. 175, fol. 220.

(b) Nawab Shaista Khan officiates for Aurangzeb during his absence from the Deccan for his marriage (1636 A. D.), Or. 175, fol. 182b.

(c) Sayid Khan Bahadur, Zafar Jung, governor of Patna, having been appointed to Kabul in 1650, Laharasp Khan, Mir Bakhshi, was ordered to proceed and take charge pending the arrival of the viceroy-designate. Or. 175, fol. 386b. On fol. 389, we learn that Laharasp Khan made over charge to the viceroy when he arrived and returned to the capital to assume charge of his office.

[2] (a) In 1618 Ibrahim Khan, Fateh Jang, governor of Bengal appointed his nephew Ahmad Beg Khan to Orissa, and himself resided at Jahangirnagar (Dacca) (Riyaz, p. 181). According to Jahangir he was appointed in 1621. (R and B. II, p. 210.)

(b) On his accession Shah Jahan appointed Yamin-ud-daulah viceroy of both Lahore and Multan and the latter carried on the administration of Multan through his deputy Amir Khan son of Qasim Khan Namki. (Lahori, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 125-126).

(c) In 1648 prince Shuja was appointed viceroy of both Bengal and Orissa, the latter province being re-united as an adjunct of the former. He was ordered to appoint his own servant Jan Beg to administer Orissa under him. Or. 175, fol. 349a.

joint-governor and was expected to act in case the chief governor had to come to court or be absent owing to some other cause. Abul Fazl gives the entire list of appointments to the newly created office which the emperor made at this time.[1] This practice, however, does not seem to have been strictly adhered to subsequently, although we find some instances in which a deputy or joint-governor was also appointed to assist the viceroy of a province.

Appointment of the viceroy and other high officials

The viceroy of a province was appointed by the imperial order technically called the 'farman-i-sabati'. (فرمان ثبتی)[2]. The diwan of the province was appointed by the 'hasb-ul-hukm' (حسب الحکم) of the emperor and the sanad appointing him bore the seal of the Vazir-ul-Mulk or the imperial divan.[3] The provincial sadr was appointed by an imperial sanad on the nomination of the sadr-us-sudur, the sanad bearing the chief sadr's seal.[4] The qazi of the subah as well as those of the towns or parganahs (قصبات) were likewise appointed on the nomination and under the seal of the sadr-us-sudur, by an imperial sanad, which was obtained through the office of the provincial sadra (not direct).[5] Similarly the provincial Bakhshi was appointed through the office of the imperial Bakshi (بخشی الملک) and under his seal.[6] The Bakhshi of the province very often also held the office of the provincial diary-writer (واقعه نویس). Another officer appointed by the imperial sanad issued direct from the office of the chief sadr was the muhtasib of the pro-

[1] A. N. III, p. 511.
[2] Ain, I, p. 194.
[3] Mirat, (I. O.) III, fol. 721a. The letters of appointment of viceroys were called 'farmans', while those of other appointments were called 'sanads'.
[4] Mirat, (I. O.) III, fol. 721b.
[5] loc. cit.
[6] Ibid. fol. 722a.

vince as well as of the towns.[1] This office was often combined with that of the sadr. Whenever farmans of appointment or any other important imperial farmans were sent to a viceroy he used to advance some distance to receive them with all due ceremony.[2] The farmans of appointment or transference of a viceroy were sent through a sazawal whose duty it was to announce the news to the viceroy and escort him to his new charge asking the outgoing incumbent to make over charge to the new arrival.[3]

Tenure of office

There is no precise evidence to show that the usual term of service of a governor in a province was fixed. Tavernier, however, refers to a custom of the empire according to which a governor was expected to retire from a province in three years.[4] From this it may be inferred that normally a viceroy was not allowed to remain in the same province for more than three years, though there were a few cases in which the term was extended. This is also supported by Mundy.[5] But in the great majority of cases transfers were very frequent and were determined by the exigencies of the administration.[6] Other travellers have also observed that the tenure was short.[7]

[1] Ibid. fol. 722a. Formal drafts of the appointment farmans together with instructions issued to the various provincial officers, are given in the Insha-i-Harkaran.

[2] Riyaz, p. 205.

[3] Numerous instances of this are found in the chronicles. See R and B. II, p. 200; and I, p. 373.

[4] Tavernier, p. 63. "Shaista Khan, having completed three years of his government, according to the custom in the empire of the Great Mughal.....he withdrew to Agra, where the court then was".

[5] Peter Mundy. II, 85. 'for governors of places are usually transferred from one place to another once in three or four years'.

[6] Dr. Beni Prasad in his Jahangir has compiled a table which illustrates the point.

[7] Manrique, Vol. I, p. 53; Terry, p. 326.

Appointments of subordinate officers

The subordinate appointments in the different departments were made generally by the heads-in-charge. The nazim-i-subah appointed the faujdar-i-gard (i.e. the faujdar of the environs), for the protection of the suburbs of the city. The junior faujdars of the city wards or *nakas* and the thanadars of the district (the pargana of the city) were appointed by the faujdar-i-gard.[1] But the subordinate officers of the diwani department were appointed by an imperial sanad under the seal of the imperial diwan.[2] These were the darogha (superintendent) of the kacheri, the inspector of the daftar-khana (مشرف دفترخانه) the tahvildar (treasurer), and a host of other servants with different duties. In the other departments, such as the dak, generally the lower services were filled by the head.

Nature and conditions of service

The basis of almost the entire system of the upper government services was military, that is to say, the status, salaries and promotions were adjudged and governed by military standards. Some writers, however, have conveyed a very unfair impression by suggesting that the paramount aim and object of the Mughal government was military and their chief business was that of recruiting forces and using them to keep the people under subjection and to realise the revenue.[3] The aims and objects

[1] Mirat, (I. O.) III, foll. 718-719a. [2] Mirat, (I. O.) III, fol. 721a, b.

[3] See Moreland's 'India at the Death of Akbar' pp. 31-32. An even more absurd and unscientific view is that of V. A. Smith who contends that the 'governor, as long as he was in office, had powers practically unlimited' and that the provincial government was essentially military in character, simply because the governor in the time of Akbar was called sipah-salar (Akbar the Great Mughal (Sec. Ed.) p. 380). The hollowness of this view scarcely needs exposure. It is only too well-known how carefully the executive and judicial powers of the governor were circumscribed. He had not the power of capital punishment, nor of mutilation or torture; he had to work under a series of checks and controlling agencies, and he had to perform

of the Mughal government were certainly far nobler and loftier, and it may be said without risk of exaggeration that the primary aim of the Mughals was to secure happiness and prosperity to their subjects. The Mughal bureaucracy were not, in effect, military, any more than are the imperial medical and engineering services of the British government at the present day, which seem to afford a very apt parallel to the Mughal services. The medical department of the Indian government is entirely controlled and most of the ministerial or higher services manned by members of the Indian Medical Service which is a branch of the military department. Those members of the Indian Medical Service who are deputed to serve on the civil side are still governed by the rules and regulations of the military department and may at any moment be called upon to go on duty to the war front, although in peace times their work is wholly of a civil character. This too was the case with the Imperial Engineering Service until it was converted into a civil service in pursuance of the policy of Indianisation enunciated by the government of Lord Hardinge in 1914.[1] In the same way the superior Mughal services of the civil and executive departments were regulated by means of a military organisation with a view to achieve certain necessary objects which it would have been extremely difficult to achieve without that kind of organisation. Moreover that was the easiest and most economical method of raising and maintaining large numbers of forces in those days of slow means of communication. The main prin-

executive, civil and judicial duties. The nature and scope of his functions and powers will be presently discussed in this chapter.

[1] It has to be noted, however, that the I. M. S. officers are not expected to fight in any war and not even to carry arms, because they are considered immune from all hostile activities, so that they may provide aid and relief to the wounded without any danger to themselves. This difference, though otherwise noteworthy, is immaterial so far as the nature of the organisations of the British and Mughal services, is concerned.

ciple was that obligation for military service was a duty for which every servant of the state was expected to be prepared whenever called upon. At any rate, it is clear beyond doubt that, although the conditions of the superior services were regulated and controlled by military regulations, neither the efficiency of the government nor the interests of the governed suffered in the least degree because the government functionaries happened to hold military ranks. It is necessary, however, to refer to a curious misapprehension which seems to prevail universally. Practically every writer boldly states that the entire body of government services under the Mughals were based on a military organisation, that is to say, even the lowest official had some Mansab.[1] No greater fiction ever passed for a historical fact into such wide currency. Even a cursory perusal of the supplement of the Mirat-i-Ahmadi and other institutional records will reveal the fact that almost the entire clerical and superintending staff of the various departments held no mansabs, and were paid only cash salaries.

From another point of view Moreland has divided the services of the Mughal government into (1) Kachcha and (2) Pacca, the first signifying a service in which the employee is bound to carry out his duties according to the rules, and with the assistance of a staff appointed by the government, and the second signifying a sort of contract of a certain part of the land, given to a chief or officer in consideration of a fixed amount of revenue, the contractor being left free to employ his own staff to realise the revenue

[1] The latest example of such an untenable view is to be found in the article on Mughal administration in the Encyclopaedia of Islam. The writer makes the entirely unsupportable remark that the 'empire was a military despotism', and in his whole article describes only the military organisation of the empire as if the administration included no other department of any consequence. It may be also pointed out in passing that in the same article 'faujdar' is mentioned as the governor of a pargana, instead of that of a sarkar or a 'group of parganahs,' adhering strictly to the statement of the Ain-i-Akbari.

and to fix the incidence thereof quite arbitrarily. Moreland contends that this system, though more prevalent in the south prevailed also in the north in Akbar's time.[1] But he does not adduce any evidence in support of his view, which is altogether untenable so far as Akbar's administration is concerned. It is based on the fundamentally wrong assumption that the main concern of the government was the realisation of the revenue. It may be pointed out that in the jagirs and suyurghals assigned by the government the assignees had no hand at all in the general administration which was carried on by the government servants, and even in the collection of their revenues they were strictly bound by the rules and regulations of the government settlements,[2] which they were not empowered to transgress under any circumstances.

As regards qualifications for appointment, or promotions no specific rules existed. Nor is it possible to discover in the chronicles any information about the conditions of leave, pensions or retirement. In theory all the superior appointments depended on the will of the sovereign. In practice, however, the emperor always consulted competent persons and ministers even in the case of the highest appointments, and an elaborate formal procedure was followed in each case. All the superior services were recruited from amongst persons of well-known ability. Such mistakes as the appointment of Raja Birbal to a difficult war front were rarely committed and were the outcome of a personal favouritism. Generally, however, merit was the admitted principle of appointments which were always made with due regard to fitness and ability throughout our period, a fact which is a tribute to the insight and judgment of the emperors.[3] For instance,

[1] India at the Death of Akbar, p. 33.

[2] This topic will be fully treated in the chapter of 'Provincial Finance'.

[3] After the conquest of Gujrat Akbar made over the charge of the province to Khan-i-Azam in preference to his uncle Khan-i-Kilan, Qutbuddin Muhammad Khan who was put in a subordinate posi-

we observe that the offices of the subahdar and diwan were always restricted to persons of different capacities. Very rarely a diwan was appointed subahdar, or vice-versa. With the unique exception of the versatile Raja Todar Mal who was equally great as a financier, general and an administrative organiser, almost all the great dignitaries were confined to a single or allied branches. Raja Man Singh, or any other Rajput, for that matter, was never entrusted with finance. Similarly most of those persons who served as diwans remained always in the financial department.[1] The lower appointments which were made by the heads of departments were also regulated, in an informal way, by the same underlying principle. Meritorious service in any branch never went unrewarded, in one shape or another, nor did inefficiency or deliberate dereliction of duty escape without suitable censure and punishment.

Departments and their staff

We have seen in Chapter III that even under the rule of the Sultans of Dihli the rudiments of departmental responsibility and specialisation had begun to take shape. There were at least four principal ministries called diwans, namely the Diwan-i-Wizarat, (Finance), Arz (War); Insha (Local Government), and Riyasat (Markets), besides several minor departments such as justice, presided over by the chief qazi or sadr-us-sudur of Dihli, the department of Amirul-Bahar, dealing with river transport, ferries, etc.; and a department of agriculture under the Amir-i-Kho. But these were central departments and we do not know

tion to him, for 'in the code of just sovereignty weight is given to wisdom and not to years'. A. N. III, (Tr.) pp. 46-47.

[1] The case of Dayanat Khan may be cited in illustration. He was diwan of empress Mumtaz Mahal in 1628, and successively held the divani of Sirhind, the Kabul army, the Deccan provinces, and of prince Murad's establishment. The only other post he held was in the branding department, and he was again made diwan of Buyutat in 1666. M. U. (Tr.) I, 484.

whether corresponding departments in the provinces also existed. But in the Mughal empire a great advance in the division of functions had definitely been made in the provinces also. The departments of finance and war were here headed by the divan,[1] and the bakhshi. The department of local government and control of markets were both combined under the kotwal whose jurisdiction included many other duties besides. The department of justice was presided over by the sadr in whom was generally combined the qazi's office also. Works of public benefit such as irrigation, education, roads, wells and sarais were by no means neglected. While nominally no new departments appear to have been added, a vast development had taken place in their scope and working as well as in the spirit which actuated the officials. A remarkable widening of functions had come about, and several minor portfolios were entrusted to the heads of the major departments,[2] a point which will be fully elaborated later in the course of this chapter. A numerous staff of secretaries, clerks, accountants, writers, office superintendents, treasurers, peons, was attached to each department.

An account of the chief officials of the province and their departments will now be given.

The sipahsalar

Under the caliphates of Damascus and Baghdad the head of a province was called wali (والی). Under the Sultans of Dihli and the surs he was called Hakim or occasionally Nazim. The term sipahsalar was a generic name,

[1] The use of the word diwan in the sense of an office or department was directly borrowed from the Persian Caliphate; but in the Mughal times it underwent a change in significance. Later it passed through several changes in meaning.

[2] The qazi of the city of Ahmedabad, besides his proper duties, held the duty of supervision of the escheat office, and the superintendence of new converts. Vide Mirat, (I. O.) III, fol. 721b. The same was true of other responsible officers.

like faujdar, both of which were used in Akbar's time because technically they held a military office, the framework of the services being organised on a military model. The use of these terms, however, need not mislead us to conclude that the duties of the sipahsalar or faujdar were confined to keeping down rebellion and realising government revenue, as some writers have suggested. The title sipahsalar connoted the full civil and executive duties of the governor. Similarly he was later on called subahdar, or even tarafdar, as in the south, both terms being derived from the fact that the kingdom was supposed to be divided into four 'sūbs' or tarafs, just as in the early Hindu empires a governor was called a sthanika (स्थानिक). The word nazim which superseded the term sipahsalar in official technique later on indicated the real function of that official.

When a subahdar was appointed the emperor invested him with the insignia of office and bestowed on him suitable honours and other gifts.[1] An instrument of instructions was issued to him at the time of his departure to take over his charge.[2] We have several very ample records of these instructions all of which contain substantially the same matter. The most important of these records are the Ain-i-Sipahsalar in the Ain-i-Akbari and a farman[3] issued to the governor of Gujrat in 1585. Another farman of the same kind was issued to Shahbaz Khan subahdar of Malwa[4] and a third to prince Murad on his appointment to the same province.[5] The contents of

[1] Islam Khan was appointed governor of Bengal in 1608, and came to Agra to receive the insignia of office. M. U., I. p. 118.

[2] On the authority of a MS. in the possession of Sir Jadunath Sarkar which he calls 'Manual of officers' duties', he states that the Subahdar had to go to the High Diwan to take his leave.....who delivered the charge to him. See Mughal Admn.

[3] Mirat (Baroda Ed.) Pt. I, pp. 163-170.

[4] Oriental Miscellany (Cal. 1798) Vol. I, pp. 15-23.

[5] A. N. III, pp. 598-600; (Trans. pp. 911-914).
The Insha-i-Harkaran also has a draft of a similar farman.

these instruments of instructions when boiled down can be classified under three broad heads :—

(*a*) Defining the responsibility and scope of the viceroy's work, his powers, privileges and limitations.

(*b*) Advice as to his private and public conduct and as to the method of work.

(*c*) Instructions to those under him to obey and co-operate with him.

Here is a summary of sipahsalar's duties :—

(*a*) Every farman commences with a supplication to God for mercy and justice and an expression of the emperor's ideal of government, as also an appreciation of the services and trustworthy qualities of the appointee. This is followed by a formal affirmation of the authority and powers vested in him. He is then reminded that the people and the army are under his orders and their welfare depends on his just administration and that he must 'never lay aside the consideration of the people's prosperity'. His duties were very comprehensive involving as they did his general responsibility for the welfare of the people, and an oversight of the activities of the government employees in the subah. One of his very important duties was to administer justice. In connection with this business he was instructed first and foremost to observe the utmost expedition and not afflict the people by dilatoriness. In trying cases he was not to rely on witnesses and oaths, but to investigate the matter personally, and to treat the parties with courtesy. In giving punishments he was to be forgiving and mild, and to discriminate between persons of different status, as a small rebuke would have on an honourable person more effect than even a severe chastisement might have on a low class man or habitual criminal. Only against the disaffected and recalcitrant, the governor was empowered to resort to severe punishments as fettering, manacling or beating, but only after all methods of persuasion and kind-

ness had failed. He was not authorised ordinarily to inflict the penalty of death on any one whom he thought deserving of it, but to send such cases to the imperial court along with a full account of them and then to comply with the judgment thereof. But if he feared imminent risk of sedition by sending bad characters to Court, and felt immediate action necessary, he could apply the last remedy of the law. His next duty was that of 'watch and ward'. He was to appoint reliable and dutiful men for the country police,[1] and keep intelligent men in the secret information service, and use them with firmness and tact to protect the subjects from the rapacity of oppressive government officers as well as the cruelty of the brigand, and also from his own friends or relations who would be apt to take advantage of their position and behave unjustly towards them. Thirdly he was to devote attention to the comforts and prosperity of the people and encourage agriculture by constructing works of irrigation, roads, sarais, gardens, hospitals,[2] wells, reservoirs and other similar works. Fourthly he was to ensure complete religious liberty to all and respect the pious and the virtuous and the learned, and also encourage learning by showing magnanimity towards them. Fifthly he was to guide and inspect the soldiers and not to let them become too expensive and wasteful. He was to report all important matters to the imperial court.

(*b*) Concerning himself, he was advised to exercise economy of words as well as of sentiment and to behave very carefully in society—neither to appear very frivolous nor too grave. He was to avoid undesirable company and never let his expenses exceed his income. He was also to keep up the practice of riding and shooting. In order to perform his duties wisely and well he was to seek

[1] These were the 'faujdars' of the districts.
See Mirat (I. O.) III, fol. 719a.

[2] That these were not merely pious wishes will be seen from the existence of government hospitals with a regular staff. (Vide infra, chapter on Public Works).

the assistance and advice of a council of reliable and far-sighted men. He was not to think himself permanently established but to be ready to be recalled any moment. He was also to supervise the various duties of a kotwal and appoint fit persons to carry out the work.

(c) All the principal umarahs, jagirdars, and other officers were at the same time ordered to obey and co-operate with him in augmenting the welfare and prosperity of the subah, and thereby also increasing the revenue of the state. He was authorised to punish if any jagirdars or officers acted in contravention of his orders or in a manner prejudicial to the efficiency of the administration.

In addition to the above-mentioned duties the subahdar had also to realise tribute from those zamindars who were attached to his province for revenue purposes. But he was not empowered to exercise that authority over those princes who had direct relations with the central government. It may also be noted here that he commanded a considerable influence with the imperial government, which, however, varied according to the personal character of the man. When temporarily in charge of Gujrat, Raja Todar Mal, enjoyed the unique privilege of accepting the submission of Rajput chiefs, making treaties with them and even of conferring mansabs on them on behalf of the government.[1] But such privilege was rarely allowed to any one. The subahdars, however, made recommendations for promotions,[2] and appointments to important offices such as the governorship of a sub-province, a deputy-governorship, and other provincial offices. On the recommendation of Islam Khan, when he was made viceroy of Bengal, Jahangir appointed Ihtimam Khan,

[1] The states of Sirohi, Dungarpur, Ramnagar and others submitted to Todar Mal, as stated above, (chapter V).

[2] On the recommendation of the governor of Bengal, the mansab of Iftikhar Khan who had done good service in Bengal was raised from 1500 to 2000. Two promotions were made on the recommendation of Abudullah Khan Firoz Jung, that of Ghazni Khan Jalwani and Rana Shankar Rao. Vide R and B. I, pp. 177; 178.

Mir Atash, recalled Vazir Khan and replaced him by Abul Hasan Muatamid Khan in the Diwan, (Baharistan-i-Ghaibi, see J.I.H. Vol. XI, Pt. III, pp.340-'41). At the request of the same governor Raja Kalyan was appointed governor of Orissa.[1] They were also sometimes empowered to assign jagirs. When Malwa was conquered from Baz Bahadur a second time the emperor wanted to pacify the people and create trust in them. For this purpose he sent Khwaja Muiyenuddin on a special mission to pacify and hearten the peasantry to take up farming again which they might have given up owing to the marching of armies in the country. The Khwaja was also authorised to grant jagirs.[2] Another example is that of Islam Khan of Bengal who gave Jessore back to Raja Pratapaditya together with the additional territories of Bikrampur and Sripuri in consideration of his promise to send 400 war boats, and to join personally with 500 boats and 20000 foot in the war against Bhati.[3]

The governors, however, were not allowed to assume royal airs, or to imitate the imperial darbar in the exercise of those powers which were the special prerogative of royalty. In the sixth year of his reign Jahangir, having come to know that some governors were imitating the darbar, ordered the bakshis to circulate orders that they should not do so in future. They were ordered not to sit in the jharokha, not to ask their officers to keep guard on or salute them, not to have elephant fights, not to inflict punishment of blinding, or mutilation of any limb, nor force Islam on anyone, not to confer titles on servants, nor order royal servants to do kornish or prostration, nor force singers to remain in attendance as in the imperial darbar, nor beat drums when they went out..... nor to seal anything they wrote.[4]

[1] R and B. II, 202.

[2] A. N. III, p. 168.

[3] Baharistan-i-Ghaibi (quoted in J. I. H. Vol. XI, Part III, p. 344).

[4] R and B. I, p. 205.

The Diwan

The word diwan is of foreign extraction, but has been used in Arabic since very early times. Perhaps, no other word has undergone so many changes in meaning and application. The Abbasides used it to denote a department of the state in which sense it was translated to India under the Sultanate of Dihli. Under the Mughals it came to be applied to the minister of revenue, as well as, in general, to any person entrusted with the management of any property, jagir or establishment on behalf of the owner. Every prince or zamindar had a diwan to manage his property and even household.[1]

In the province the office of diwan was the most important next to the sipahsalar. He was selected by the imperial diwan, and appointed directly from the imperial court and was in no way subordinate to the governor. He acted directly under the orders of the imperial diwan and was in every way responsible to him. In the year 1596 Akbar issued an order that all provincial diwans should report their proceedings to His Majesty in accordance with the suggestions of the chief divan, Khwaja Shams-uddin[2]. The diwan was the head of the finance department. The Mirat-i-Ahmadi gives a succinct and very comprehensive account of his duties. We are told that he was allowed to have (in Gujrat) fifty horsemen as a personal contingent besides his mansab. The thanadaris of Arjunpur and Khanbali together with a contingent of one hundred horse were attached to the department for its assistance. For the work of realising the revenues a body of mansabdars and for the purpose of performing the other business of the department (such as

[1] Dayanat Khan was the diwan of the establishment of the empress Mumtaz Mahal, in the first year of Shah Jahan's reign (M. U-Tr. I, 484). At the same time it came to signify the building in which the court was held, or the private sitting room of the grandees. See Bernier (Ed. Smith) pp. 266-'67.

[2] A. N. III, 670. It is not clear what was the real aim of this order.

assessment and calculation of the revenue, and drawing up of budgets) a body of officials of the provincial civil service, were attached to the office (کچہری) of the diwan. His duties were: the collection of revenue from the Khalsa mahals and keeping the accounts of the balances and receipts and supervising the lands assigned for charitable endowments, the allotment and disbursing of salaries to officers of the province according to their rank (grades) and administering the financial business in relation to the jagirs assigned according to the royal sanads in the nine Khiraji (Khalsa) sarkars. All the aforesaid transactions were to bear the seal of the provincial diwan. Besides these, similar other duties, both small and great, and receipts and disbursements were part of his work.[1])

[1] Mirat, (I. O.) III, fol. 721a; (Baroda Ed.) Supplement (Text) p. 172, (Trans.) p. 148. Of the two texts of the Mirat which I have compared, the reading of the I. O. MS. is evidently more correct and makes sense, and the Baroda text is slightly wrong. But as usual Mr. Seddon's Trans. (Baroda) is hopelessly wrong, while Col. Watson's, though not correct, is much better. I think it necessary to quote the text and briefly discuss the obscure phrases:

دیوان صوبه بموجب حسب‌الحکم اقدس ارفع اعلی و سند بمهر وزیرالملک مقرر می شود و سوائی منصب ذات و تا بینان پنجاه سوار مشروط و تهانه‌داری ارجن‌پور و تهانه‌داری کهنبالی پائنام دیوانی مشروط یک صد سوار مقرر است و جمعی از منصب‌داران بنابر سزاولی و سرانجام‌کار سرکار والا از متعینان صوبه تعینات کچہری دیوانی معین اند و آئینی محالات خالصه شریفه و پائبانی و بار یافت – آئمه و تنخواه مطابق خدمات و جاگیرات بموجب اسناد درگاهی نه سرکار خراجی – صوبه بمهر دیوان صوبه و قدیم امورات جزوی و کلّی و مداخل و مخارج بدو تعلق دارد –

The error in the Baroda text is in adding a (و) between the words تنخواه and مطابق underlined above, which renders the passage meaningless. In the translation پائنام دیوانی has been rendered as 'civil' which is absurd. The sentence beginning وجمعی از منصبداران and ending معین اند has been rendered incorrectly by both the translators referred to. There are clearly two distinct and separate bodies of officers referred to here, one, the mansabdars,

An idea of the extent of the diwan's functions can be formed from the extant schedules of instructions isued by the emperors for diwans of subahs from time to time. One of these is contained in Sarkar's 'Manual' and the other is Aurangzeb's farman to the diwan of Gujrat containing directions about his business, quoted in full, in the Mirat-i-Ahmadi. The salient features of these instructions may be briefly stated. The diwan was to strive by all means in his power to encourage the growth of agriculture. He was to keep strict watch over the treasury and see that nobody withdrew money without a proper warrant. He was to let no official exact any forbidden cess (abwab). He was to scrutinise the work as well as accounts of the amils very severely and report corrupt amils (officers) for dismissal. If in any place arrears of revenue had accumulated owing to the amil's neglect, it was to be collected in easy instalments of 5% every season. The taqavi loan was to be realised. One of the clauses of the farman authorises the diwan to change payment of revenue from one form into another for the convenience of the cultivators. The bulk of the farman deals with revenue affairs which will be discussed in their proper place.

The diwan was sometimes invested with the auditors' office also.[1] He exercised full control over the allocation of expenditure to the different departments. In the beginning of Jahangir's reign there were frequent rebellions of the local zamindars in Bengal. In order to restore order and punish the rebels Ihtimam Khan, the

for collection work, and the other, the civil staff for the office work, but they have been confounded and mixed up. The Baroda translation is again wrong: "He is assisted in his civil work by certain officials stationed in the province as stewards (سزاولی) to carry out the Royal command." The remaining translation is equally imperfect. (q. v.).

[1] وزیر خان بدیوانی و تنقیح ایں صوبه مباهات اندوخت –

Trans. Vazir Khan was entrusted with the diwani and auditorship of this subah (Bengal). Vide Riyaz, p. 170 (Tr. p. 168).

commander of artillery and war boats (میر آتش و میر بحری), prepared a large fleet of war boats. He prepared a rather extravagant budget for the upkeep of the forces, his estimates being three times as much as the previous ones. To this both Islam Khan, the viceroy and Mu'atamid Khan the diwan, objected and Ihtimam Khan had to cut down the budget by one-third.[1]

The records that were kept in the office of the provincial diwan

The following records are stated in a MS.[2] to have been preserved in the Provincial Diwan's Office:—

1. Records dealing with the Executive Department and their answers, together with separate files of the revenue of the mahals of the khalsa, under the seals and signatures of the qanungos and zamindars. The estimates, realisations and expenditure, together with the roznamcha and awarija (روزنامچه و اوراجه) under the seal of the karori.

2. Records dealing with the department of the mahals of the jagir lands in the order of the amount of salaries granted by the emperor. The papers of the mahals showing the balance in the same way as the records of the khalsa, and the dastur-ul-amls of parganas concerning the land revenue and the sair (imposts), under the signature of the qanungos.

3. Record of the department of counting the wells in each pargana, signed by the qanungos concerned.

4. Records dealing with the department of inams

[1] Baharistan-i-Ghaibi (Trans. in J. I. H. Vol. XI, Pt. III, p. 345). Subsequently the power and influence of the diwans became inconceivably great. The author of the M. U. says about Diyanat Khan who was confirmed in the diwanship of the Deccan after Aurangzeb's death: "How can the power and influence of the diwans of those days be described? They could make grants up to 99000 dams (Rs 2425) under their own signature and could add to such grants" .....They had begun even to sign the grant deeds of jagirs which were not valid technically without the Emperor's or the Prime Minister's signature. Vide M. U. (Tr.) I, p. 473.

[2] Add. 6588, foll. 72b-73b.

and commissions to headmen, qanungos and muqaddams. The returns of rates of commodities (نرخ نامهٔ اجناس) signed by the rates clerk. The account of the deposits in the treasury, under the seals of karoris and fotahdars. The statement of the sair-i-mahal with the seals of the amin and the darogha and mushrif. The roznamcha of the income and expenditure.[1]

The same MS. gives a list of the papers and records which had to be submitted by the provincial diwan to the office of the chief diwan. The files (طوامیر) which were thus sent and bore the seals of those officers who sent them were: 1. The baramad (برامد)[2] of the discharged amils under the seal of the darogha-i-mushrif. 2. List of the dismissed and newly appointed amils. 3. The certificates of the sureties of the amils with the seal of the qazi and of the surety. 4. The balance sheet (awarijah) of the amount due (مطالبه) to the government from the amils, zamindars and mansabdars in the account of the tributes of the zamindars. 5. Records of the annual collections and arrears, according to the registers of the amils, so that they may be corrected in the office. 6. The petitions and communications of the amils and other people from the parganahs. 7. The copies and despatches (پروانجات) which are written by the amils and other people. 8. The list of the larger imā (ایمه) grants, copies of the farmans and despatches of the office of the chief sadr of the subah, and the list of the property of the imas left by the deceased under the seal of the provincial sadr. 9. Return of the public treasury, the roznamcha, i.e., of income and expenditure, under the seal of the provincial diwan and mushrif. 10. List of the mansabdars

[1] Add. 6588, foll. 72b-73ba. The author says that the list of records kept in the Provincial Diwan's Office is very long and he therefore confines himself to giving an account only of the principal ones.

[2] This was a kind of return prepared by the amils, containing an account of the net income of the government after all expenses had been defrayed, as explained in the same MS. fol. 91b.

appointed in the subah. Acquittance roll of the salaries of the mansabdars, ahadis, the monthlies and dailies (روزینه‌داران). 11. Return of the mint of the subah. 12. The return of the record room of the provincial diwan's court. All these papers were safely preserved and after the harvest (season) or the year, copies were prepared from each of them according to the dasturs obtaining in the subah, and sent to the head office. And in case some mahals were transferred before the end of the season or the year or the returns of certain mahals had already been sent, such mahals were to be deducted from the annual returns, and a correct copy of the remaining mahals was to be sent to the head office. All these copies of the papers were to be certified by the seal of the diwan of the subah.[1]

The significance of the diwan's office: Provincial dyarchy

The diwan, as we have seen, was appointed, promoted, or dismissed by and was responsible directly to the head-quarters. In matters financial, he stood on a par with the governor. Thus there were two parallel and mutually independent organisations in the province. The diwan was the head of a graded series of services on the revenue side, from the amalguzar down to the patwari and patel, just as the governor was the head of a similar range of services from the faujdar down to the shiqdar and village chowkidar. This system was in the nature of an administrative dyarchy, a dyarchy which only technically resembled the present system of so-called dyarchy in the provinces in British India, inasmuch as in it the entire business of provincial administration was divided into two mutually independent halves each being responsible to the sovereign. It differed from the present system in that it did not pretend to have transferred the responsibility of either half of the government from the sovereign to the people. The purpose of this ingenious

[1] Add: 6588, fol. 73a. Much greater details of these records are given but for the sake of brevity I have given only a gist of them.

administrative device was to create a most potent and reliable check on the highest officials of the province. The subahdar and the diwan kept a jealous watch over each other's activities and reported them to the headquarters.[1] This need not, however, imply that the aim was to create a perpetual rift and clash between the two officials. On the contrary mutual co-operation and collaboration was the *sine qua non* of their success and efficiency. Indeed, as soon as the imperial government were informed that the diwan and the governor of any province were quarrelling with each other, one of them or sometimes both were immediately recalled.[2] Thus while acting in complete harmony they both exercised a very healthy influence and restraint upon each other and added considerably to the efficiency of the administration.

It may, however, be noted that though the diwan in his office was practically independent of the viceroy's authority, he was not his equal in status or rank. The viceroy besides enjoying a much higher rank had also

[1] An apt illustration of the way in which these two offices kept a watch on each other is afforded by the relations of Muhammad Hashim, the diwan (1661-1663) and Khan-i-Dauran, the governor of Orissa. During the disorder at the end of Shah Jahan's reign the revenue administration was in a chaotic state. Raja Raghunath the "Chancellor" therefore appointed a strong man, Muhammad Hashim to the diwani. On arriving in Orissa he at once called for all papers of his predecessors in office and the collections they had made. Khan-i-dauran sent them without demur saying "What objection can I have in giving them to you. You write that the Amil of parganah Karnul has appropriated some money.....I order an enquiry to be made....." (Muraqqat, quoted in Sarkar's Studies in Mughal India, pp. 221-222). But when the diwan went beyond his jurisdiction and interfered with the executive department, and withdrew men from the Hariharpur mint, Khan-i-Dauran at once warned him and asked him to send the men of the mint back immediately. Muhammad Hashim persisted in his arrogant ways which eventually spelt the ruin even of the revenue department. The governor, therefore, made a representation to the Imperial Chancellor and Muhammad Hashim was removed. (Ibid, pp. 222-224).

[2] We have seen how Vazir Khan the diwan of Bengal was recalled by Jahangir because Islam Khan the governor did not want him.

the advantage of being the head of the executive and naturally in the public eye he commanded greater prestige and honour than the diwan.

The staff of the diwani secretariate[1]

The following were the principal officers of the diwan's office. The peshkar or the secretary and personal assistant, who was appointed usually from the headquarters by an imperial sanad under the seal of the chief diwan. But in many cases the diwan's own private secretary (پیشکار خانگی خود) did this duty. The darogha of the diwan's court and office (office superintendent) was also a mansabdar and received his appointment by an imperial sanad under the seal of the chief diwan. The mushrif (probably the head clerk),[2] was appointed by an imperial sanad and received a salary of forty rupees per mensem. His office also included the inspection of the pan-market.[3] The tahvildar-i-daftarkhana (the treasurer of the office) was appointed also by an imperial sanad and had a salary of forty rupees a month. He had, in addition, to be the tahvildar of the pan-market. The other staff consisted of the munshi of the kachery, the huzur nawis (probably the clerk dealing with the correspondence with the central government), suba-nawis (probably the clerk dealing with the correspondence with the governor's office), muharrir-i-khalsa (clerk of the 'Reserved territory'); muharrir-daftar-i-tan (salary disbursement clerk), muharrir daftar-i-paebaqi (clerk in charge of receipts and arrears), the clerk of the stipendiaries of all

[1] عملهٔ و نعلهٔ کچهری دیوانی.

[2] It is not possible to ascertain the exact duties of some of these officials. The Baroda Trans. renders it as Treasurer, which is, I think, quite wrong. He was in all likelihood an inspector or head clerk.

[3] From these examples it becomes clear that all servants of the government were not mansabdars as has been supposed hitherto by all writers.

kinds,[1] the clerk in charge of weighing and measuring (probably the revenue received in kind and keeping the account of its proceeds)[2], the clerk in charge of imports (i. e. probably customs or income from imports).[3] All these together received one hundred rupees monthly. The clerk of the treasurer (not clear),[4] the writer of rates,[5] of news,[6] the man in charge of the office,[7] and the peon and watch of the kachery.[8]

The sadr and the qazi

Next to the diwan the most important officers were the heads of the judicial and religious departments. These two departments were often combined under the mughals although a distinction seems to have been kept up between the jurisdictions of the various officials connected with this department. But almost all modern writers are hopelessly confused in giving an account of this department, both of its scope as well as its functionaries and their duties. This subject, however, will be fully dealt with in a separate chapter.

The intelligence department: the bakshi and the political remembrancer

With the office of the provincial bakhshi was generally combined also that of the political remembrancer (وقائع نگار). According to the Mirat four bakhshis were appointed in the province from the office of the great

1 محرر سرشتهٔ ارباب وظائف
2 محرر موازنه و اوارجه
3 مشرف برآمد نویس
4 محرر ارباب التحاویل
5 نرخ نویس
6 اخبار نویس
7 دفتر بند
8 میرده کچهری

bakhshis (at court) and their appointment letter bore the seal of that office.[1] Occasionally a separate remembrancer was also appointed, and in some parganahs some of his agents were stationed so that they might regularly report the incidents of those places. Then the bakhshi made an abstract of such news as was worthy of being reported to the imperial government and included it in the report of the city. He kept his reporters in the offices of the nazim, diwan, faujdar-i-gard, court of justice and the police, who reported to him daily what passed in those offices. In some parganahs, however, official reporters were appointed direct from the headquarters: the reporters registered the lists of the properties of the deceased or renegade mansabdars and despatched them, under their seals, to the office of the diwan of the province concerned. If any mansabdar went away without taking leave from the bakhshi he was declared a runaway or deserter (فراری). The reports (packets, لفافه) which came from the remembrancer were sent to the provincial darogha of dak (postmaster-general) and he despatched them to the imperial court along with other despatches.

The secret service

Besides the official remembrancer, who reported about the activities of the public servants and offices, there was also a secret service for which need was felt owing to the remembrancer's entering into a collusion with the governors and the other staff and thus suppressing news which might be prejudicial to the latter. On the other hand, they were suspected sometimes of exaggerating or even forging false reports. Hence a new set of reporters were created known as sawanih nawis or khufia nawis (اخبار خفیه نویس نیز گویند), who were to remain secretly in all important places and transmit news not only about the government officials, but all other happenings. These reporters were appointed throughout the dominions

[1] Mirat, (I. O.) fol. 722a.

by the postmaster-general of the province, to whose suite were attached twenty horsemen for the purpose of carrying out this branch of his duties. Subsequently the sawanih nawises also acted as postal superintendents and forwarded all the news, reports and despatches of the diwans and nazims and letters and communications, enclosed in envelopes which were put in mail bags and entrusted to the official dak-runners (هرکارها) who are stationed at appointed posts, to be carried to the P. M. G. of the empire to be presented before the emperor. Like the system of the waqia' nigars the agents of the secret reporter were also appointed to watch the court of the governor and other departments and through them were conveyed the farmans and orders from the headquarters concerning the attachment of the jagirs of the deceased, discharged or deserted mansabdars, or concerning other administrative business, and the imperial office sent such letters as arrived in the dak to their respective addresses. It will be noticed that the sawanih nawises who began as a secret branch of the intelligence department soon became openly established as a parallel organisation of reporters with the waqia nawises who were more of the nature of office recorders and reporters.

Harkaras

It would seem that this transformation of the secret service into an open service necessitated the creation of another secret service. These were named the harkaras. They were appointed throughout the imperial dominions from the office of the chief superintendent of the harkaras (داروغهٔ هرکارهائی کُل). They kept the nazim (governor of the province) informed of the happenings and condition of their localities, and sent an envelope to be forwarded to the imperial court enclosed in the mail bag. The agents of the harkaras also used to sit in the court of the governor and other offices like those of the waqia nawis and sawanih nawis. These three persons (that is the agents) are also called by the common name of akhbar-nawis.

Some instances of the working of the intelligence department

If the records of the intelligence department had not been destroyed they would have constituted a most wonderful and rich source of the history of the period. All that remains of them are stray references in the memoirs and annals of the period. These incidental references give us some glimpses into the actual working and usefulness of the system.

We have seen how efficient Sher Shah's espionage system was. Under Akbar it seems that the system took some time to be rebuilt into a vigorous and effective machinery. But we know from a statement of Jahangir[1] that it had been fully reorganised by his father, who had made 'a rule that events of the subahs be reported according to the boundaries of each'. News-writers from the court had been appointed for this duty, and Jahangir speaks very highly of the inestimable advantages of the system. Even such occurrences as the death of a few travellers on the road by a sudden storm near Lahore were reported to the emperor. In one instance the governor of Gujrat was punished on the report of the bakhshi. The latter having recorded certain affairs unpleasant to Abdullah Khan Firoz Jang, the governor of Gujrat, was mishandled by him. The bakhshi reported the governor's misbehaviour to the emperor. Jahangir thought this matter to be 'very serious' and sent Dayanat Khan to make enquiries whether the bakhshi's report was true. As soon as Firoz Jung came to know of this he started for the capital on foot and made an abject apology. He was deprived of his office.[2] Hawkins, the English merchant, had been ill-treated at Surat. When he came to complain of it at the headquarters he was surprised to learn that the emperor had received a full report of the matter and had already taken action to redress it.[3] Theve-

[1] R and B. I, p. 247.
[2] R and B. I, pp. 330-'31.
[3] Hawkins' voyages, pp. 400-'1.

not also affirms the existence of a 'Vaca navis, that is, one who writes and keeps a register of all that happens within the extent of the country where he is placed'.

Thevenot tells us that the king kept one of these officers in every government (i.e. a province) to give him notice of all that occurred and that he (the waqia' nawis) depended on no minister of state but only on His Majesty.[1] Manucci says that the reports of these officers (news-writers) were read out to the emperor at night. The provincial waqia nawis submitted his reports to the court through the diwan.[2]

There was a parallel organisation of waqia'-nawises for the army and here too the office was combined with that of the bakshi.[3]

The main functions of the bakhshi's department, however, pertained to the military administration. They included enlistment, mustering, passing of pay bills, both of the mansabdars and their soldiers, and enforcing the branding regulations. A detailed account of this topic deserves a separate treatment and will be given in another chapter.

The relation of the provincial government to the central: the control of the latter over the former

The question of the control and check of the central government over the provincial authorities and their activities has two aspects, theoretical and practical. The

[1] Thevenot, Part III, pp. 19-20.

A very interesting case occurred in the time of Aurangzeb. Izzat Khan, the governor of Sindh, having made indecent overtures to the young daughter of a rich merchant was enticed by the clever girl into her room at night time, dressed as a woman, and then shut up there. Next morning he was found to have mysteriously disappeared from his court and the matter having come to be known was reported by the waqia-nawis to the emperor. The governor was dismissed, deprived of his rank and made to walk on foot up to the capital. Manucci, II, pp. 218-20.

[2] Manucci, II, pp. 331-332.

[3] M. U. (Tr.), p. 149; 157.

theoretical position of the governor of a Mughal province has been fully discussed in the beginning of this chapter. It has been shown that a fundamental change came about in the relations between the governors and the sovereign since the advent of Akbar. How far practice conformed to theory is, perhaps, a question of greater importance, and should now be discussed.

The control of the central authority in an empire so extensive as that of the Mughals and at a time when the means of communication were very slow, depended, to a considerable extent, on the geographical conditions and on the personal equations of the king and the provincial governor. The obstacles and difficulties that a benevolent and strong ruler would have to face would arise from distance, from the nature of the locality or province, and from the recalcitrant, covetous or neglectful character of the governor. That the obstacles in the way of a good and just administration were great cannot be denied. We have to see how far the Mughal rulers strove and succeeded in overcoming them, and by what means.

'The Mughals devised a series of checks to control and supervise the activities of the government officers, especially the governor and his ministers. First the governors of provinces were not allowed to remain for long periods in one province.' They were very frequently transferred and generally together with the whole of their ministry, so that none could consider himself permanent master of one place. What was more, they were never allowed to remain a moment if it came to be known to the emperor that they were either oppressive or neglectful and inefficient. We have numerous instances of viceroys being punished for misgovernment or at least severely reprimanded and recalled. Even such an influential officer as Man Singh was recalled from Kabul as soon as the emperor learnt that he and his Rajput subordinates were behaving with injustice towards the people.[1] 'The second

[1] A. N. III, pp. 517-518. A few instances of punishment for

most powerful check was the intelligence department whose ramifications covered the whole empire like a network and kept the government servants always alert about their duty. Thirdly the administrative dyarchy which has been discussed above served as the most potent and unfailing check on the governor and the ministry of the province. The bakhshi being generally also the waqia nawis had a very strong instrument of power in his hands. The governor could not afford to show any high-handedness in his affairs nor to lose his confidence. Even more effective, in some ways, was the fear of the secret reporter (the sawanih nawis), and the harkarah.[1] The few cases quoted above in the account of the intelligence department

oppression and misgovernment will suffice to bear out how alert and strict the emperors were in this matter.

(a) The governor of the Punjab, Hussain Quli Khan Mahram, was removed from office on charges of maladministration and neglect of duty. Sa'eed Khan was appointed in his place; 21st year of reign. (A. N. III, 247).

(b) Muzzaffar Khan and Shah Mansur were appointed to enquire into the case of the 'amal guzar (collector) of Dihli against whom the petition of the public was received. Ibid. p. 250.

(c) Sheikh Sultan, a learned man, was hanged for oppressing the people of Thaneshwar where he was appointed karori in response to his request. According to the Iqbal Nama the ryots had petitioned against him. A. N. III, p. 748; (Tr.) 1118.

(d) The son of Abdur Rahim, Khan Khanan, was imprisoned for murderous attack upon a qazi. Ibid. p. 758.

(e) Hafiz Qasim was castrated for outraging the chastity of a woman in Kashmir. Ibid. p. 733.

(f) On the complaint of a widow that her daughter had been taken by force and kept by Muqarrab Khan, governor of Cambay, and that she had died, it was found on enquiry that the servant of Muqarrab Khan was responsible for the crime. The servant was executed and Muqarrab's mansab was reduced by half, and an allowance was given to the woman. R and B. I, p. 172.

(g) Mirza Ghazi Tarkhan of Qandahar was punished for oppressing the people of Thatta. R and B. I, p.262.

(h) Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi, sadr of Gujrat was imprisoned because a representation was made against him and the charges were, on enquiry, found true. A. N. III, 408-'09.

show how powerful a check this service constituted. A fourth check was provided by the frequent imperial tours and the deep concern displayed by the kings for the peasantry.' Sher Shah always laid great stress on the ruler's duty of protecting and encouraging the peasantry, and the zeal which he always displayed in fulfilling this ideal was inherited, with unabated warmth, by the Mughals. The emperor Akbar when touring in the Punjab (1579 A. D.) was approached by many people who complained that Shah Quli Mahram, the governor did not punish the oppressors and that, in consequence, the administration of justice was not in a good state. The complaint being found correct the governor was reprimanded and cashiered.[1] The emperor also found certain other reforms necessary and commissioned Raja Todar Mal, as usual, to put the administration of the province on a sound basis and wipe out all sources of evil. Another apt illustration of the utility of imperial tours is found

(i) Several officers of Bihar having been found guilty of neglect of duty were punished. R and B. II, 175-'6.

(j) Sir Jadunath Sarkar quotes an instance of Shah Jahan's justice, from the India Office MS. No. 370, and says that 'it shows the atmosphere and the public belief in Shah Jahan's kindness to his subjects.' Mughal Admn., pp. 81-82.

(k) Raja Kalyan, governor of Orissa, was accused of some evil doings. On enquiry he was found to be innocent and was acquitted and restored. R and B. I, pp. 389-390.

(l) Shaista Khan was accused of dissipating the revenues of Bengal. He personally went to court and explained to the emperor and was acquitted and re-installed in his office. (Riyaz, pp. 222-223).

(m) Amir Fatehullah Shirozi, who was included in the ministry, in the 30th year, and then made Amin-ul-Mulk, in the 34th year, presided over a commission appointed to investigate the case of a shiqdar, named Allah Bardi, agent of Sadiq Khan, near Sialkot, against whom complaints of oppression were made when the emperor was on tour to Kashmir. Shahbaz Khan and Qasimbeg (Mir 'Adl) were the other members of the commission. The accused was found guilty and punished with death. A. N. III, 538.

[1] A. N. III, p. 247.

in the two visits of Akbar to Kashmir during both of which he instituted enquiries, into the financial condition of the province, in the first case by appointing regular committees as a result of which the arbitrary and oppressive imposts of the local officers were removed and the administration overhauled.[1] When Jahangir was touring in Gujrat in 1617, he made every effort in his power, with a very righteous and religious intention, to give to the people the greatest benefit of his presence, and he did not fail in his resolve.[2] Similarly Shah Jahan used to enjoin it very strictly on his armies and officers that during imperial tours no injury should be done to the farms of the cultivators. He appointed commissions to watch the soldiers to prevent their doing any harm and if any field was unavoidably damaged, the owner was fully compensated.[3] Such tours were also utilised for inspection purposes, and had a great restraining influence on the evil tendencies of the local officials. In the year 1578 when Akbar was touring in the Punjab he found that the lands given as madad-i-maash and ima had been encroached upon. He had reports already of the dishonesty of Abdunnabi, the chief sadr, and his subordinates. He therefore appointed Qazi Ali Baghdadi to re-arrange the boundaries of the madad-i-maash and ima lands, and 'congregate them all in one village' after re-measuring them so as to make a clear distinction between their boundaries.[4]

Official inspectors

Besides personal inspection by the emperor, provinces were also subjected to formal inspection by deputing certain high officials for the purpose. In the year 1002 A. H. (1593 A. D.) Akbar deputed Asaf Khan Bakhshi to Kashmir to investigate the administration and affairs

[1] A. N. III, 549 and 727.
[2] R. and B. I, p. 440.
[3] See Or. 175, fol. 105-106.
[4] Badaoni, II, p. 254.

of the military as well as the ryot.[1] Todar Mal was sent on a tour of inspection to Benares and Bengal when Bayazid was shiqdar of Benares. After the Raja had finished his inspection at Benares and was still in darbar (court) some people came and complained against Bayazid's having demolished an old temple and erected a college on its site, in which they were supported by some Muslim officials also. Bayazid had to resign.[2] The peculiarly Mughal institutions of the jhorokha and the ghusalkhana, a private assembly held in the evenings over which the emperor presided and which was open to all who had any grievance to complain of or any petition to make, were not without appreciable utility inasmuch as they provided a free chance to the humblest person to seek redress from the sovereign himself.

In view of these agencies of restraint and supervision of the local administration it would be no exaggeration to say that, due allowance being made for stray cases of misgovernment or oppression—cases which occur even under the best of governments and which no government can entirely eliminate—during our period, peace and security reigned and the people were, on the whole, happy and contented.

[1] Ibid., p. 395.

ودراین ایّام آصف خان بخشی را بجانب کشمیر بجهت تحقیق معاملات و مهمات سپاهی و رعیت آنجا رخصت فرمودند –

[2] Mem. of Bayazid (Tr. by Erskine) Add. 26610, pp. 76-77.

CHAPTER VI

THE SUB-DIVISIONS OF A PROVINCE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The sarkar and the parganah

Each Subah was divided into a number of sarkars and each sarkar into parganahs or mahals. The parganah was the lowest official unit of administration, and below the parganah was the village panchayat, which was popular in origin but recognised by the government. According to the Ain, in 1596 the empire comprised 105 sarkars and 2737 mahals or parganahs. But these figures were constantly changing owing to frequent re-arrangements and fresh annexations.[1]

Character of the sarkar and parganah

In connection with the sarkar and the parganah there are two questions which have recently become a subject of controversy since the new theory propounded by Moreland (See Supra Chapter IV, App. B). These questions are: (1) What was the character of the sarkar and parganah, that is to say, whether they were general administrative divisions or merely for revenue purposes; (2) who were their chief officials and what were their functions and duties? Both these questions are, however, aspects of the same problem. The question as to who was the head of the sarkar has already been subjected to a thorough examination, which has shown that the adminis-

[1] The various Dastur-ul-amls called manuals, of which there are several in the Br. Mus. and the I. O. give lists of the subahs and sarkars at different periods, which do not always tally. The question of the number of the subahs has been discussed in Chapter IV.

trative head of the sarkar was called faujdar, and that, apart from sarkars, there were no other divisions of a subah, for purposes of general administration, as suggested by Moreland.

It is recognised by Moreland that the two chief divisions of government, namely, the Executive, called the 'Huzur' and the Revenue called 'Mal', were definitely in existence. When it is proved that the sarkar was the only division next to the subah, with the faujdar as its head, and the amalguzar in charge of its revenue, it is clear that the faujdar represented the executive half of the government. Although there is no detailed record of the functions and powers of the faujdar in the sakar and of the shiqdar in the parganah we have enough evidence to enable us to form an approximate estimate of the scope of their duties. The Ain-i-faujdar (in the Ain-i-Akbari) is a sort of summary of the instructions which were issued by the government to him at the time of his appointment. The duties enjoined on him in this Ain were at least what he was expected to do. They pertain broadly to three branches of administration: revenue, police and army. On the revenue side his part was only indirect and not direct. He was to assist the amalguzar in the realisation of revenue if the cultivators turned contumacious. His main function was guarding the countryside or the rural areas of his sarkar. In the army he was regularly to inspect the local militia and keep it well-equipped and in good trim.

How far, in actual practice, the faujdars conformed to theory is more than could be said with any degree of precision. It would always considerably depend on the personal character of the man in office. But it must be said in fairness to the Mughal rulers that in the administrative machinery there was no want of checks and restraints to keep the employees on the path of duty and justice and to prevent maladministration. The various methods of keeping a check on the officials, such as official tours of inspection, and the intelligence depart-

ment, have been detailed in the previous chapter. That acts of injustice and oppression as soon as they came to be known to the emperor were visited with very severe, often exemplary punishment, is evidenced by innumerable instances. The people were encouraged to ventilate their grievances freely and received prompt redress if their complaints were found true. Many cases are on record in which even such high officials as the provincial viceroys were recalled as a result of the complaint of the people against their misrule.[1] In view of these facts, it would be but fair to conclude that, on the whole, the faujdars, and indeed all government employees, had to behave justly.

We have ample and unmistakable evidence of the faujdars' duty in connection with the policing of the country. The Mirat-i-Ahmadi gives a detailed account of a network of thanas covering the parganas, which were in charge of subordinate faujdars or thanadars under the control and authority of the faujdar-i-sarkar.[2] In another place we are incidentally told that when any important letters or documents were sent through official mace-bearers (گرزبرداران), they had letters requiring the local faujdars, zamindars and thanadars to escort them through their respective jurisdictions and safely hand them on to the officers of the next district.[3] Foreign travellers also bear testimony to these duties of the faujdar. Thevenot tells us that 'the faujdar of Surat is obliged to secure the country about, and to answer for the robberies that are committed there.....'[4] Finch refers to the faujdar of Dihli suppressing and destroying the thieves and robbers around the city.[5] We are also entitled to assume

[1] R and B. I, 262-3.

[2] Vide Supplement (ضمیمہ) (Baroda Text) p. 188 et seq.

[3] Mirat (I. O.) III, fol. 732a.

[4] Thevenot, Pt. III, p. 20.

[5] p. 157. In the face of these evidences the suggestions of writers like Sarkar and Moreland that the countryside was completely neglected and the village population were left entirely uncared for by the government, would appear to be quite groundless and unacceptable.

that in virtue of his being the executive head of the sarkar the faujdar was also empowered to exercise a general oversight of its administration, although he had no authority to interfere in the revenue or judicial affairs.[1] But he does not seem to have exercised the duties of a magistrate, which function in the sarkar was entrusted to the kotwal as will be shown later.

It is possible to trace the origin of the office of faujdar as well as the connotation of that title under Akbar and his successors. Under Sher Shah the executive head of a sarkar was called a shiqdar-i-shiqdaran, i.e., the chief shiqdar, and the head of the revenue side was called a munsif-i-munsifan. The chief shiqdar's duties exactly conformed to those of the faujdar of Akbar's time, that is to say, the latter was a direct successor of the former. But in a few places where the importance of the locality or the volume of work seemed too much for a single person to cope with, Sher Shah had appointed a shiqdar as well as a faujdar. In Dihli Sher Shah appointed Adil Khan and Hatim Khan shiqdar and faujdar respectively.[2] He had similarly appointed faujdars in Malwa, when Shujaat Khan was governor of that province.[3] At the same time he had appointed Ahmad Khan Sarwani, Amin of Dihli. Though it is difficult to differentiate clearly between the duties of these officials, it would seem that the shiqdar had charge of the local police and the adminis-

[1] As has been pointed out in Appendix B, Chapter IV, faujdar was a term which was used for various offices. There was a faujdar of the elephant corps, named 'Halqas' also (Ain I, p. 135). There were faujdars of the frontiers and forts. The study of the Mirat-i-Ahmadi reveals the existence of faujdars in charge of thanas in every parganah (see Supplement). Thus the term was used in many senses like 'diwan', 'darogha', 'Amin' and other kindred terms.

[2] Abbas, (I. O. MS.) fol. 107b; MS. (A) pp. 222-223.
Text:—

در دارالخلافت حضرت دهلی میان احمد خان سروانی امین و عادلخان و حاتم خان شقدار و فوجدار سپاه ساخته بود –

[3] MS. (A), p. 189.

trative side, while the faujdar was to deal with the rebellious Mewatis and other chiefs around the capital, and had thus semi-military duties. The Amin was clearly the trustee-governor of Dihli as explained above (see Chapter IV). Besides the faujdar and amalguzar there were two more officials in the sarkar who were in charge of justice and the religious department. These were the qazi and the kotwal. It is a noteworthy fact that the faujdar did not hold any magisterial powers and therefore he represented the governor in the sarkar only in one aspect of his duties, viz., maintenance of law and order. The magisterial side of the governor's functions was held by the Kotwal who was a magistrate not only for the headquarters' town but for the whole of the sarkar.[1] Thus there were four chief officers in the sarkar, viz., the faujdar, amalguzar, kotwal and qazi. The last two divided between them the entire judicial work of the sarkar.

In the parganah, however, the duties of the faujdar and kotwal were combined in the shiqdar who was in charge of the police as well as criminal justice, while civil justice and revenue administration was carried on by the parganah qazi and the amil respectively. The magisterial functions of the kotwal and the extent of his jurisdiction and authority will be fully discussed in the chapter on judicial administration.

The parganah and its officials

Since the time of Sher Shah there had been definitely three important officers in the parganah: the shiqdar, the amin and the qanungo, assisted, of course, by a numerous staff of treasurers, clerks, patwaris and peons. It was not considered necessary to change the names of the parganah officials, like those of the sarkar, in the time of Akbar. As has been observed already here the

[1] For a full discussion of kotwal's duties and functions see Chapter X.

shiqdar combined the functions which were divided in the sarkar between the faujdar and kotwal. He was thus in charge of law and order as well as criminal justice in the parganah. The municipal duties of the kotwal, however, do not seem to have been entrusted to the shiqdar, but he was in charge of the general administration by virtue of being the executive officer of the parganah. The amil of the parganah had the same duties as the amalguzar in the sarkar. But he had to deal directly with the peasantry in his work of assessment and realisation of revenue. In addition to his proper work, he was also expected to assist the shiqdar together with the headmen of the villages, in maintaining law and order and punishing the miscreants. All contemporary authorities refer to the mutual help and co-operation with which these officials were expected to carry on the administration of the parganah. In the revenue department the shiqdar was to assist the amil in the collection of revenue from recalcitrant cultivators. In matters pertaining to general administration the shiqdar and not the amil or any other official, was the representative of the government. When Sher Shah had to send farmans to the Imams he transmitted them through the shiqdars.[1] The duties of the shiqdar remained unchanged under Akbar and his successors. In the twenty-fifth year of his reign Akbar decided to take a census of the country and the shiqdars, jagirdars and daroghas—not the revenue officials—were ordered to gather statistics of the names, occupations and residences of the people. They were also to take note of the arrivals and departures of dangerous men, and not to allow anyone to reside in the town who had no ostensible means of livelihood.[2] Now it will be seen that these were the duties enjoined in the sarkar on the kotwal and not on the faujdar. The shiqdar acted as a criminal magistrate also but with limited powers, and cases which

[1] Abbas (I. O. MS.), fol. 113.
[2] Elliot, VI, 61.

did not fall within his cognisance were forwarded by him to the kotwal of the sarkar, 'who among the Mughals corresponds to a city magistrate.'[1] Manrique and his companions were once arrested in Orissa on suspicion of being the Feringhi pirates of Chittagong and the shiqdar being unable to try their case had to forward them under custody to the court of the kotwal of Midnapur.[2] Thus we see that the shiqdar in the parganah represented both the faujdar and the kotwal, and it may be safely assumed that as head of the parganah he had the general supervision of administrative affairs. While the above evidence should suffice to prove that the parganah was a political division for purposes of general administration and not merely a revenue division, we have further illuminating evidence on the point. Sher Shah entertained the project of building a fort in every sarkar in order to make it thoroughly safe from theft and larceny and to provide shelter for the people in time of danger.[3] On the judicial side there was a court of justice in every parganah and small town. The courts of the ports of Cambay and Ghogha which were mahals were not subject to the sarkar courts, but had direct dealings with the provincial court. From this the inference is clear that there was a regular hierarchy of courts from the parganah upwards.[4] Sher Shah had also established courts of justice in every place, which may reasonably be supposed to refer to seats of parganahs and other small towns.[5] In most of the sarkars, however, one man was considered sufficient to perform the duties of both the offices, which were therefore amalgamated by Sher Shah under one officer who was called the chief shiqdar. It seems quite certain that Akbar substituted the term faujdar for shiqdar-i-shiqdaran, per-

[1] Manrique, I, 419.

[2] Ibid. pp. 410-26. Midnapur was officially called the sarkar of Jalessor. See Jarrett, p. 126 f.n. 1.

[3] Abbas, (I. O. MS.) fol. 110. Elliot, IV, 420.

[4] Mirat, (Bar. Text.) Supplement, (ضمیمہ) p. 193.

[5] Abbas, (I. O. MS.) fol. 108.

haps because the latter was a rather cumbersome word, without effecting any change in his jurisdiction or functions. For similar reasons the term amalguzar was adopted in place of munsif-i-munsifan.

Other political divisions

In addition to the sarkar and parganah into which the greater bulk of the empire, including the states and principalities of the autonomous vassal chiefs, was divided, administrative exigencies necessitated the creation of certain other political divisions in some localities. These divisions or more correctly administrative centres were seaports, frontier outposts and forts, chaklas and thanas.

Seaports

The Mughals had no navy nor any notable naval activities beyond occasional pilgrimage parties to Mecca. But when they conquered Sind, Gujrat, Kathiawad and Khandesh, they came into direct contact with the sea and a large number of seaports passed into their possession. Some of these seaports were very important owing to a large volume of foreign trade passing through them. Their administrative organisation was therefore the outcome of their peculiar needs as well as their commercial and economic importance.

Seaports, an independent unit

Though nominally the ports formed a sub-division of a subah, for administrative purposes, the more important ports were constituted into separate units entirely independent of the provincial authorities. In the case of smaller and less important ports, either two or more were combined to make one unit,[1] or sometimes a minor port was placed under the jurisdiction of the chief officer

[1] The ports of Ghogha and Qandhar were put under one person. Mirat, (Bar. Text) Supplement, p. 193.

of a major port in the neighbourhood.[1] Later Cambay was made a mahal of the Chorasi parganah and constituted one of the three mahals of that parganah, the other two being Chorasi proper and Ghogha ports.[2] The 'Ghogha ports' included Ghogha and Qandhar, another minor port. The administration of each of these three mahals was separate. The Chorasi mahal being a territorial unit was, as usual, subordinate to the sarkar of Ahmedabad. The Ghogha mahal also included the Qandhar port, but the administration was jointly entrusted to a single officer, the mutasaddi, (superintendent) who was also the faujdar, and had charge of the thanas and was responsible also for the porterage of the luggage of the merchants.

In Cambay there was a separate mutsaddi and a separate faujdar. But in both cases the mutsaddi and faujdar, as well as the qazi, the muhtasib, the darogha of the mint, the accountant and the treasury officers, were directly appointed from the headquarters. Often the mutasaddi also was the darogha of the mint. The judicial and religious department of the ports was subject directly to the provincial court.[3]

The port of Surat

The port of Surat affords the best example of the government of a first class port. This port, unlike Cambay, comprised a sarkar by itself, the surrounding territory consisting of 31 mahals, including ports and

[1] When in 1615 A. D. Sir Thomas Roe arrived Muqarrab Khan was the Mutsaddi (Superintendent) of both Surat and Cambay, and his assistants carried on the actual administration of the two ports under his supervision and control. See Embassy, pp. 28-34.

[2] Mirat, (Bar. Text) Supplement, p. 193. It will be noticed that here a parganah consists of three mahals, the reason being that there were three separate units of revenue assessment, one being territorial and the other two being ports. Mahal is used here in its proper sense of a unit of revenue assessment, whether territorial or otherwise, as distinguished from a parganah, which bears a territorial connotation.

[3] Mirat, Sup. (Bar. Text), p. 193.

parganahs both, according to the Mirat, but according to the Ain, it comprised 73 mahals, of which 13 were ports. Evidently the composition of the sarkar underwent a complete overhauling after Akbar.

The administration of the sarkar as well as the port of Surat was often vested in the same official called the mutsaddi. This officer was of the status of a provincial governor and was directly subordinate and responsible to the imperial government. But sometimes the mutsaddi was only in charge of the port administration while the other parganahs were under the commander of the fort. Both these officers were appointed from the headquarters, the mutsaddi by an imperial sanad under the seal of the Diwan-i-ala and the qiladar by the order and under the seal of the Commander of the artillery. Both had more or less equal status and were quite independent of each other, their jurisdictions being quite apart and well-defined, and both had to answer for their actions only to the king..... and they did not encroach on each other's rights.[1] The mutsaddi, in addition to his main office in connection with the port, held several other offices. He was a civil judge, and often superintendent of the mint. The fort commander had the additional duty of policing the country, in which he was assisted by a faujdar, who had to make good any thefts or robberies committed within his jurisdiction.[2]

The entire higher staff of the port was appointed direct from headquarters, by the orders and under the seals of the different heads of departments to which each officer belonged. The officers thus appointed were:—

Sadr and qazi (usually amalgamated).
Bakhshi and waqia nigar.
Sawanih nawis.
Harkara
Muhtasib.

[1] Thevenot, Pt. III, pp. 19-20.
[2] Ibid. Loc. Cit.

Darogha of the department of purchase of Arab and Iraq horses, imported in ships, and of the cattle market.

Darogha (superintendent) of the office and the treasury.

Amin (controller) of expenses.

Superintendent of the court, public works and stores purchase department for the fort.

Superintendent of the mint, superintendent of the salt department.

Superintendent of the customs and inland transit duties of the mahals.

Superintendent of the charitable kitchens and poor relief department.

The Kotwal and superintendent of the jewel market and fancy market.

Superintendent of rent-collections.

Superintendent of hospitals.

Superintendent of expenditure on langar khanas.

Superintendent of the corn market and the Bagh-i-Suhail (?)

Superintendent of the annual presents to the holy places, i.e., Mecca and Medina.

These officers were appointed under the orders and seals of the chief diwan, the commander of artillery, the chief sadr, the chief steward and the postmaster general of the empire.

The Custom-house and its management

There used to be a master or superintendent in charge of the custom-house, on behalf of the mutsaddi of the port and appointed by him. The clerks (i.e., accountants) were banians (trader-class) and a number of petty functionaries such as peons, waiters and porters who were generally Muslims.[1]

[1] Thevenot Pt. III, p. 27.

Powers of the mutsaddi and the superintendent

The Mutsaddi of the port was the governor who had the sole responsibility for the administration of such affairs as did not affect the broader interests of the empire. In matters of higher policy he could not act on his own initiative without the sanction of the headquarters. The superintendent was only to carry out the governor's orders and manage the routine work of the custom-house according to the rules and regulations. He had no initiative or discretion in any matter; for instance, he could not permit any merchant from a foreign country to land without the governor's permission. When Hawkins arrived at Surat on August 20, 1608, Muqarrab Khan was governor of both Surat and Cambay, and was at that time at the latter station. When Hawkins told the superintendent of Surat his business and asked permission to unload his cargo and to open a factory at Surat and buy and sell merchandise, the superintendent replied that it was not within his authority to deal with his case. He therefore wrote to Muqarrab Khan both for permission to unload Hawkins' cargo and to allow him to open a factory. Muqarrab Khan granted him permission to unload his cargo and sell goods pending the orders of the emperor, for, he said, it was not within his powers either to grant him permission to open a factory or for future trade.

The working of the custom-house

Thevenot has given a vivid account of the extreme care and caution, very often even much to the annoyance of the travellers, with which the customs officers searched the luggage as well as the person of everybody. But in spite of all their strictness a large amount of precious stones and jewels was smuggled by the fraudulent methods of the Dutch governor, of which Thevenot had a personal knowledge. Tavernier testifies to the dishonest practices of the English merchants in spite of their being exempt from many taxes, and to the various subterfuges

and stratagems they employed both to smuggle goods and evade payment of dues. Such practices exist in every age, but perhaps they were more conspicuous at that time. These conditions justified the strictness of the port officials.

Frontier outposts and forts

The problem of frontier defence during Mughal rule was one of the greatest importance and complexity. Unlike the present when the interest of frontier defence is mainly centred in the north-west of the country, in the Mughal period while the north-west was still the source of the gravest danger, the question of the defence of the entire northern border of the empire from Kashmir to Assam, fringed by the Himalayan slopes which sheltered innumerable independent and semi-independent chieftains, was of no less importance and required constant vigilance. This may be called the problem of external defence, that is to say, defence against the neighbouring states which were not within the empire. But at that time as a result of the peculiar political situation of the age, the defence of what we may call the 'internal frontiers' that is to say, the frontiers between the imperial territories proper and those of the vassal chiefs, also constituted a serious problem.

Another equally important aspect of the north-west frontier problem must needs be referred to here, as it had a bearing upon the extent of the north-west frontier organisation. The frontier problem of the mughals was not merely a negative problem of defence from external danger as it was during the Sultanate period: they joined to it a positively aggressive policy of conquering not only Kabul but the whole of Central Asia, to which they laid hereditary claim from Timur. The direct outcome of this policy was an attempt to push the outer line of their north-west frontier even beyond Kabul, represented roughly by a line joining Merv, Herat and Qandhar. This had its repercussions on the internal line of

defence which was organised and strengthened so as to serve as a base of operations and a bulwark. In order to keep this line well under control and its defences in a state of efficient equipment it was essential either to subjugate or conciliate the tribal region, and to conquer Kashmir on the north and Baluchistan on the south of that region. The growing power of Abdulla Khan Uzbeg in the north-west of Chitral, the annexation of Kabul after the death of Hakim in 1585, as a regular province of the empire and the need of its defence, and the Persian danger from the Qandahar and Baluchistan side, made the problem so serious that Akbar felt compelled personally to move to the north-west and to remain there for over a decade. He took no time in deciding that the whole of the three parts of the inner frontier, namely, Kashmir, the tribal region and Baluchistan including Sind should be brought under control. The project called forth the supremest effort on the part of the emperor. By the end of 1595 he had achieved a great success and could feel safe both from tribal and external aggression. Of these three regions Kashmir was conquered and annexed (1587) and made an adjunct of the subah of Kabul. In 1589 Khan Khanan Mirza Abdurrahim was appointed governor of Multan and commissioned to take Sind, which was annexed in 1591. In 1595 the fortress of Sibi south-east of Quetta fell and along with it the whole of Baluchistan up to the fort of Qandahar, which was handed over, shortly after, by its Persian commandant, to Akbar's officers. The tribal region proved the toughest problem and he had to pay a heavy price for it. The first expedition ended in disaster owing to mutual dissensions among the generals. Birbal met his end in this disaster. Then Raja Todar Mal retrieved lost prestige by harrying the Afghans and Man Singh won a great victory over their leader Jalal Khan in the Khyber Pass. But no amount of reprisals, not even a wholesale extermination, could coerce the tribes to settle down to a peaceful life. They continued

to give trouble and 'the emperor had finally to patch up a peace by pensioning the tribal leaders and overlooking their depredations.' Under Jahangir and Shah Jahan the same state of things continued.[1]

The Himalayan frontiers

With the exception of Kashmir, annexed in 1587, and Kangra valley, annexed in 1620, no other part of the Himalayan region was conquered or brought directly under their rule by the mughals. Several other states, such as Kumaon, Sirmur and Garhwal, owed nominal allegiance for a time, but always maintained full freedom of action and paid tribute only under compulsion. The western and northern side of the imperial territory was formed from west to east by the provinces of Multan, Kashmir, Lahore, Dehli, Awadh, Bihar and Bengal. It is impossible, at present, to determine with any degree of accuracy the boundaries of the first three of the above, but it seems almost certain that a part of the north-western boundary of Multan and Lahore was exposed to aggression from beyond the passes as well as from the tribal region beyond the Indus and the Gakkhar country between the Indus and the Chenab. Kashmir was surrounded on all sides by the high wall of the mountains, and the passes that opened into it from the central Asiatic countries were impassable by large armies with the result that the valley remained comparatively immune from external aggression. But on its southern side the Gakkhar country was a source of danger. Next to Kashmir a continuous chain of hill-states extended right up to the extreme east, fifteen of which are mentioned in the Akbarnama.[2] These were:

1. Jammu, in the north of the Rechna doab (between the Ravi and Chenab) with a fort at the foot of the hills, protected by a fort at the summit.[3]

[1] Sarkar: Short Hist. of Aurangzeb, p. 139.
[2] A. N. III, p. 581; (Tr. III, pp. 884-885).
[3] Ain. II, (Jarrett), 320.

2. Nagarkot, north of the Bari Doab (between the Ravi and Beas) on the slopes of the Kangra hills which was surmounted by a massive fort.[1]
3. Mau, whose capital was Dhamri (later named Nurpur) also in the Bari Doab.[2]
4. Jaswal (?)
5. Kahlur,[3] a Punjab hill state beyond the five rivers.
6. Gwalior, in the Bari Doab.[4]
7. Dahpal (?)
8. Siba (Siha ?)[5]
9. Mankot, probably one of the five hill forts in the Siwaliks which Islam Shah Sur had built.[6]
10. Jasrota, an extinct principality in Kashmir, lying to the north of Jammu.[7]
11. Lakanpur (probably identical with the Lakhnor of the Ain, as suggested by Beveridge)[8].
12. Sharkot (Sharkat in Bijnor ?)[9].
13. Bhita (?)
14. Sukat Mandavi, hill states.[10]
15. Iladiya (Talwarah). Very uncertain and controversial.
16. Dhauriwal or Dhamri.

Almost all these states were north of the Punjab. Finch continues the list eastwards and adds[11]:—

17. Sirmur (modern Nahan state) in the Siwaliks, of which the chief city was Kalsi.

[1] I. G. VII, 430; Jarrett 319.
[2] Jarrett, Ain. II. 319; Finch, 179-180.
[3] Ibid. 325.
[4] Ibid. 319.
[5] Ibid. 317.
[6] Bad. I, pp. 386-387.
[7] I. G. VII, 147.
[8] Jarrett, 321.
[9] I. G. XII, 380.
[10] Jarrett, 317.
[11] Finch, pp. 179-183. Finch's information being based on hearsay was out of date in the case of the rulers, as he gives the names of rulers who were dead at the time he wrote.

18. Garhwal, east of Sirmur, its rule extending at that time to the Dehra valley as far as Haridwar; chief city Srinagar.[1]
19. Kumaon, a vassal chief, but paying only nominal allegiance. The tribute and army figures given in the Ain were not what was actually received but what was expected.
20. Maghs, in the extreme east, near Arakan.[2]
21. A Pathan prince.....among the streams of the Ganga. Probably Isa Khan, chief of Khizrpur, near Narayanganj in the Dacca District is meant. Pinch says 'He confineth upon the east, makes raids and compels the emperor to maintain a frontier army.'
22. Then there was the king's land (Bengal) and beyond it lay the mighty kingdom of Arakan.

In addition to these major states there were numerous petty chiefs either subordinate and tributary to their more powerful neighbours or maintaining a fitful independence.

There were two aspects of this problem in the north-west, as has been already noticed, namely, the maintenance of communications with central Asia, and the control of the tribal region. Similarly the problem bore a twofold aspect so far as the Himalayan frontier was concerned. The aim of the emperors was not only to prevent aggression which, indeed, was not very serious from this side, but to subjugate them or compel them to acknowledge at least their nominal suzerainty.

Measures adopted to deal with the frontiers

The measures adopted by the Mughal emperors to deal with this problem may be summarised under three heads:

[1] See Or. 173, foll. 427b-431a.

[2] Jarrett, 120.

1. Controlling the tribal and other turbulent regions, if possible, by coercion, or else by conciliating them and purchasing peace by payment of money.

2. Building a chain of strong forts and outposts strongly garrisoned and equipped, all along the frontier and at strategic points, and entrusting them to able and experienced warriors.

3. Stationing military officers called faujdars, entrusted with defence and also the authority of aggression, all along the Himalayan border line.

Another point to be considered in this connection is whether any frontier province or even a lesser territorial unit was ever created especially as a safeguard against the north-west. There is no record of any separate frontier province. The faujdars and commandants, however, of the frontier outposts, had direct dealings with the central government, while it was the duty of the governors of Multan (including Sindh) and Lahore to assist them in cases of emergency.

Of the three measures referred to above the first one is outside our present scope and has, therefore, been briefly noticed inasmuch as it had a bearing on the relevant topic under discussion. The work of building forts and setting up outposts was earnestly taken up by Sher Shah and pursued by his son Islam Shah as well as the Mughals with unabated enthusiasm. When Sher Shah after defeating Humayun reached the Gakkhar country the army that he had sent against them from Hathiapur was badly defeated by their Sultan, Sarang Khan. The war council of Sher Shah advised him to deal with the Gakkhars with stratagem and patience, as, owing to the mountainous nature of their country, precipitate action against them would be futile. It was decided that the Gakkhars should be harried and their country devastated by surprise attacks. For this purpose Sher Shah left a large army and laid the foundation of Rohtasgarh, a most massive fortress, near Koh Balnath, which was constructed under the charge of Todar Mal, and completed during

Islam Sur's reign.[1] Islam Shah took another important step to provide against the danger from the north-west. Lahore was at that time a very flourishing and rich centre of international trade and commerce. Islam thought its situation to be dangerous because if its rich resources had fallen into the possession of an invader they would have given him an incalculable advantage. He decided to depopulate Lahore and erect a strong military settlement in the Siwaliks, where he built five forts on five adjoining hills in such a way that it looked as one single fort, from below.[2] With the hill-chieftains of the north the Surs do not seem to have had any occasion to come into conflict.

When Akbar came to the throne he gradually built a number of new forts on the frontiers, the most important of which was that of Attock on the Indus, the foundation of which was laid by the emperor's own hands while he was returning from Kabul in the 1581 A. D.[3] But the Gakkhar problem was solved in another way. Sarang Khan had eventually been killed and his son Kamal Khan imprisoned in Gwalior by Islam Shah, but still their country remained unsubdued. Kamal Khan's uncle Adam Khan ruled over it. After Akbar's accession Kamal was released and did loyal service to the emperor. He then asked to be given his own country. The emperor decided to divide it half and half between him and his uncle, but the latter proving obdurate, he and his son were both driven out by imperial forces and Kamal established as a vassal of the empire in his ancestral land.[4] No other obligation was imposed on him beyond that of a loyal friendship.[5] In the extreme west the fort of Qandahar buttressed by the province of Sindh was the most

[1] A. N. (Tr.) I, 398-399; (Text) I, 195-196. Makhzan (Ethe, 1705) foll. 157a-158a.
[2] Bad. I, 386-387.
[3] A. N. III, 355; (Tr.) III, 520-521.
[4] A. N. (Tr.) II, 298-300, Text II, 192-193.
[5] R and B, I, pp. 262-263.

important military outpost between Persia and India. The governor of Sindh usually held the charge of the frontier officer and under him there was a commandant of the fort. In 1614 Mirza Ghazi Tarkhan held this situation and was punished for oppressing the people.

Faujdaris of the hill-border

Although it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of faujdaris which were created on the hill-border from east to west, there are ample references to a number of them which throw sufficient light on their constitution and nature. From these references we learn that under each of these frontier faujdars there were several military outposts called thanas.[1] There is no mention of how and by whom these thanas were created, but considering the nature and conditions of the task with which the faujdars were entrusted it can be safely assumed that a considerable amount of discretion and authority would have been given to them with respect to the establishment, shifting and the working of these thanas.

Some frontier stations and their working

The most important of these was on the Indus, apparently round Attock which was in charge of Mirza Yusuf Khan in 1581 when Hakim invaded from Kabul. Although Yusuf Khan sent an expedition and repulsed

[1] Vide Or. 175, fol. 206a, where the following words occur:

نوکران اسلام خان که به حاجو رفته بودند بمحافظت تهانه های حوری حاجو بپرداز ند –

Trans. The servants of Islam Khan who had gone to Haju for the guarding of the thanas of the environs of Haju.

Also Ibid., fol. 433a. The thana of Chandi which commanded the Dehradoon valley was entrusted to Nagar Das, Karori of Hardwar. The temple of Chandi which marks the site of the old settlement is situated on the top of the hill of that name right at the northern apex of the Bijnor District, just overlooking Hardwar on the opposite bank of the river. It was a military outpost until lately. (See Bijnor Gaz., p. 141 and Map.)

the invading army, he was still considered unfit and not to have used prudence and foresight in the management of the frontiers. He was consequently superseded by Raja Man Singh.[1] For the hill-border in the north of the Punjab there was usually one faujdar who had his jagir also within his jurisdiction.[2] Mirza Rustam Khan was sent to this post in 1591, with Asaf Khan and several other deputies. But they proved inefficient and were removed.[3] Owing to the contumacious conduct of the hill chieftains this faujdari continued to be considered of great importance and to be entrusted to able men.[4] The jurisdiction of these faujdars extended as far as the boundary of Srinagar Garhwal east of the Siwaliks.[5] The hill-border of Kangra, however, apparently owing to its great importance was entrusted to another faujdar.[6] South-east of Garhwal was the important faujdari of Bareli which, though only a parganah in the sarkar of Budaon, of the Dilhi province, was a military station owing to its situation at the bottom of the Kumaon hills. We hear of Hakim Ain-ul-Mulk[7] in the twenty-sixth year of Akbar's reign and Mathuradas Sahgal in the thirty-third year,[8] as faujdars of Bareli who suppressed revolts and reduced the hill chieftains to submission. Then on the Assam frontier, at Jamdhara there was one of the most important Mughal outposts in charge of a faujdar who was, however, constantly to be supported by the governor of Bengal. The Assamese were very troublesome and aggressive. They invaded and harried the imperial territory and at one time captured Saiyed Abu Bakr, the faujdar of Jamdhara in 1618. The Emperor Jahangir dismissed

[1] A. N. III, 336-337; Tr. 493-494.
[2] Ibid. 712; Tr. 1060.
[3] Ibid. Tr. p. 1081.
[4] Vide Or. 175, fol. 131a and 179a.
[5] Or. 175, fol. 131b.
[6] Ibid, fol. 239.
[7] A. N. III, 348-349; Tr. 511-513.
[8] Ibid 533.; Tr. 812.

Qasim Khan the governor of Bengal for his failure to make proper enquiry about the capture of the faujdar.[1] A similar incident took place under Shah Jahan when Nawab Azam Khan was made governor of Bengal. The Assamese grew fierce, ravaged the frontier parganahs and carried away Abdul Salam who had been sent against them to Gauhati. Azam Khan was therefore removed from office.[2] There is mention of another faujdari at Kuch Haju on the Assam frontier, which is not unlikely in view of the importance of that region.[3]

Duties of the border faujdars

There were mainly four kinds of duties which the border-faujdars had to perform. First they had to keep watch over the frontiers and suppress the turbulent and rebellious chiefs. Secondly they had to punish aggression. The hill-chieftains lost no opportunity of invading and ravaging the imperial territories. Now and again, therefore, they had to be chastised. It was also the duty of the faujdars to realise tribute from those hill-chieftains who had acknowledged imperial suzerainty and agreed to pay tribute. This tribute was rarely paid without coercion and hence the faujdars had enough work on hand on this score also.[4] Then they were not to lose any opportunity of conquering or subjugating new principalities wherever possible. The vassal chiefs on their part were expected to pay occasional visits to the faujdars.[5]

The 'internal frontiers'

Similar faujdars and sometimes qiladars were appointed to forts and military stations which were established on the borders of the subordinate states in order to keep them under control and watch their activities.

[1] Riyaz, p. 181.
[2] Riyaz, pp. 207-8.
[3] Or. 175 fol. 205a.
[4] Or. 175 foll. 239-240.
[5] Or. 175 fol. 179.

Most of the sarkars of the province of Rajputana were also military faujdaris of this character. Occasionally a frontier jagirdari or district was created in order to deal with habitual rebels. The Mewatis in the neighbourhood of Shahjahanabad were very turbulent. Kirat Singh, second son of Mirza Raja Jaisingh of Amber, was made permanent jagirdar of this place by Shah Jahan.[1]

Appointment of the faujdars

The office of faujdars of sarkars and those of the border military posts seem to have been reckoned equally important in status and rank. As we know from the Ain the faujdar's was the most responsible post among the first subordinate servants of the government, and although subordinate to the provincial governor, he could have direct communications with the imperial government. In view of these facts it would be expected that his appointment was made in the same manner in which other high appointments were made, that is to say, by the farman-i-sabati. Of the nine officers who as enumerated by Abul Fazl, were appointed under the farman-i-sabati, the Naheti (ناحیتی) has been rather obscure. But a passage in the Maasir-ul-Umara makes it clear that the word Naheti (ناحیتی) that is to say, the head of a Nahiya (ناحیه) must have been used for a faujdar. The passage in question states that in the twelfth year of his reign the emperor Aurangzeb appointed Hasan Ali Khan Bahadur to the faujdari of Mathura and.....dismissed him to go and chastise the rebels of that Nahiya (ناحیه).[2]

Chaklas and thanas: origin of the chaklas

When Allami Sa'dullah Khan was appointed the chief minister (Wazir-i-'Azam) in the reign of Shah Jahan he

[1] Or. 175 fol. 381b.

[2] و خان مشارالیه از تغیر صف شکن خان بفوجداری متهرا.....سربلند گشته با فوج حضور بمالش سر تابان آن ناحیه رخصت یافت -
M. U. I, p. 594.

divided parganahs into groups and called them Chaklas. In each Chakla he appointed an amin and a faujdar, and made the karoris of the mahals subordinate to the amin of the chakla.[1] We have no means to know what was the necessity of creating it. Possibly it was a substitute for a sarkar, or an intermediate division between the sarkar and parganah. But it seems to have been created to facilitate and improve the realisation and assessment of revenue. The author of the Lubbut-tawarikh-i-Hind refers to chakladars but does not enlighten us about chaklas.[2] Subsequently in the eighteenth century, it seems to have gradually taken the place of the sarkar in every province. In 1772 Bengal was divided into thirteen chaklas, each under a separate superintendent of finance. At different times and in different parts of the country the chakla seems to have varied in extent and in its sub-divisions.[3] About the same time the greater part of Oudh was divided into sixteen chaklas, administered under the 'Ijara' or contract system, by a contractor known indifferently as Nazim, Amil, Chakladar or Mustajir. He not only compounded for the revenue of his district, but also acted as governor.[4] In Gujrat Chakla was the name of the wards into which a city was divided for police administration. The city of Ahmadabad had seventeen chaklas. In all these chaklas several footmen were posted to patrol the streets.[5]

Military, semi-military or police stations and the territory within their jurisdiction were called thanas, a

[1] Add. 6588, fol. 79b.—Text:

.. — بعد آن علامی سعدالله خان که از تغیر اسلام خان وزیر اعظم منصوب گشته چند پرگنه را چکله مقرر نموده در هر چکله یک کس امین و فوجدار مستقل تعین کردانند و کروریان آن محال تابع امرش شدند – و حق‌التحصیل کروری سر یصد پنجروپیه مقرر کردید چنانچه تا حال ایں دستور رواج دارد

[2] Elliot, VII, p. 171.

[3] See Wilson's Glossary.

[4] J. of the U. P. Hist. Soc., Vol. I, pp. 169-170.

[5] Mirat (I. O. MS.) III, fol. 605a.

sense in which the word continues to be used till today. The thanas of the frontier faujdaris have been noticed above. They were purely military stations. But they must be distinguished from the civil police stations known as thanas into which the parganahs were divided. An analysis of the sixteen sarkars comprising the province of Ahmedabad reveals that each parganah had a faujdar, and several thanas each under a thanadar who was subordinate to the faujdar. Normally there was a thana in the centre of a few villages, varying from a dozen to two or three, but where a turbulent population like the Kolis were inhabited there was a thana in each village in order to keep the Kolis under control. For an illustration the figures of the Haveli parganah of Ahmedabad sarkar will suffice. Ahmedabad comprised thirty-three mahals of which two, namely, the town and the mint were fiscal mahals as distinguished from territorial ones. Two more were sea-ports and the remaining twenty-nine were territorial, that is to say, parganahs in the ordinary sense. Of the remaining 29 mahals, the pargana Haveli consisted of 193 villages which were divided into 12 groups or tarafs (اطراف); each taraf had a head village, known as taraf; there being thus 12 head villages. Each taraf was a thana and all the thanas were under a faujdar who was subordinate to the faujdar-i-gard of the capital. Thus we see that a very elaborate organisation of country police existed in the country, if we assume, as we reasonably may, that the other provinces of the empire were also organised on the same model.

Administration of towns: the kotwal[1]

As regards the local administration of the towns, the contemporary Muslim writers give us next to no information. The only brilliant exception is that of the

[1] See J. I. H., Vol. XIV (1935) Part I, p. 111 (Paper by Akram Makhdoomi) Kotwal=Commandant of a fort, a Hindi word.—Vide Taj-ul-Maasir of Hasan Nizami, Elliot. II, p. 219, Barni p. 302; Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi of Yahiya bin Ahmad, p. 77.

Mirat-i-Ahmadi which furnishes a detailed account of the police and municipal organisation of Ahmedabad. This is supplemented by the stray observations of the European visitors of the period to India.

It would be idle to look for anything like the modern municipal institutions, in that age. Nor have we any means to ascertain in what condition the general sanitation or other kindred necessities of the towns were maintained. We only know that the kotwal—whose office at the present day is confined to purely police duties—was solely in charge of the town administration, and his functions in connection with the town in his charge were, at least in theory, the most comprehensive conceivable, being in certain respects even wider than those of the municipal bodies of the present day.

Duties and powers of the kotwal: his appointment

The kotwal was appointed from the headquarters, that is, by the imperial government, on the recommendation and by a sanad bearing the seal of the imperial commander of the artillery (Mir-i-Atash). Besides utilising 100 infantry attached to the Nazim-i-subah for that purpose, his personal contingent was 50 horsemen. His monthly salary in Gujrat was 213 rupees.[1] Under him was a mushrif who was appointed by the government (probably the provincial), according to the regulations of the province, and the salary of the mushrif was fixed at Rs. 40 for his mushrifi of the kotwal's office, that of the pan-market and the Diwani office. He was paid from the imperial treasury, the abstract of his salary being endorsed by the seals of the kotwal and the Diwan-i-subah. The kotwal appointed the city guards (mace-bearers گذربانان) in the city, allotting to each a certain part which he was to watch day and night.

[1] Mirat, III, (I. O. MS.) fol. 724b. Here the text is ambiguous. After Aurangzeb the kotwal was sometimes appointed by the provincial viceroy.

Concerning the powers and functions of the kotwal, the contemporary sources, both indigenous and foreign furnish ample information. The various records in connection with that office belong to either of the two classes, namely, (1) the instruments of instructions or such other documents which tell us what the government expected the kotwal to do, and (2) references bearing upon his actual performances on different occasions in different places.

The two most important and considerable documents of the former class are the Ain-i-kotwal in the Ain-i-Akbari and the farman of Akbar issued in 993 A. H. (A. D. 1595). Both of these are so much alike in substance that Abul Fazl's Ain-i-kotwal would clearly appear to be nothing more than a summary of the above farman. Thus these two documents provide a somewhat detailed account of the scope of the obligations and powers which were officially assigned to the kotwal.[1] These obligations and powers can be stated under a few broad heads: (1) Watch and ward of the town. (2) Control of the market. (3) Care and legitimate disposal of heirless property. (4) Care of the people's conduct and prevention of crime. (5) Prevention of social abuses, such as sati. (6) Regulation of the cemeteries, burials and slaughter-houses.

For a successful performance of his first duty the kotwal is advised in the farman to make himself easily accessible to all without the intervention of a mediator, so that the miscreant may be soon punished and grievances redressed without delay.[2] Then he is advised to keep a detailed register of all the people in the town, ward by ward, to keep spies to report to him about every person coming in or going out, and about all occurrences, to keep full control over the sarais, noting down the names and details of the merchants and travellers. For this

[1] The Insha-i-Harkaran has also a draft farman (No. III) of exactly similar text.

[2] The kotwal had to act as magistrate also for criminal cases of some importance. This part of his functions will be fully dealt with in the chapter on Justice.

purpose he is asked to divide the whole town into wards and appoint a headman for each ward (میر محلّه) who should answer for all untoward happenings in his ward. The very minute details of information of which he is expected to keep a diary would undoubtedly be impracticable, in case they were literally enforced. But the point is cleared up by the concluding sentence of the instructions in this connection which says: 'in short they (the kotwals) should appoint one or two watchmen in every mohalla to report the daily occurrences there'.....and further 'they should act honestly towards the people and consider this only as a detail of good government, and not make it an excuse for seizing men's property.'[1] Besides managing the affairs of the people in this manner he is also advised to ordain that whenever a mishap might occur such as theft or fire or murder, the inhabitants, as well as the headmen and watchmen all should render assistance immediately. Thus he was advised to preserve security and order by creating a spirit of mutual help and co-operation among men. Moreover he was asked to let no men remain idle because workless people are a fruitful source of mischief. In this connection he was also explicitly told that he would be answerable for all the thefts and robberies committed within the town and if he failed to spot them he would have to make good the loss. That these instructions were not mere pious wishes is borne out by the testimony of foreign observers. Thevenot describes how the kotwal's men had to patrol the streets three times in the night and arrest suspicious persons moving about at a late hour, and how they used to cry their warnings to the householders.[2] Manucci bears testimony to the kotwal's responsibility for thefts and robberies, and describes how

[1] Mirat (I. O.) I, fol. 99. Text:
الغرض یک دو خبردار از همان محله تعین نماید که روز بروز احوال آن محله نویسانده باشد .. و این کاوش و پیرایه انتظام داند نه سرمایه اخذ و جبر گرداند

[2] Thevenot, Pt. III, 20.

he utilised the sweepers (حلال خور) who went to clean the houses twice daily, as his spies.[1] Manrique confesses that he was surprised with the prosperity and security of the country which was a result of the efficiency of the police.[2]

Next to policing the town the kotwal had to regulate the markets and to prevent rich people from regrating the commodities. He had also to examine weights and punish those who kept short weights. Thirdly, his duty was to guard the property of persons dying suddenly or without heir, to keep an inventory of all such effects and report the matter to Court so that they may be handed over when a legitimate heir might appear. Fourthly, he was to prevent manufacture as well as use of spirituous liquors, and to lodge all public women and prostitutes in a separate quarter outside the town and keep watch over those who visited them.[3] Badaoni gives a detailed account of how Akbar had tackled the problem when it was reported that the number of harlots in the city had grown too large and many people were becoming degraded. Manucci affirms the kotwal's activities in this direction.[4] Fifthly, the kotwal's duty was to prevent forcible Sati and also to prevent it by dissuading those who willingly desired to become Sati.[5] He was to prevent circumcision under twelve, to prevent infanticide, and a criminal deserving death from being impaled or tortured. Lastly, he was to control the slaughter-houses and not let any animal be killed on certain days and parts of the year. He was also to locate the cemetery outside the town at

[1] Vol. II, 421.
[2] Manrique, II, 188-189.
[3] Badaoni, II, 302-303.
[4] Manucci, II, 420.
[5] Pelsaert, says that the governors were instructed to dissuade intending satis but not to refuse permission if they insisted on it. He mentions the case of a widow to whom the governor offered a yearly pension of 500 rupees but to no avail, and the governor had to give his consent which was necessary for every intending sati to obtain before the ceremony could be performed, see p. 79.

such a place that it may not be unwholesome to health.

It was recognised by the imperial government that the functions enjoined upon the kotwal were too vast and varied for one man to manage. He was, therefore, asked to employ the requisite number of assistants and had a whole staff under him to carry out the various duties incidental to his office. There should be no difficulty in believing that it was possible for one officer to accomplish such a heavy work[1].

The village community

No account of the administrative institutions of India of any period would be complete without a sketch of those institutions by which the administration of the vast majority of the people consisting of the rural population was carried on. In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to show that the Mughal rulers of India far from being so callously indifferent towards the villages as some writers have suggested, were quite conscious and active about their duties, according to their own lights,

[1] Sir Jadunath Sarkar (see Mughal Adm., pp. 68-69) dismisses Abul Fazl's statement in the Ain of the kotwal's duties as an ideal which only a 'perfect man could satisfy'. He therefore does not 'attach any value to this source'. But the last clause of the Farman which forms a sort of introduction to the instructions for the kotwals which follow, as shown above, makes it abundantly clear that even the emperor realised the vastness of the kotwal's duties and recommended him to entrust the different parts of his duty to several able persons. As regards the high moral qualities expected of him, which are the despair of Sir Jadunath, being, as he says, possible only for a perfect man, one may venture to point out that such instructions were not unusual or peculiar to this case alone. They were given to all other officers and only evinced the keenness with which the emperor cared for the happiness, security and good of the people. That the kotwal actually did perform all those duties is amply borne out by the evidences adduced above. Sir Jadunath makes another equally unwarranted assertion that 'most of Akbar's regulations were withdrawn after his death', without suggesting the period he is referring to, or adducing any evidence in support of his contention.

towards the village population. At the same time it is but fair to admit that they confined their activities mainly to the negative sphere of the protection of life and property, and adjudication of disputes wherever their intervention was called for. In times of distress or national calamity, such as famines, they did all that was possible in that age to relieve human suffering. In the agricultural industry, however, they took a special interest, that being the main source of the state income. Therefore from Sher Shah and Akbar downwards every single monarch was very careful about the welfare of the peasantry. They strictly enjoined it upon all their officers to encourage and improve agriculture by every possible means: to dig wells and canals, to extend monetary help to the indigent farmer and bring new lands under cultivation. But beyond this almost all other affairs pertaining to religion, charities, public works and education, were left to private initiative, because the socio-economic system[1] of the country was so deep-rooted and worked so well in those days that it would have been unwise to interfere with it. Thus while the Mughal rulers did not initiate any positive schemes of serving their rural subjects, they at least extended their full patronage to the time-honoured institutions which had long served the land and were still good for service. Moreover such rural institutions as the agrarian system they completely adopted. Thus in a way the whole of the village local government became assimilated into the general administrative system so as to create a harmonious machinery in which no part seemed isolated or to suffer from neglect. And the village local government worked in co-operation with the official machinery of the rulers and in certain respects it became a part of it. Consequently it is necessary to give a brief review of it here.

[1] This system degenerated into the unfortunate caste system with all its concomitant evils.

Antiquity of the village community

"Local Government", to borrow a phrase from Professor Sydney Webb, is 'as old as the hills'[1]. This is more true of India than of any other country in the world. There was a great variety in the principle as well as details of the composition of villages in ancient India. But so far as their administrative system is concerned it was uniform in its main features and working, which may be taken as fairly typical of all the various forms of rural communities. That system covered practically all the aspects of the life of their members; its main work being related to the economic side of the village. But it was equally concerned with the safety of life and property, the promotion of education, medical relief, prevention of crime and other matters connected with the general well-being of the people.

In ancient India, of course, the village was autonomous, that is to say, its affairs were transacted by the villagers themselves.[2] But it was responsible to a higher authority. It was treated as a 'concrete unit of the state possessing distinct rights and duties and accountable to a supreme power for due discharge of the trust'.[3] We have enough evidence to show that in the pre-muslim period the king undertook actual supervision of the village council and if any action, executive or judicial or of any kind, of the council was not approved by the community they complained to the king for redress.[4] This point, however, need not be elaborated here.

[1] Preface to J. Matthai's Village Govt. in Br. India, p. xiv. See also R. C. Datta's Econ. Hist. of Br. India, I, p. 152; N. C. Bandopadhyaya's Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories, Part I (Cal. 1927), pp. 237-238; and Studies in Chola Hist. and Administration by K. A. Nilkantan (Madras, 1932).

[2] Corporate Life in Ancient India, p. 58.

[3] Ibid., p. 59.

[4] See Village Government in British India, pp. 32-34.

Village community and the Mughal rulers

It has been already explained that the Muslim rulers whether out of conscious foresight or political expediency, did not attempt to interfere with, alter or modify the local government of the village communities in any manner. On the connection which subsisted between this local government and the central government of the Mughal emperors no direct evidence is so far available. But it would seem that nothing like the sort of direct control and supervision of all its activities which obtained in the pre-Muslim period, existed under Mughal rule. On the other hand it can be fairly presumed that the villages were not so studiously and severely left alone as has been surmised by certain writers.[1] While it seems fairly certain that in the normal tenor of the life of the village communities or their administration no interference was attempted by the Mughal government, it is also beyond doubt that the representatives of these communities were invariably held answerable for crimes of a more serious nature, such as murder, larceny or treasonable activities. We may also fairly presume that in disputes of all kinds, civil, criminal, religious or social, in which the decision of the local body failed to give satisfaction to either party appeal could be made without any restrictions, to an ascending hierarchy of the judicial officials of the government. That this sort of practice prevailed is shown by an instance quoted by Dr. Altekar, from the history of

[1] Mr. Matthai in his 'Village Govt. in Br. India', p. 32, remarks that between the village community and the King's government practically no connection was maintained, and quotes Sir W. W. Hunter in his support, who says that: "This separation has stamped itself in the language of the people. The terms for the village and its internal life are almost everywhere taken from the vernacular Indian speech; but beyond the village stretched the Persian zila or district, and beyond the zila the Persian subah or province, whose capital formed the remote government or the Persian Sirkar". Mr. Matthai did not notice that Hunter's impressions were necessarily premature being based on insufficient and incorrect data. Neither was the separation stamped to such an extent in the language as was

the Adil Shahi government of Bijapur.[1] It would not be unreasonable to presume that a similar practice prevailed in the Mughal empire when we know, at the same time, that Sher Shah as well as Akbar and his successors had given clear instructions to the peasants to report to them direct any cases of injustice or oppression, and that they held open courts on certain days when even the humblest person could go and seek redress.

The origin of the village council

The question of the manner in which the village councils and assemblies were brought into eixstence is extremely controversial and cannot admit of a single precise answer. The methods and authority by which the village bodies were constituted varied rather widely in different parts of the country and at different periods. No detailed examination of this question is either possible or necessary here. It is enough for our purpose to give

misconceived by Hunter, nor was the origin of this difference in the two sets of terms, namely, for the village institutions on the one hand, and for the king's institutions on the other, rightly understood by him. First, the word parganah, which evidently escaped Hunter's notice, was admittedly an old Hindu term adopted by the Muslims, and the term zila occurs nowhere in a concrete technical sense before the later part of 18th century. Secondly, the fact that the Mughal and even early Muslim rulers used the headman of the old village community as not only an agent for revenue realisation but also held him officially responsible for the policing of the rural areas, clearly testifies to the connection between the central government and the village community. The separation in terms was only in the higher stages, and arose from the fact that the higher governmental organisation was entirely built up by the Muslim rulers after a foreign model, while the local institutions continued as before, and consequently, here there was a mixture of terms, such as chaudhry and Muqaddam, pargana and qanoongo, patwari, harkarah, and mirdah.

[1] This was a dispute between Jagdale and Bapuji Musalman of Karad regarding the patilki watan of Karad. The case having been decided by the Panchayat against Bapuji he was dissatisfied with it and preferred an appeal to the district Panchayat and then to the king himself, who upheld the decision of the Panchayat. Vide 'History of Village Communities in Western India', pp. 44-45.

an outline of the typical village government and its powers and scope of work.

Continuation of the village government down to the beginning of the 19th century

The old village government continued to function throughout the Muslim period and although the uncertainty and confusion resulting from the decline of Mughal power would have disturbed the even tenor of village life also, yet it is fairly certain that wherever it was left alone it was the least affected by the wars and dissensions of the period. The cause of this was inherent in the nature of the village community. It was so self-sufficient that the fall or rise of higher institutions or political actors was altogether immaterial to its life. The British administrators of the early 19th century, such as Malcolm, Munro, Metcalfe, Sleeman, all bear testimony to its existence and good work. Metcalfe was so deeply impressed by these institutions that he called them "little republics", a term which has since been very frequently and rather loosely applied to the Indian village communities, irrespective of the fact that since the time it was used by Metcalfe it has come to bear a very precise significance in political terminology,[1] which is hardly applicable to the village communities. Still later in the middle of the 19th century a historian says, "so long as it remains untouched India, by whatever despots ruled, is but a mass of little independent states, tiny constitutional monarchies, within their own spheres, however limited, self-acting, self-governing. This people of slaves, if only left to themselves are in possession of the most perfect municipal freedom."[2]

[1] Metcalfe's famous description of the Indian village community is given by Baden-Powell in his Land-Systems of British India, Vol. I, pp. 170, et seq. The report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, issued in 1812, commonly known as the Fifth Report, gives a detailed list of the village officers and functionaries in Madras (vide Parliamentary Papers, 1812 (377), VII, I, pp. 84-85).

[2] Ludlow: 'British India: its Races and its History', (1858) Vol. I, pp. 64-65.

Sir John Malcolm in his Memoir of Central India, vol. II., p. 3 bears testimony to the efficacy and existence of the village councils in these words: ".....fortunately the bigotry of the Muhammadans and the rapacity of the Marathas, alike understood and valued those ancient institutions which render every village in India an independent and distinct community, ruled by its own officers within its own limits. These were respected when found; and when lost, through death or desertion of the inhabitants, were recreated; and we may ..... presume them to be *indestructible, unless the hand of power is actually exerted to put an end to an establishment which has formed the basis of all Indian government.*" (Italics ours) In vol. I, Chapter 12 of the same book the author says that all just princes founded their chief reputation and claim to popularity on attention to them (Vill. Com.).

It was the policy of Lord Cornwallis which dealt a fatal blow to the village self-government. The consequence of the adoption of the principle of the private proprietorship of land by a few landlords, was "the saddest change in the virtual extinction of the old forms of self-government and the disappearance of those ancient village communities of which India was the first home among all the countries of the earth.[1]" But this village system was of such immemorial antiquity and so deeply ingrained in the minds of the people that although the policy of Lord Cornwallis practically swept away the very idea of it in many instances, yet, says Ludlow, "it lingers in the speech and minds of men, it clings, as it were, to the soil. Everywhere the functionary has disappeared, his land retains the memory of his functions".[2] Even as late as the beginning of the 20th century the village community, officially divested of all its functions and authority, silently continued to function with an efficiency and prestige which has surprised many a civil offi-

[1] R. C. Datt: Econ. Hist. of Brit. India (Pre-Victorian), p. 152.

[2] British India; its Races and its Hist., Vol. I, p. 64.

cer. An extremely illuminating instance of this has been cited by Professor Webb in his preface to Matthai's book.[1] Webb describes how an able collector of long service in Central India told him that "he was totally unaware that anything of the sort existed in any of the villages over which he ruled, and how subsequently on making enquiries, he discovered, in village after village, a distinctly effective, if somewhat shadowy, local organisation, in one or other form of panchayat, which was, in fact, now and then giving decisions on matters of communal concern, adjudicating civil disputes, and even condemning offenders to reparation and fine". At the present day some vestiges of this system are to be found in the headman, the accountant and the watchman who have now become the paid servants of the government, in one form or the other.

Constitution of the village government

In a country so vast as India with widely varying economic and social conditions in different parts it cannot be expected that a uniform system of village government could have prevailed all over. On the other hand we know that a great variety existed in their composition in different parts. In spite of this variety, however, certain fundamental features were essential to all of them and these afford us an example which may fairly be regarded as typical. Mr. Matthai gives the following account of the "staff of functionaries, artisans, and traders", by means of which the village communities carried on their internal government.[2]

The Headman, who has the general superintendence of the affairs of the village, settles the disputes....., attends to the police, and collects the revenues from his village.

[1] Vide Village Govt. in Br. India, p. ix. See also Report of Criminal Justice, Lower Provinces of Bengal, 1881, p. 4, for the existence of the remnants of the old system of village panchayat in the district of Dinajpur.

[2] Based on the Fifth Report cited above.

The accountant, who keeps the accounts of cultivation and registers everything connected with it.

The watchmen, of whom there are two kinds—the superior and inferior. The duty of the former is to gain information of crimes and offences and to escort and protect persons travelling from one village to another. The province of the latter is more immediately confined to the village, consisting among other duties in guarding the crops and assisting in measuring them.

The boundaryman, who preserves the limits of the village and gives evidence respecting them in case of dispute.

The superintendent of the tanks and water courses who distributes the water for the purpose of agriculture.

The priest, who performs the village worship.

The schoolmaster, who is seen teaching the children in the village to read and write in sand.

The astrologer, who proclaims the lucky or impropitious periods for sowing and threshing.

The smith and carpenter, who manufacture the implements of agriculture and build the dwellings of the ryot.

The potter, washerman, barber, cowkeeper, doctor, dancing-girl, musician and poet.[1]

Originally these functionaries carried on the work of the community by a mutual co-operation. Later each of these professions became crystallised into a caste with its hereditary duties, obligations and privileges.

The village council

The village council was the most characteristic feature of the government of a village community. We shall not enter here into a discussion of the origin of the panchayats; but in regard to their composition it is known

[1] These officials, says Mr. Matthai, may be taken as fairly typical of the greater part of the country, but they were not found in Assam and Burmah, and were hardly perceptible in Bengal.

that there were sectional and caste panchayats as well as panchayats of the whole village including all sections of the population.

It is also not possible to say whether and in what circumstances precisely the village panchayat included all the members or a select body of the people of the village. But it seems fairly clear that general meetings of the whole community were called only for disposal of some special kind of business, and the normal routine of duties was carried on by a select council through a number of sub-committees. These sub-committees as mentioned in an inscription of the early 10th century A. D. were as follows:[1]

1. Annual Committee.
2. Garden Committee.
3. Tank Committee.
4. Gold Committee.
5. Committee of Justice.
6. A Committee styled pancha-vara whose significance is as yet uncertain.

These committees were in all likelihood sub-committees of a larger council. The qualifications for membership include a certain economic status and possession of one's own residence, age between 35 and 70 years, knowledge of the sacred writings which in case of certain specialisation would make up for a defective property qualification; knowledge of business and honesty and integrity of personal character. Persons who had been on any committee for three previous years, or those who failed to render account when they held office or those guilty of any sin were not eligible for election. Sex was no disqualification and women, wherever fit and capable, were elected.[2]

Election

The manner in which the panchayats were elected was partly by votes and partly by lots in some undeve-

[1] Quoted by Matthai, pp. 25-26.
[2] Matthai, p. 29.

loped communities in very early times.[1] But all that had the binding force of religion. But among advanced communities the election was secured by a method of which the basic principle was not party contest but a unanimous agreement by a process of mutual discussion and understanding. As a precaution against the unwholesome and obstructionist tendencies of obstinate people instructions like the following, discovered in an inscription, were often issued.[2] The inscription lays down as a rule for the conduct of the village assembly that members should in no case persistently oppose by saying "nay" "nay", to every proposal brought before the assembly. Sir Herbert Risley once expressed this point with great clearness as follows: "The method by which the Panchayat is elected cannot be expressed in terms of European political phraseology. The people get together and they talk, and eventually an opinion emerges from their talk which is the opinion of all of them. There is no majority for they are unanimous; there is no minority, for the minority has been talked over and casts in its lot with the majority. The process can only be described as selection by acclamation, in the way the early Greek and German popular bodies were elected, the oldest mode of election in the world.[3]

The functions of the punchayat

The functions of the village punchayat included settlement of disputes, watch and ward, education, sanitation, public works, poor relief, medical relief and provisions for recreation, amusements and festivals.

Settlement of disputes

In early times perhaps all sorts of disputes could be settled by the village councils, but in the Mughal

[1] Ibid., pp. 27-28.

[2] Madras Epigraphy, Annual Report, 1912-13, p. 98, quoted by Matthai, p. 30.

[3] Speech, Bengal Legislative Council, July 23, 1892.

period their powers had become somewhat restricted, as in cases of serious crimes. But they had cognisance of: all cases of communal disputes; matrimonial disputes, land disputes, disputes concerning revenue and all kinds of rent-sharing, disputes arising out of watering the farms, or of sharing of harvest, and, indeed, all kinds of conflicts arising in the social and economic life of the people, came before the panchayat.[1]

The place of holding the panchayat was the village Chopal (a common meeting-house) or a temple or near a tank. The headman presided and the heads of each family used to be present, the votes carrying weight in proportion to the voter's status.[2] The sanction behind the decisions of the panchayat was a happy blend of traditional sanctity, a general sense of subordinating personal to communal interests, together with a fear of communal ostracism which meant deprivation of all the advantages and amenities of communal life. "The usual method of settling differences in the old village community" says Mr. Matthai, "was by referring them for arbitration to the headman, who settled small disputes himself but secured the assistance of a council of elders in determining more important matters. The headman possessed also power of criminal justice, which though often enough in the disorganisation of later ages he exercised with some degree of oppression, he was restrained and moderated in abusing." (Village Government, p. 162). Rarely was it found necessary to invoke the assistance of the higher authorities to enforce the decisions of the panchayat. We have seen how in the case of Jagdale and Bapuji Musalman quoted above, the Adil Shah respected the decisions of the panchayat. That the panchayats worked far more efficiently and successfully than the

[1] Sir Saiyed Ahmad Khan's Qadim Nizam-i-Dehi (قدیم نظام دیہی) (Urdu) pp. 13-14.

[2] This condition obviously came about when the zamindari system became established in the 19th century, to which the author is referring.

government officials appointed from above has been confessed time and again by many an official from personal experience.[1]

Methods of appeal

Small villages were generally attached to larger villages in the neighbourhood, and if the panchayat of the smaller village was unable to decide a case, that of the larger one came to decide it. Sometimes the aggrieved party himself invoked the intervention of the larger panchayat against that of the smaller.[2] To sum up: the advantages of the system of justice by means of these local agencies, the panchayats, were very great. On the one hand the members of a panchayat were restrained from injustice by the fear of public opinion in whose midst they had to live. On the other by its very nature, the village tribunal threw upon the parties and witnesses an obligation to state the truth. It is a well-known and universal fact that before the *biradri* panchayats (caste

[1] Evidence of Dr. Andrew Campbell, an honorary magistrate, before the decentralisation commission 1907: "I use the panchayats largely myself.....and they generally settle matters more satisfactorily than I could myself." In 1821 Elphinstone wrote: "Our principal instrument must continue to be the panchayat". (Adm. Report, p. 99). A civil servant in Madras, A. D. Campbell, gave the following evidence before the Select Com. on Indian Affairs in 1831-'32. "I have had considerable experience of the use of panchayats as a revenue officer.....and found them exceedingly useful in adjusting matters of dispute, both between the inhabitants themselves and between myself as the representative of the Government and the ryots paying land revenue as well as of the merchants; I have often found parties resisting all arguments on the part of my native servants as well as of myself, but immediately conceding the point with cheerfulness when decided in favour of the Government by a panchayat."

[2] "Qadim Nizam Dehi" (قدیم نظام دیہی) p. 14.

On p. 15 Sir Saiyed writes that even major crimes such as cases of serious injury or even murder were also decided by the panchayats by mutual reconciliation and seldom went up to the government courts or the qazis. (These conditions came to prevail only when the power of the Mughal emperors had declined).

councils) no one ever utters falsehood even at the present day. Sleeman bears testimony from personal experience to the facility with which truth could be arrived at in any dispute through the village communities where the people "state it before their relations, elders and neighbours whose esteem is necessary to happiness and can be obtained only by an adherence to truth". (Rambles (Ed. 1893) II, 34-35). Another obvious advantage was the intimate knowledge of everything which the village elders possessed and which enabled them to do unfailing justice. Lastly, it saved the poor villager the incalculable suffering and expense which he has to undergo in the modern system of law courts.

Watch and ward

The prevention of theft and robbery and kindred crimes was very effectively brought about by a mutual agreement amongst the zamindars ('zamindars' used in its 19th century significance) of neighbouring villages, and if a theft was committed or any person injured, the stolen property and the culprit were traced without difficulty. By this arrangement the villages were freed from the danger of such crimes.[1] In the earlier centuries when the Mughal authority was at its height, in normal times, these conditions of peace and security were still more effective as the headman had to answer to the government for such occurrences.

In the same way education through the Brahmin teacher and the maulvi, the former being very often the village physician also, sanitation through the scavengers and other functions were carried on smoothly under the guidance and control of the panchayats. These points will be briefly touched upon in the chapters on Police and Public Works.

[1] Qadim Nizam Dehi, pp. 17-18.

CHAPTER VII

THE MILITARY ORGANISATION OF THE PROVINCES

Although the military organisation of a state is generally an exclusive department of the central government, in the Mughal empire the case was quite different. Here the administrative machinery was mainly organised on a military basis. The army was neither recruited nor managed by a department totally separate from the civil government of the provinces as now. On the other hand the recruitment of the greater bulk of the army, its training and discipline, its maintenance and equipment, and the arranging of campaigns and camps were all done through officials who were also responsible for the civil administration of the provinces. There were no military divisions of the empire, apart from the provinces, like the present 'commands' into which the country is divided. Hence the military organisation was as important a subject of the provincial government as it was of the central.

By far the most baffling and complicated problem connected with the Mughal military system is that of the precise significance of the "Mansabdari" system. For nigh on three-quarters of a century a great controversy has raged round this question and diametrically opposite views have been held by scholars, and though considerable light has been thrown on the obscure points connected with it, no final solution has yet been reached. Another question which, though not at all so difficult or obscure, has still occasioned a good deal of controversy is that of the strength of Akbar's standing army. A third is the question of the general efficiency of the army as compared with the contemporary forces of other countries. The

other questions concerning the military system, such as those of its organisation and framework are simple enough and may be referred to briefly.

The Military organisation of the Sur kings

Like the rest of their history the military organisation of the Surs has not been described by the contemporary writers with sufficient fullness. The meagre information available in the chronicles helps us to reconstruct only a bare outline of their system. The military system of the Lodis was as weak and outworn as it was simple in its organisation. The reforms of Ala-uddin Khalji's time had been abandoned by the lethargic Firoz Tughlaq and since that time the army of the Sultans of Dihli was composed of a motley rabble of men collected and supplied by the nobles and jagirdars at the spur of the moment. The King, it seems, did practically no recruiting himself, nor was any system of inspection, disciplining or training in existence.[1]

With his usual alacrity Sher Shah set about reforming the army and soon carried out a complete overhauling of the military system. The fundamental feature of his reform was to concentrate the control and supervision, and probably, if Abbas is to be taken literally, the recruitment of the central army[2] into the hands of the king. He allotted a part of his daily morning programme to the

[1] At any rate we have no information as to the manner in which the army was recruited. But we know that there were *Bakshis* under Sikandar Lodi.

[2] Qanungo has again built up quite baseless and impossible theories concerning Sher Shah's military organisation. He suggests that soldiers of the entire army were as a rule recruited by Sher Shah himself and that the provincial governors were seldom given permission to recruit their contingents. (Sher Shah, p. 363). In support of this he quotes Abbas: "He himself fixed the monthly salary by looking at the man, and in his presence he had the descriptive rolls taken down and the horses branded" and again "As he fixed the salary of each man so he paid each man separately." These words certainly cannot imply that Sher Shah recruited every individual

business of recruiting the men, when he examined their physique and other necessary qualifications himself and made appointments on the spot, fixing their pay and rank. He revived the "branding system", a scheme which was particularly devised to prevent the fraudulent practices of the jagirdars who had to recruit their own contingents. Sher Shah was very strict in enforcing the branding regu-

soldier, even of the contingents of jagirdars, himself. Abbas is only referring to the fact that he was so active that soldiers recruited in the capital were not left to the officers for selection, but were selected by the king himself. It would have been physically impossible for the king to enlist every individual soldier himself, specially when he was so much engrossed in a tremendous amount of both civil and military affairs. Qanungo himself quotes (although wrongly so as to yield the meaning he wants: see 'Sher Shah' p. 362 and compare with the original) how Shujaat Khan of Malwa was severely reprimanded by the king for withholding part of the jagirs from the soldiers' salaries. It would be ridiculous to assume that all these 12,000 soldiers, or for that matter, soldiers of other jagirdars who held charges of the distant provinces, were all recruited by the king and sent to them. This would involve the further absurdity of supposing that either all the soldiers were taken from the central part of the kingdom or that they were sent or came all the way from the various distant provinces to wherever the king was and then returned to wherever they were attached. The words "Sher Shah had ordered Shujaat Khan to distribute some lands in his province to the common soldiers ....." quoted by Qanungo (p. 362 f. n.) occur nowhere in Abbas. On the other hand it is clear from the actual words of Abbas that Sher Shah had assigned to Shujaat Khan jagirs for the regular payment of the soldiery, from which the latter withheld some from covetousness: I quote the I. O. MS. fol. 114a:—

چون حکومتِ مالوه شیر خان شجاعت خان را عنایت نمود بوقتِ قسمت جاگیری ارکانِ دولتِ او عرض کردند که وقت قسمتِ جاگیری سپاه است اگر مسند عالی حکم فرماید از حصّهٔ سپاهی جهت خالصهٔ مسند عالی مقدار نگاه داریم داشته باقی قسمت کنیم

(See also Elliot IV, 425). In one instance Sher Shah had made an exception to the rule of branding, that of the contingents of Ghazi Khan, Ismail Khan and Fath Khan. Are we to understand that their contingents were also recruited by the king himself? Abbas, however, leaves no room for conjecture. The cause of introducing the branding regulations and muster roll, as he puts it into Sher Shah's

lations and would not pay the salary of soldiers unless their horses were branded.[1]

The constitution and strength of Sher Shah's army

The army was divided into two classes, the royal army maintained by the king himself and the contingents supplied by the jagirdars. The governors of provinces and other nobles holding jagirs were obliged to maintain a certain number of horsemen in proportion to their respective jagirs and station. The unsettled political condition of the country dictated the need of establishing a number of cantonments or military stations throughout the kingdom with an adequate force in each. The largest forces were of course, stationed on the frontiers and at other strategic points. For defence against the Gakkhars and Kashmir a force of 30,000 horsemen was stationed in the fort of Rohtas, under Haibat Khan Niazi (entitled Azam Humayun).[2] We are not in a position, however,

mouth, was that he wished that every mansabdar should maintain soldiers according to his rank and not deceive the king by keeping only a few men in times of peace and then sending hurriedly collected men when demanded to do so, just as they used to do in the time of the Lodis (See I. O. MS. foll. 104b-105a; MS (A), pp. 218-219; Elliot, IV, 411-412, tallies with the texts I have used). The branding regulation of Sher Shah would become practically useless if it is supposed that every soldier and horse was enlisted and branded by himself. When appointing Isa Khan to Sambhal, Sher Shah ordered him to maintain 5000 horse. Are we to understand that in all these cases horses and men were recruited and supplied by the king?

[1] Vide I. O. MS. fol. 105ab and MS. (A). p. 219. Abbas states in his own loose way that he was so strict that he would not pay even the sweepers and women servants of the harem unless they were branded. This seems to be a mere flourish for effect; it could not be literally true. Probably he kept a descriptive roll of these servants too.

[2] I. O. MS. fol. 107; MS (A) p. 223. Other places where the armies were stationed were: Gwalior, Bayana, Ranthambhor, Chittor, Mandu, Raisin, Chunargarh, Rohtas (Bihar), Kalpi, Lucknow, Dhandera, Nagore, Ajmer, Jodhpur. (Vide I. O. MS. fol. 108a; MS (A), pp. 224-225). Lucknow is mentioned only in Elliot, but not in either of the two MSS. I have used.

to compute the total numerical strength of the forces because of the very incomplete data given by the chroniclers. Abbas gives the number of matchlockmen for nine military stations and of horsemen for only two, Rohtas (above-mentioned) and Mandu. No indication is given of the number of horsemen comprising a "fauj". But it seems certain that that word did signify a regiment consisting of a fixed number of cavalry, because the matchlockmen represented the infantry.[1] But the number of the royal standing force is definitely stated to have been 150,000 horsemen and 25,000 matchlockmen and archers. Now if the approximate average of each "fauj" be taken to be 10,000 horsemen, the total cavalry distributed in the cantonments which were nearly 15, would amount roughly to 150,000. Thus the total strength of the standing army would have been nearly 300,000 horsemen, besides nearly a 100,000 infantry.[2] It is reasonable to assume that no material alterations either in the constitution or the strength of the army were made by Sher Shah's successors. We only know that Islam Shah detailed 5000 cavalry for each one of the sarkars.[3]

[1] Out of the nine stations for which the numbers of infantry are mentioned the word Banduqchi (بندوقچی) has been used in the case of eight and Topchi in the case of Raisin in all other MSS including Elliot's where it is translated as artillerymen except I. O. MS, where the word (بندوق دار) Banduqdar is used throughout. It seems that topchi has been used just for the sake of variety by some copyists and indicates the same matchlockmen as in the other eight places.

[2] It may, however, be pointed out that the detailed figures of the forces given in the Tarikh-i-Daudi are entirely different from those of Abbas. Moreover it describes a force of 113,000 to have been distributed in the parganahs. But this seems to refer to the military police which was kept by the chief shiqdars. On the whole the contemporary accounts are so much confused that it is impossible to reconstruct an accurate account of the composition or strength of the army.

[3] Bad. I, 384.

Artillery and elephants

It is also stated by Abbas that Sher Shah maintained 5000 war elephants. These were used, however, only for pulling heavy guns or similar other equippage. There is no direct mention of cavalry in any of the sources. But we have definite evidence that the Surs had a very strong artillery. We learn from the Tarikh-i-Rashidi and other works that Sher Shah made use of artillery in the battles of Bilgram, Kalinjar and Raisin. Islam Shah finding at Dihli that the bullocks for the gun carriages had been left behind in Gwalior, yoked from 1000 to 2000 men of the army to drag each of his heavy guns.[1]

Mansabdars and officers of the army

On the question of the mansabdars or officers of the army our sources throw very little light. We come across only certain indirect references from which we can trace the existence of the mansabdari system in a rudimentary stage. Mansabdari in the sense of military service in consideration for a certain payment or allowance which involved a proportionate obligation to supply troops seems definitely to have existed, but was confined only to officers. Mansabdars of between 5000 and 20000 are frequently mentioned throughout the Sur period. Sher Shah, moreover, clearly says that he introduced the branding and muster roll regulations in order to prevent the fraudulent practices of the nobles which prevailed in the time of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, and in order that "every one should maintain soldiers according to his rank (mansab) and should not vary his numbers".[2] This refers also to the existence of a similar system in the previous reigns.

[1] Badaoni, I, 384.

[2] I. O. MS. fol. 105a; MS (A) p. 218.

Text:—

و بمقدار منصب خود هر کس سپاهی نگاه دارد کم و زیاده نماند –

See Bad. I, pp. 384-385 for references of Mansabdars of 5000 to 20000 under Islam Sur.

As regards the administrative staff of the army the absence of any information in the contemporary sources has led writers like Qanungo to assert that the "Emperor combined in himself the functions of the commander-in-chief and the Paymaster-General",[1] an assertion which seems to be very much wide of the mark. For one thing, it is not supported by any positive statement in the sources, and this manner of silence on the part of the chroniclers cannot warrant such a conclusion. Then prima facie it seems well-nigh impossible and hence ridiculous to assume that one man, however energetic and active, could manage all these onerous duties unassisted and single-handed. Thirdly we know that the office of a permanent commander-in-chief never existed, at least not under the Surs and Mughals. Any suitable officer was entrusted with the conduct of a campaign on each occasion. Fourthly, and above all, there is definite evidence of the existence of bakhshis in charge of the imperial army, in the time of Sikandar Lodi[2] and immediately after Islam Shah's death.[3] These two references occur in such a natural way that they raise a strong presumption that bakhshis and other important officers must have existed under the first two surs also. For there seems no reason why the post of bakhshi which existed under the Lodis, should have been abolished by Sher Shah. Thus it can be justly assumed that there was a regular staff for the administration of the military department.

The constitution of the central army of the Mughals

The army which Humayun brought with him on his return was composed of such heterogeneous elements that after it had served the temporary purpose of re-occupying the country, it naturally threatened to become a source of danger rather than be a means of strength and support. The rivalry between the Persian and Turkish

[1] Sher Shah, p. 362.
[2] Tarikh-i-Daudi, in Elliot, IV, p. 457.
[3] Ahmad Yadgar, in Elliot, V, p. 43.

factions and the ever rebellious attitude of the Afghans made matters still worse which at one time jeopardised the very existence of the empire.

Akbar was fully aware of the necessity of overhauling the entire military organisation. He began by reviving and further elaborating the branding and muster roll regulations with a view to checking fraudulent musters and other dishonest practices of the jagirdars. Then followed what must be regarded as the most monumental and important scheme of Akbar, which is called the mansabdari system. This system had, in view of the administrative exigencies of a vast army, to be so much elaborated and worked out in such detail that it became highly complex and must have involved tremendous labour and time to formulate.[1]

The mansabdari system was introduced by Akbar

[1] Writers like V. A. Smith, (Akbar, p. 363 and Qanoongo Sher Shah, p. 304 f. n.) have stressed the abuses inherent in the system of mansabdari and the latter has by comparison claimed superior excellence for Sher Shah's system on the groundless supposition that every individual soldier of the whole kingdom was separately paid. It is curious that he should so conveniently forget that the soldiers of Malwa or those of Isa Khan and, in fact, those of all other officers were paid through the officers themselves to whom jagirs were invariably assigned. If each man was paid separately what was the purpose of assigning jagirs to provincial officers? It may be that the soldiers of his own army were paid individually. Smith following Qanungo has suggested that where the officer himself paid his soldiers, they became personally attached to him and were "inclined to follow him even against the emperor". That such a consequence was not easily possible should have been clear to these writers from the existence of a number of checks, such as frequent transfers and inspections, and the elaborate system of payment through bakhshis. If there were any weaknesses in the system they were inherent in both and were not peculiar to Akbar's system alone. The case of the defiant attitude of Mahabat Khan was no more "the natural product of Akbar's system" than the defiant attitudes of the various Afghan chiefs under Islam Shah and his successors. The mansabdari system of Akbar, far from being a retrograde step, was a necessary elaboration of the military system as dictated by the demands of a growing and more efficient army.

as a measure intended to minimise the chances of fraud and to bring about order and stability in the military organisation as well as to insure facility of its working. During the reign of its author it worked very well under his strict supervision. But the alterations made by his successors and the comparative slackening of control considerably damaged its efficiency.

The zat and sawar

At first Akbar had devised only one class or grade of the various mansabs or ranks. But towards the end of his reign he introduced three grades in each of the ranks from 5000 downwards, with a view to making further distinctions of honour in the positions of mansabdars without increasing the number of his contingent or his other obligations of service.

As to the significance of Zat and Sawar, however, there is a great divergence of opinion. Blockmann held that the Zat indicated the nominal number he was expected to keep while the Sawar indicated the actual number of horsemen he had to maintain. Irvine's view, on the other hand, was that the Zat represented the actual number of horsemen which the mansabdar had to maintain while Sawar "was an honour" carrying with it at the same time the actual number indicated by it. Dr. Tripathi holds that the Sawar rank was an indication of honour for which an officer was also paid an extra allowance, but it did not impose any obligation on him to maintain the number of horsemen indicated by it.[1]

The question of the numerical strength of the regular army has also been thoroughly discussed and it has been practically established that the standing army of Akbar could not have been less than three-hundred thousand, as we know the actual number of Jahangir and

[1] See Blockmann, Ain, I, pp. 238-47.
Irvine: 'Army of the Indian Mughals', p. 9.
Rep. of Ind. Historical Rec. Com., Vol. V, (1923), pp. 60-62.

Shah Jahan's army.[1] This would, of course, include the army directly attached to the emperor as well as the contingents of the mansabdars.

The main arm of the Mughal army was the cavalry. The infantry comprised a heterogeneous mass of matchlockmen (بندوقچی), archers (تیر کش or تیرانداز), swordsmen (شمشیرباز), lance-bearers and mace-bearers (گرز بردار or بھالے بردار) and all sorts of menial servants and attendants required for the regular troops. The number of infantry cannot be easily computed but they might have been as many as the cavalry.

The provincial army

The main question which belongs in here is the composition and nature of the Provincial Armies. Although the materials for a study of the provincial armies are quite considerable they are not quite easy to interpret and hence a certain amount of obscurity hangs about this question. We come across three different classes of forces in the provinces. First, the contingents which every high official from the governor downwards had to maintain in accordance with his mansab. This was, of course, a part of the regular standing army of the empire. It was maintained more for the general service of the empire than for that of the province. At first it was paid usually by assignments made to the mansabdars carrying an income equal to his salary. Later on the system of assignments was discouraged by Akbar and disbursements of salaries were made directly from the Imperial Treasuries (خزانۂ عامرہ).

The second class of provincial army consisted of the contingents of certain minor zamindars which were attached to the provincial governors to assist them whenever called upon. We have seen (Chapter V) how the zamindars of Sirohi, Dungarpur, Banswara and several others were required to remain in attendance on the

[1] Rep. Ind. Hist. Rec. Com., Vol. V, (1923), pp. 61-62.

governor of Gujrat. The greater zamindars had, according to their stipulations, to fulfil their obligations of the supply of money or men to the central government directly. But in this connection one question is not clear. Were such chiefs as those of the house of Amber, who held regular mansabs and offices in the empire, also under an obligation to provide a force from their states over and above that which they had to maintain as mansabdars for which, of course, they received separate pay. We have no means to answer this question.

The third and most important class of local or provincial forces consisted of the numbers of cavalry, infantry and other arms mentioned in the Ain in the detailed account of the subahs, as the quotas of sarkars and mahals. Now in respect of this class there are two different readings in the various MSS. of the Ain. The reading which has been adopted in the Cal. Edition (Vide Ain, Vol. I, p. 178 and f. n.) is: و سپاہ زمیندار از چہل و چہار لک افزوں چنانچہ گذارش یابد

and in MSS. marked as (ض د)it is: و سپاہ و زمیندار از چہل و چہار لک

The former reading has been translated by Blockmann (Ain, I, 231) as: "The zamindars of the country furnish more than four millions and four hundred thousand men, as shall be detailed below." This reading has been accepted by Dr. Tripathi in his Paper "The Army Organisation of Akbar" (see Rep. of the Ind. Hist. Rec. Com. V, p. 58) and on this basis he thinks that it was composed of the contingents of "the Rathors, the Chauhans, the Jados, the Solankis, the Kachwahas, the Guhlots" and other rajas and zamindars. The words "as shall be detailed below" of course, seem to refer to the detailed figures of the army given in the account of the subahs in the following book of the Ain (Jarret, II, pp. 115 et seq.) But there are insurmountable obstacles in accepting the hypothesis that these detailed figures of the army of the various provinces represent the contingents supplied by the zamindars. First it must be noted that the details of the contingents consist of cavalry and infantry in almost all provinces for which army figures are given,

and in some cases elephants, boats, and guns are also mentioned. The totals of these figures for the whole empire are: cavalry 383,618; infantry 4,213,382; elephants 1,863; guns 4,270; boats 4,500.[1] These figures may only be taken to be approximately correct because in many cases the actual totals of the mahals of sarkars do not tally with the totals given at the top for the respective sarkars and similarly the actual sum at the top of the subah.[2] But for our purpose they are quite enough. It will be seen that the infantry figures amount nearly to 4,400,000, that is, the figure mentioned by Abul Fazl, as referred to above. Now the question is whether the zamindars furnished infantry only. If we assume this to be correct where are the cavalry and other arms to go? Are they to be regarded as parts of the regular army, as distinct from the 'feudal levies of the zamindars?'[3] This is obviously impossible as all these arms are stated to be parts of what Abul Fazl calls Bumi (بومی). A still greater difficulty arises from the fact that these contingents are mentioned for all the subahs, in some cases mahal-wise and in others sarkar-wise, the obvious reason for which, it seems, was that for those subahs which had not yet been surveyed, detailed statistics were not available. It is clearly impossible to put down all these contingents under the category of "feudal levies' supplied by the zamindars, because in that case the entire territory of the empire would become a group of zamindaris. But

[1] These totals are based on the Calcutta text of the Ain. Jarret's translation is full of mistakes and should never be relied upon for these figures at least. Guns are given only in Bengal and Orissa together, and boats in Bengal and Bihar alone, while elephants are given in Bengal, Orissa, Ilahabad, Awadh, Agra and Malwa.

[2] This confusion must be ascribed to the errors committed by the secretariate clerks who prepared the lists and schedules, and to the copyists who must have confused them all the more.

[3] The term 'feudal' has been used by almost all scholars rather loosely to describe the tributary states under the Mughals, but it is quite incorrect to use it in that sense. The Rajput institutions were not feudal in the sense of mediaeval European institutions.

as we have shown in Chapter IV the whole empire was divided into subahs in such a way as to include all the autonomous states and principalities also within the subahs unlike the present political divisions in which the states are not included within the provinces. A necessary corollary of this scheme of division was that the states were either grouped or divided, according to size, also into sarkars and mahals, just as the khalsa provinces were divided. Consequently the figures of their local armies are also given in the same manner in which the revenue figures are given, irrespective of the fact whether the army or the revenue thus mentioned, was the contribution of the khalsa (in the wider sense of Imperial lands) territory or that of a tributary state. Thus even if we omit the cavalry, artillery and other figures, we cannot put more than a small fraction of the entire infantry under the category of the zamindar's levies. But we are still confronted with Abul Fazl's positive words, "و سپاهِ زمیندار" as quoted above, which plainly contradict the above conclusion. This difficulty is got over, however, if we accept the second and more probable reading which occurs in other MSS, including among them the India Office No. 265 (Ethe. 316) and Br. Mus. Add. 6546.[1] This reading as given above, has the words "و سپاه و زمیندار", which might be understood to mean the contingents and zamindars, perhaps implying the ordinary contingents and those of the zamindars. Whatever this alternative reading may mean, it, at any rate, removes a great discrepancy which reduces Abul Fazl's statement to an absurdity, if the former reading be accepted. In fact this discrepancy alone is enough to show that it is completely

[1] The copyist of this MS says that he had compared it with several MSS in Agra and Dihli. In the Lucknow edition of the Ain-i-Akbari (Printed at the N. K. Press. in August 1869) vol. I, p. 210, the passage reads thus: و سپاه و زمیندار از چهل و چهار لک افزوں آمد چنانچه گذارش یابد

wrong. But it still remains to be explained why Abul Fazl should have referred only to the infantry. Of this the following suggestion may provide a solution. If we add the cavalry and infantry figures the total amounts to a few thousands less than 46 lakhs, and on closer scrutiny it will be found that the actual sum-total of the detailed figures comes to even less than 46 lakhs. Now Abul Fazl says that the army of the provinces and zamindars was more than 44 lakhs. In all probability he included both the cavalry and infantry in the word پیاده and this interpretation leads to no inconsistency between the statement of Abul Fazl and the actual figures of cavalry and infantry together.

It is necessary now to discuss and settle the nature and character of this army. But before coming to it one more point demands our attention. While discussing the strength of Akbar's army Dr. Tripathi quotes Hawkins and Jourdain to say that Jahangir's army ranged from 3 to 4 lakhs. Then he refers to Dr. Horn's estimates according to which the cavalry was nearly four lakhs and infantry nearly 40 lakhs. In support of these estimates Dr. Tripathi says that 'if we add up the figures of cavalry and infantry given for each subah in Ain, Book II, a method not free from objections, we get a figure which is in substantial agreement with their statement'.[1] Now while completely agreeing with his conclusions as to the strength of Akbar's army, one finds it difficult to agree with Dr. Tripathi in that the cavalry and infantry figures given for the subahs represent the regular army, the cavalry of which was referred to by Hawkins and Jourdain, and cavalry and infantry both estimated by Dr. Horn. These statements and estimates have, therefore, nothing to do with the subah figures mentioned above. In fact Dr. Tripathi himself has, in the course of the same paper, treated these forces as the contribution of the zamindars, a point which has been discussed above.

[1] Rep. of Ind. Hist. Rec. Com., Vol. V, (1923), p. 62.

We may now turn to the question of the nature of the army figures given for the subahs. The so-called army (لشکر) indicated under the subahs was really in the nature of a militia and not a regular army. Nor was it a part of the zamindars' levies. The figures in question represent, in reality, general estimates of a sort of militia or the fighting man-power, which each province, sarkar or mahal, was expected to be able to raise and supply to the government in time of need or whenever demanded to do so. The proportion of the contribution of cavalry of each locality was determined more by the martial qualities than by the mere numerical strength of its population, and of infantry more by the numerical strength than by the martial qualities. This principle admirably explains the actual figures. Thus the highest cavalry contribution, 86,500, was that of Ajmer, but in infantry, Bengal combined with Orissa, being the largest in area as well as population led the way with as many as 801,150 men, while Ajmer came sixth. The other provinces occupy the following positions in descending order in cavalry contribution: Lahore, Agra, Kabul including Kandahar and Kashmir, Dihli, Malwa, Bengal including Orissa, Multan including Thatta, Gujrat, Bihar, Ilahabad, Awadh. In infantry contributions they came in the following order: Bengal with Orissa, Agra, Malwa, Bihar, Lahore, Ajmer, Dihli, Ilahabad, Kabul, Awadh, Multan with Thatta, Gujrat, Qandhar with Kashmir.

A careful analysis of the army figures given for the various states in the Ain will fully bear out this theory. The states of Rajputana afford the clearest and best illustrations of this point. We find that for several states three or in some cases two different sets of army figures are mentioned in different contexts in the Ain. What these different figures meant will become clear by taking an example. The sarkar of Sirohi had been, as we have seen, (ante Chap. V) transferred territorially and for purposes of revenue realisation and accounts, to the province of Ajmer from Gujrat when that province was

taken by Akbar. Politically, however, it remained still attached and subordinate to the governor of Gujrat. This sarkar of Sirohi comprised six mahals, which constituted four small autonomous tributary states, viz., (1) Sirohi and Abu, (2) Banswara, (3) Jalor and Sanchor and (4) Dungarpur. The first mention of the armies of three out of these four states, namely, Sirohi, Banswara and Dungarpur is to be found in the descriptive introduction to the account of the subah of Gujrat, in the course of which Abul Fazl briefly touches on the history and local conditions of these states. There he says[1] that the ruler of Sirohi possessed 2000 horse and 5000 foot, and those of Banswara and Dungarpur 5000 horse and 10000 foot each.[2] These figures clearly represent the armies maintained privately by these chiefs for their respective states. The second mention of these armies comes under the detailed account of the subahs and hence in the case of these states it falls under Ajmer (Sirohi being a sarkar of that province) and there the army figures are Sirohi 3,000 horse, 15,000 foot; Banswara 1500 horse, 20,000 foot, and Dungarpur 1000 horse, 2000 foot. These figures unmistakably represent the quotas of these states, whatever might have been the nature of that quota. The third mention of their armies occurs in connection with their submission to Raja Todar Mal and accepting the supremacy of the emperor when among other conditions the Raja enjoined on the chief of Sirohi to attend with 2000 cavalry and the chief of Dungarpur with perhaps 2500, to remain in attendance upon the governor of Gujrat.[3] There is unfortunately no reference to Banswara here, and we have no other means of knowing the

[1] Ain, I, 492. خداوندِ دو هزار سوار و پنج هزار پیاده

[2] Ibid. در هر دو پنج هزار سوار و ده هزار پیاده Similar figures are given for several other states, which I reproduce in tabular form (see infra, p. 267).

[3] Mirat (Ethe. 3597) foll. 78-80. In the case of Dungarpur it is only said that the Raja assigned him a rank of 2500 and asked him

conditions of attendance or service of that state. However, the figures for Sirohi and Dungarpur need no comment. They constitute the quota with which each of the states had to attend on the Nazim, and hence the quotas given under the provincial statistics seem beyond doubt to signify the quotas which these states were expected to furnish or were regarded as capable of furnishing to the empire in times of emergency. They do not indicate the contingents which the states or the mahals and sarkars were actually required to maintain. In the crown districts, of course, the conditions would have been slightly different. There a general estimate would have been made through the agency of the government officials, on the basis of population, while in the states, it would seem, it must have been settled by a mutual agreement between the government and the chief, for we see that while the infantry quotas of Banswara and Sirohi were 20,000 and 15,000, Dungarpur escaped with a contribution of only 2,000. This conclusion finds further proof from Abul Fazl's account of Chittor. He says, "This Bumi (it may either mean zamindar or locality) possesses a force of 16,000 cavalry and 40,000 infantry."[1] Here he is unmistakably referring to the local force maintained by the chief. But in the detailed account the quota of Chittor was 22,000 cavalry, 82,000 infantry which clearly represents the numbers which that sarkar was expected to raise and

to serve the Nazim of Gujrat. But the chief of Ramnagar, who also came at the same time and made his submission to Raja Todar Mal, was made a mansabdar of 1500 horse, and required to serve the governor of Gujrat with 1000 horse. If this may serve as an example of the proportion between the rank and the actual number of horse for service, the Rana of Dungarpur would have been required to keep a contingent of about 1600 horse for attendance on the governor.

[1] Vide Ain, I, p. 507.

جمعتِ این بومی شانزده هزار سوار و چهل هزار پیاده – لیکن بسیارے دیگر زمینها بر گرفتند – چنانچه سانگارا یک لک و هشتاد هزار سوار ملازم بود – پیاده فراوان

supply in an emergency. For the sake of clearness the above-mentioned cases of army figures are given in tabular form, together with several other kindred cases.

	Private force	Contingents maintained for attendance on Government	Militia
1. Sirohi ..	2000 horse 5000 foot	2000 horse ..	3000 horse 15,000 foot
2. Dungarpur	5000 horse 10,000 foot	1500 horse ..	1000 horse 2000 foot
3. Banswarah	5000 horse 10000 foot	Not mentioned ..	1500 horse 2000 foot
4. Chittor ..	16,000 horse 40,000 foot	In the time of Jahangir the crown prince of Mewar was to serve whenever required, but not always to attend, with 1500 horse.	22,000 horse 82,000 foot
5. Pattan. (Old Surat) ..	2000 horse 3000 foot	Not mentioned ..	715 horse 6000 foot

In this connection the tables of the army figures of territories like Orissa and Berar, over which the imperial administration had not yet been established and which were, consequently, left under the local chiefs, make a very interesting and illuminating study. Of the five sarkars of Orissa the Ain gives detailed statistics of only three, and of the two remaining ones, bare totals of their revenue, and army are given. Under the three for which mahal-wise details are given, the number of forts also is mentioned together with cavalry and infantry. Here it seems, it was too early to make any estimate of the militia which these states could supply, and hence a statement of the actual forces maintained by the various chiefs or zamindars is given which might also have been assumed

by the government secretariate, as the contingents these chiefs should supply whenever called upon.

The case of Berar was somewhat different. There, with the exception of a very small portion, the greater bulk of the province was still held by independent chiefs. Abul Fazl, as usual, gives the local standing armies of many of these chiefs, such as those within Kherlah, in the course of his introductory notice. From them no contingents could yet be demanded by the government and hence no mention of these occurs in the detailed account. But the contingents of those mahals are given which had been subjugated and brought under control.

These two cases also point to the same conclusion.

CHAPTER VIII

PROVINCIAL FINANCE

SECTION I

The Background of the Mughal Fiscal System: the theory of Taxation

Introductory. The study of the financial institutions of the Mughal Empire is fraught with great difficulties, which are infinitely greater in the case of provincial finance.

No contemporary treatise dealings scientifically and fully with the various aspects of the financial and economic system of the state is known to exist, because none was, in that age, ever attempted. We have consequently to rely primarily on the Ain-i-Akbari and a few 'Official Manuals' called 'Dastur-ul-amls' and kindred statistical accounts. Next to these our sources are the incidental references scattered in the writings of general chroniclers and European travellers and merchants. These sources, however, do not help us far enough. The Dastur-ul-'amls are full of tables consisting of figures mainly of the central revenue, the number of provinces, sarkars and mahals at different periods, the distances between important towns, army figures and so forth. With the exception of the Ain which gives a detailed account of the revenue, area and army of the sarkars and mahals, we have no other records. On the more important and really vital questions, such as the various methods of assessment, the apportionment of revenues between the central and provincial governments, the sources of income other than land revenue, the heads of expenditure, the total income of the state, etc., our authorities say next

to nothing. The Ain explicitly includes in the detailed account of Bengal the figures of other taxes, such as sair, zakat, salt, piscary, tribute from petty but independent zamindars, market dues, and in a few other provinces figures of port-dues, ferry tolls and customs. But no such information is available in any other source. Whatever information is contained in these later compilations, the Dastur-ul-'amls, is confined to central land revenue, the local statistics being entirely ignored. In one respect, however, and one which is of the greatest importance for our purpose, the Ain-i-Akbari furnishes ample information. It gives us detailed accounts of the duties and functions of the various officials concerned, of the nature and working of the different revenue systems and the stages and causes of their development. Thus it enables us to reconstruct a complete picture of the administrative structure. The Ain-i-Akbari is supplemented by the Mirat-i-Ahmadi particularly in the matter of administrative details of a later age. Next to the Ain, the Mirat constitutes our most valuable source.

The scope

It is necessary at the outset to define the scope of provincial finance. Ordinarily, land revenue, tributes from the chiefs, customs, etc., did not form part of provincial finance and consequently do not concern us. But because all these were administered through the local machinery, an account of the structure and working of this machinery becomes an essential part of this chapter. Consequently this aspect of the land revenue will be mainly dwelt upon in the following pages.

The Mughal theory of taxation

It hardly needs to be said that no theoretical science of finance or economics had yet come into existence. However, it is but fair to observe that the problems of practical finance and of general economics of the country

were none the less thoroughly understood by those in authority. It is also to be admitted that the financial problems of Mughal polity were, for that age, highly advanced and complicated. The Mughal empire was a vast concern with an elaborate and highly complex system of taxation and expenditure, a system which had been developed and, in accordance with the local and political needs, modified, improved and perfected from time to time by a series of expert and able financiers at the head of whom stands the versatile and brilliant figure of Raja Todar Mal. These financiers thoroughly understood the practical problems of 'public finance'. These ministers were also conscious that the aim of the administration was to ensure the general good of the state, and that the primary condition to achieve this object was a policy of taxation calculated to reconcile the interests of the subjects with the needs of the government and thereby to advance the well-being of both. Nor were the sovereigns indifferent to the happiness and interests of the people. Sher Shah seems to have been entirely responsible for not only determining the policy but also for the working out of the details of his financial administration. Similarly Akbar had a full hand in the financial policy which was worked out by his ministers. His son and grandson continued his policy without any material alteration. But the administrative efficiency underwent a certain amount of deterioration soon after Akbar's death. In the early part of their reigns Jahangir and Shah Jahan evinced a great earnestness and vigour, but towards the end their energies and zeal both perceptibly declined. And although in the latter period of their reigns they did occasionally show strength and watchfulness in keeping a check on the oppressive tendencies of officials, it cannot be gainsaid that the administrative control and efficiency had considerably declined. In the matter of squandering the tax-payer's money on their whims Shah Jahan perhaps evinced the greatest callousness. The enormous sums he wasted on his central Asian and Persian campaigns

can hardly be justified on any grounds. Nevertheless when all is said about their wastefulness, it is also but fair to say that even Jahangir and Shah Jahan were not devoid of an adequate appreciation of the economic needs and problems of the country. They were always watchful of the interests of the people and did their best to ensure the welfare and improve the financial prosperity of their subjects.

The basis and theory of taxation

The Muslim theory of taxation was not the basis of Akbar's taxation. The jiziah which was a vestige of the Turkish rule was not recognised by him as legitimate and was soon abolished. The theory on which the king based his claim to taxes from the people was the same as in ancient India. It has been expounded by Abul Fazl in his note on the 'currency of the means of subsistence.'[1] (دوامی روزی). In this note Abul Fazl explains in his own florid style that men being by nature inclined to be selfish and avaricious, became the cause of mutual harm and did 'not recognise the difference between other people's property and their own'.....and that there was 'no remedy for such a world of confusion but in autocracy'.....that is to say, 'the administration of a just monarch',[2] whose existence is essential for the protection of the property, lives, honour and religion of the people. This is followed by a dissertation on the different professions which men follow and the classes into which they are divided, all being dependent for their prosperity on the protection provided by the sovereign. The whole argument is then concluded with a historical and comparative account of the dues of sovereignty, including the various classes of taxes that were raised in ancient India, in contemporary Persia, Turkey and other Muslim lands, the amounts of these taxes, and an exposition of the canons according

[1] Ain, I, 289-294; Jarrett, II, 50-58.
[2] Cf. Hobbes' theory of the origin of sovereignty.

to which the incidence of taxation should be determined. This principle in his own words was: "And because the conditions of the royal state and prerogative vary in different countries, and soils are diverse in character, some producing abundantly with little labour, and others the reverse, and as inequalities exist also, through the remoteness or vicinity of water and cultivated tracts, the administration of each state must take these circumstances into consideration and fix its demands accordingly".[1]

This was exactly the theory of taxation in ancient India as is borne out by the testimony of ancient works on politics. 'The taxes were regarded in Hindu polities as wages of the king for the service of administration, and the protection of his subjects.[2] Similarly the principle on which the taxation was based enjoined upon the king the fixing of taxes on the merchants, traders, artizans, producers, etc., after very carefully scrutinising their profits.....and in such a way that he (the king) himself and the producer may both participate in the result.'[3]

Thus, in view of the fact that Abul Fazl was fully conversant with the ancient Hindu principles of government and taxation, it may safely be concluded that his ideas were derived from the early Hindu system. A peculiar feature, however, of the Muslim kingdoms was the identification of the monarch with the state and consequently the absence of any difference, at least in theory, between the privy purse of the monarch and the public purse.

The origin and development of the Mughal system of taxation

When the Muslim conquerors established their rule in India they found a highly developed and deep-rooted financial system in the land, which it was neither easy nor

[1] Jarrett, 55.

[2] See K. P. Jayaswal: Hindu Polity, p. 161 et. seq. chapter on taxation for a full exposition.

[3] See Ghoshal: Hindu Rev. Sys., p. 19.

beneficial to uproot and destroy. Nor had they brought with them any well-tried system which could supplant the indigenous system with any hope of success. Consequently they had to adopt the native institutions of administration, chief of them being the revenue system. On this they only superimposed certain religious taxes, such as the Jiziah charged from the Hindus and Zakat, from the Muslims. The distinction which obtained between Ushr and Kharaj in Persia and the adjoining countries, practically disappeared in India, and the Jiziah was also discontinued in the Mughal period until re-imposed by Aurangzeb. In the words of Ghoshal, 'the institutions of the Hindu rulers, at many points, and notably in the domain of land revenue, resemble the methods and arrangements of their Muslim successors. To suppose that these coincidences were accidental is contrary not only to the probabilities of the case, but also to what we know of the slowness with which Muslim rule took root in Indian soil. Indeed it seems risky to concede, in view of the absence in mediaeval India of distinctly Islamic features, such as the distinction between the 'tithe land' and 'tribute land' that the Muslim conquest brought with it a fusion of the indigenous system with the nearly identical system of the conquerors. (Contrast Moreland: Agr. System, p. 16). When, therefore, we find in the revenue history of mediaeval India some striking features which had their parallel in the earlier period, such as the methods of land survey and cash payments of land revenue, we need have little hesitation in connecting them with a causal relation.'[1] This conclusion is more true of the agrarian system and of the village local government, called the panchayat system, than of any other political institution of pre-Muslim India.

[1] Hindu Revenue System, p. 287.

Financial system of Sher Shah

Like other political institutions, the financial system also of the Dihli Sultanate, in its later days, was in a somewhat chaotic condition. Babar and Humayun did not attempt any improvements. When Sher Shah captured the throne of Dihli, with his usual expedition and vigour, he set about improving the financial system also. Unfortunately, the records of his administration which have come down to us are far too faulty and inadequate. We are told practically nothing about other items of revenue or expenditure except the land revenue, and even of this, no statistics are available. But from the stray references in contemporary literature we are now in a position to say that besides the land revenue, which was the main source of his income, there were certain other considerable sources, namely, the zakat, jiziah, heirless or unclaimed property (ترکہ or Res relicta), the khams or one-fifth of war booty, octroi and customs, mints and public works such as fruit gardens and irrigation canals, which should have come down from the time of Firoz Shah.

Land revenue under Sher Shah

There are three fundamental questions in regard to the land revenue system of Sher Shah, namely, (1) the method of assessment, (2) the mode or form of payment, and (3) the proportion or quantity of the government demand. Before he gained the kingdom of Hindustan Sher Shah had considerable administrative experience as manager of his father's jagir of the parganahs of Sahasaram, Khawaspur and Tanda. There he had tried his revenue system on a small scale, but with a keen insight and personal knowledge of the causes of the weaknesses and shortcomings from which the revenue system under the Lodis had suffered. His schemes and ideas were, therefore, quite mature and well-settled and when he became king, he lost no time in giving effect to his revenue system.

throughout the country, with the exception of the province of Multan which deserved special treatment.

Thus he established the jarib or survey system of assessment in supercession of the previous systems, namely, Ghalla-bakhshi, i.e. sharing, and Muqtei which signified a method of mutual agreement by a general estimate of the standing crops between the cultivator and the government agent.[1] As regards the mode of payment, he, out of his great concern for the convenience and encouragement of the peasantry, gave them the option of paying either in cash or kind. The incidence of revenue was charged on the general principle of one share of the government and two of the peasant, of the gross produce, that is, 33 per cent. Over and above this the peasantry had to contribute probably something towards the fees and maintenance of the surveyors and collectors when they were on active duty.[2] What the total income of the state from land revenue was we have no means of ascertaining.

[1] Ain, I, 296. (آئین الہی گز)

[2] These three questions have been fully discussed by the present writer in the course of a paper on the 'Revenue System of Sher Shah', published in the J. B. O. R. S., Patna, Vol. XVII, Part I, 1930-31. It has been shown in that paper that Mr. Kanungo's view that Sher Shah charged one-fourth of the produce as revenue is untenable, and equally wrong is the view of Mr. Moreland that Sher Shah offered to the peasantry choice between the two methods of assessment, viz., "Measurement (jarib) and "Sharing" (ghalla-bakhshi). The correct view is, as observed above, that with the exception of Multan the rate of government share was one-third of the produce; and in regard to the form of payment, i.e., in kind or cash, he left it to the option of the cultivator. Another point of considerable consequence on which I have differed from Moreland is his interpretation of the term Muqtei (مقطعی) which was one of the two systems of land revenue before they were replaced by Sher Shah's measurement system (the other being "sharing"). Moreland has suggested that it might have been a sort of farming, but I have shown that it was a sort of contract or compromise arrived at by mutual agreement between the government and the cultivator. This is very common even now and is known as kankut or mukata in some states.

On one point our authorities are unanimous, namely, that Sher Shah entertained the greatest care and concern about the interests and welfare of the peasantry and that he was extremely severe in punishing any one suspected of oppressing the cultivators. He therefore, practically abolished the intermediary headmen and established direct dealings with the peasants.[1] Moreover we learn from a unique contemporary document,[2] that Sher Shah had ordained that everyone of the landholders and payers of revenue should pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of their tax to the public treasury by way of an insurance fund, so that it might be spent in cases of accident or natural calamity. This fund was meant to help individual cases, but in order to provide against such calamities as famine, insufficiency of rains or failure of crops owing to some other cause, he made a rule that 'the poor peasants should be helped with money from the state treasury so that so far as the resources of the kingdom permitted, he might be saved from the whirlpool of destruction'.[3]

The organisation of the revenue department

It has been shown above (chapter VI) that the par-

[1] In view of the extreme importance Sher Shah attached to the protection and safety of the peasantry, we may safely presume that even in the lands which were granted in jagir to his officers, assessment and realisation of revenue would have been carried on strictly according to the government regulations and under direct control and supervision, even if we suppose that the jagirdars would have employed their own agents for realisation.

[2] This document is a contemporary history of Sher Shah written by one Hasan Ali Khan, who claims to have been in the employ of Sher Shah, and is named by the author 'Tarikh-i-Daulat-i-Shershahi'. It was discovered by Prof. R. Williams, who read a paper on it at the third meeting of the Ind. Hist. Records Comn. (see Proc. of the I. H. R. C. Vol. III, Jan. 1921). Prof. Williams considered it to be of great value for the history of Sher Shah. Part of it is now in the possession of Dr. R. P. Tripathi of Allahabad University. My references are to the latter's translation.

[3] Tarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi. Farman No. 10.

ganah was the lowest unit of general administration which also included the revenue administration. The revenue officer of the parganah was the amin. He had a treasurer and two or more clerks under him. The peculiarity of Sher Shah's system was that for the convenience of the peasants many of whom might not know Persian he had appointed a duplicate set of clerks for the purpose of keeping records in Hindi. These officials represented the government. The headman of the village was a sort of semi-official person to assist the revenue officials in the collections and serve as a link between them and the peasantry. The case of the peasantry was represented by the patwari who in those days was a village accountant, keeping all the agricultural records of the village, and the kanungo who performed the same duty for the parganah.[1] The shiqdar who was the executive officer of the parganah assisted the amil if his help was required. Above the amil was the chief amil or chief-munsif in the sarkar whose business was to exercise a general supervision and control over the activities of the amils within the sarkar and to settle any boundary disputes arising between them. These chief amils, we have grounds to presume, worked under the guidance and authority of the provincial governors, although it is not unlikely that they had also the authority of direct communication with the central government. This conclusion is amply borne out as well by the evidences we have of the agents through whom the actual administration was carried on, as by the probabilities of the case. The instructions to Azam Humayun, governor of Multan, for a special treatment of the province, the clear statements of Abbas that the governor of the Punjab hills, and that of Rohilkhand (Sambhal) province, having so cowed down and humbled the recalcitrant peasantry that they paid their revenue according to measurement, without delay or hitch, should be enough to illustrate the point. It may also be pointed

[1] The functions of the kanungo and patwari will be more fully discussed under Akbar's revenue system.

out that besides the evidence of the Ain-i-Akbari which gives the schedules and tables of Sher Shah's time,[1] the tenth farman of the Daulat-i-Sher Shahi also tells us that the land was divided into several classes and the rents fixed accordingly.

As regards the extent to which the measures of Sher Shah were actually enforced we know that he was very strict about enforcing the obedience of his orders by the government functionaries as well as the subjects. His instructions to the revenue officers were for them to be very mild at the time of assessment so that no injustice be done to the cultivators, but to be very strict at the time of collection and to give exemplary punishment to rebellious peasants. That these instructions were fully carried out we know from the examples of the governors of the Punjab hills and Sambhal referred to above.

The other sources of income

About the other sources of income above referred to our authorities almost completely fail us. We are only incidentally told that Sher Shah charged a transit duty at the two frontiers of the kingdom, at Sakrigali in the east, and Rohtasgarh in the north-west, where goods from outside entered the kingdom, and an octroi duty at the place of sale. No one dared to levy other customs either on the roads or at the ferries, in town or village.[2] This, however, need not imply that he did not realise even the Jiziah and the Zakat or derived no income from mints, although we have no direct evidence on the point. But the fact that the jiziah was abolished by Akbar, shows

[1] Vide Ain, I, p. 297: وزیع که شیر خان برگفته بود و امروز در همه صوبها از و کمتر نشان ندهند پزیریش یافت –

Tr. The revenue rates levied by Sher Khan less than which is not prevalent at the present time in any subah, found acceptance. Jarrett has wrongly translated the words پزیرش یافت (see p. 63).

[2] Elliot, IV, 421; I. O. MS. fol. 111ab.

clearly that it had never been discontinued since its imposition by the Turkish and Afghan rulers and that it was traditionally allowed by Sher Shah to continue. We have no justification to suppose that it should have been revived after him.

Expenditure of the kingdom

Concerning the expenditure side of the state finance we know still less, almost next to nothing. No positive information is furnished by any historian as to either the different heads of expenditure or the actual amounts spent. The only item of expenditure about which Abbas enlightens us is the langarkhana or 'charity-kitchen' which was maintained at the state expense in order to provide food for the needy and indigent, at a cost of 500 gold asharfis per diem.[1] The asharfi of that time weighed one tolah, and the ratio between the value of gold and silver was 1: 9½.[2] Calculated on this basis the amount of tankas of equal value spent on the kitchen would be 5000 daily or 1825000 per year.

Another item of considerable expenditure were his public works, sarais, roads, wells, trees and mosques, for the maintenance of which he made liberal grants. A large share of the government income must have been swallowed up by the army and wars which Sher Shah constantly waged, and by the government services. Sher Shah was also a very liberal patron of learning and culture. The author of the Tarikh-i-Daudi mentions several instances of his generously rewarding men of learning.[3] But it is impossible even to make anything like an approximate estimate of his total expenditure owing to a complete lack of data of any kind on the point.

[1] I. O. MS. fol. 112b.

[2] Vide 'Chronicles of the Pathan kings' by Edwards, p. 405.

[3] Vide Or. 197, foll. 80b-81a, where the case is related of how a young student of a qazi coming to see the king pleased the latter so much with his intelligent answers that he conferred on him 1500 rupees and 1500 bighas of land as madad-i-ma'ash.

SECTION II

The Land revenue system of the Mughals

The organisation. The head of the financial department of the state was the minister known under Akbar as wazir (also diwan) and later diwan-i-ala. Occasionally the offices of wazir and vakil were combined and entrusted to one person if he was considered capable of carrying on the heavy responsibility. In the beginning of 27th year, Raja Todar Mal was made the Ashraf-i-diwan and chief minister. The Raja suggested a number of reforms and improvements in the working of the financial administration, made many new rules and issued new instructions in order to minimise fraud and oppression and to ensure a good and just administration. All these were confirmed by the emperor.

In the 36th year when after the death of Raja Todar Mal Qalij Khan was the finance minister, we are told that the work of the finance department having become too heavy for one man to cope with the khalsa lands were divided into four portions each of which was made over to an able man. The provinces of the Punjab, Multan, Kabul and Kashmir were entrusted to Khwaja Shamsuddin; Ajmer, Gujrat and Malwa to Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad, bakhshi; Dihli to Patra Das and Agra, Ilahabad, Bengal and Bihar to Rai Ram Das. But all of them were directly responsible to the chief finance minister and had regularly to submit reports of their departments to him. Nothing more is said as to the manner in which this ministry worked and what actually were their powers and functions. But it may be justly assumed that they were in the nature of political secretaries in the ministry of finance.

The provincial diwan

In the provinces the provincial diwan was in charge of the financial administration. While he was, under

Akbar, subject to supervision by the governor, who was the vicegerent of the emperor in the province, he was directly responsible to the imperial diwan from whom he received his orders. There are indications in subsequent literature to show that the diwan became more and more independent of the governor under Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Jahangir had begun the practice of entrusting the revenue settlement of provinces to the diwans independently, it seems, of the subahdar.[1] A very apt illustration of the independent manner in which the diwan had begun to act is afforded by the case of Muhammad Hashim who was appointed diwan of Orissa in 1661 when Khan-i-Dauran was governor there.[2] This process of the growth of the independence of diwans initiated by the emperors themselves with a view to keep a check on the subahdars, continued unchecked until the diwans became dangerously powerful when the successors of Aurangzeb were too feeble to control their officers. They could make grants up to 99000 dams (Rs. 2475) under their own signature. Dayanat Khan who was confirmed by Azam Shah, after the death of Aurangzeb, in the diwani of the Deccan, used even to sign the grants of jagirs which were legally not valid without the emperor's or the prime minister's signature.[3]

Duties and functions of the Diwan

There is no compact account of the duties of the diwan available during the period under treatment, except for stray references. Abul Fazl in his introduction to the Ain-i-Akbari gives us some clue from which we may conclude the scope of that officer's functions. But the fullest account of the diwan's duties is to be found in two farmans (instruments of instructions) issued by the emperor Aurangzeb to his diwans, Mohammad Ha-

[1] Vide R and B. I, 22.
[2] Sarkar: Studies in Mughal India, pp. 221-222.
[3] See M. U. (Tr.) I, 473.

shim and Rasikdas.[1] These farmans have been translated by Sarkar in his Mughal Administration (2nd edition, pp. 197-223). These two farmans can be boiled down to give the following main points:—

The emperor at first makes it clear that the aim of administration should be directed to 'the increase of cultivation, and the welfare of the peasantry and people at large'. Keeping this object in view the officers are instructed to assess and realise the revenue according to any of the methods which the ryot may agree to, and strictly stop all sorts of perquisites or illegal taxes which the officers might be extorting from the people. They should encourage the growth of cultivation and persuade the peasants to cultivate any lands lying fallow, by giving them every sort of help, by extending loans, constructing irrigation works, and making the charges as easy as possible. They are asked to realise arrears in easy instalments and punish the officials who may have practised oppression and conciliate the ryots. If any calamity befalls the cultivation in any place, they should make proportionate reduction in the revenue or even remit it according to circumstances. If any extra amount has been exacted by the collection officers they should be made to refund it,[2] and those karoris and jagirdars who have served with uprightness should be recommended to the court for due reward for their services. Special stress is laid on the necessity of scrutinising and inspecting the

[1] The former one is reproduced also in the Mirat-i-Ahmadi (see Baroda text, Pt. I, pp. 268-272).

[2] Dr. Pant in his 'Commercial Policy of the Mughals' however, quite soberly and dogmatically asserts (see p. 59) that "In assessing the cultivators the principle kept in view was: exact from the peasant the last dam that he can pay: leave for him just enough to exist but not to live", and again, "the land revenue was a tax levied on the theory of 'what the peasant can bear". A more fictitious and more sweeping statement is difficult to imagine. It is not easy to understand how a writer with any presumption to scientific research could make such utterly unscientific and purely imaginary generalisations.

work of the subordinate officials with unflagging keenness and attention, and on collecting all the necessary papers of the department to be sent to the ministry. In the matter of realisation of government dues, the officers were enjoined to be very strict, chiefly with habitual defaulters, and even authorised to use flogging if persuasion failed.

Revenue officers of the sarkar and parganah

The chief revenue officer in the sarkar was the amalguzar or amil. He was assisted by a numerous staff of which the bitikchi was the most important. The other notable subordinates of the amil were the karkuns, the fotadar or khāzānadar and the parganah officials. Of the three chief officials of the sarkar, namely, the kotwal, the faujdar and the amalguzar, the kotwal had no share in the revenue side of the administration, but the faujdar's duty was to render such assistance as might be required by the amalguzar in realising revenue from recalcitrant and turbulent people.

In the parganah the shiqdar, the amil and the karkun and fotadar had continued from Sher Shah's time. While the main work of assessment and realisation was carried on by the amil with the help of his karkuns, and the rest of the staff and the semi-official functionaries, the qanungo, the patwari and the headman, the shiqdar also seems to have given him substantial assistance. But we have no means of ascertaining the manner and extent of the assistance. Under Sher Shah the shiqdar was the chief executive of the parganah and controlled the treasury of the parganah and the fotadar who could not make any disbursements from the treasury except with the sanction of the karkun and the shiqdar. These functions of the shiqdar had remained unaltered under Akbar.[1] From this it may be reasonably inferred that the shiqdar's share in the revenue administration was to receive the money which the culti-

[1] See Ain VII, Ain-i-Khazanadar, in Vol. I, p. 289.

vators brought to pay directly into the treasury,[1] and keep watch and control over the treasury staff. Besides this he represented the faujdar also in the parganah inasmuch as he rendered police assistance to the amil in the collection of revenue wherever necessary, and in maintaining peace.

The powers and functions of the amalguzar

The powers and functions of the chief amil are fully described in Ain V by Abul Fazl. These powers and duties would appear to be too wide and numerous for a single officer to perform. But a careful reading of the Ain would reveal the existence of a number of officials through whose instrumentality he was to carry out his varied functions. It is clear that he was the source of authority in which the various sub-branches of the revenue administration were centred and from which they were controlled and conducted. But he was instructed not to adopt a policy of aloofness, but on the other hand to make himself easily accessible to everyone without the intervention of a mediator. This provision must have gone very far in minimising the possibility of oppression and keeping in check the covetousness and rapacity of the lower officers. He was also authorised to punish robbers, murderers and other miscreants in order to protect the peasantry.

With these preliminary duties he is next enjoined to adopt every reasonable method of encouraging the cultivator and enhancing cultivation in quality as well as quantity. Among the ways of encouraging the peasantry, the amil is advised to give the poor husbandman advances of money and recover them gradually, to allow certain concessions (½ biswah on each bigah) at the time of realisation, redress grievances if any, strive to bring waste-land under cultivation and increase the facilities of the husbandmen year by year without increasing any revenue. In order

[1] We have several allusions to the payment of revenue by the peasants directly to the government treasury, Vide Ain, I, 389, ll. 13-14.

to secure the extension of cultivation he was given the exceptional power of departing from the regulation system of assessment by measurement and agreeing to practically any method which the husbandmen chose to be assessed by as also to payment either in cash or kind.

The alternative methods of assessment which the amil was to adopt were the three different forms of batai or sharing and kankut or estimation of ripened crops when ready to be harvested. He is then ordered with special stress not to entrust the kankut to be carried out by the headmen lest it should encourage them to tyrannise, but to deal directly and civilly with the husbandmen. His next duty pertained to circumscribing and controlling the lower officials, such as surveyors, assessors and other officers of revenue, by taking securities from them, and fixing their daily rations when on active service. Through the headmen and other village officials he would gather correct reports of the cultivated lands and assess accordingly making due allowances for inferior crops, if any. On completion of the assessment of a village a copy of its abstract would be sent to the imperial secretariate within fifteen days. Should any calamity occur to any farm after the despatch of draft estimates, the amil would immediately make an estimate of the loss and despatch a report to the Court so that it might be approved or a commissioner might be deputed (to investigate and ascertain the accuracy of the report).

Then in the matter of collection, the amil is advised to be amiable and courteous. This is followed by an indication as to the times of revenue collection. He is then asked to induce the cultivator to bring the revenue himself to the treasury so that the possible evils arising from the conduct of collectors might be avoided. Where the harvest was good he was to enforce punctual payment. Next are fixed the rates of taxation on those fields which are not sown but used as pasturage for cattle by the owner.

In regard to the amount deposited in the treasury the amil was solely responsible. He was to keep a written

statement of the deposits and personally to see that it was correct. Here a very significant instruction is given to the amil. He is asked, after counting and putting the cash in sealed bags, to deposit it in a strong room and 'fasten the door thereof with several locks of different construction, the key of one of which he was to keep himself and leave the rest with the treasurer.

Then the amil was to send monthly reports of the daily receipts and expenditure to the court, and remit the money to the central treasury as soon as two lakhs of dams were collected. Then he is asked to inspect the work of the patwari and other subordinate officers, to examine suyurghals, to make rules for the guidance of servants and to accept no presents from any government servant. He was also to provide the imperial government with detailed information regarding the condition of the rural people every month. Lastly he was to undertake the duties of the kotwal's office, should that office be vacant in the sarkar. It would seem that the amil was instructed to undertake the suburban police and judicial duties of the kotwal and not the municipal duties which that officer had to perform in the city under his charge.

The amil was subject to supervision and inspection by the governor who could recommend his dismission if he found him inefficient or dishonest.[1]

The bitikchi and his work

From a perusal of the duties of the bitikchi set forth in Ain VI, it will become quite clear that next to the amil he was the most important revenue official in the sarkar, and as Abul Fazl says, really indispensable to his chief, the amil.

Bitikchi is a word of Turkish origin, meaning a writer or recorder. He may best be characterised as the secretary of the revenue department in the sarkar, who did the entire work of preparing the necessary papers and records

[1] Ain, I, 281-282.

on the basis of which assessment and collection was carried out by the amil. In the preparation of these papers the following procedure was followed:—

First he took from the qanungos the yearly average of the revenue of each village on the basis of the average of the past ten years and acquainted himself with the customs (رسم آن سر زمین) of the locality (the sarkar in his charge), to the satisfaction of the amil. Next the bitikchi was to record the contracts made with the cultivators define the village boundaries, and estimate the amount of arable and waste land, and keep a note of the government servants employed in preparing the above records, such as the munsif, the zabit (ضابطا), the measurer (جریب کش) and the thanedar, and also the headman and the cultivator, and the kind of produce cultivated (by each person). After taking these individual records he was to prepare them for the whole village, noting down the village, the parganah and the harvest to which the entries refer. In this manner he was to complete the survey of the village, was to work out the assessment of each cultivator and make up the totals of each village. This done, the collector (amil) was to realise the revenue on the basis of these records. But if these records were not ready by the time of collection, the bitikchi had instructions to proceed with his work on the basis of the patwari's records of each village, and thus furnish the necessary papers to the collector.

In the business of actual collection also the bitikchi had an important duty to fulfil. If the money was raised by the tahsildar, he was to keep his account, or if the peasant paid it to the treasury he was to grant him a receipt signed by the treasurer. More important than this, he was carefully to scrutinise the rolls and records of the patwari, the muqaddam and other assistants concerned, according to which the collections were made. Finally, the bitikchi was to keep daily and monthly accounts of income and expenditure and forward monthly abstracts and reports, as well as an annual abstract of the entire assessment at the end of the year under the amil's signature, to the im-

perial secretariate. If any balances were left he was to report them to the collector at the end of the year, as also about any thefts or loss of cattle in any village (on which taxes were raised).

The treasurer and his duties

This officer to whom Abul Fazl gives the name of khazanadar (Ain VII) was commonly known as fotadar since Sher Shah's time. Ain VII, describing his duties opens with a remark on the advisability of the treasury being situated in a safe place and near the residence of the district officer (نزد حاکم).[1]

The duties of the treasurer were comparatively simple and far less onerous. These fall under three main categories; rules in regard to receiving money; those regarding the manner of keeping the money, and those regarding the disposal of the deposits. Concerning receipts, the khazanadar was instructed to receive from the cultivator gold, silver or copper, any kind of coin which he might bring, and not harass him. He was not to ask for any rebate but only take the value of the short weight, if any, of the coins. The coins of former reigns he was to accept as bullion, that is, as equivalent to the current value of their weight.

As regards depositing money in the treasury we have seen that in conjunction with the amil the treasurer was to keep it in the treasury under several locks, one key being with the amil and the rest with the treasurer. The karkun and shiqdar also were to have a regular knowledge of the deposits in the treasury. In order to keep his accounts in agreement with those of the patwari's he was to take the patwari's signatures on the *bahi* or ledger.

The khazanadar was not empowered to make any disbursements, without the sanction of the diwan (probably the provincial diwan is meant). In cases of emergency he could incur expenditure on the authority of the shiqdar and

[1] Here Abul Fazl is describing the functions of the parganah and sarkar treasurers.

karkun, provided he represented the case to the government (without delay).

The karkun

Besides the above-mentioned officers several others connected with the revenue administration are mentioned. Although their duties and functions have not been mentioned in detail, we have ample incidental references to enable us to make an estimate of their work. These were the karkun, shiqdar, amil or munsif, amin, zabit, jaribkash, qanungo, patwari, headman, karori.

The karkun was evidently another functionary of some importance attached to the suite of the amil. Now it must be clearly borne in mind that the word amil was indifferently used by Abul Fazl for the chief amil, *i.e.*, of the sarkar and for the parganah amil who was since Sher Shah's time also called munsif, a term which seems to have dropped out of common use under Akbar. The karkun was a sort of camp clerk and accountant in one, both to the chief amil and the parganah amil, and going round with them on their tours of assessment. His first duty was to keep a full record of the transactions which took place between the government servants and the cultivators at the time of assessment, on behalf of the government so that the collector might compare his accounts with those of the headman and patwari. A copy of these was then kept both by the collector (amil) and the bitikchi.[1] The karkun was also to keep a day ledger of receipts with which the amil compared the account kept by the treasurer.[2] The karkun had some authority over the treasury also. No deposits could be made into the treasury without his knowledge. It was the duty of the treasurer to keep him informed of the treasury accounts and to compare his own with the ledger of the karkun.[3] The karkun could in conformity with the

[1] Ain, I, 286, ll. 21-22.
[2] Ibid, I, 287, l. 10.
[3] Ibid, I, 289, ll. 5-6.

shiqdar sanction expenditure from the treasury in cases of emergency.[1]

The shiqdar

The shiqdar was the executive officer of the parganah. The nature and character of his office and his duties have been discussed in Chapter VII above. Here it is only relevant to notice briefly his work and authority in the revenue administration.

The first reference to the shiqdar in the Ain is in connection with the treasurer's duty to keep deposits in the treasury with the knowledge of that officer.[2] Then he was the other officer empowered along with the karkun to sanction expenditure from the treasury in emergencies.[3] Besides these two references the shiqdar's name occurs only once more in connection with the revenue administration. In Ain XI, which describes the different classes of land, the work of some subordinate government functionaries is also noticed. Here the daily perquisites or allowances of the agents of the shiqdar, karkun and amin are referred to.[4] It would be quite baseless to suppose that the three officers referred to had each a separate set of agents to carry out the survey and estimate of the harvests. The passage can only mean that the surveyors and other agents doing the work of assessment were in a general way described as the agents of the parganah officers. From these brief and indirect references to the shiqdar's duties in the revenue administration it is quite clear that he was not directly concerned with it, but in virtue of his office as the head of the parganah, it was his duty to assist the revenue officers also.

[1] Ibid, I, 289, ll. 10-11.
[2] Ain, I, 289, l. 5.
[3] Ibid, I, 289, ll. 10-11.
[4] Ain, I, p. 300, l. 35 and p. 301, l. 1. Text:

و آئین چنان که گماشتهای شقدار و کارکن و امین....

Munsif, amil and amin

The terms munsif and amil or amin were commonly used as interchangeable in the time of Sher Shah. The office of the amil or munsif of the parganah is described by Abbas and other contemporary authorities as belonging to the revenue administration. He was the man who carried out the assessment and realisation in the parganah with the assistance of an adequate staff. The term munsif, it seems, gradually fell into disuse, and amil remained in vogue, but it does not seem to have been altogether forgotten under Akbar or even much later. It occurs only once in the Ain-i-Akbari but the context in which it is used leaves no obscurity as to its significance.[1] In a MS. of the later 18th century we have these words :— امین عبارت از منصف است[2] *i.e.*, 'amin is a common word for munsif'. Thus the word amin continued to be rather indifferently used to signify amil or the revenue officer of the parganah.

Amin

This term, *i.e.*, amin, is a common word for munsif. Like darogha and diwan, it was of very wide and various application.[3] It cannot be asserted that in our period the amin was a distinct officer apart from the amil of the parganah. In fact under Sher Shah Elliot's MS. alone seems to have had that word in the place of amil (see above, Chapter VII). In the Ain-i-Akbari, it occurs once,[4] from which it does not appear that this officer was different from the amil. Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his 'Mughal Administration' (pp.

[1] Ain, I, 288, l. 7.
Wilson (p. 356) gives the use of the word munsiff as a judge under Br. administration, and also says: 'In some places the munsiff was an officer on the part of the Zamindar employed to superintend the measurement of the lands of a village in concert with the villagers'.

[2] Add. 6588, fol. 73b.

[3] For the other applications of this term or the various offices which were known by this name, see above, Chapter VI.

[4] Ain, I, pp. 300-301.

88-89) translates from his MS. (which he calls Manual of officer's duties) the detailed duties of the amin, a perusal of which will show that all these duties belonged in the main to the amil (described above) and partly to the bitikchi. The Manual in question is not a very early document being 'not later than the early 18th century' (see Mughal Admn., p. 262) and it is possible, if the Manual is to be believed as reliable, that in the 18th century the term amin came officially to be used for amil. The literal meaning of the word, however is 'trustee', *i.e.*, one entrusted with any special duty or office or a special commission. In this sense it is of frequent occurrence from Sher Shah downwards. Administrative amins were appointed, in special circumstances, to the provinces, like qazi Fazilat to Bengal or Abu Turab Wali to Gujrat. When Itmad Khan was made governor of that province both in the revenue and judicial departments the term amin seems to have been applied to a person entrusted with the carrying out of a special charge, such as collection of revenue from an estate or assessment of a particular district. We definitely know that in this sense it was used in the 18th century.[1]

Zabit

This name occurs only incidentally in the Ain-i-Bitikchi. Although no direct hint is given as to his duty, the context helps us to know his functions almost with a certainty. Jarrett has correctly translated the word as

[1] Vide Add. 6603, fol. 45b. Wilson's glossary also gives this meaning.

Sir J. Sarkar (Mughal Admn., 2nd Ed., 1924, p. 87) says: "Amin literally means an umpire or arbitrator, a trustee for others. The essence of the office was to be an impartial umpire between the state demanding revenue and the individual ryot paying it". This definition has been accepted also by Mr. Kanungo (see Sher Shah, p. 353). The literal meaning of the word, as said above, is trustee, but in no dictionary do we find "umpire" or any synonymous word, as its meaning. Nor did he ever act as umpire to settle the revenue between the government and the ryot. He was definitely a government official (in

superintendent, which is the literal meaning of the word. The zabit was a sort of supervisor of the surveying after the crops had been sown; and the jarib-kash or surveyor worked under his supervision. This officer might have existed since Sher Shah's time.

Qanungo and patwari

The qanungo was also an old official and this is perhaps the one officer whose association with the parganah has continued since very early times down to our own day, although the signification of both has undergone considerable modification. As at present, he was in a way the head of the patwaris of his parganah, since he had to keep the same records for the parganah as the patwari had to keep for the village. Abul Fazl says that 'the qanungo was the refuge of the husbandman', obviously because he was supposed not only to keep the records of the crops and farms etc., but also to know the local practices and customs, matters on which he was referred to whenever such a need arose. Formerly the qanungos were paid by means of a commission of one per cent which was remitted by Akbar and thenceforth they were paid cash salaries from the public treasury besides an assignment for personal maintenance. There were three grades of qanungos in Akbar's time; the first got Rs. 50 per mensem, the second thirty and the third twenty.[1] It will be noticed that these salaries were very handsome, considering the purchasing power of money at that time which according to Moreland[2] was about six times, and according to Brij Narain fifteen times that of the present.[3] Taking the average of these

the same sense in which amil is used by Sarkar) acting according to rules and regulations, in which the question of 'umpireship' or arbitration did not arise at all. Of course he acted as an arbitrator to settle disputes between two parties when especially entrusted with such duty in the judicial department.

[1] Ain, I, 300, ll. 23-25.

[2] India at the Death of Akbar, p. 60.

[3] Indian Econ. Life: Past and Present, p. 20.

two estimates and putting it at about ten times the present purchasing power, the salaries of the three grades would be Rupees 500, 300 and 200 respectively in terms of modern money. The salaries of the other parganah or sarkar officers are not mentioned, but we can safely conclude that these must have been somewhat more than those of the qanungos. Such liberal salaries must have served as a check on corruption and bribery, as at the present day the higher officers who are well-paid are generally free from bribery, while such corruption is notoriously rampant among those who are low-paid, from the tahsildars and thanadars downwards.

The functions of the Qanungo have been thus defined by Wilson (Glossary, p. 260): "An expounder of the laws, but applied in Hindustan especially to village and district revenue officers, who under former governments, recorded all circumstances within their sphere which concerned landed property and the realisation of the revenue, keeping registers of the value, tenure, extent and transfers of the lands, assisting in the measurement and survey of lands, reporting deaths and successions of revenue-payers, and explaining, when required, local practices and public regulations. They were paid by rent-free lands and various allowances and perquisites". This was their position in the 18th century just before the establishment of the British administration, and we may safely assume that in the 16th and 17th centuries it was practically the same. "The patwari", says Abul Fazl "is a writer employed on the part of the cultivator". He probably, unlike the qanungo continued to be paid by the one per cent commission which was taken from the other sources of revenue.[1]

[1] The original word in the Ain is جہات which is translated by Jarrett as "Manufactures." This seems to be incorrect, as the salaries of the qanungos and patwaris had nothing to do with any kind of manufactures. Besides, the word jihat only means extra taxes, other than land revenue.

The karori

This officer was the creation of Akbar's time and did not exist before that. In the nineteenth year the emperor, being anxious to put an end to the corruption which had crept into the assignment system, decided, in consultation with his ministry, to introduce an improved system. The fundamental change brought about by this system was to substitute cash payments in place of the assignments for salaries. The imperial territories were converted into *reserved lands*, and these territories, (*i.e.*, those excluding the chief's states) in the provinces of Hindustan, excluding Bihar and Bengal, were divided into circles, in such a manner that each yielded an average revenue of a karor of tankas per year; and from this fact the amils to whom these circles were entrusted were called Karoris. The new system was given trial for a few years and being found unsatisfactory and open to grave abuses, was abandoned after about five years,[2] and the assignment system came gradually into vogue again.

There is a great difference in the accounts of Badaoni and Nizam uddin on the one hand and Akbar Nama on the other regarding the motives which underlay the introduction of the system. This point has been discussed by Moreland and he suggests that it may be that the official version of the Akbar Nama represents the motives of the emperor and the two unofficial versions probably those of the ministry. This is not unlikely.[3]

In later times the word karori survived and came into popular use for a revenue collector but the system associated with that name disappeared altogether by the time the Ain was written as there is no reference to it in that work at all. It is, therefore, a mistake to reckon the

[1] A. N. III (Tr.) pp. 166-167; Text p. 117.

[2] The A. N. and Tabaqat-i-Akbari do not say anything about its working and final fate. Our conclusion in this connection has to be based on Badaoni's statement only.

[3] Agr. System, pp. 100-103.

system of karoris as an integral part of Akbar's revenue system, as is frequently done.[1]

The functionaries whose duties have been, as far as possible, estimated above, were those who were chiefly concerned with the conduct of the revenue administration. But they by no means exhaust the list. We find casual references to many other minor officers of the revenue department, such as the headman, a semi-official person assisting the tahsildar, in the assessment, survey as well as collection of revenue. These terms have survived to this day to denote similar officials with their offices altered according to the circumstances.

The working of the land revenue system

We may now turn to the actual working of the land revenue administration. Under that head the same three fundamental questions must be dealt with, *viz.*, (1) the methods of assessment, (2) the incidence of the revenue, that is to say, the proportion of the state demand, and (3) the mode or form of payment.

The second and third questions may be disposed of first, as the first question calls for a detailed examination. It will consequently be taken up last.

In the first decade of his reign Akbar had to work the system of Sher Shah which had survived the chaotic period following his son's death. Abul Fazl bears clear testimony to this fact.[2] Thus the incidence of revenue which was one-third under Sher Shah was continued unchanged. In the form of payment also very little modification was brought about. Although in general the principle of cash payment was introduced for the sake of

[1] See, for instance, Smith's Akbar.....Sir J. Sarkar (Mughal Admn., p. 86) refers to a class of "kroris of Ganj" and translates it as "collectors of market", which is wrong. "Ganj" in Persian never meant market. Ganj means treasure or an amount of money and karoris of ganj would simply signify a collector of money or revenue.

[2] Ain, p. 297. See passage quoted above, f. n., p. 279.

the convenience of the cultivators and the soldiery,[1] it was qualified in many ways under different circumstances. In the instrument of instructions, however, the amil is ordered not to 'make it a practice of taking only cash payments but also in kind'.[2] The reason for this is explained further on in the same Ain. 'If it be not prejudicial to the husbandman he (amil) may take a cash payment on land which is under the sharing system,[3] at the current market rate'. The meaning is that certain classes of land and crops as specified in the following account of the Polaj, Parauti and other kinds of land were subject to cash payment and in others option was given to the cultivator. Thus in the Ain-i-chachar we read: "According to the differences in situation the revenue is paid either in money or in kind".[4] But the revenue on such green products as musk-melon, onions, *ajwain* and other vegetables, was taken in cash. Thus the form of payment was made sufficiently elastic in order to suit the convenience of both the parties.

The methods of assessment

Of all the items of business connected with the revenue administration the method of assessment presented a problem of extreme complexity. Once the assessment was settled the rest was simple. Collection of revenue was only a mechanical process according to the share agreed upon or the rates fixed. The ideal of the assessment system was to devise a scheme by which the estimates of crops

[1] Ain, p. 297. I cannot understand how the institution of cash payment of revenue affected the convenience or otherwise of the soldiery. Nor have I seen any other writer explaining Abul Fazl's enigmatic statement.

[2] Ibid, p. 285, l. 24.

[3] Ibid, p. 286, l. 9. و اگر برعیت گران نیاید زمین غله بخش را بنرخ بازار نقدی سازد

Jarrett's translation (pp. 44-45) of the phrase Ghalla bakhshi, as corn-bearing land, does not convey the right sense and is misleading.

[4] Ain, I, p. 301, ll. 16-17.

could be rendered as accurate as possible and to minimise, so far as possible, the chances of oppression or defalcation by the public servants and fraud and deceit by the cultivators. The first twenty-four years of the reign of Akbar witnessed a series of experiments and improvements, with a view to attain that ideal, until the incessant efforts of the emperor and the ministry finally established what has been commonly wrongly understood to be the ten-year system, but was in reality a system based upon the average yield of the previous ten years.

The start was made by continuing Sher Shah's system which is described by Abul Fazl in detail in the Ain. As we know, Sher Shah had brought the greater part of Hindustan under a system of measurement which probably was carried out every season. The area of the various crops having been ascertained, certain scheduled rates were applied to them and the revenue realised accordingly. The schedules of rates were prepared by dividing all kinds of crops into three broad classes, good, middling and bad, and striking the average produce by taking one-third of the sum of all the three. In this way the average produce per bigha of each crop was worked out and one-third of this average was the state demand. The share of the government might then be commuted into cash at the current rates.

Certain modifications and improvements were probably made in this system in order to ensure more equable and fair treatment to the peasantry. But the system was open to many abuses and seems to have given a rather free hand to the government employees to oppress the people, in applying the rates of commutation and other such matters. In the thirteenth year Muzaffar Khan was in charge of both the general and revenue ministries. The emperor realising that the two duties were too heavy for him, relieved him of the financial ministry and calling Shihab-uddin Khan from Malwa entrusted it to him.[1] Shihab-uddin found that the old system of yearly survey and assessment (ضبط هر ساله)

[1] A. N. II, 333 (Tr.) II, 488.

was a source of great expense and led to embezzlements. He therefore abolished it and established the system called Nasq in the empire. There is no record for us to know how long this new experiment continued and with what success. When in the 24th year the "Ten year system" so-called, was established in the bulk of the empire, in certain parts the nasq and ghallabakhshi systems are also found to have existed at the same time. Thus the revenue system of the empire was not uniform even after the "Ten year system" so-called, had been established as a remedy against the short-comings and corruptions of the former systems. It is possible that certain other experiments, though not elaborate enough, were tried during the decade between the introduction of the nasq by Shihab uddin and the establishment of the "Ten year settlement". The net result was that the different revenue systems were adapted to varying local conditions without being mechanically imposed on them. Each of the three systems which finally obtained in different parts of the empire calls for a separate notice.

Ghallabakshi

This was one of the two systems which prevailed before the introduction by Sher Shah of his annual zabt system.[1] This system was the simplest to work, and therefore, perhaps liable to much abuse and oppression on the one side and evasion and fraud on the other. It had nothing to prevent the revenue collectors effecting a collusion with the cultivator at the sacrifice of the government revenue. Abul Fazl is fond of using as many different synonyms as he could find for every technical word. For ghallabakhshi he uses also bhoali and batai, and in the Ain-i-amalguzar he explains three different ways of the working of batai. In batai proper or bhaoli the crop was

[1] Ain, I, 296, ll. 5-6.
و در زمان شیر خان و سایم خان که هندوستان از غله بخسی و مقطعی بضبط آمد —

reaped and stacked and divided in the presence of the parties by a mutual agreement. The second was known as *khet batai* in which the fields after they were sown were divided before they were actually harvested, by a mutual agreement again. The third was *lang batai* in which the division was made after the grain was separated from the chaff and made into three equal heaps.[1]

Nasq

Nasq was the second of three alternative methods of assessment which are known to have existed in the different parts of Akbar's empire after the final settlement had been made. The nature of nasq has not been clearly defined by any contemporary authority and consequently it has occasioned a good deal of discussion and search on

[1] Moreland and A. Y. Ali think that the term ghallabakhshi signifies the original Indian system, thereby implying that the survey system did not exist in pre-Muslim times. They further say that, as used in the Ain, the word appears to include such developments as the determination of the shares by estimation instead of actual weighment.....(Vide J.R.A.S., 1918, p.9). The first opinion is formed without reference to facts. Survey systems are clearly stated to have existed in India prior to Muslim times (See Ghoshal: Hindu Rev. System, p. 287). See also C. V. Vaidya's History of Hindu Med. India, Vol. I, pp. 133-134. The second is the result of an incorrect interpretation. The method of kankut which is described along with the three forms of the batai system was quite distinct, as clearly appears from the description given of it. In kankut the area of the cultivated land was approximately measured either in the ordinary way or by steps and then an approximate estimate (appraisement تخمینا) of the quantity of crops was struck while they were still standing. On the basis of this estimate the share of the government was agreed upon. It should be noted that measurement of land in any shape or form was never a feature of the batai or bhaoli system. Another proof that kankut was distinct from bhaoli and that bhaoli or batai included all the different forms of batai, that is to say, batai proper, *khet* batai and *lang* batai, is provided by a phrase (Ain, I, p. 303) where Abul Fazl concludes his account of the banjar land (آئین بنجر) with the remark 'the Lord of the world out of great magnanimity.....granted to the peasants the right to pay either cash (i.e.

the part of some modern writers. There are three cardinal points to be settled in regard to nasq. First, whether it was a new system introduced by Shihabuddin, during Akbar's time, or whether it had existed from earlier times. Second, whether it was distinct and separate from zabt and ghallabakhshi or indistinguishable from either of them. Thirdly, what was the true nature of the system.

The first two questions can be briefly dismissed. As regards the age of the nasq system we have clear evidences to show that it was a well known old system which had prevailed from before Akbar's time.[1] We have equally good grounds to conclude that it was quite a distinct system from either zabt or ghallabakhshi. A single passage in the Ain furnishes a clear proof of the above view. In his introductory remarks to the statistical account of the subah of Bengal Abul Fazl says ".....as the sharing or dividing of grain between the government and the cultivator is not here customary, and the harvests are always abundant, and measurement is not insisted upon, the revenue demands are determined by nasq or

by the zabt system) or by kankut or bhaoli, the only three recognised methods of assessment. Here kankut and bhaoli are mentioned distinctly as the only two other systems besides the zabt, and bhoali signifies all the three forms in which it was practised. This finds further confirmation in the Diwan-i-Pasand where the three modes of settlement, viz., zabt, kankut and batai or bhaoli are described. For the last one it says: Bhaoli or batai is to take a certain portion of grain as revenue. There are three kinds of batai:—

(1) Khet Batai, sharing of the crop while unripe.

(2) Lang Batai, sharing the mown stacks.

(3) Wazan Batai, sharing by weighing crops after the grain has been extracted in the barn.

This also shows that these modes of assessment had continued right down to the 19th century in precisely their old form.

For a further and final confirmation of this view see Dist. Gaz. of Benares, p. 138 and Land Rev. in Br. India, by Baden Powell, p. 36.

See infra, p. 308.

[1] This is admitted by Moreland and Ali also. See J. R. A. S. 1918, pp. 27-28.

appraisement of crops. His Majesty, in his goodness, has confirmed this custom."[1] The above passage clearly states that the ghallabakhshi, the other alternative of two former systems prevailing in the country, is not prevalent in that subah, and the measurement system is not enforced on it by the emperor, who has graciously 'confirmed' (برجاداشت) the former system of nasq.[2]

As regards the third question of the nature and exact significance of nasq, Moreland and Ali suggest the inference that nasq "was a well known and old established mode of assessment, regarded as simpler and cheaper than zabt (i.e. yearly survey). We know nothing to show how the assessment was made, but we find a suggestion that it was ordinarily a zamindari rather than a ryotwari arrangement."[3] Then again in his later work 'The Agrarian System of Moslem India', Moreland reverts to a discussion of the term nasq, as introduced by Shihab-uddin Khan in 1569, and interprets it as "Group-Assessment (or possibly farming), of a village or a parganah, as a whole."[4]

We shall first examine the grounds on which the above-mentioned scholars have based their view.

The word nasq occurs three times in the Ain-i-Amalguzar. In the first passage (p. 285, l. 24) the amalguzar

[1] Ain, I, 389, ll. 14-15. رسم غله بخشی نباشد و همواره ارزانی بود و در پیمودن آن باز نکویند – و خواهشگری مال بر نسق رود – گیتی خداوند از مهربانی دلی همان آئین برجاداشت

[2] Moreland and Ali rightly point out that the name of nasq is quoted with such familiarity that it cannot be regarded as an innovation of Akbar's period, and further that if it were such Abul Fazl would have noted it without fail.

[3] J. R. A S., 1918, p. 29.

[4] Vide Agr. System, pp. 85 and 236. Group-assessment is explained by Moreland on the same page as "assessment of a lump sum on the village (or occasionally the parganah) by agreement with the headman as representing the peasants, the distribution of the assessment over the individual peasants being left in the headman's hands".

is told, in the event of some cultivators choosing nasq and the others paimaish (zabt), to forward the agreements to the court with all despatch.[1] After this nasq occurs at p. 286, l. 12. In laying down the attitude of the amalguzar towards the cultivator, whose goodwill is to be secured, the text says: "He should not entrust the appraisement (نسق) to the headman of the village lest it give rise to remissness and incompetence and undue authority be conferred on high-handed oppressors, but he should deal with each husbandman, present his demand and separately and civilly receive his dues". (Jarrett's Trans., p. 45).[2] A third time nasq occurs on the same page line 24, where the amalguzar is instructed to send weekly to the court the abstracts of the village accounts and then the text says: "After the despatch of the *draft estimates*.....should any disaster to the crops occur....."[3] (Jarrett's Trans., p. 45). The fourth occasion where the word nasq has been used is in the Akbarnama,[4] where Shihab uddin is mentioned as having minimised embezzlement and expenditure by substituting nasq for the annual zabt.

Now as regards the first passage quoted above Moreland and Ali contend that it only suggests that nasq was alternative to zabt, and helps us no further as 'the amalguzar is merely told to send the agreements up to head-

[1] Text:—اگر لختے پیمائش خواهند و برخے نسق بپذیرد قرارنامه را زود زود بدرگاه فرستد –

[2] Text:—نسق بکلا نتران ده نکند که تن آسانی و کار نشناسی بر خیزد و چیره دستان ستم پیشه نیرو بخشد بلکه بیک یک کشاورز فرارسد و از راه مهربانی نوشته سپارد و برستاند –

[3] Text, 286, L. 24. واین نسخه را هفته به هفته روانهٔ درگاه سازد از پانزده روز نگذارند – و پس از فرستادنِ نسخهٔ نسق بدرگاه والا اگر آفتی بکشت و کار رسد –

[4] A. N. II, 333 (Trans. II, 488) ضبط هر ساله را بر طرف ساخته نسقی قرارداد

quarters.' But they have failed to notice the clue to the significance of nasq, which is contained in the last sentence which they have dismissed as useless. I shall presently revert to discuss this significance. Next they consider the third of our passages quoted above, and think that it contains reference only to an official form, the nuskha-i-nasq, (نسخهٔ نسق) but to no particulars as to its nature. Here however nasq has been used in its general or generic sense of "arrangement", and not in the technical sense of a method of assessment, as is clear from the context. In the passage in question, after laying down the procedure to be followed in carrying out the assessment of a village, the text says that when the assessment is complete the amalguzar shall enter it in the abstract (در ضمن منتخبی نگارد) of the village accounts.....and this document (این نسخهٔ) he shall forward ..... to the royal court. Then the text proceeds: 'After the despatch of the (نسخهٔ نسق) *draft estimates*.....' (Jarrett's Trans. which, I think to be quite correct) It is clear from this that nasq in this place is used in the sense of a draft of arrangements with the cultivators in the course of an assessment, by whatever method made, and not in any technical sense..

Our passage No. (2) which Moreland and Ali have treated as third, is really of great significance. Jarrett's translation (as well as the original passage, in foot-note) has been given above. The chief point of this passage is that the amalguzar is instructed not to entrust the nasq to the headmen lest it should lead to oppression and injustice. But our authors have rendered it: 'He should not make a nasq with the headmen. This rendering will appear to be quite incorrect when the passage is read together with No. (1), in which the amalguzar is asked to send the agreements made with the cultivators in case any of them chose to be assessed by nasq in preference to zabt. Thus read the two passages admit of only one inference, viz., that nasq was a method of making some

sort of agreement with the cultivators and that, in order to avoid inefficiency and injustice, the amalguzar was explicitly told not to leave this work in the hands of the headmen but to do it himself. I, therefore, accept Jarrett's translation as correct, viz., that the amalguzar should not entrust the nasq to be carried out by the headmen. The alternative offered by Moreland and Yusuf Ali would make no sense, for the following reasons. In the first place, the first passage explicitly gives the option between nasq and zabt to cultivators, and it seems highly improbable that whole villages should have agreed to prefer the one or the other system where choice was permitted to the individuals.[1] There is not the slightest hint of the agreements being made with any other person than the cultivators themselves. Secondly if the nasq was a method of farming or group-assessment, that is to say, an agreement or contract made with the headmen (evidently for a fixed sum on each village or even parganah, to be realised from the "contractor" who might be either a headman or "zamindar" as suggested by the joint authors), why should the government officer have been asked to be concerned about the efficiency of the "contractors". Their duty was only to ensure that the "contractors" paid the stipulated amount due to the government in time, and not how the latter found that amount. Thirdly even if it be supposed that nasq was a sort of group assessment or farming or a 'zamindari rather than a ryotwari' system prior to Akbar it was, in any case, completely altered by the emperor in his time. It is difficult to see how under Akbar the system of nasq could any more be called "zamindari" when the amalguzar was explicitly asked to deal with each individual cultivator separately.

But as I have shown in my paper, 'The Revenue System of Sher Shah', (J. B. O. R. S., Vol. XVII, Part I, 1930),

[1] The choice between the two systems of assessment could only be given to the people directly concerned, i. e. the peasants, and not to the headmen.

Sher Shah had taken special care to put an end to the oppression of the headmen by depriving them entirely of any hand that they formerly had in the assessment of the revenue, and establishing direct relations with the cultivator. I have shown that of the two systems which obtained in the country before they were replaced by the annual zabt system of Sher Shah, one was 'sharing' or batai and the other was "muqtei", which signified a method of arriving at a compromise as to the government's share by the mutual agreement of the parties. This was attained by striking an estimate of the expected yield of the crops while they were still standing. This method was obviously adopted as an easier and less expensive alternative where and when circumstances did not favour the far more cumbersome and elaborate method of zabt. It has also been shown in the paper referred to above that precisely the same methods of assessment under the slightly popularised name "mukata" was prevalent until the close of the last century in some parts of the country.

Now, as I have already pointed out above, in some outlying provinces such as Bengal either Sher Shah did not find it possible to introduce the zabt and suppress the time-honoured muqtea, or what is more likely, it became revived during the weak rule of Islam Sur's successors. In any case no new system could have come into existence in this interval and we can presume almost with a certainty that the nasq which Shihab-uddin re-established in the empire was none other than what Abul Fazl refers to in another place under a different name "muqtei", it being his hobby to use as many synonyms as possible for all such terms. This very system is described by him under a third term 'kankut' in the Ain-i-amalguzar, and the definition given of it there will be found precisely to agree with what nasq or muqtei signified,[1] as explained above. Thus it is clear that in three different contexts

[1] The definition of Kankut has been reproduced and explained above; see foot-note p. 301.

Abul Fazl refers under three different names,[1] to a method of assessment which was alternative to sharing or batai, and on one occasion clearly defines its working, leaving no room for conjecture or uncertainty. One more point remains to be examined as it has some bearing on the nature of nasq. Moreland thinks that nasq in the sense of group-assessment as defined by him is found to have existed during Aurangzeb's reign and in the subsequent period. This conclusion is based on the preamble of a farman issued by the emperor for the guidance of his revenue officers.[2] But I find no reference to the group-assessment system in the preamble of the farman. On the contrary the same word kankut is used there to signify a method of assessment alternative to zabt. In fact again the same three methods, Ghallabakhshi, zabt and kankut are mentioned to have obtained side by side. The preamble first briefly recapitulates the practice of the amins, the records sent by them to court and those they had omitted to send. Then the officers are advised as to the manner in which they should deal with land which might have been abandoned by its owner. The preamble confirms the existence of the self-same systems and does not suggest any new system. The zamindari system which gradually arose and took root began with the decline of Mughal power when the emperors had become too feeble to transfer powerful and dominant jagirdars. But we have clear evidence that till the close of the 18th century at least, the kankut and other systems of assessment[3] prevailed

[1] It was also called by a fourth name, dana bandi (دانه بندی) which term survived till the end of the 18th century. See Add. 6588 fol. 74a.

[2] The text and translation of this farman were first published by Prof. Sarkar in J. A. S. B., June, 1906, and later the translation was reproduced in his Mughal Admn. as well as 'Studies in Mughal India'.

[3] See "British India Analysed" by C. Greville, p. 216; Add. 6588, a MS. of the later 18th century also gives only these three methods of assessment; fol. 74a:

عمل ضبط یا غله بخشی که آنرا لغاتے بتائی نامند یا دانه بندی یا کنکوت — درانچه بمال سرکار نقصانی راه نیابد. . . .

side by side with the zamindari system which was what Moreland calls "Group-Assessment". It is but a plain fact that during the period of the great Mughals there is not a trace of any method of assessment such as the group-assessment or, worse still, farming, which would be tantamount to a complete surrendering of royal authority and administrative control in the territory to which this method would be applied.

and then on fol. 75a kankut is defined in the same words as in the Ain-i-Akbari. That this method was in use alongside with the others in the later 18th century is also borne out by the Diwan-i-Pasand of Chhattar Mal, translated by L. da Costa, which says:—

In kankut 'each individual field is measured and the quantity of produce estimated either by nazrandaz or cursory survey, or by cutting the crops of a biswa from three different places and finding out the average produce, and calculating on the basis thereof'.

See Dist. Gaz. of Benares, p. 138, where it is clearly stated that when J. Duncan proposed and introduced his reformed *settlement* in the 'province of Benares', one of the conditions which he notified to the Raja of Benares was "the prohibition of division of crops by batai and the substitution of *kankut* or appraisement of the value before harvest." Similarly Baden-Powell in his 'Land Rev. in Br. Ind.' (Ed. 1913), p. 36, says: that the batai or bhaoli system being abandoned the system of *kankut*, i.e., an appraisement of standing crops, was introduced.

In Rajputana also these two systems were prevalent and were regarded as quite distinct from each other. Tod in Rajasthan, Vol. I, p. 582, (Crooke's Edition) describes the modes of collecting revenue thus: "There are two methods of buying the revenues of the crown on every description of corn—kankut and batai, for on sugar-cane, poppy, oil, hemp, tobacco, cotton, indigo and garden stuffs, a money payment is fixed, varying from two to six rupees per bigha. The kankut (kan, 'grain', kut, 'valuation', in f. n.) is a conjectural assessment of the standing crop, by the united judgment of the officers of Government, the Patel, the Patwari, or Registrar, and the owner of the field. The accuracy with which an accustomed eye will determine the quantity of grain on a given surface is surprising: but should the owner deem the estimate overrated, he can insist on batai, or division of the corn after it is threshed; the most ancient and only infallible mode by which the dues either of the government or the husbandman can be ascertained. In the *batai* system the share of the government varies from one-third to two-fifths of the spring harvest, as wheat

The revenue arrangements in force towards the close of Akbar's reign.

Under this head I propose to discuss the following questions—

(1) Which of the revenue systems of assessment were in force in each of the subahs of the empire towards the close of Akbar's reign?

(2) Do the revenue statistics given in the Ain show the total revenue of the empire or only land revenue?

(3) Are the assignments included in the revenue figures or not?

(4) Does the revenue represent actual collections, or an estimated demand?

These questions have been discussed by Moreland and Ali in the J. R. A. S. 1918, and in two later writings

and barley,.....In either case, *kankut* or *batai*, when the shares are appropriated, those of the crown may be commuted to a money payment at the average rate of the market. The kut is the most liable to corruption. The ryot bribes the collector who will underrate the crop; and when he betrays his duty, the shahnah, or watchman, is not likely to be honest; ..... The system is one of uncertainty, from which the ryot eventually derives no advantage, though it fosters the cupidity of patels and collectors; but there was a barar, or tax, introduced to make up for this deficiency, which was in proportion to the quantity cultivated and its amount at the mercy of the officers. Thus the ryot went with a millstone round his neck; instead of the exhilarating reflection that every hour's additional labour was his own, he saw merely the advantage of these harpies, and contented himself with raising a scanty subsistence in a slovenly and indolent manner, by which he forfeited the ancient reputation of the Jat cultivator of Mewar."—

The above excerpt brings out two things clearly: viz., (1) that the two systems kankut and batai were known to be quite distinct and were both in vogue, and (2) that the former system was very much liable to corruption which eventually went to injure the husbandman. From the last sentence it is also clear that in olden days the cultivator was happy and was protected from the oppression of the government officials, while in Tod's time he had lost his former happiness and prosperity.

by the former writer.[1] But as the present writer finds himself unable to agree with them on some vital points, it is necessary to discuss them here.

Before proceeding to examine the above-stated question, it is essential to remind ourselves of a rather peculiar but fundamental feature of the provincial divisions of the Mughal empire, which has been discussed in Chapter IV. This feature was that the various subordinate states, from the largest to the smallest and varying in political status from that of an almost complete autonomy to almost entire subjection, were all reckoned as parts of the general provinces of the empire, that is to say, they all constituted either sarkars or parganahs or even part of a parganah, in some province or the other, unlike the present larger native states most of which constitute separate political territories quite apart and distinct from the provinces into which the rest of the country, called British India, is divided. It is due to their failure to grasp this fundamental feature that the writers above referred to were led to draw conclusions which are open to several objections. Before examining these conditions, however, it will be well to enumerate those territories of which the systems of assessment are specifically mentioned. Among these the zabti system is stated to have obtained in 138 parganahs out of 199 (or 200?) in Bihar; in 131 of 177 in Ilahabad; in 20 out of the 23 mahals of the sarkar of Hindia, in subah Malwa; and in part of the Bari doab sarkar of the Punjab (Lahore) subah and the whole of Multan excluding the sarkar of Tattah. The exact territory or number of mahals which were under the zabti is not stated. But a careful examination of the revenue figures for each mahal shows that at least 14 mahals out of the total 52 were 'naqdi' and 38 mahals under the zabti system.

[1] J. R. A. S. 1918, p. 23 et. seq.
J. U. P. Hist. Soc., Vol. II, (1919), Pt. I, p. 4; and Agrarian Sys. pp. 118-123.

The nasq system is stated to have existed in the whole of Bengal ingluding Orissa, the whole of Berar and parts of Kashmir, the exact amount of territory not being specified.

The batai (ghallabakhshi) or sharing system is mentioned in Tattah which was then an adjunct of the subah of Multan and in parts of Kashmir, which at that time formed a sarkar of Kabul, and in the sarkar of Kandahar it was applied only to certain crops where the cultivators did not desire to be assessed by the zabti system. In the case of banjar land (land which was not cultivated for five years or more) option was given to the cultivator everywhere to choose anyone of the three systems, either naqd (zabt) or kankut (nasq) or bhaoli (ghallabakhshi).

Thus we see that only in the case of a few territories we are clearly told what sort of assessment prevailed. As regards the rest we have to depend only on the extent to which the internal evidence of the revenue and area figures given in the Ain will help us to trace the existence of the different systems of assessment.

In general it seems to be correct to assume that wherever in the imperial territories proper (that is, excluding the states ruled by chiefs) the dasturs and area figures are given, such territories were assessed by the zabti system. But neither the existence of dasturs nor the mention of area figures for any locality necessarily imply a concurrent existence of the zabti system therein, as Moreland has supposed.[1] In the case of territories ruled by subordinate chiefs this criterion does not hold good for the following reasons:—

(1) In many cases area figures are given for mahals and sarkars which comprised the territories of subordinate chiefs, in the internal administration of which the imperial

[1] See J. R. A. S., (1918), p. 11. Relying on this view Moreland and Ali have suggested that the zabti prevailed in Awadh, Agra, Malwa, Dihli, Lahore and parts of Ajmer and Gujrat. This conclusion is, however, open to very serious objections and can at best be accepted as only partly correct.

government had no hand. Besides several large and prominent states of this class there were many others whose existence is confirmed by the nature of their revenue statistics as given in the Ain. The main features of their revenue are that, firstly, it is in even thousands and hence we have good reason to believe that cases of revenue in even hundreds also fall in the same category. Secondly there are no suyurghals in such cases obviously because none could be granted from the chief's territories. Thirdly there are a few cases of mahals among these in which the revenue is in even thousands as usual but there are no area figures. In these last mentioned cases the revenue is stated to be 'under cash agreement' (از قرار نقدی), an expression which will be discussed later. The following cases may be given here by way of illustrating the point:—

Sarkar with Province	No. of mahals with rev. in even 1000's	Suyurghal
Ajmer (in Ajmer) ..	6 mahals	nil
Chittor do. ..	11 ,, ...	nil
Ranthambhor do. ..	29 ,, ...	nil
Chanderi in Malwa ..	16 mahals and 5 more cases with revenue in even hundreds.	nil

If the even hundreds of revenue figures of all the above sarkars were taken it would add several more to the list. Now it is admitted even by Moreland and Ali that these round figures could not have been obtained by the zabti system. It has been observed in Chap. V above that these round figures represent a stipulated sum which the states were under obligation to pay to the sovereign. Thus it is quite clear that at least so far as the subordinate states were concerned, the area figures, where they are given for the whole or part of their territory, do not indicate the existence of the zabti system in them.

(2) Nor does the existence of the dasturs of necessity imply the simultaneous existence of the zabti system.

Dasturs are mentioned for five sarkars of Ajmer while it is almost certain that the zabti system could have existed nowhere else (if at all it did exist) except in the sarkar of Nagor and a few mahals of Ajmer. On the other hand we find that in the zabti provinces of Bihar and Multan, dasturs are given only for 14 mahals out of 88 of Multan, and none for Bihar. Again if Gujrat may be supposed to be mainly zabti on account of its full area figures, there are no dasturs for that province either. And moreover, the introductory section of the province gives an account of the many chiefs in that province who enjoyed almost complete autonomy. These instances should suffice to show that even the existence of dasturs seems to be no unfailing indication of the zabti system.

In view of the above discussion it seems impossible at present, until further light is thrown on the subject from some other source, to know the precise nature of the assessments in those provinces where it is not specifically defined. We may, however, tentatively say that in the imperial territories (excluding the states) the measured areas were generally under the zabti system.

Before turning to the other three questions, a word must be said about the terms naqdi and az qarar-i-naqdi. The significance of the former is impossible to know as it has been used in the Ain in many places in such a way as to give apparently entirely self-contradictory senses. There are passages in which it clearly appears to be distinct from all the three methods, zabti, nasq and sharing. For instance, in sarkar Hindia (Malwa) 20 mahals out of 23 are stated to be zabti—followed by the amount of revenue from both zabti and naqdi.[1] Similarly in the parganah and revenue figures of Bihar and Ilahabad the distinction is clearly made into zabti and naqdi par-

[1] Ain, I, 465. Text:—بیست و سه محل – آراضی ضبطی بیست محل – وجهٔ دیوانی ضبطی و نقدی دام ۱۱۶۱۰۹۶۹

Trans. 23 mahals; zabti area, 20 mahals. Total revenue, both zabti and naqdi 11610969 dams.

ganahs.[1] Again in Kashmir which was partly ghallabakhshi and partly naqdi, several revenue figures are qualified as naqdi. But in the detailed account of Ilahabad the revenues of 8 out of 10 sarkars are stated to be naqdi. This is an entirely contradictory position which is difficult to reconcile. Similarly all sarkars of Awadh, and several in Agra, Lahore, Berar, Multan, Ahmadabad, Malwa, Ajmer and Kabul are stated to be naqdi; and in these provinces, as we have already stated, there were all sorts of assessments. The whole of Bengal revenue is mentioned as naqdi.

In view, therefore, of these facts, it seems impossible to give a precise definition to naqdi but it is very likely that naqdi was not so much a method of assessment, as a mere mode of payment, which could be commonly practised under all the different methods of assessment.

Our position regarding the nature of 'az qarar-i-naqdi' is far more satisfactory. It has been noticed above that there are several mahals in Ajmer and a few in Agra, Malwa and Gujrat of which the revenue is defined as 'az-qarar-i-naqdi'. That az qarar-i-naqdi is not the same as the naqdi above discussed, is clear from the fact that the revenue of the whole subah of Ajmer is defined as naqdi and yet several mahals of its sarkars are specially notified as az-qarar-i-naqdi. The following cases of this class are found in the Ain.

In sarkar Narnol (Agra).	1.	Singhana & Udaipur[2] which had a copper mine and mint for copper coinage.
	2.	Khandela.
In sarkar Gagron (Malwa).	3.	Urmal.
	4.	Gagron.
In sarkar Ahmadabad (Gujrat)	5.	Bandar Solah.
	6.	Thamanah.

[1] Vide Ain, I, pp. 417 and 424. The reading in line 18 is slightly incorrect. The word naqdi should go with 'shast-wa-yak' (شصت ویک) and not with dam.

[2] Both now in the Jaipur State.

In sarkar Chittor (Ajmer).	7. Udaipur.
	8. Islampur known as Mohan.
	9. Sembal with the cultivated tracts.
	10. Mandalgarh.
	11. Madarya.
In sarkar Ranthambhor (Ajmer).	12. Amkorah
	13. Dablanah.

From the nature of the above mahals it becomes clear that they fall into two classes. Some of them such as Udaipur, Singhana or Bandar Solah were mahals without area, for some special reason, the former having a copper mine and the latter being a port. The rest of them had forts and in all probability their chiefs had preferred to purchase virtual independence by agreeing to pay a sort of quit tribute irrespective of the extent of their territory or their income. This is why there are no area or suyurghal figures in any of the thirteen mahals of this class. This fact incidentally throws some light on the utility of the area figures given for the remaining mahals. These states of Rajputana which were in very intimate contact with the sovereign power had perhaps allowed their territories to be measured for the sake of facilitating a general estimate of their contribution towards the government. But this can be no better than a mere tentative suggestion.

Now we may turn to our next question, viz., whether the revenue statistics given in the Ain represent the total revenue of the empire or land revenue only. The revenue statements give the impression that generally they show only the land revenue excepting those cases in which the other kinds of revenue have been specifically mentioned. Among the other items which thus have been included are all sorts of dues in Bengal, including sair taxes, salt, piscary, water, port dues, zakat, masjid dues, etc. In Gujrat there were port and coast towns in

the sarkars of Broach, Surat and Sorath. In the first two no separate port dues are shown, the revenue of these mahals being shown in dams as usual. But in Sorath out of 73 mahals, 13 are stated to be ports, and sixty were territorial mahals or parganahs. But seven out of the 13 port towns were also seats of the territorial mahals or parganahs; that is, each of these seven consisted of two mahals, one territorial and one port-mahal. The remaining six were simply ports and must have been within the other territorial mahals. The revenue of the latter, i.e. territorial mahals, is as usual, shown in dams, but that of the ports is given in mahmudis (a silver coin which was current in Gujrat and to which Mahmud Begada had given his name). The port of Talājā consisted of four mahals, which probably indicates that there were three other minor ports, each counted as a mahal, but attached to Talaja. Ferry receipts collected at Atak Benares in Sind-Sagar Doab,[1] in the province of Lahore are included in the general revenues. The word *jama*, however, has been used to include all revenues and is not restricted merely to land revenue, as Moreland thinks. The Bengal revenues, for instance, are called jama.[2] Besides the land revenue of the crown territories proper, the contributions of the subordinate chiefs, in whatever way they were received, are also certainly included in the revenue statements, as the above discussion has shown.

The answer to the third question whether the jagirs were included in the revenue figures is plainly given in the Ain, viz., that they are a part of the total revenue figures and not separate.

Our fourth question is whether the revenue figures represent actual collections of any particular year, or an estimated demand. These points call for a fuller consideration. No single answer can be given to this question

[1] Jarrett, II, p. 323, f. n. 2.

[2] See L. da Costa, "Sometimes Abwabs are also included in Jamabandi."

as the revenue figures are not uniform. They comprise not only land revenue but also the tribute or contributions of subordinate chiefs which form a considerable part thereof besides the various other dues referred to already. Now while the land revenue figures would seem to be the estimates of the demand of a particular normal year, the chief's contributions represent certain fixed amounts stipulated according to one of the two ways the existence of which is suggested by the "cash-agreement" (از قرار نقدی) mahals, as discussed above.[1] The other dues such as salt, sair, zakat were also very likely actual receipts of a certain year.[2]

Working of the assessments

The working of the ghallabakhshi and kankut (nasq) has been described by Abul Fazl in the Ain-i-Amalguzar. In the former three equal divisions were made either of the crop or the grain after it was separated from the chaff. In kankut the share of the state was settled between the government and the cultivator by a general estimate of the crop. It is thus described in the Diwan-i-Pasand: "Each individual field is measured and the quantity of produce estimated either by nazarandaz or cursory survey, or by cutting the crops of a biswa from three different places and finding out the average of produce, and calculating the state demand on the basis thereof".

[1] These two ways were either to stipulate a quit-revenue or to allow their land to be measured and a tribute fixed according to the yield of the land.

[2] Moreland (see J. U. P. Hist. Soc., 1919, Pt. I, p. 5) is again led into error by wrongly treating such sarkars as Bikaner, Kumaon etc, as regular parts of the crown territories. When in such sarkars as Kumaon (in Dihli) or Kallam and Kherlah (Berar) the revenue of some mahals is said to be not fixed (مشخص نیست) or not received (نرسیده بود), it means that the chiefs of these parts have not yet been sufficiently subjugated to agree to pay tribute. It does not mean that assessment has not yet been carried out in these mahals. The question of assessment by the imperial government did not arise at all in the case of the chiefs' territories.

In the zabti system the schedules of rates for different crops and different kinds of lands were fixed by taking an average of the preceding ten years' produce.[1] The area of cultivated land was every season measured by the government servants in the presence of the local officials, the patwari, qanungo, headmen and the cultivator himself and forwarded to the headquarters where on the basis of these returns the schedules for the year were prepared and according to these the collection was carried out. If any unexpected calamity befell any farm or village it was to be thoroughly investigated and the extent of injury reported to headquarters under due endorsements for proportionate remission of revenue. From the instructions to the amil it would also appear that he was not to insist upon enforcing the zabti system, but let the cultivators choose by whichever method they would be assessed.[2]

Certain reforms introduced by Akbar

In order to ensure the successful working of his revenue system Akbar perfected every conceivable side of it. Finding that the survey was not being reliably carried out under the contract system in which the measurers

[1] Vincent Smith (Akbar the Great Mughal, p. 377) relying only on translations was led to conclude that the average was taken of the best crops of each year. The words, however, in the original are 'jins-i-kamil' which have been explained elsewhere to mean superior crops, such as sugar-cane, grains, in contradistinction to the cheaper crops such as millets, etc. But even if this correct sense is taken, the average of merely the superior crops could not have been taken. This would conflict with the account that 10 years' rates from the 15th to 24th were taken and the average worked out. The real source of this discrepancy, as pointed out by Moreland and Ali, is in the correct reading in the Cal. text of the Ain. In the I.O. MS. the words are: جنس کامل افزوں بود i.e. the superior crops increased every year. See J. R. A. S. 1918, pp. 18-20.

[2] It is scarcely necessary to point out here again that the Ain-i-Dahsala was wrongly understood by earlier scholars as a settlement for 10 years. This error has been very thoroughly pointed out by Ali and Moreland.

received 58 dams for measuring at least 200 bighas in the rabi and 250 in the kharif season, he substituted the wage system at the rate of one dam per bigha.[1] At the same time many irregular imposts which had locally grown up were abolished. He, in fact, laid it down that all kinds of arbitrary imposts called jihat (on manufactures) and sair jihat (general imposts) and extra collections known as *wajuhat and faruat*, which became established by custom, were unjust and wrong in principle and should never be raised.[2] Next the emperor reformed the scales as well as instruments of measurement. He defined the gaz, the tanab and the bigah and fixed their standards of measurement. Formerly different kinds of gaz were used to measure cloth and land. Akbar abolished them all and introduced a common gaz for all sorts of measurements, of 41 digits. The tanab or jarib which was formerly used was made of hempen rope which became much shorter or longer according to the humidity or dryness of atmosphere and thus resulted in incorrect measurements causing loss to the parties. The emperor removed this defect by substituting tanabs made of bamboos joined by iron rings which were free from the effects of weather.[3]

So far as the structure and machinery of the provincial administration was concerned no alterations of any consequence are recorded under Jahangir and Shah Jahan. A certain amount of decay in efficiency, however, should have resulted during periods in which the administrative control was weakened due to the quarrels of succession or the decline of the sovereign's enthusiasm and energies.

The administration of assignments

The different forms of assignments each yielding a certain estimated revenue constituted a very important and peculiar feature of the Mughal administration. The

[1] Ain, I, 301.
[2] Ain, I, 294, ll. 17-19.
[3] A. N. III, p. 167.

bulk of these assignments were made by way of payment of salaries to most of the officials of the government who were technically treated as servants of the military department. The next largest share of the assignments went for charitable purposes both to individuals and institutions, and these assignments were called suyurghals. The question arises whether the revenue administration was left entirely in the hands of the assignees or whether the government retained any control over it. So far as assessing the revenue of jagirs is concerned the question whether the power thereof was transferred to the assignees seems superfluous. The very fact that the jagir was assigned to a particular officer as his pay or allowance shows that every such jagir was estimated at a particular value (that is to say, it was calculated to yield a certain amount of revenue) and the assignee was not expected to realise from it more than his due or than the jagir was officially expected to yield. But we have definite evidence also to support this view. In the 27th Ilahi year Raja Todar Mal issued a circular of instructions and regulations for the guidance of the revenue officials. Of these the very first clause was an order to the 'collectors' (amalguzaran) of the crown-lands and the jagirdars that they should collect the rents and taxes in accordance with the dastur-ul-aml. 'If from wickedness and tyranny they took from the cultivators more than the agreement.....the oppressors were to be fined and the complainants were to be re-imbursed'.[1] When in the 19th year the karoris were appointed the amirs were also called upon to appoint karoris in their respective jagirs, and they were sent into the country on their responsibility.[2] Thus we see that while the assessment of both khalsa and jagir lands was made according to the government regulations, the work of collection in the jagirs was carried out by the jagirdars through their own agents.[3]

[1] A. N. III, 381; Tr. 561.

[2] T. A. in Elliot V, 383.

[3] Sharaf Beg was the shiqdar of Khwaja Shah Mansur in his jagir of Ludiana, in charge of collection of revenue in the 27th year

SECTION III

SOURCES OF INCOME OTHER THAN LAND REVENUE

AND

PROVINCIAL EXPENDITURE

No clear statement of the division between central and provincial revenues is on record. But we know that besides the land revenue and the tributes from the chiefs, customs, including port dues and inland transit dues, salt tax, income from mints, and royal public works, zakat, and some miscellaneous charges such as fishery taxes, were included in the central revenues. These may be put under the head of regular revenue as distinguished from certain occasional sources of income, such as presents, inheritance of unclaimed or heirless property and escheat, which come under irregular revenue.

Customs

Customs were mainly charged at the ports on goods entering the country from outside. The Mirat-i-Ahmadi mentions 27 ports and 45 *baras* in the province of Ahmadabad. Ports where small boats anchored were called baras and those where large ships anchored were called bandars. The management of ports was entrusted to an official appointed by the imperial government. He was generally in charge of one central port like Surat or Cambay and several minor ports and baras were attached to it. The mutsaddi had usually a naib mutsaddi at every considerable port under his charge, and a subordinate staff of clerks, peons, waiters and porters. Sometimes the ports of Cambay and Surat were both entrusted to the

of Akbar's reign. See T. A. II, 358-359. In the 42nd year, we are told, a quarrel took place between the agents of Raja Ram Chand who were in charge of revenue collection in his jagir in Malwa, and Prince Marad's men. See A. N. III, 732.

same man. When Roe arrived at Surat in 1615 Muqarrab Khan was superintendent of both these ports.

The customs officers were very strict in searching the merchants bringing goods in ships. The reason of this was that the merchants were extremely unreliable and were always trying to cheat the port officers and smuggling goods into the country. Thevenot gives a vivid account of how with the help of their Dutch friends on shore some merchants used to smuggle precious jewels.[1] Tavernier has described the dishonest practice of English merchants and how they smuggled lots of gold and silver and adopted various stratagems to evade payment of dues.[2]

The rates of the customs duty on goods were very low being only 2½ to 3 per cent ad valorem.[3] These rates would seem to have continued unchanged during the two following reigns. But under Aurangzeb Thevenot in 1665 found them increased to 4% on Christians and 5% on the Hindu merchants. The rate on gold and silver was 2½%.[4] An inland custom was charged at Atak Benares near Balnath on the north-west frontier. The amount realised here was, according to the Ain, 3202216 dams, but no rate is mentioned.[5]

In addition to these frontier customs certain internal transit duties which may be called tolls were subsequently realised, although there is no indication of these in the

[1] Thevenot, III, 2. 'Indeed it is incredible what caution and circumspection they use to prevent being cheated.'

[2] Tavernier, p. 10.

[3] Aurangzeb's farman of 1680 fixed the rate at 3½%. In Bengal where the English were allowed to return to their settlement of Calcutta again in 1691, they were granted freedom from all dues by an imperial grant (Feb. 1691), on condition of the payment, as before, of Rs. 3,000 per annum in lieu thereof. Vide C. H. I. Vol. V. p. 108.

[4] Thev. III, pp. 2-3.; Tavernier, p. 7., says it was 2%

[5] Ain, Vol. I, 547. I think it implies "transit duties" and not "ferry receipts" as understood by Jarrett (p. 323) and accepted by Moreland (India from Akbar to Aurangzeb p. 278). The words in the original are حاصل گذر, that is to say, receipts on the passing of goods which implies transit duties.

time of Akbar. These will be noticed later under the provincial heads of revenue.

Mints

Perhaps the revenue from the mints was not very considerable. The administration and working of the mints with as many as seventeen different classes of workmen from the superintendent (darogha) down to the 'separator' (niyariah), have been elaborately described by Abul Fazl in the Ain.[1] The mints were directly administered and controlled from the headquarters, but it seems that in the early part of the reign their administration was carried on through a class of local officers called chowdharies. It was in the 22nd divine year that the emperor felt the necessity of overhauling the administration of the mints and completely centralising it. He therefore called to a privy council the ministers Khwaja Shah Mansur, Raja Todar Mal and Muzaffar Khan and after consultation with them, entrusted the mints in the different provinces to responsible ministers of high rank.[2]

A salt tax was another source of revenue all of which, it would seem, went to the central exchequer. Figures of certain salt duties in Bengal are mentioned in mahal statistics. But in another place it is stated about the Salt Range that near Atak Benares the government charged from the merchants a duty of one rupee per 17 'mans'.[3] But there being no reference to this revenue in the statistics of the sarkar of the Sindh Sagar Doab, it may be conjectured that this revenue went to the provincial exchequer.

Escheat

There is no indication in any of the contemporary authorities that the rulers claimed the property of minis-

[1] Cal. Text. p. 5 et seq.; Trans. (2nd ed. by Phillot). p. 16 et seq.
[2] A. N. III, 227; (Tr.) 320-321.
[3] Ain, I, 539, ll. 5-9. Jarrett's Tr. Vol. II. p. 315.

ters or government servants as state property after their death. The accounts of European writers are from hearsay and therefore conflicting and entirely untrustworthy. Moreover these accounts refer only to a later period. This point has been discussed by Professor Sarkar,[1] in his Mughal Administration, where he has shown that a deceased noble's property was only temporarily taken under custody in order to ensure payment of government dues if any happened to be in arrears.

Provincial revenues

The principle on which the services in general were organised left comparatively very little financial burden on the provincial governments. With the exception of the clerical and subordinate staff in offices nearly all other services were paid on the mansabdari system. The result was that the provincial and local administrations were relieved from having directly to deal with the major portion of the disbursements and other administrative expenses. It would seem that it was for this reason that the major sources of revenue were almost all absorbed by the central exchequer. Thus to the provinces were left only local and inferior sources of income. Among these the following may be gleaned from incidental references in contemporary authorities.

1. Duties on internal transit.
2. Duties on various markets in large towns.
3. Income from Public Works such as gardens.
4. Octroi.

On the first item our information is mainly derived from the foreign merchants and travellers who visited the country in those days. Merchants travelling in northern India usually travelled by boats by the rivers. They had all to take a passport (dastak or farman) from the place of departure and show it at the customs posts (chabutras)

[1] Mughal Adm. (2nd Ed.) pp. 167-169.

in order to be allowed to pass without payment. Manrique has given a vivid account of two long journeys which he made, one from Dacca to Patna and the other from Lahore to Thatta, both made by river. He describes how at every post they had to wait because the officers were very busy owing to rush of work. At important posts like Rajmahal he saw as many as 2000 vessels full of cargo, which fact testifies to the great prosperity of the country and the flourishing condition of commerce and trade between different parts. They arrived at a small port between Rajmahal and Monghyr, (which was the boundary between Bengal and Bihar) at dusk and trying to evade the customs office stole past it along the farther coast. But they were detected by the vigilant watchmen on duty and hauled up, hands tied behind their backs, before the kotwal of Rajmahal who was also the customs officer in charge. Their vessel was searched but nothing contraband was found in it. The kotwal on hearing Manrique's case generously forgave him on the ground that being a foreigner he was liable to make an error. But the mirdah (pilot) and piaks (peons) of the boat were given 50 lashes each.[1]

Manrique's second journey was performed under a farman from Asaf Khan, (Nur Jahan's father), Governor of Lahore. This greatly facilitated his journey and his party was allowed to pass without delay at every post. When he reached Thatta it was late at night and the customs office was closed. They could not therefore disembark and had to pass the night on board ship. Next morning when the officers came they were allowed to disembark with their beddings and utensils which were not liable to duty.[2] Manrique also describes the flourishing condition of Benares, Ilahabad and other towns which he passed on his way to Agra. He refers to the great industries of Benares, especially its silk and embroidery which were used as far as Turkey, Persia and Khorasan.[3]

[1] Manrique (Hak) II, pp. 120-123; 135-137.
[2] Ibid., pp. 230-236.
[3] Ibid., p. 146.

Other travellers have also described similar experiences. From Tavernier we learn that each wagon load of merchandise was charged four rupees and a chariot only one rupee. On boats a different rate was charged.[1] The merchants who had to pass through the states of the autonomous chiefs had to pay transit duty to them also. The imperial government did not attempt to interfere with their privileges. As the trade of the country in our period was in a very flourishing condition and large quantities of goods passed from one part to another this must have been a lucrative source of revenue to the provinces.

Then we learn from the Mirat-i-Ahmadi that the various markets, such as the cloth market, pan market, jewel market, were subject to a local tax. There was a regular staff of police and revenue officials to guard and protect the markets and to raise taxes from them.[2]

The only public works from which some income could accrue to the state were the fruit gardens which the emperors as well as the nobles were in the habit of planting in towns. A large number of such gardens were therefore found in every place. The income that their products yielded was utilised for their upkeep and the maintenance of the garden servants. If it fell short it was aided from the provincial treasury.[3]

There is no direct evidence of the levy of octroi duties on goods entering a town for consumption, but the taxes raised from sales in the markets were perhaps reckoned as octroi.

Manucci informs us that the kotwal of Lahore collected a weekly tax from six thousand houses of ill fame. Among these there were dancers and singers also who paid tax to the king.[4]

[1] Tavernier, p. 96.

[2] Vide Supplement to the Mirat, wherein full details of the subject are given.

[3] Mirat, Supplement (I. O. MS.) fol. 729b.

[4] Manucci, II, p. 186 and I, p. 195.

Expenditure

We have had occasion to observe above that much of the administrative expenditure was incurred directly or indirectly by the central government under its own control. There were, however, certain items of local expenditure which seem to have been almost certainly met from the provincial treasury.

The Mughal emperors were great builders and spent enormous sums on their edifices and public works. Part of the expenditure incurred on local works, such as canals, embankments, sarais, etc., was often charged from the local treasury.

Among the local items of expenditure were the hospitals, mainly meant for the poor and indigent, which were established in many places. In the hospital at Ahmadabad there were three physicians and a surgeon, and besides their salaries rupees two thousand were spent annually on medicines. Next there were permanent kitchens and charity houses for distribution of blankets and other clothing to the poor. Sarais were built in every city and on roadsides and for the convenience of travellers a regular staff and provisions were maintained. Possibly some local schools and mosques also received aids from the local treasury.

The expenditure on services and administration was incurred through the local diwans and bakhshis, but it was controlled by the central government.

The ownership of land under Mughal rule

The question of the ownership of land in India from the earliest times has aroused of late great controversy among scholars and diametrically opposite views have been expressed upon it by different writers. Although we are not directly concerned here with the position of the king and the people in relation to land in ancient times, we must needs refer to that position as being the basis of the subsequent developments of the relation of the king to the land. Vincent Smith relying merely on

an incorrect version of a *shlok* (couplet) of the Arthshastra wrote that "the native law of India has always regarded agricultural land as being crown property" (Early History pp. 137 ff.). But if he had cared to study Indian jurisprudence he would not have committed such an error. K. P. Jayaswal has subjected the question to a thorough examination and adduced irrefutable evidences from authoritative books of jurisprudence and politics that the king was never regarded as the proprietor of the land (Vide 'Hindu Polity', Part II, pp. 174-183). Jayaswal's view was supported by Baden-Powell long before. To quote Baden-Powell: "There is no reason to suppose that in the time (whatever the true date may be) represented by the Laws of Manu, the claim of the king to be the owner of all land was as yet asserted. Nothing of the kind is mentioned in the Code or in any other ancient text."[1] And again: "Whatever may have been the precise date to which the right of the state to be considered superior owner of the soil may be carried back, it is certain that no ancient Hindu authority can be quoted for it; nor is it consistent with the genuine principles of Hindu law. On the other hand, by the beginning of the 18th century, and in some cases of conquest long before that, all the rulers of Muhammadan states and all the local rajas who were conquerors and mostly foreigners, were found *de facto* to claim the superior ownership of every acre of their dominions."[2]

In the last sentence Baden-Powell is referring to the Rajput and Muslim rulers. But he is totally mistaken in holding this view in respect of both the classes of rulers. The theory of the state ownership of the soil (state-landlordism) in the Muslim period is as baseless as it is in respect of the Hindu period. It is one of those fictions of history which seem so plausible that they pass into common currency without serious thought being given

[1] The Indian Village Community, p. 207.

[2] The Indian Village Community, p. 209.

to them. A careful study, however, would reveal the complete hollowness of it. It is supported neither by Muslim jurisprudence nor by the theory or the actual practice of the Mughal rulers in India. To quote Ed. Thomas: "The Ain-i-Akbari gives no countenance to the fiction of the state-ownership of the soil: the king's demand in no case extends beyond his share of the produce. It is true that an absolute monarch who could take with impunity a subject's head, could with equal licence take that subject's land; but soil was valueless without the *ascripti glebae;* and so far from desiring to oust owners or occupiers, the raiyat was encouraged in every possible way to become a good cultivator. The king, in effect, was in partnership with the husbandmen of the nation."[1]

The principle on which the king claimed a right to a share in the earnings of the people was that he gave them the protection which was essential for the peaceful and safe conduct of their business and their general progress.[2] In this connection I cannot help referring to the views ventilated with enviable boldness by Dr. Pant in his 'Commercial Policy of the Mughals.' On what authorities the learned doctor has based his views, he has not troubled to state. On page 59 of his thesis he says, "Every inch of land in the Empire belonged to the king. Any grant of land that he made would be life grant. And even within that period he could take away land whenever he wanted. At the death of the land-holder, the land would *ipso facto* revert to the crown. His children might or might not get the land, as the king wielded absolute authority. Therefore, there was no permanent zamindari (hereditary landlordism) under the Mughals. The system of tenure was ryotwari of today, that is to say, peasants were tenants of the crown. They were tenants at will."

"To sum up: all the land was vested in the king. He could give and take back land whenever he liked:

[1] Rev. Resources of the Mughal Empire, pp. 8-9.

[2] It has been shown above from the evidence of the Ain-i-Akbari.

vested interest in land therefore could not arise." Opposite views concerning "state landlordism" have been held even before but they have never been asserted with more dogmatic self-complacency and less justification. The actual legal position of the land in relation to the king will be fully discussed presently. But Dr. Pant's observations give rise to several questions which must be elucidated. In the first place, it should be noted that he completely fails to recognise the difference between the officers and other men to whom the jagirs were granted by the Mughal Emperors on the one hand, and the peasants who were the real owners of the land on the other. The hereditary proprietorship of the peasant was never questioned, nor was land ever transferred from one peasant to another in the same way in which the jagirs were transferred. The assignment of jagirs or suyurghals only meant the grant of that share in the income of the land which the government imposed upon the cultivator in consideration of the services which it rendered to him. No jagirs except those granted for charitable purposes were ever granted for life, and even the charitable grants were resumed if they were found to be misused. It was these jagirs which were liable to and were transferred from one person to another at the king's pleasure, and not the lands owned by the peasants. No such landholders existed before the XVIII century, whose land reverted to the king *ipso facto*. The system of escheat of which Dr. Pant is obviously thinking is not relevent here. The children of an officer who held a jagir carrying a revenue equivalent to his salary (which included the entire expenditure he had to incur on his contingent) could not inherit the jagir, just as, for instance, the children of a collector or any other officer today cannot inherit his salary. So that the question of 'zamindari' in the modern connotation of the term, whether permanent or temporary, did not exist at all in the Mughal period.

As regards the question of the king's wielding absolute authority to take away land whenever he so wished,

Dr. Pant has again failed to understand the actual position. As has been indicated already the *de jure* as well as *de facto* owner of the land was the peasant, and this right of his was never questioned. But the king of course, had the authority and power to seize anybody's land or even other property for any serious fault, by a pretence of legality, just as now, or without it. But no such proceeding was or is ever justified on the basis of the theory that the king is the proprietor of the property.

Coming to the system of land tenure Dr. Pant holds that the ryotwari system of today prevailed also in the Mughal period, with the difference that the cultivators were tenants-at-will. It is clear that Dr. Pant belongs to the "rent theory" school as opposed to the "tax theory" of land revenue in modern times. This is no place to discuss the merits of the rival theories regarding the modern land revenue, but to impose either of them on the pre-British system will be to beg the whole question, because what we thus assume has first to be proved. In other words, we cannot say that, because the land revenue today is regarded by some as rent, therefore, it was the same in Mughal times. The line of argument must be followed from the end, and we should try to understand the *de jure* and *de facto* positions of the ryot at that time. This was, as I shall presently show, that the system of tenure was, of course, ryotwari based on the theory of the peasant proprietorship of land, that is, not a ryotwari as conceived by Dr. Pant, but one in which the ryot was the proprietor of the land and not a "tenant-at-will" nor tenant in any sense at all. But Dr. Pant commits a ridiculous self-contradiction when (on the same page) he says: 'There was no idea of rent in those days.....The crown demand on land was, therefore, a tax levied on the theory of what the peasant can bear.' To regard the ryot as tenants and at the same time to characterise the revenue which they paid to the government as a tax is a self-contradiction which perhaps the ingenuity of Dr. Pant alone could reconcile.

The actual position

The actual position of the land was that it basically remained the property of the community, held either severally or collectively, just as it was before the Muslim conquest. The peasants who cultivated the land were the *de facto* as well as *de jure* owners of their respective plots. There is no record that at any period in history the whole land was resumed by the ruler or conqueror and re-distributed. And yet the notion prevails widely among even serious students of history that the land was claimed as private property by the sovereign. But the origin of this misconception is not far to seek. It has arisen out of a confusion that has been repeatedly made in understanding the real significance of the jagir or assignment system of the Mughals. The assignments made by the king have been curiously enough, thought to convey an element in the nature of property with them, an element which became a feature thereof towards the end of the eighteenth century owing to reasons which need not be detailed here. In point of fact, however, nothing was farther from the jagir system than that it should imply that an assignee had in the least degree or in any sense a right of proprietorship over his assignment. The true nature and significance of the assignment, in its various forms, was no more and no less than this, that it was a device adopted by the government to transfer a part of its functions to another agency not immune from the watch and control of the government. Instead of realising the revenue and disbursing it directly through their own staff, the government used, for realising the revenue, the agency of those very people to whom it had to pay either salaries or donations such as suyurghals. This agency was the assignee. On this principle the assignee exercised only a delegated authority to realise on behalf of the government from the tax-payer that part of the government revenue which was equivalent to his own pay or allowance.[1]

[1] The incomes of jagirs in the same way used to be assigned to

On the same principle the assignments were so frequently transferred from hand to hand, and the assignee was not expected to consider his assignment any more than merely as an instrument by which the government paid him. On the same principle again the assignee was not allowed to claim or collect more than the prescribed share of the government. The cultivators who were the real owners of the tract thus assigned continued to be in undisturbed enjoyment of all their former rights over the soil without the slightest alteration being effected in their position by the assignment. Thus the assignment system was originally only a political expedient, a convenient device to facilitate government business. That it was no more than this was proved by the emperor's deciding to resume all the jagirs and giving a trial to direct realisation and payment system, which, however, did not survive long. When side by side with this it is remembered that the principle on which the government's demand for a share in the ryot's earnings was based (as clearly explained by Abul Fazl) was that some amount of money should be required to carry on the work of administration, no doubt remains whatsoever as to the position of soil under Mughal rule. The revenue paid by the people to the king were his wages for the service he rendered them. He never could nor did claim any share of the produce of the land on the basis of even a joint proprietorship with the cultivator. That, in effect, the state demand for a share in the produce of the soil appeared to be arising out of such a claim was due to the fact that agriculture was always in India the largest source of income and in consequence the government demand on it was so constant and insistent.

We may now adduce some concrete examples in support of our contention. In the 10th year of Shah

Officers in the Hindu Period, by way of their salary. So this system was not an innovation of the Muslim rulers. See Editor's note on p. 29, of Jour. of Ind. Hist., Vol. XIV, Part I, 1935.

Jahan's reign, on his return from Daultabad the emperor had had a courtyard and other buildings together with A'lia Begam's (Jahan Ara's) mosque erected in front of the gate of the Fort at Agra. The grounds on which the chowk and mosque were constructed belonged mainly to the crown, but a part of it belonged to others. Some of these owners were satisfied by receiving ten to fifteen times the actual value of their plots and the others by receiving grants of land from the neighbouring royal domains.[1] Professor Sarkar quotes an anecdote of Shah Jahan's wrath at finding that a tract of land in a certain village which had risen out of water owing to the river having receded, had been taxed by the karori of the place. The emperor thought it unjust even to raise any revenue from a plot which, as he said, God had given to the poor cultivator in response to his prayers.

In the Gazetteer of Hardoi,[2] it is stated, on the basis of the Settlement Report of that district (1880) p. 41, that the Saiyids of Bilgram 'have held continuously most of the land in the neighbourhood of Bilgram, the greater part of their property, having been acquired by purchase over two hundred years ago.'

Hawkins and Terry on jagir

The accounts of Hawkins, Terry[3] and other European visitors, do not in the least affect our conclusion. They refer only to the system of assignments which were totally at the will of the king, but the peasant-proprietorship was in no sense affected by this system.

[1] Or. 175, fol. 180ab.
[2] Vide Gaz. of Hardoi Dist. (1904) pp. 90-91.
[3] Vide Hawkins, p. 112; Terry, pp. 326-327.

CHAPTER IX

LAW AND JUSTICE: POLICE AND JAILS

Muslim law

Islamic jurisprudence is known by the name of fiqh (فقه), literally "wisdom", the 'jurisprudentia' of the Romans. The development of jurisprudence resulted from the necessities of governance arising from the expansion and organisation of the Khilafat as a political institution. In theory the fiqh is believed to be derived from the Quranic Law, (the shar') and is therefore regarded as immutable by any human institution. In actual practice the fiqh has more often than not drawn upon foreign law, mainly Romano-Byzantine law, but thanks to the fiction of the Hadis, all such material borrowed from other sources was ascribed to the prophet and his great companions, and became a part of the Revelation.[1] The fiqh is mainly drawn from two sources, the Quran, and the Sunna which consist of the traditions revealed in order to explain the Quran. Practical needs, however, compelled the recognition of other sources. It was found that the fiqh did not cover all cases. Hence the faqihs (فقيه) were compelled to apply analogous cases on such occasions. This was the origin of the third source called qiyas (analogy). Another source which received recognition was 'ijma' or universal consent.

The various schools of law or jurisprudence grew up in later times according as they attached importance to the different elements of the fiqh. For some time there was a struggle for predominance among them, out of which eventually four schools emerged successful and

[1] See Lammens 'Beliefs and Institutions of Islam.'

were recognised by the jurists of Islam. These four schools are (1) The Shafiite, (2) The Hanifite, (3) The Malikite and (4) The Hanbalite.

The theory of Islamic jurisprudence does not recognise the non-Muslim as a citizen of the state. In its view the state is an organisation or instrument to subserve the ends of the creed of Islam and consequently no non-Muslim can have any place in it. The expansion of the rule of Khalifas, however, over non-Muslim countries brought them face to face with the practical problem of dealing with their non-Muslim subjects, who could neither be converted wholesale nor exterminated. The jurists, therefore, gave to these non-Muslim subjects a qualified position by imposing on them certain disabilities and restrictions together with a certain amount of special fine by way of price for the privilege of being suffered to exist in an Islamic State.

Such, in theory, was the status of the non-Muslims in an Islamic state. But in India more than in any other country, they had to face the problem of reconciling the principles of Islam with the existence within the state of a vast non-Muslim population. They soon found that it was impossible to rule this population according to the strict injunctions of their creed, much as they professed and preached an uncompromising adherence to them. When his nephew Malik Ahmad questioned him as to the cause of this non-observance of the principles of Islam, Sultan Firoz gave a despondent reply, confessing his impotence to suppress the Hindus who every day passed under his palace blowing their conches and going to the Jamna openly to worship their idols, and wearing white clothes and existing in luxury.

From Sher Shah onwards, however, the attitude of the rulers underwent a complete transformation. Sher Shah's predecessors had allowed religious liberty to their non-Muslim subjects because they had to; but Sher Shah, out of political expediency, initiated the policy of complete religious liberty. Consequently from his time, in religious

and social matters the Hindus were governed by their own laws and not by Islamic laws. Grady says that 'In one particular, indeed, the conduct of the conquerors materially differed from what has been generally considered in Europe.....as an invariable principle of all Musalman governments; namely, a rigid and undeviating adherence to their own law, not only with respect to themselves, but also with respect to all who were subject to their dominion. In all spiritual matters, those who submitted to their rule were allowed to follow the dictates of their own faith, and were even protected in points of which, with respect to a Musalman, the law would take no cognizance'.[1] In other particulars, indeed, of a temporal nature, they were subject to the decrees of the law.....'In matters of property.....and in all other temporal concerns (but more especially in the criminal jurisdiction) the Musalman law gave the rule of decision, excepting where both parties were Hindus, in which case the point was referred to the judgment of the Pandits or Hindu lawyers.'[2] This principle is supported by the Fatawah-i-Alamgiri, according to which all Muslim laws were divided into two classes, the religious and secular; and the purely religious laws were applied to the Muslims alone.[3]

The scope of the king's judiciary

In this field again there was a great divergence between theory and practice. In theory, the sovereign was the fountainhead of justice possessing unlimited scope and authority over all sorts of causes and disputes wherever and in whichever community they might occur. But

[1] Hedaya (Ed. by Hamilton and Grady, p. XIV).
[2] Loc. cit.
[3] Vide Baillie's Digest of Muhammadan Law, p. 174: "Non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim state are not subject to the laws of Islam." Their legal relations are to be regulated "according to the principles of their own faith."

in actual practice the jurisdiction of the state system of justice was very much restricted. We have seen above that in matters religious and communal the parties were allowed full freedom to have their causes tried by religious and communal courts. But in addition to these the village panchayats were allowed to continue in full enjoyment of their ancient powers of deciding all disputes occurring in the villages, excepting cases of very serious crime, such as murder or organised robbery. If the village jury failed to give satisfaction to either party (which rarely happened) the latter could prefer an appeal in the government court of the qazi. The qazis and other officers of the judicial and religious department were appointed even in the smallest towns (as we shall presently see), but even in these places the disputants were allowed to have recourse to their communal bodies or trade guilds for justice. The principle underlying this policy was to let the time-honoured institutions of the land which were still working quite successfully, continue to co-operate with the government in the business of administration, and not to destroy them indiscriminately.

The organisation of the judiciary in an Islamic state

When the Khalifas assumed the position of worldly rulers possessing an extensive empire it became necessary to delegate their powers of justice to competent men who were learned in the law. The officers who were thus appointed to administer justice were called qazis.[1] They were appointed either by Khalifas or by their wazirs when the latter were *de facto* rulers.

Qualifications of a qazi

The qazi should be perfectly sound physically and mentally. He should be a free citizen. No slave was entitled to hold the post. Faith in Islam was an essential

[1] Qazi comes from qaza, signifying jurisdiction.

condition. No unbeliever could be a judge over Muslims. He should be a man of irreproachable integrity and honesty, and should have a knowledge of law both theoretical and practical.[1] According to the Hedaya a qazi must possess the qualifications of a witness,.....i.e., he should be free, sane, adult, a Musalman and unconvicted of slander. A woman also may become a qazi but the jurists differ as to her jurisdiction over all or a limited class of cases.[2]

Duties of a qazi

A qazi on his appointment, is enjoined to take possession of all the records, etc., appertaining to his office and to demand the 'diwan' (the bag containing the records and other papers) of the former qazi. He should take over charge of all these papers through his amins, and the latter should ask the retiring qazi for separate files of different subjects, such as property, orphans, marriage, inheritance. The new qazi must also enquire into the state of the prisoners confined on any legal claim..... and reinvestigate their cases and act accordingly.

The qazi must hold his court in the mosque or in his own house. Save from relations, he should not accept any presents or feasts. He should behave with equal courtesy towards both parties in a case and never show more regard for either, even by smiling. Nor should he help the witnesses. Before going to the court he should prepare himself so as to maintain a calm and dispassionate attitude during business.[3]

The qazi's office included the following functions:— (1) To try and decide cases, (2) to execute judgments, (3) to appoint guardians for those incapable of dealing

[1] Von Kremer, p. 284.

[2] Hedaya (Hamilton and Grady) p. 334.

[3] Hedaya, pp. 336-338.

These duties are also given almost in the same form in the Mir-ul-Masail. (Eng. Tr.) pp. 52-55.

with their property, e.g., lunatics, minors, (a sort of court of wards) (4) supervise and manage waqf property, (5) execution of wills, (6) charge of the remarriage of widows, (7) execution of punishments prescribed by religious laws, (8) the supervision of streets and buildings, so that no one might disfigure the streets and open spaces by erecting projecting roofs or unauthorised buildings, etc. etc., (9) supervision of law officers, such as notary (Shohud) secretaries and the sub-judges whom he could appoint as well as remove, (10) where no collector of poor-tax (sadqah) was appointed it fell to the lot of the qazi to collect this tax also.[1]

The framework of Mughal judiciary: the chief law officers

The Mughal judicial system was practically modelled on the above system. But the new administrative problems of this country dictated a readjustment of the jurisdiction and powers of the various officials which brought about considerable changes in their scope and functions.

As regards the organisation of courts some scholars of note have made statements which would appear to be altogether unwarranted by the facts available. The most typical and definite opinion in this respect is that of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, viz., that "The main defect of the department of law and justice was that there was no system, no organisation of the law courts in a regular gradation from the highest to the lowest, nor any proper distribution of courts in proportion to the area to be served by them"[2]. But it is curious that the above statement is followed (p. 108) by the following remarks: "Every provincial capital had its qazi, appointed by the supreme Qazi of the empire (the qazi-ul-quzat); but there were no lower or primary courts under him, and therefore no provincial courts of appeal. A qazi was also posted to every large town and seat of a faujdar. The smaller towns and all

[1] Von Kremer, pp. 284-286.
[2] Mughal Adm. (2nd Ed.) pp. 107.

the villages had no qazi of their own, but any plaintiff living in them, ... could carry his suit to the qazi of the neighbouring town in whose jurisdiction they lay." On p. 27 of the same book again he makes an even more effective statement, viz., "Every city and even large village had its local qazi, who was appointed by the chief qazi."

In the above passages the writer clearly admits that under the supreme qazi there was a provincial qazi and under him the qazi of the 'seat of a faujdar.'[1] That there was a qazi also in every parganah headquarter and also in other towns wherever it was found necessary to post one, is known to us from other sources, as I shall presently show. It is also admitted by Sir Jadunath that the jurisdiction of the qazi of the sarkar extended over the whole of its area and the people living in the towns of a sarkar could carry their suits for decision to the sarkar court. Even if it be supposed that there were no other courts below the sarkar court, it is clear that the people were not without any agency where they could seek justice. In the face of this gradation of courts of justice it is difficult to understand what Sir Jadunath means by inserting the rider, viz., 'but there were no lower or primary courts of appeal.' In attempting to look for law courts of appeal and of first instance exactly like those of our modern times, the writer has been led to underrate far too much the worth of the Mughal courts. What other lower or primary courts than those of the sarkar and mahal could possibly exist? Further, is there any definite evidence to support the contention that there were no courts of appeal? True, there was nothing like the present elaborate classification of business entrusted to different grades of courts, and perhaps no distinction between appellate courts and those of first instance, but there is no reason to presume that if anybody wanted to appeal against the decision of a lower court, he had no recourse for it.

[1] The seat of a faujdar was none else but the headquarters of a sarkar as I have shown in Chapter IV above.

Indeed, however meagre be the information furnished by the sources on this subject, it is quite sufficient for us to form a thoroughly clear and satisfactory picture of both the framework and the working of the Mughal judicial system. We are also in a position to know which of the officials in the province, the sarkar and the parganah respectively were entrusted with judicial powers and duties.

The imperial and provincial courts

The precise composition of the supreme and provincial courts seems to be a matter of some difficulty to ascertain. All references on the point are somewhat vague and indefinite. It seems, however, almost certain that besides the emperor, the sadr and the diwan-i-ala divided between them the entire business of administering justice. A curious error into which almost all previous writers have fallen is to suppose that there was a separate chief sadr and separate chief qazi, and there were a sadr, a qazi, a mir'adl and a mufti in the provinces. The only authoritative writer who has dealt with this subject fully is Sir Jadunath Sarkar, but his treatment makes a confusion of the entire system. Here is his account of that system. On p. 22 of his Mughal Administration (2nd ed.) he enumerates the eight departments of the administration and their heads. Among them Nos. 4 and 5 are "Canon Law, both civil and criminal (under the chief qazi)", and "Religious endowments and charity (under the chief sadr)." It should be noted that here the sadr is not said to be concerned with justice at all. On p. 26 we find: "The qazi was the chief judge in criminal suits, and tried them according to Muslim law.....assisted by a mufti, who consulted the old Arabic books on jurisprudence and stated the abstract law bearing on the case, the qazi pronounced the sentence." Then on p. 28 he sets forth the duties of the mufti and adds: "The sadr was judge and supervisor of the endowments of land....." This is followed

by a dissertation on the duties of the sadr and a criticism of his "notorious venality and cruel spirit" as head of the charities department. Again on p. 29 we read: "Practically the sadr was exclusively a civil judge, but not of all civil cases." The class of cases tried by the sadr, however, is left unspecified. Thus the officials of the central judiciary as well as their functions have been confounded, and the mufti's is stated to have been a regular post or office in the judiciary.

The confusion has arisen from losing sight of the fact that while the three offices of the sadr, the qazi and mir'adl are in some places separately mentioned (the significance of which I shall presently discuss) in actual practice these three offices seem to have been very often entrusted to one and the same person even though they may not have been amalgamated. Sir Jadunath himself, perchance unconsciously, recognises this fact when he mentions only the qazi in the provincial judiciary (except the governor), and neither the sadr nor mir'adl. But one of the most important officials who shared the administration of justice, namely, the diwan, has escaped the attention of Sir Jadunath as also of all other writers. Both the diwan-i-'ala and provincial diwan exercised certain judicial powers, but it would seem that theirs was a court of appeal only and not of first instance.[1] In regard to the office of mufti the available evidence leads us to the conclusion that this was never a regular post in the judicial department. There was no such officer as the mir'adl in the central judiciary. That officer is only mentioned in connection with the provincial courts and will be discussed presently.

Thus the chief judicial officer of the supreme court of the realm (next to the king) was the chief sadr who seems to have combined in himself the office of the chief

[1] Vide Add. 26,251 fol. 80a; also Mirat (I. O. 3597), fol. 161a, where among the instructions issued to the diwans they are enjoined also to keep an eye on the judicial administration, and investigate cases of people who were put in custody.

qazi also. This is clearly borne out by the following evidences: In the Ain-i-Suyurghal[1] Abul Fazl clearly tells us that the sadr was the head of the (provincial) qazis and mir'adls who were appointed under his signatures and acted under his orders. Then in the lists of the highest officers of the supreme government Abul Fazl gives only the wakils, the wazirs, the bakhshis and the sadrs, but the qazi-ul-quzat is not referred to at all.[2] When these two facts are put together there remains no room for us to suspect the existence of a chief qazi's office apart from that of the sadr.[3] The other judicial officer who must have assisted the sadr in certain branches of justice was the diwan-i-ala or wazir.

The mufti

References to muftis are of frequent occurrence in connection with judicial administration. None of these, however, show that the mufti was a regular official.[4] He was a sort of unofficial legal referee recognised by public

[1] Ain, I, 198.

[2] Ibid. I, 232 ll. 6-15, from top.

[3] But Aurangzeb established the practice of appointing separate chief-qazis, the first incumbent to hold that office being Abdul Wahab, because he was the only one who declared that Aurangzeb's usurpation of the throne was not a violation of the Shariyat as Shah Jahan was physically unfit.

At one time, however, the supreme office of the sadr was, we are told, abolished altogether and the empire divided into six Sadarats in the 26th year of reign in order to prevent fraud and corruption in that department. The Sadarat of Dihli, Malwa and Gujrat was made over to Hakim Abul Fath; that of Agra, Kalpi and Kalinjar to Shah Abul Faiz, Faizi; that from Hajipur to the Saru to Hakim Humam, that of Bihar to Hakim Ali; of Bengal to Hakim Ain-ul-Mulk; and that of the Punjab to Qazi Ali Bakhshi. Also here and there in the provinces the Emperor appointed an able and unbigoted man to be the head of qazis of that quarter so that "he might look after that crew of large turbaned and long-sleeved men." (Vide A. N. Vol. III, 372 (Tr.) p. 546).

[4] The mufti was not legally recognised in the Muslim Khilafats either. Vide Von Kremer, p. 284.

opinion. I have found only one instance in which the Sadr-i-Jahan of Pihani is said to have been appointed mufti of the empire, through the good offices of Shah Abdunnabi, the sadr.[1] But it seems certain from the facts that this was a case of a special title or honour being conferred on a person in recognition of his abilities and owing to the special recommendation of the chief sadr. No one seems to have held that post either before or after him. In fact with this single exception, there is, so far as I know, no mention of any such officer in the supreme judicature, or, for the matter of that, in the lower courts either. In reality the mufti was a sort of unofficial legal-remembrancer of canon law. There was no definite number of muftis. Any one who was, by common agreement, ranked among the learned, recognised to be an authority on religious law, was called a mufti. His assistance was sought in all cases coming within the pale of religion, on which the law was not clear to the judges of the court, and the mufti's duty was only to state the law applicable to the case under reference. It may also be noted, in passing, that the muftis were called upon to give a fatwa, that is to say, a decree in accordance with the law, on all questions of social and religious life of the Muslims and even of the non-Muslims if they behaved in a manner prejudicial to the Law, as expounded by the great jurists. We can quote a number of instances in which the muftis were clearly non-official jurisconsults. Mian Jamal Khan mufti of Dihli was a most learned man of his time. It is said about him that he never went to the houses of kings, but used to associate with the honourable officials of the town.[2] Thevenot also refers to the existence of muftis

[1] Bad. III, p. 141.

[2] Vide Bad. III, Text 77. Another instance is that of several muftis who were put to death by Mirza Muqim and Mir Yakub, wakil at the court of Kashmir (1569 A. D.), because they had given a fatwa of death upon the assassin of qazi Habib of Kashmir who was a very strict sunni. We incidentally learn here that the muftis were several in number and were consulted by the ruler as to the punishment of the man who had stabbed qazi Habib.

who had 'the inspection over all that concerns the Muhammadan religion.'[1] Later in the 18th century the muftis seem to have gradually been ignored in the higher courts,[2] and in the lower courts we find that a number of clerks who copied the decrees of the qazis were officially called muftis.[3]

The mir'adl

The office of mir'adl was peculiar to India. No officer of that name was known to the judicature of the Muslim caliphates of Turkey, Persia or Egypt. Nor do we find any mention of that officer during the period of Sultanate of Dihli. The idea of a mir'adl's post and functions was thus purely a creation of the Mughals. As regards the actual appointment of that officer, Abul Fazl says that it was only conditional on the qazi being found unable to manage the whole work, and not a regular appointment. Hence we rarely come across a mir'adl having actually been appointed, and even in these cases it is not certain whether he was not the qazi as well. Qazis and sadrs of provinces are very frequently mentioned in connection with various affairs of judicial administration, but not mir'adl. The only instance of a mir'adl, so far as I know, has been mentioned by Badaoni. Mir Sayyid Muhammad of Amroha was appointed mir'adl, in all likelihood, of some province.[4] Nor do we find any mention

[1] Travels, Pt. III, pp. 19-20.

[2] Wilson in his Glossary, p. 349, says that the qazi 'in British India usually discharges the duties of the mufti also'. But the Com. of Secrecy appointed by the House of Commons in 1773 to enquire and report into the Admn. of India, in their description of the former 'state of judicature in the country' mention the mufti. (Vide Com. of Sec. 7th Rep. pp. 321-332).

[3] Mirat. (I. O. MS.) Vol. III, fol. 722. But there was no mufti in the parganah courts. Vide Rep. of Hist. Records Com. Vol. XII, (1929) pp. 83-84; and J. B. O. R. S. Vol. XX. Parts III, IV, 1924, pp. 275-278., 'Adm. of Justice in Bhagalpur District.'

[4] Bad. III, 75. در اواخر در سلک ملازمان درگاه پادشاهی بمرتبهٔ اختصاص رسیده بمنصب میر عدلی امتیاز یافت

of mir'adl in the provincial chronicles like the Mirat-i-Ahmadi and the Riyaz us Salatin. Finally among the officers and dignitaries whose appointment was made by the farman-i-sabati we have the names of the sipahsalar, the wazir, the sadr and even the nahiyati (who, as I have shown above, was none other than the faujdar-i-sarkar) but not those of qazi or mir'adl.[1] This is highly significant and lends further weight to the conclusion that the three offices were normally held by the same officer who was in official technique called the sadr, but the chroniclers, as usual, delighted in using the other titles such as mir'adl or qazi by which he could be characterised. But while all this evidence justifies the above conclusion, a statement in the Akbar Nama creates a serious difficulty. We are told that in the 24th year of the reign, the Emperor divided the empire into twelve provinces and in every province the following officers were appointed: (1) a sipahsalar, (2) a diwan, (3) a bakhshi, (4) a mir'adl, (5) a sadr, (6) a kotwal, (7) a mir bahr, (8) a waqia nawis.[2]

Now here there is no mention of qazi, which indicates clearly that that post was combined either with that of the sadr or of the mir'adl. The regular appointment of mir'adls, however, was neither considered essential in

Sir W. Haig (Bad. Trans. III, pp. 120-121) is wrong in translating the words در سلک ملازمان درگاه پادشاهی as 'a high position in the imperial court.' It is only a way of saying that a man rose from a humble position to high post in the service of the king, and does not mean necessarily 'in the imperial court,' as is proved by the fact that in the next few lines we are told that even the chief qazi, (meaning sadr) refrained from ill-treating him. It would be quite unreasonable to suppose that there was a mir'adl under the sadr in the imperial court.

[1] Ain, I, 194, l. 3 et seq.

[2] We learn from the Tarikh-i-Daudi that Sher Shah had courts presided over by qazis and mir'adls. But I think the use of the word mir'adl is an anachronism, having been used by the author, who wrote at a much later period when that term had come into vogue, without considering that it did not exist at the time about which he was writing.

theory nor is it shown by contemporary evidence to have existed in normal practice. The explanation of this seeming contradiction may be found in one of the following alternatives: either that at the time of the reorganisation of the empire the full quota of officers who were considered essential was appointed, and subsequently when actual experience showed that some of them were superfluous, they were dropped, or that Abul Fazl has given a list of all the important staff which was created for a typical subah, without referring to those particular cases where one or two of these officials were not necessary, such as, for instance, the mir bahr who was not needed in a province like Ajmer. Consequently the true explanation seems to be that Abul Fazl's is a general statement of the officers who were theoretically required for a province. Subsequently the posts of qazi and sadr were usually entrusted to one and the same person, although we are not in a position to say that the two offices were formally amalgamated. My contention is further supported by the organisation of the department of Justice under the Turkish Sultans of Dihli. It was called the Diwan-i-Qaza-i-Mamalik or the Diwan-i-Shar'a[1] and was presided over by the Qazi-ul-Quzat or Qazi-i-Mamalik, officially styled in a variety of ways, such as the Sadr-i-Jahan, Sadr-us-Sudur, Sadr-ul-Islam[2], or Sadr-us-Sudur-i-Jahan.[3] He was the chief justice of the realm and was always a man of great learning and piety. All the 'ulama (scholars) of the empire were under his supervision, and in Firoz Shah Tughlaq's time, he had the authority of granting them pensions[4]. Thus we see that the offices of the qazi and sadr in the preceding period were not separate, but only two names for one and the same office.

[1] Sirat-i-Firoz Shahi—Bankipur MS. fol. 123a.
[2] Masalak-al-absar, in Elliot., III, p. 578.
[3] Barni (Text) I, 247-248.
[4] Elliot, III, 579; Barni, 580.

The qazi-i-askar

There were separate qazis for the army also called mir'adls by some writers. In the time of Akbar we read of three important personages who held that post in succession. Qazi Tawais, up to 1567 A. D.; Qazi Yaqub (1567-1577); and Qazi Jalal (1577).[1] In the 30th year of his reign Akbar appointed Qazim Beg Tabrizi to the post of mir'adl of the camp.[2] Mulla Shukr-ullah Shirazi was mir'adl of the army under Shah Jahan.[3] There were qazis of *askar* in the Ottoman empire also.[4] This post was, however, not new like so many others. Qazis of the army existed even under Sher Shah. Qazi Fazilat held that post at the time of his promotion to the aminship of Bengal.[5] In addition to the above regular courts important and complicated cases, chiefly those in which government officials were involved, were investigated and tried by special commissions. The manner of the appointment of these commissions and their working will be dealt with presently in the course of this chapter.

Before coming to the sarkar and parganah courts we must briefly discuss other studies of the judicial administration. Of these the following are worth noticing:—

1. The article on Mughal Administration in the Encyclopædia of Islam, which is devoted entirely to the military organisation and revenue administration, and dismisses the judicial system with just a few words.

2. Beni Prasad in his History of Jahangir makes a good summary survey on the whole (see p. 110) but does not escape the common error of supposing that 'every town, generally even a very small town, had a qazi and a mir'adl who formed a judicial bench'.

3. Smith in his 'Akbar the Great Mughal' does not

[1] Vide Bad. III, 78-79.
[2] A. N. III, 477.
[3] M. U. I. 45.
[4] Encyc. Islam, II, 838.
[5] Bad. I, 365.

go beyond the provincial judiciary, and even that is not regarded to be important enough to deserve more than a few lines (see pp. 380-381). He devotes a little more space to the central judicature, but only to show the horrors of the administration rather than to describe the system.

4. Ishwari Prasad has made confusion worse confounded. On p. 442 of his 'Muslim Rule in India' (2nd ed.) the chief sadr is stated to be the head of the charities department. Then on pp. 446-447 he says "Below the emperor was the sadr-us-sudur who decided important civil cases especially of a religious character. The qazi-ul-quzat was the highest judicial officer in the realm, who was responsible for the efficient administration of justice... The functionaries who were mainly concerned with the disposal of cases were—(1) the qazi, (2) the mufti and (3) the mir'adl. The mufti expounded the law, the qazi investigated the evidence, and the mir'adl delivered the judgment. The mir'adl was especially enjoined to look after the general interest of the state and to act as a counterpoise to the qazi's influence." Further, he adds: "The qazi's court had civil and criminal jurisdiction, and tried cases of both Hindus and Muslims." It is difficult to make any sense out of the above remarks. But perhaps they may be paraphrased like this: The chief sadr was the head of the charities department but also acted as judge in some important civil cases of a religious character. The chief qazi was the highest judicial officer in the realm. There were two other officers concerned with the dispensing of justice, the mufti and the mir'adl, the former expounding the law, the latter simply to pronounce the judgment according to the finding of the qazi. The qazi could decide both civil and criminal cases. Now the question is, first, whether the sadr, being the first judicial officer below the king, was the highest judicial officer or the qazi-ul-quzat. Secondly, if the sadr dealt with the 'civil cases of a religious character', was the chief qazi's jurisdiction limited to secular, civil, and all criminal cases? Could any appeal from the court of the qazi lie

to that of the sadr or vice versa? Thirdly, was the mufti a regular government official? Fourthly, is there any evidence of a separate mir'adl apart from the qazi ever having been appointed in any court? Or whether this generalisation is based merely on the Ain-i-mir'adl and qazi (in the Ain-i-Akbari) which only provides for the appointment of a mir'adl in case one officer were found incapable of coping with the whole work? Even in such a contingency the duty of the mir'adl is thus defined:—

و دیگرے بکار نشاند آو را میر عدل –

Do these words only signify 'he pronounced the judgment'? Fifthly, supposing the existence of a mir'adl to be authentic, was his duty merely to announce the judgment or the decision which the qazi had arrived at? Can it be regarded as enough excuse for appointing a separate officer? If he was to act as a counterpoise to the qazi's influence, did he take part in investigating or deciding the case? What evidence is there to support this contention? Sixthly, was a mir'adl attached to a qazi's court to announce the judgment and act as counterpoise, or to that of the sadr also who being a religious judge would also be equally liable to corruption? These questions reveal how discrepant and unreal is the whole of the above account of the judicial system.

5. But there are even more loose statements, e.g., "During the Muslim period the law was administered by the qazis and the judicial organisation was as follows:— The qazi will investigate the case and send it before the mir'adl, who will pronounce judgment, and from these appeal will be to the subehdar and from there to the chief qazi. Against the imperial qazi's decision appeal will finally be to the emperor whose decision is irrefutable. This is like the Privy Council decision of today." (See Commercial Policy of the Mughals by Dr. D. Pant, p. 43).

The sarkar and parganah courts

There were four chief officials in charge of the different branches of administration of a sarkar: the faujdar,

the kotwal, the amil and the qazi. Of these the faujdar was a sort of general executive, entrusted with the duty of the maintenance of law and order, the ensuring of peace and security, and the assisting of government servants in the performance of their public duties, if and when they were thwarted by contumacious people. For this purpose he was given charge of a contingent of military police. He thus represented the might of the sovereign to enforce his will on the people and thereby to make the working of government smooth. But the faujdar had no judicial powers at all.[1] He only represented in the sarkar the executive function of the sipahsalar in the subah. The kotwal had very wide functions. He was a magistrate, prefect of police and municipal officer rolled into one. As magistrate he took cognizance of criminal cases of the whole sarkar, while in other respects his jurisdiction was limited to the headquarters town of the sarkar. There is no clear classification of cases which came under the authority of the qazi and the kotwal, but from the known cases it is quite easy to comprehend that the secular type of criminal suits went to the kotwal and the religious cases, such as inheritance, marriage, divorce, and civil disputes, went to the qazi's court. These two officials in the main shared almost the whole business of justice in the sarkar between them. But the amil was also enjoined to share a small part of what may be regarded as a semi-police judicial duty, inasmuch as he was asked to help in maintaining peace and security by chastising robbers, thieves and other miscreants. Moreover, in the event of the kotwal being absent the amalguzar's duty was to undertake his work. Respecting this injunction I am inclined to think that it probably required the amil to undertake only the magisterial duties of the kotwal, in which he even normally rendered some assistance. Considering the peripatetic nature of his duties as revenue officer of the sarkar it seems

[1] Towards the close of the 18th century, however, the faujdar had come to have judicial authority over all cases less than capital crimes. (Vide Rep., Com. of Sec., 1773, pp. 321-351).

difficult to conceive that the amil could have been expected to undertake the extremely extensive police and municipal functions of the kotwal. Although there are ample and unmistakable evidences of the magisterial branch of the kotwal's duties, it is not a little curious that this fact has been completely overlooked by all previous writers. The kotwal's kacheri (court) was called chabutra. In a farman of instructions for the guidance of the officials issued by Aurangzeb the last clause (No. 33) enjoins upon him to personally investigate the case of any one who is brought to his court by the complainant, or by his own men or by any official, and to release or punish him according as he may be found innocent or guilty. But if he be accused of any offence against the Shariyat, i.e. the religious law, he should be sent to the qazi's court; and if there be a revenue claim against him, he should be sent to the subahdar.[1] Tavernier tells us that the office of the kotwal was 'a sort of barrier where a provost administers justice to those of the quarter'.[2] Palsaert tells us that 'ordinary questions of divorce, quarrels, fights, threats and the like', were in the hands of the kotwal and qazi.[3] Thevenot is still more explicit: "The governor of the town judges in civil cases and commonly renders speedy justice.....He meddles not at all in criminal cases. The kotwal takes cognisance of criminal cases. His other main duty is to guard the town..... Nevertheless neither the civil nor criminal judge can put anyone to death..."[4] Manrique relates an exceedingly amusing but illuminating personal experience illustrative of the judicial position and powers of the kotwal and the manner of his doing justice. Manrique and party were going by river from Ugulim (Hugli) to Banja (Bang or Gaur). On the way they were arrested by the men of a village on the suspicion of being the Feringhi pirates of Chatgaon, who by their terrible barbarities, had terrorised

[1] Vide Mirat, (Ethe, 3597), fol. 165b.
[2] Tavernier, p. 92.
[3] Palsaert's Jahangir (Moreland's Tr.), p. 57.
[4] Thevenot, Pt. III, pp. 19-20.

that part of the country. Being considered very dangerous people they were very firmly secured and kept under custody. Their case, however, was not within the competence of the local shiqdar to try: he had, therefore, to forward them, with a formal report, under guard to the kotwal of Midnapur[1] where they were eventually found innocent and released. Thus there were two officials, the qazi and the kotwal who, in the main, dispensed justice in the sarkar besides the amil who also shared the duty partly.

The parganah court

The parganah court was presided over by a qazi, as usual, who decided civil and religious cases. But here the shiqdar represented the kotwal's magisterial functions and the general executive and police functions of the faujdar. Within his jurisdiction the shiqdar's duty was to assist the revenue officers in the realisation of revenue and to try cases of a purely secular criminal category. Of this too Manrique's account furnishes an excellent illustration. He was one night staying in a village of the sarkar of Narayanpur in Bengal, when one of his party killed two domestic peacocks belonging to the village people. The population of the village being primarily Hindu, they complained against the man to the shiqdar. In spite of the clever pleading and backstairs efforts of Manrique, the culprit received whipping although he escaped the mutilation of an arm which was the maximum penalty in such cases[2]. For rural police duties there were one or more thanadars in the parganahs but they had no

[1] Manrique, Vol. I, pp. 409-424. In this connection it will be of further interest to note that in the 28th year of his reign Akbar had appointed a standing Judicial Committee of four courtiers of high rank in order to deal with the grievances and complaints preferred by the oppressed people. Among these four one was Shamsher Khan, the kotwal of the empire. Vide A. N. III, 390.

[2] Manrique, II, pp. 111-112.

judicial powers. But the appointment of the qazi was not restricted only to the chief town of the parganah. Every town of some consequence and even a large village had a qazi as Prof. Sarkar also recognises. K. K. Basu has given an account, based on the records in the archives of the collectorate of Bhagalpur, of the judicial organisation of that district at the close of the 18th century immediately prior to the establishment of the Company's courts.[1] Basu writes that there was a zila qazi in Bhagalpur[2] who held office by the sanads of the provincial qazis (known there as qazi-ul-quzat) there being at that time three chief qazis in the province, one being the senior and the other two junior, like the chief and puisne judges of present-day High Courts. In those days Rajmahal formed a separate zila and had a qazi of its own holding office like his compeer of Bhagalpur by sanads of the chief qazis. The district qazis had the power to appoint their own assistants in important centres, their number varying according to the need of each locality. For instance the Bhagalpur zila was divided into four subdivisions of which the centres were Bhagalpur, Colgunj, Bihpur and Gogri, each having a naib qazi. Each of these naibs or principal assistants had several others under them whom they appointed themselves. The naib of Bhagalpur had five sub-qazis under him who resided at five different places, the naibs of Colgunj, Bihpur and Gogri had three sub-assistants (sub-qazis) stationed in different places. Thus in a single district which represented a parganah of Akbar's time, there were altogether as many as nineteen qazis for conducting the judicial administration and performing certain religious duties such as marriage and funeral rites, sanctioning divorce, etc.

Such was the framework of the judicial administration of a district at a time when the Mughal institutions had decayed to such an extent that they were regarded as

[1] Vide J. B. & O. R. S. Vol. XX, Parts III, and IV, 1924, pp. 275-278.

[2] Bhagalpur was a parganah in the sarkar of Monghyr.

obsolete and worthy of being superseded by new institutions. We may reasonably assume that the judicial system described above represents the vestiges of a system which must have been fully elaborated in the heyday of Mughal rule. It could not have been elaborated to such an extent during the period of decline. We may, therefore, justly conclude that a network of qazis was spread over the parganahs, each parganah being divided into very small judicial circles. This is not only admitted, as pointed out above, by Prof. Sarkar, but also becomes quite easy to understand when we know that the appointment of qazis in the centre of a group of villages was necessitated by the religious ceremonies and rites which they had to perform. The qazis also kept charge of mosques and even did teaching work. Thus these rural qazis were the exact counterparts of the Hindu pandits who performed exactly the same duties in respect of the Hindu population. There is no trace of the mir'adl in any court below the provincial court.

The working of the judicial system: the king as supreme judge

Muslim jurists have given to the king the highest position and authority to administer justice in the kingdom. It may be said, without exaggeration, that the Mughal Emperors, no less than their Afghan predecessor, the brillant Sher Shah, looked upon the providing of justice and protection to their people as the highest and most essential of their duties, and they sincerely endeavoured to realise that ideal. The actual degree of success, however, that could be attained in an empire so vast as that of the Mughals would depend on many factors, individual, social and environmental. Nevertheless it must be said in fairness to them that they attained no mean success in providing protection and justice to their people, as the following discussion will show.

Sher Shah's system of justice

About the judicial system of Sher Shah our information is extremely meagre. We have, however, enough data to be able to form a skeleton of his judicial system. As usual the highest court of justice was the king himself. He devoted some time every morning when he sat in the Am Khas (the common meeting hall) to hearing complaints if anyone had come to make them. Obviously the king must have heard both appeals as well as initial cases.[1] Sher Shah had a network of courts from the province downwards, in every sarkar and parganah headquarter throughout the empire.[2] The Tarikh-i-Daudi also has a clear reference to the existence of qazis and mir' adls' courts everywhere.[3]

As regards the manner and the ideal of justice of Sher Shah, it is only too well-known how very particular he was about protecting the poor and the weak people from every kind of oppression or injustice. His great solicitude for the peasantry has already been referred to. But it should be noted here that even during the marches of the army he did not brook any injury to the crops of the peasantry, and if any harm was done unavoidably, it was fully compensated for without delay. The case of the complaint of 2000 soldiers of Malwa against Shujaat Khan, the governor, on the latter's unjustly withholding part of their jagirs, is a testimony of the confidence he commanded and of his reputation for redressing the grievances of the oppressed. His principle of punishment was that it should be severer in the case of a government official or a great man, than for a smaller and poorer person. That he was as good as his word, he proved by his unremittingly condign punishment of his nephew who had violated the modesty of the wife of a goldsmith by throwing a betel leaf at her while she was bathing in the enclosure

[1] Abbas, (I. O. MS.) fol. 104b.
[2] Abbas, (I. O. MS.) fol. 108b, MS. (A) p. 225.
[3] Tar. Daudi, Or. 197, foll. 83b-84a.

of her house when the prince was passing by on his elephant.

For the sake of the guidance and control of the government officers he made regulations from time to time, and so did Islam Shah. Both were extremely strict in enforcing their regulations.

The Mughal rulers

The Mughals were actuated by the same noble and lofty ideals of justice. 'The king has most precise regard for right and justice in the affairs of government.'[1] They regularly held court in the 'Ām Khās or Hall of Common Audience, devoting every day a part of their routine to hearing complaints and administering justice. The method of these courts was very simple, which enabled everybody, even the humblest person, to have free access to the emperor. The complainants brought written petitions and held them up so that the officers assembled in the court saw them. All these petitions were brought to the king who had them read out and calling each complainant cross-examined him personally and passed orders for necessary action.[2] Akbar, says Abul Fazl, spent not less than 1½ *pahar* daily in doing justice.[3] Jahangir seems to have been, in this respect, most particular. He held daily court and spent about two hours in redressing complaints.[4] Jahangir's chain of justice by which everyone, without fear of obstruction, could carry his grievance to the emperor, was a sincere expression of his zeal to provide justice to his people.[5] Indeed he was so particualr about

[1] Commentarius, p. 210.
[2] Bernier, p. 263.
[3] A. N. III, 257.
[4] Hawkins, p. 116.
[5] Vide Withington, p. 226. Professor Sarkar's sneer that the Mughal emperors, notably Jahangir, made a parade of their justice .....(Mughal Adm., p. 107) would seem to be very unfair when we know that the motive behind such devices was to impress upon the officers their keenness about justice. And this they proved by precept in the shape of repeated instructions to their officials as well as

it that when he was staying at Ahmedabad (13th year) he took special steps to prevent any possibility of mischief or oppression on the poor people of that city by the men of the Imperial camp, and himself sat every day for about three hours in the Jharokha to hear the complaints and punish the evil doers. He did not stop attending the Jharokha even during illness and extreme physical pain, because, as he says, he 'looked upon ease of body as harām' (legally forbidden) for him.[1]

While they devoted some time every day to administering justice, the Mughal emperors had reserved one day in the week specially for judicial work of a more important character. Akbar had reserved Thursday, Jahangir Tuesday and Shah Jahan Wednesday for that purpose. Cases which required a more serious examination and investigation were, it seems, taken up on these days, while those which could be summarily disposed of were attended to daily. Once a week, says de Laet, Jahangir took his seat on the tribunal and heard patiently all cases that were brought before him, both criminal and civil.[2] These courts were held in the Daulat Khana-i-Khas (Inner Apartment of the Palace) and on that day no one was admitted there except the officers of justice, (متصدیانِ عدالت) theologians qualified to give Fatwa, a few

by doing stern justice in those cases which were brought to their notice. Witness, for instance, the exemplary punishment he gave to such a high officer as Muqarrab Khan, Superintendent of Cambay, for his responsibility in the death of the young girl of a widow, and the execution of Muqarrab's servant who was, on enquiry, found to be the murderer. R and B. I, p. 172. The chain of justice was not meant for the people to tie their petitions to as Prof. Sarkar imagines, but it had sixty bells attached to it so that anyone might ring the bells by shaking the chain in order to draw the attention of the emperor. Any one who reads the account of it in the words of the emperor himself cannot fail to be impressed by his earnestness about his duty of doing justice.

[1] R and B. II, pp. 13-14.

[2] de Laet, p. 93.

learned men noted for their integrity and piety and a few amirs who were always in attendance.[1] Bernier also testifies to their unfailing regularity in attending to the judicial business.[2] According to him Aurangzeb used to hold court for two days in the week.[3]

The routine of judicial work was not allowed to be interrupted during tours, excursions, or even military expeditions. The Mughal emperors took special care to avoid the least injury to the farms or any other property of the people even when they went out to hunt. We have seen how Shah Jahan used to appoint special officers in the march of the army to guard the fields and also a tribunal to compensate those whose property had been unavoidably injured. (Vide ante Chapter IX). Jahangir describes an incident of the 4th year of his reign, when he went out for hunting: "As the Rabi Fasl had arrived, for fear any damage should happen to the cultivation of the ryots from the passage of the army, and notwithstanding that I had appointed a qur-yasawal (a head watch) with the band of Ahadis for the purpose of guarding the fields, I ordered certain men to see what damage had been done to crops from stage to stage and pay compensation to the ryots."[4] Mention has already been made of his sitting in Jharokha at Ahmedabad with unbroken regularity.

As regards the class of cases which were decided by the kings Monserrate tells us that "all capital cases and all really important civil cases also are conducted before himself."[5] But it seems that mostly the criminal cases of a serious type and appeals of all sorts usually came up to the royal court. Numerous instances of complaint preferred by the oppressed people against tyrannical offi-

[1] Lahauri, I, pp. 149-150. See also Lubbut-Tawarikh-i-Hind (Add. 26, 251) fol. 80a. Wednesday (چہارشنبہ) was fixed for the holding of this court.

[2] Bernier, p. 360.

[3] Ibid, p. 263.

[4] R and B. I, pp. 162-163.

[5] Commentary, p. 209.

cials are on record and will be noticed presently under punishments.

Appeals

There seem to have been no precise or elaborate rules of appeal like those of the present day. But the lack of them did not hamper the course of justice in the least. Appeals could be preferred, in accordance with custom, from the lower court to the higher court in whose jurisdiction the particular case lay, and from the latter to the next higher and finally to the king himself. The revenue cases were tried by the qazi in the sarkar and parganah, but their appeal would lie to the diwan-i-subah and diwan-i-ala. In the sarkar and lower courts the qazi also decided all civil suits and criminal cases of a religious character, but the appeal for these cases lay to the court of the provincial sadr or qazi and mir adl (if that officer happened to be in any province) and thence to the court of the sudr-us-sudur (or chief qazi) of the empire. Smaller criminal cases were disposed of in the parganah by the shiqdar from whom appeal lay to the kotwal (as shown above) in the sarkar. From the kotwal's court the suits went to the nazim or governor of the subah and thence to the king. Some parganahs were from either economic or political reasons as important as a sarkar and in such cases their courts of justice were directly subordinate to the provincial sadr, and not to the qazi of the sarkar, both being equal in status.[1] Nevertheless it seems certain that these rules were not always strictly observed and some overlapping of business would have surely occurred. The Nazim, moreover, in virtue of his being the sovereign's representative in the province did exercise a general supervision and control over all branches of administra-

[1] For instance the port of Cambay in the sarkar of Ahmedabad which comprised three mahals in one, and was called parganah chaurasi, was directly subordinate to the provincial authorities and its qazi and muhatasib as well as other officers were directly appointed. See Mirat, Supplement (Bar) p. 193.

tion including justice. The author of the Lubb-ut-Tawarikh tells us that the offenders when discovered were first tried by the local authorities where the offence had been committed. If any individual, dissatisfied with the judgment, appealed to the governor or qazi or the diwan of the subah, the case was reviewed and judgment awarded with the greatest care and attention lest it should be carried to the ears of the king that justice had not been done. From here, the parties, if still not satisfied, appealed to the chief diwan, or if it were a matter of religious law, (– پیشِ دیوانِ اعلیٰ و مقدماتِ شرعیٔ پیشِ اقضیٰ القضات) to the chief qazi. These officers made thorough enquiries. With all this, what cases, except those of blood and religion, could need to be referred to the king?[1] This passage refers to the right of the parties to prefer appeals to higher courts in case of dissatisfaction with the judgment of the lower court. But besides this the judges of lower and provincial courts had definite instructions to forward complicated cases to the supreme court. The Emperor Akbar in the 30th Ilahi year, among other instructions to some newly appointed judicial officers, enjoined on them to report to him if they found any questions too difficult for them.[2] Instances of both kinds of appeal are found in the contemporary accounts. A very apt and interesting example of an appeal by discontented parties is furnished by an incident related by Tavernier. The relatives of a rich widow of Ahmedabad, in order to claim her property, wanted to prove the illegitimacy of her posthumous son. They oppressed and tormented the woman and she appealed to the governor of Ahmedabad. The governor consulted the doctors and after due investigation they all decided in favour of the woman. The governor, therefore, ordered the property of the woman to be secured for her infant child. The covetous relatives not satisfied with this, appealed to the emperor at Agra. His Majesty

[1] Or. 26251 fol. 80a.
[2] A. N. III, 477.

issued orders to the governor to send the mother and child to him, and on investigating the case, found the decision of the governor to be right and upheld it. Thus the helpless widow was saved from the clutches of her greedy relatives.[1] Of the second kind of appeal or more correctly the forwarding of a case by the provincial court to the supreme court, the emperor Jahangir has an excellent example in his memoirs.[2] 'Abdul Wahab son of Hakim Ali had preferred a false claim of Rs. 80,000 against the Saiyeds of Lahore, and had produced a signed bond as well as witnesses in proof thereof. But the Saiyeds completely denied it. The plaintiff was prepared to take oath on the Quran, but that did not appear to be reliable to the qazi and sadr. He therefore thought the case to be very complicated and sought the emperor's advice. At first the emperor told them to decide it on the basis of the evidence available. But next day Muatamad Khan after meeting and examining the Saiyeds represented to His Majesty that the matter was a complicated one and needed the greatest reflection and care in dealing with it. Then the emperor commissioned Asaf Khan thoroughly to investigate the real truth of the case. When Asaf Khan announced his intention to examine the parties in his own presence Abdul Wahab lost nerve and tried to persuade the Saiyeds not to proceed with the case, himself offering to withdraw it. Asaf Khan had him brought to Court by force and he confessed that his claim was false. The Khan made his report to the emperor. 'Abdul Wahab was deprived of his jagir and mansab and the Saiyeds were released from custody.

The volume of litigation

In spite of all the facilities for securing justice alluded to above, the amount of litigation was conspicuously small. The reason of this is not far to seek. The greatest

[1] Tavernier, p. 62.

[2] R. and B. II, pp. 157-158. There is reference to this story in the Mirat-i-Ahmadi and M. U. also (Tr. Vol. I, p. 184).

credit in preventing unnecessary and suicidal litigation from increasing mainly among the rural population, was due to the village punchayats. These panchayat courts, being responsible to the people in whose midst they had to exist, had become, by time-honoured traditions such incomparable instruments of deciding disputes, that scarcely, if ever, any such cases arose in which the elders failed to decide the matter to the full satisfaction of the parties. The early British administrators (as has been shown above in the section of village panchayats, Chapter VII) have borne unanimous testimony to the excellent manner in which the village panchayats were still working down to the 19th century. Thus those petty disputes which under modern conditions pile up by the thousand in almost every conceivable court firstly did not arise at all and if some disputes did occur, rarely was it found necessary to carry them to higher courts for appeal. They were decided without any crushing expense and with the best attainable honesty. Nevertheless, as we have already pointed out, the door of appeal to higher authority was not shut against anyone. The second reason of the small volume of litigation was expedition in justice, so that those cases which came to the parganah and higher courts did not have to wait endlessly for hearing and judgment.[1]

[1] Sarkar's thoroughly unwarranted assumption that there were no provincial courts of appeal (Mughal Adm., 2nd Ed., p. 108) is followed by the preposterous statement: "The Indian villager in the Mughal Empire was denied the greatest pleasure of his life in our own times, viz., facility for civil litigation with Government Courts of first instance close at his doors and an abundance of courts of appeal rising up to the High Court at the capital. Men had, therefore, to settle their differences locally, by appeal to the caste courts and local juries (panchayats), the arbitration of an impartial umpire (salis) or by a resort to force." It is indeed highly disconcerting to see a scholar of such repute to make himself responsible for a statement, so baseless so thoroughly opposed to real facts, the statement, namely, that litigation is today the greatest pleasure of the Indian peasants' life. We might appreciate Sir Jadunath's commisseration with the peasants of the Mughal period, but his feeling of gratification that after all in 'our own day' the Indian peasant has found that covetable source of pleasure

Conception of justice and its practical application

Justice as a condition secured by the power of the state to its citizens is not necessarily always compatible with the equality of all in the eyes of the law, that is to say, with impartiality in its application to all men, high or low, rich or poor. The law of the state may be partial, may extend privileges to one man and deprive the other; it may be severer for one and milder for the other; it may even be tyrannical to one community and over-advantageous to the other. But the justice of the state will be satisfied with applying the law as it is. It is not concerned with whether law itself is just or unjust. But judged by an ethical standard a law which refuses to recognise the fundamental equality of all men and of their rights, is unjust in itself. To be just and in conformity with ethical standards the law must be the same for all without any distinction of caste or creed or station in life.

Within certain limitations, viz., of the non-acceptance of a non-Muslim or zimmi as citizen of the state, the Muslim law conformed to the ethical ideal. Once the unbeliever became zimmi, that is, he acknowledged loyalty to the Islamic state, it was tantamount to a sort of contract between him and the state, the latter's obligation

which he was hitherto denied is one of which it would be difficult to find a parallel in the whole body of modern historical literature. As it is, it amounts to a callous piece of satire and becomes all the more incisive when it is realised that the author of these remarks could not conceivably be so completely ignorant of the incalculable sufferings and grinding poverty of the peasantry, for which the British legal system is greatly responsible. His last sentence presumes that the volume of litigation was quite heavy, if not as much as now—a presumption which is equally unwarranted. It was not for want of higher courts that 'men had to settle their differences locally', but because that was the least oppressive, least expensive and most satisfactory method of settling their disputes. To say that they settled their disputes by a resort to force is to imply either the absence or the powerlessness of any controlling authority of the village council as well as the government. It scarcely needs to be said how unfair and unwarranted this statement is.

being the protection and security of the life and property of the zimmi. Here the Muslim law did not make any distinctions. A Muslim and non-muslim thief or adulterer were both liable to equal punishment. None could expect favour by reason of his persuasion or position.

That was the logical position of the law. The Mughal emperors, however, tried to conform to that ideal though with due discretion and discernment. The farman issued by Akbar (1595) has the following instructions to the law officers: Para XVII—"Let them connive at men's faults, as men become more hardened sometime by punishment, or take to flight through fear of it, when they cannot be without fault. In short, there may be one man who must be punished for the first fault, and another who must be forgiven for a thousand. Knowing then that awarding punishment is one of the most difficult matters in the art of government they should award it with mildness and discernment." And again: Para. XIX—"Punish each man according to his rank and station, for a severe glance is like death to a man of good family, while a kick will not reform a man of low birth."[1]

This sort of discrimination would seem to be quite just and proper in principle, if the aim of punishment is to reform and not to retaliate, and it does not run counter to the ethical standards either. But when men of high position and rank are mildly let off or go scot free and are thus encouraged to do further mischief and tyranny then ethical justice is really killed. But in this respect the justice of the Mughals was most stern. No consideration of official rank, nor even royal kinship deterred them from meting out the severest punishment to the culprit.[2]

[1] See Mirat (Bar. Text) Part I, p. 166.

[2] In the 16th year of his reign the emperor Jahangir having been informed that Hoshang, brother's son of Khan-i-Alam, had committed a murder, summoned the accused and finding the charge after due enquiry to be true, ordered him to be executed. Referring to this occasion the emperor says "God forbid that in such cases I should consider princes, and far less that I should consider amirs. I hope the grace of God may support me in this." (Vide R and B. II, p. 211).

Nor were notions of a false prestige allowed to thwart the course of justice and tarnish the good name of the ruler. To the Mughals, prestige consisted in inspiring confidence, not in awe. As a matter of fact wherever a responsible official was found to be guilty of oppression or injustice in his dealings with the people, the emperors invariably gave exemplary and deterrent punishment. There are many evidences which go far to prove that this was the ideal of the Mughals. Father Monserrate testifies to it in these clear words: "The king's severity towards errors and misdemeanours committed by officials in the course of government business is remarkable, for he is most stern with offenders against the public faith. Hence all are afraid of his severity and strive with all their might to do as he directs and desires. For the king has the most precise regard for right and justice in the affairs of government."[1] Even when Jahangir and Shah Jahan, owing to their lethargy and loss of zeal and vigour in administration in the latter part of their reigns, paid less attention to the affairs of government, their keenness to do justice was not abated. In these periods of laxity the administration of justice also would have surely suffered demoralisation in the hands of unscrupulous officers. Moreover even during the periods of most efficient and vigorous administration there would have been many cases of injustice and misdemeanour. Indeed, no government, however efficient, can entirely prevent the occurrence of such cases. But we notice that even in times of laxity on the part of the sovereigns the force of public opinion and fear of obloquy constituted a strong bulwark of the safety of the public interests and liberties. This is fully borne out by the testimony of both foreign and native writers. Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi, the chief judge (sadr and qazi) of Gujrat was suspended from office because the people of Ahmedabad complained and petitioned against him. Badaoni says that he used to take

[1] Monserrate, p. 209. Instances of strict and stern justice will be cited presently under the section 'Punishments'.

bribes. When after due enquiry his guilt was proved, he was not only dismissed but imprisoned in the fortress of Ranthambhor (1584 A. D.)[1]. In the 42nd Ilahi year Saiyed Sultan, a learned man, who had been made karori of Thaneshwar in response to his own desire was executed because the people of Thaneswar complained against his greedy and oppressive administration.[2] In the 12th year of Jahangir Raja Kalyan was governor of Orissa. Some people sent complaints against his conduct and the emperor appointed the prime minister Asaf Khan to make an enquiry. The Raja having been found guiltless was acquitted and allowed to present himself before the emperor.[3] Tavernier gives an occurrence of Shah Jahan's time which took place at Patna when the traveller was staying there. A certain commander of 1000 (horse) disgraced a boy who was in his service. The boy, overwhelmed with grief, chose his time and killed his master and then openly announced what he had done. The governor put him in prison but released him after a time, and although all the relatives of the deceased did what they could to procure the boy's execution, the governor did not dare to condemn him as he feared the people, who maintained that the young man had acted rightly.[4] Manrique (Shah Jahan's time) gives an extremely lucid and illuminating case of the manner in which the force of public opinion was recognised by the sovereign authority, and how it made itself felt by the local officers. Manrique and party were travelling from Jalesar to Narayangarh in Orissa. They stopped one night in a cattle shed in a village. One of the party killed two domestic peacocks belonging to a Hindu and the party had a hearty meal of them. Next morning

[1] Mirat (I. O. 3597) fol. 83b.

A. N. III, 264 (Tr.) 383; Badaoni II, 277, lays the responsibility of his being imprisoned again on Abul Fazl with whom the sadr is said to have quarrelled, but he is not reliable.

[2] Saiyed Sultan was a very learned man and was the collaborator of Badaoni in translating the Mahabharat. A. N. III, 748. Tr. p. 1118.

[3] R and B. I, 390.

[4] Tavernier, pp. 100-101.

they were all arrested and their whole luggage taken into custody. When the culprit was produced before the shiqdar the latter admonished him in these words: "Art thou not a Bengali and a Musalman? How then didst thou dare in a Hindu district to kill a living thing?" Manrique very cleverly pleaded with the Muslim shiqdar for the acquittal of the man on the plea that in Islam it was not a sin to kill animals. The shiqdar agreed but said "The emperor who conquered these lands from the heathen had given his word that he and his successors would let them live under their own laws and customs: he therefore allowed no breach of them". He promised, however, to make the punishment lighter than demanded by the accusers. The rest of the party were then released but the offender was sent to the prison (bandikhana). Manrique tried by some subterfuge to get the man's release, but says "The complainants being representatives of the whole village the shiqdar dared not offend them". He commuted the punishment from mutilation of the right hand to that of his fingers, but Manrique eventually succeeded in saving his fingers also. The culprit was, however, ordered by the shiqdar to be publicly whipped because the "complainants were importunate to see him punished in their presence." This case is typical of the conditions prevailing at that time and scarcely needs comment. If such was the force and fear of public opinion on the district officer, and be it noted, in one of the most distant and inaccessible provinces of the empire, conditions nearer the centre, it may safely be presumed, were far more satisfactory. It also shows that though Jahangir and Shah Jahan both occasionally gave vent to an intolerant policy, their ambitions in this direction were frustrated by the force of tradition and they had to bend before the demands of their people. Fidai Khan, the governor of Bengal, was removed by Shah Jahan because lots of people had complained against his

[1] Manrique, II, pp. 108-114.

extortions. But he protested that the complaints were absurd and nothing was proved against him. He was therefore restored.[1] The governor of Gujrat (Hafiz Muhammad Nasir, diwan, 1648-52?) was imprisoned for life in Patna on account of his exactions and misgovernment. The merchants had made complaints against him which on enquiry were found authentic.[2] These instances, to which many more can be added, seem to show beyond question how effective public opinion was in those days and how effective it was in safe-guarding the interests of the people from oppressive officials.[3]

In the latter part of Shah Jahan's reign and thereafter, considerable corruption and demoralisation had gradually crept into the judicial administration. One great reason of this was that the post of the qazi became for all practical purposes, hereditary. A qazi trained

[1] M. U. (Tr.) I, 563.

[2] Manucci, I, 198.

[3] Sarkar has adduced the story of Shah Jahan's wrath when he learned that the revenue officer had charged revenue even from a plot which had been left to the cultivator by the receding of the river. (Mughal Adm. pp. 81-82). In spite of such overwhelming evidences, we come across such rash pieces of writing with pretensions to sober research, as this: "There is no denying the fact that judicial work under the Mughals was extremely corrupt. From the qazi to the emperor, everybody was greedy and grabbing. It is no exaggeration to say that justice then was a marketable commodity". (D. Pant in 'The Commercial Policy of the Mughals' p. 43). The learned Doctor has only drawn upon the opinions of some modern writers who have uncritically relied on such flimsy and weak evidences as those of Palsaert. Neither has he troubled to sift and investigate the overwhelming contemporary evidence of other writers, both foreign and Indian, which warrants no such conclusions. What is most surprising, however, is that instead of faithfully reproducing the views of his originals, the learned doctor has made such a sweeping generalisation about everybody concerned with the judicial administration, not excluding even any of the emperors, and has asserted it so emphatically, as almost infinitely to intensify the picture drawn by his predecessors. One would expect such dogmatic and emphatic statements to be based on firmer ground. His boldness must be the envy of his predecessors.

his son to qualify for his own profession and gradually by a sort of imperceptible convention the qazi families became established. In the time of Aurangzeb qazi Abdul Wahab was extremely avaricious and hoarded a great deal of wealth from bribes. But his son after him proved to be just the reverse. The author of the Masir-ul-Umara refers to the ignorance and corruption of the qazis in strong words.[1]

Fees of the qazis

Incidentally the fees of the qazis are referred to. They used to charge fees on marriage (nikahana) and on dowers (mehrana), to which they considered their title as to 'their mother's milk'.[2]

Legal procedure

The duties of the qazi as defined by Muslim jurists have already been noticed. As regards the place of holding courts it is provided that the qazi should either hold it in the mosque where every Muslim, poor or rich, had free access, or at his house, provided he allowed everybody equally free access there.

He should have kātibs (writers) with him to record evidence in the court and interpreters in case he does not know the language of any party or witness.

When the plaintiff comes to the court without a written plaint the qazi should send him to the katib who would record his statement in the prescribed form and summon the defendant. When both parties appear and the plaint is put before the qazi, he should examine it, and if it is valid and in order, he should proceed with the case; if not, he should reject it.

During the hearing of the case the qazi must remain silent and must listen attentively to the statement of the plaintiff, which should be recorded either by his writer

[1] M. U., I. (Tr.) pp. 75-76.
[2] M. U. I. (Tr.) p. 77.

or by himself. After the plaintiff has stated his case the qazi should turn to the defendant and say: 'Such and such a charge has been brought against you, what have you to say? Do you accept it or do you not?' Then the qazi must record the reply of the defendant and if it be a denial, take his defence statement also. When the statements of both are thus recorded the qazi would ask them if they are correct and when both testify to their correctness, he would examine the case. If the case happens to be simple so that the qazi can pass a judgment thereon on the spot, he should do it at once. But if he is not satisfied with the evidence he should ask the plaintiff to produce further evidence in support of his plaint, in accordance with the provisions of the law of evidence.

Similarly when a witness will come to give evidence the qazi should not direct him in any way, but quietly record his evidence. Then after fully considering the whole case he would pass his judgment in accordance with the 'Law' (Shara). If the case is decreed against the defendant the qazi should order him to make recompense on the spot, but should not put him into jail in the event of his inability to pay, unless so requested by the plaintiff. None should be put under arrest for non-payment unless two witnesses give evidence of his capacity to pay.[1]

It may be reasonably presumed that the above procedure would substantially have been followed by the qazis and other judicial officers in Mughal courts. But no detailed report of any actual trial or civil suit is available, so far as I know. But we know something of the manner of working of the courts from stray references. With the emperors it was usual to have the complaints read out before them and after hearing both the parties to decide the case then and there, if necessary, in consultation with the legal experts, who were always present on such occasions to render legal advice.[2] The qazis and governors also seem to have followed almost the same practice

[1] See Hedaya, Almavardi and Suluk-ul-Mulk. (Or. 253).
[2] Bernier, p. 263; Lahori, I, pp. 149-150.

so far as criminal cases were concerned. But in civil suits documentary evidence also played an equally important part and was frequently produced.

Varieties of evidence and their weight

Several kinds of evidence are alluded to in the contemporary accounts, viz., witnesses, oath, written documents, and ordeal. If the witness or suitor was a Christian, he took oath on the Gospel, if a Muslim, on the Quran, and if a Hindu, on the Cow.[1] But the emperor Akbar laid down certain general principles of investigation for the guidance of judicial officers which may be reasonably taken to have been followed after him too. He instructed his officers on several occasions not to rely mechanically either on witnesses, oaths or any other such evidence, but to exercise their intelligence and ingenuity and get at the real truth by various suitable methods. Concerning this, Abul Fazl writes: "In the investigation into the cases of the oppressed, he places no reliance on testimony or on oaths, which are the resort of the crafty, but draws his conclusions from the contradictions in the statements, physiognomy and from sublime ways of investigation and far-sighted conjectures.[2] When Prince Daniyal was appointed governor of Illahabad (42nd year) one of the instructions given him on this occasion was: "Be slow and profound in enquiries, and be not satisfied with writings, witnesses, and oaths. Let varied investigations be made, and consider the lines of the forehead."[3]

The place of holding court under the Mughals was no more either the mosque or the qazi's house. The courts were held in official buildings specially meant for the purpose. The kachery (court) of the qazi at Agra was situated outside the gate of the fort, and after it that

[1] Thevenot, III, 19.

[2] A. N. III, 257 (Tr.) 373.

[3] Ibid., 722 (Tr.) 1078-'79; and p. 390 (Tr.) 577-'78.

gate was called the kachery gate.[1] The kachery was also called the chabutra.[2]

In the year 995 H. (1586) an order was passed that the cases of Hindus were to be tried by Hindu pandits and not by qazis.

Despatch in business

Despatch in judicial work was a conspicuous and prominent feature of the Mughal administration. This was rendered possible by the nature of the system itself. The great bulk of the petty civil and criminal work was disposed of first by the village panchayats and caste guilds, and whatever passed beyond them, by the district officers. Consequently the quantity of litigation which went up to the provincial or imperial courts was incredibly small. This was one of the causes which helped expedition of justice. Then the filing of suits and the procedure of the courts were not overburdened at every step with a multiplicity of formalities to be fulfilled before the suits could come up for trial. Nor was there the ingenious lawyer to delay the process indefinitely by a display of his debating faculty. That there are great advantages of lawyers and the system has great potentialities for good, none can deny. But it has become so demoralised and mercenary in spirit at present, that it is more than doubtful whether the litigants of that period were anywise the losers for the absence of lawyers and pleaders. Some writers have supposed that the system was rather too hasty and have characterised it as of 'a rough and ready kind'. But I think it is hardly a fair account of it. There was no undue haste in the normal affairs of the courts. It is undeniable that occasionally promptness and expedition would have led to some injustice, but the percentage of such cases of injustice on this score could not be more than the inevitable minimum which cannot be eliminated

[1] Finch, 183; Tavernier, p. 79, says that there was a judge's court or court of justice inside the Fort Palace of Shah Jahan at Dihli.

[2] Manrique, II, 160.

under any form of administration. On the other hand, the notorious evils of 'laws delays' have been unanimously recognised and condemned in no uncertain terms, in modern times. Bernier frankly admits the advantages of quick justice. 'We cannot indeed too greatly admire the old Persian proverb.....(Speedy injustice is preferable to tardy justice). Protracted law-suits are, I admit, insupportable evils in any state, and it is incumbent upon a sovereign to provide a remedy against them'.[1] Akbar fully realised the great hardships which delay in courts caused to the suitors. It was mainly in order to expedite judicial work and to avoid fraud that he felt the need of splitting up the imperial sadarat (the religious and judicial authority of the empire) into five separate jurisdictions, in the 26th Ilahi year, 'so that applicants might not have the pain of delay.'[2]

Justice by means of commissions

Practically all writers who have treated the subject of justice under the Mughals leave the impression that justice was done in a somewhat hasty manner, and while it had obvious advantages, its great defect was that cases requiring rather a serious deliberation and patient investigation had little chance of receiving adequate attention or justice. But even a cursory perusal of the contemporary sources would be enough to convince us of the deep care and concern which the Mughal emperors evinced in all judicial affairs. Indeed they seldom failed to give to any case the degree of attention which its importance demanded and invariably caused a thorough enquiry to be made before finally deciding it. For such difficult matters they made very frequent use of the agency of judicial committees or commissions to investigate the truth. This was a favourite device with all the emperors and was regularly employed. It is not a little curious that such a conspicuous feature of their judicial system should have

[1] Bernier, pp. 237-238.
[2] A. N. III, p. 372.

been completely ignored by all previous writers. Perhaps it has been passed over as of no consequence. The actual facts, however, prove clearly that the system of trials either by special or by standing judicial committees was really the ultimate method and agency of doing justice, and must be regarded as higher than even the court of the imperial sadr, because the services of a judicial committee were sought in the most difficult and important cases which were considered too complicated for the ordinary courts to try.

There were two kinds of judicial committees: permanent or standing committees and special committees. A standing judicial committee for the purpose of expediting justice and saving the people from the distress caused by delay as also for general improvement in the tone and practice of justice was created by the Emperor Akbar in the 28th Ilahi year (A. D. 1585). The origin of this committee was as follows. In the 27th Ilahi year the emperor had called the chief nobles of the court to a sort of privy council and invited their suggestions for improvements in the government of the country. Raja Bribal's suggestion was that 'some right-minded and energetic men should be appointed as inspectors in every place to represent impartially the condition of the oppressed people and seekers after justice, and to report unavoidable calamities.'[1] The emperor approved of this suggestion and to give it effect he entrusted the administration of justice to a standing committee of four members consisting of Raja Birbal (who was apparently the chairman), Hakim Hummam, Shamsher Khan kotwal and Qasim Ali Khan. An order was issued that they should not be satisfied with witnesses and oaths, but make a profound investigation. Commenting on this new measure Abul Fazl observes: "The deeds of one party (the oppressor) were very base, and the condition of the

[1] A. N. III, 380 (Tr.) 558-560.

[2] Ibid., 405. It should be noted that the kotwal of the empire was a member of the judicial committee, which fact shows that the kotwal had an important connection with the department of justice.

other (the petitioner) very bewildered. On account of the bribery of the oppressor and of his high position, and of the helplessness of the oppressed, it was necessary that there should be no slackness in the enquiry"...It is clear from these remarks that this committee was created to deal with the complaints and appeals made by the people against the unjust and oppressive public servants.[1] This committee worked during the time of Akbar but I do not know whether similar committees existed under his successors.

Special commissions

Special commissions appointed for investigation of particular cases were a feature common to all the three reigns under review, and we come across a considerable number of these in the chronicles. Occasionally only one reliable noble of high rank, assisted by a staff, was commissioned to do the job. The following cases will serve to illustrate the point:—

1. In the time of Islam Shah Sur one Shah Muhammad Wali who was respected by the king, desired to marry his daughter to Mir Shamsuddin a renowned physician, but the latter rejected the proposal. The Wali took such offence at this that one day he invited the physician and his uncle to a dinner and had them murdered. When the city magistrate asked him to explain how it had happened, he totally denied any knowledge of the plot. The magistrate prepared a report of the whole affair under the great seal (مهر اکابر) and sent it together with a despatch to the king. Islam Shah, in order to investigate the case thoroughly, despatched to Dihli a commission consisting of Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Abdullah of Sultanpur, who was Sheikh-ul-Islam and Sadr-us-sudur. The enquiry took two months and eventually the crime of the

[1] For ordinary judicial work the office of Sadr-i-Jahan had already been divided into five different circles, as referred to above.

Wali was established.[1]

2. Mirza Pulad son of Khudadad Barlas, being a very violent Sunni, one night attacked Mullah Ahmad Talla, a believer in Imami doctrines, and cut off his arm, believing that he had cut off his head. The culprits were searched for and apprehended by the kotwal (عسس) that very night, but denied their guilt, although their clothes bore bloodstains. The emperor appointed a commission consisting of the Khan Khanan Asaf Khan (brother-in-law of Abul Fazl), Khudawand Khan and Abul Fazl. The accused were found guilty and given exemplary punishment.[2]

3. Khan-i-Azam Mirza Aziz Koka (emperor's foster-brother) handed over his diwan to his servant who beat him so much that he died. Koka executed his servant, but the father of the deceased diwan complained to Akbar. On this the emperor appointed qazi Jalal (of the army) to go and investigate the case. Aziz Koka was so much frightened that he compounded with the complainant by paying him a large sum as indemnity and he withdrew the case.[3]

4. The case of Abdul Wahab's false claim of Rs. 80,000 against the Saiyeds of Lahore and the appointment of Asaf Khan to investigate it by the emperor Jahangir has already been referred to above.

5. In the 11th year of Jahangir's reign, Abdullah Khan Bahadur Firoz Jung, governor of Gujrat, mishandled his Bakhshi Ahid Khan for the latter's reporting certain matters unfavourable to him. The Bakshi complained to the emperor who thought the matter to be serious and at once commissioned Dayanat Khan to proceed to Ahmedabad to investigate the case. The governor, on hearing of this, was so unnerved, that he made an abject surrender and started on foot to the court to beg pardon.[4]

[1] Bad. I, 391-394.
[2] A. N. III, 527; (Tr.) 804.
[3] A. N. III, 266; Tr. 387.
[4] R and B. I, 330-331.

Criminal justice

Islamic principles of punishment

According to Islamic law, punishments are divided into three classes, viz.; Hadd, Qisas and Ta'zib.

1. Hadd (pl. Hudud; literally "that which is defined") is that punishment the limits of which have been defined in the qoran and hadis. The following belong to this class:—

(*a*) Adultery (zina), for which the adulterer must be stoned.

(*b*) Fornication (zina), for which the guilty person must receive one hundred stripes.

(*c*) The false accusation of a married person with adultery (kazf), for which the offender must receive eighty stripes.

(*d*) Apostacy (Irtidad), which is punishable with death.

(*e*) Drinking wine (sharb), for which the offender must receive eighty lashes.

(*f*) Theft (sarikah), which is to be punished by cutting off the right hand.

(*g*) Highway robbery (qata'ut-tariq) (قطع الطريق), for robbery only, the loss of hands and feet; and for robbery with murder, death, either by the sword or crucifixion.

2. Qisas, literally, "retaliation", is that punishment which, although fixed by law, can be remitted by the person offended against or in the case of a murdered person, by his heirs. It is applicable to cases of murder and of wounding. Qisas is the 'lex talionis' of Moses i.e. "eye for eye, tooth for tooth.....", but in allowing a money compensation Muhammad departed from the Jewish code.

3. Ta'zib is a punishment which is left to the discretion of the qazi or judge.[1]

[1] Hughes' Dictionary of Islam, pp. 476-477.

In the above classification no distinction is recognised between the offenders on the score of their position or general character. Secondly the principle of punishment is not uniform. In some cases it is deterrent and hence very stern, such as apostacy, theft or robbery. In others, such as fornication, it is comparatively milder and hence reformative.

The principles of punishment according to Abul Fazl

Abul Fazl in his preface to the Ain-i-Akbari, discusses the general principles of punishment, in which he takes the personal character of the offender also into consideration.[1] He classifies men worthy of punishment into two broad categories, the inconsiderate man, and the vicious man. If the inconsiderate man commits some fault or crime owing to his foolishness, he should be corrected by advice and admonition or severe censure, if necessary. But in the case of a vicious person a severer remedy is necessary. First he should be imprisoned; if this remedy fails, he should be deprived of his dwelling: if this also does not avail, he should be exiled. If this even fails to improve him, he should be deprived of the instruments of wickedness and lose his sight, or his hand, or his foot, as a last resource. 'But the king should not go so far as to cut the thread of existence'. Abul Fazl then explains further: "It is therefore necessary for just kings to make themselves first acquainted with the rank and character of men, by the light of insight and penetration, and then to regulate business accordingly". That this principle of punishment based on a due discrimination according to the character of the offender was followed by Akbar is evidenced by the instructions he issued to his governor in this connection (see above). So we cannot say that the Mughal emperors in our period strictly adhered to the Islamic principles or even to the Islamic laws of punishment, although in the case of certain crimes,

[1] Ain, p. 6. (Tr. I, p. IX).

such as theft, their punishments were practically the same as prescribed by the Quran. In other matters, they greatly departed from the Quranic laws and the reasons for this departure were that, firstly there were many cases which did not come exactly within the ambit of the Quranic law, and secondly, in many cases social and political needs and the attendant circumstances demanded a different treatment. Consequently they freely exercised discretion without being mechanically tied down by any set of rules or laws.

An attempt may now be made to classify the different kinds of punishments which were given under the Mughal rule, with the offences for which they were given.

1. Fines and confiscations, or forfeiture of rank and title, or dismissal from office, or subjecting to humiliation by other methods.
2. Imprisonment and internment.
3. Banishment.
4. Whipping and other corporal punishments.
5. Mutilation of the offending limbs.
6. Execution.
7. Cases of royal wrath.

The first three classes of punishments were often given to government servants for different kinds of faults but other people also received the same punishments for crimes of similar nature. The crimes committed by public servants in their official capacity, can be broadly classed under two heads: (1) acts of oppression on the people or dereliction of duty and (2) treason, rebellion or effrontery against the sovereign. Cases of injustice or misrule were punished in proportion to the gravity of the crime.

Cases of misrule or abuse of power or moral turpitude

Haji Ibrahim, sadr of Gujrāt, was imprisoned in Ranthambhor, after due enquiry by Akbar.

Mirza Rustam Safavi, governor of Thattah, was recalled from office.

Muqarrab Khan, governor of Gujrat, was deprived of half of his mansab for forcibly taking the daughter of a woman.

Izzat Khan, governor of Sindh, having behaved disgracefully in attempting to violate the chastity of the daughter of a rich man, was dismissed and deprived of all rank and pay. Murtaza Khan, Governor of Gujrat, was recalled on account of misgovernment.[1] In one case the governor of Gujrat got life imprisonment in Patna fort, on account of misgovernment.[2]

Cases of dereliction and neglect of public duty, or of injustice, insubordination, effrontery or dishonesty

Mirza Aziz Koka was opposed to the branding regulation and when it was ordered to be enforced, the Mirza behaved most insolently. The emperor interned him in his own garden.[3]

Khan Khanan Abdur Rahim was recalled from the Deccan for neglect of duty and remained unemployed for a year.[4] Raja Jagannath was deprived of his jagir for a similar reason.[5]

Sabit Khan was imprisoned in Gwalior fort for abusing Itmad-ud-Daulah, father of Asaf Khan. Ahmad Beg Khan was imprisoned in Ranthambhor on the complaint of Qalij Khan commander of the army, for misbehaviour.[6]

In the fifth year of Jahangir during the absence on leave of Afzal Khan, governor of Patna for some time, the officers left in charge could not suppress a rebellion raised by certain people. The emperor summoned them to Agra, had their hair and beards cut off, and had them dressed in women's clothes and seated on asses and paraded round the city of Agra and its bazaars as a warning and

[1] R and B. I, 153.
[2] Manucci, I, 198.
[3] A. N. III, 147, Tr. 208-209.
[4] R and B., I, 179-180.
[5] Ibid. I, 241.
[6] Ibid. I, pp. 278-279.

example to others (a case of punishment by humiliation to set an example)[1]

Abdullah Khan having gone away to his jagir without leave from the subahdar of the Deccan, was deprived of his jagir.[2]

Sheikh Farid, governor of Balkh, since its conquest in the 19th year of Shah Jahan's reign, was ordered in the 22nd year to join Raja Bethal Das who was made governor of Lahore. Being jealous of the latter he delayed. Consequently he was deprived of his rank and jagir and reduced to the position of rozinadars.[3]

Abdul Wahab, son of Hakim Ali, was deprived of his rank and jagir for bringing a false suit against the sayyids of Lahore (see above).

The shiqdar under the kotwal of Midnapur (in the case quoted above), was punished for arresting and troubling Manrique and his party, thinking them to be pirates of Chatagoan. The kotwal was persuaded to send a mild report against his inconsiderate action to the Nawab of Cuttack. In spite of this the shiqdar had to pay a fine of 200 rupees.[4]

Banishment

Some cases were punished by banishment. For instance, Haji Sultan of Thanesar was banished to Bhakkar on account of an accusation of cow-killing brought against him by the Hindus.[5] Shaikh Husain, grandson of Khwaja Mu'in-ud-din of Ajmer, was also banished to Bhakkar for impertinent behaviour.[6] After the passing of the branding regulation (20th Ilahi year) several officers were, on examination, found to be defaulting in the maintenance of the obligatory number of troops. For this fraud

[1] Ibid. I, pp. 175-176.
[2] R and B., II, 217.
[3] Khafi Khan, I, pp. 683-684.
[4] Manrique, I, 425.
[5] Bad. III, 118.
[6] Bad. III, 300.

they were punished by being sent away to distant Bengal, and were deprived of their original jagirs. This was, says Abul Fazl, the strongest method of showing displeasure and punishing those for whom it was a matter of great disgrace to be removed from the presence.[1] It would appear that some far off and climatically uncomfortable provinces, such as Bhakkar and Bengal were used as penal divisions of the empire in order to punish guilty officials. A soldier was punished with dismissal and banishment for enticing the girl of a clerk.[2]

Whipping, mutilation and other corporal punishments were administered in cases of theft, robbery, fornication, etc. For instance, we have seen above the case of a man of Manrique's party, who was saved with very great difficulty from mutilation of hands but had to undergo whipping, for killing peacocks in a Hindu locality. Jahangir while staying at Ahmedabad ordered the thumbs of the servant of Muqarrab Khan, the governor, to be cut off *'as a warning to others'*, his fault being that he had cut down some champa trees alongside the river.[3] Hafiz Qasim was castrated by Akbar's orders for violating the chastity of a woman.[4] Barkhurdar, son of Abdur Rahman, was imprisoned for attempting murder.[5] Sharif Khan, son of Muhammad Abdus Samad Shirin Qalam, was beaten and put into prison for being implicated in a case of adultery.[6] In one case of murder resulting from grave provocation the culprit was let off simply with six months' imprisonment.

Capital punishment

Capital punishment was resorted to in cases of high misdemeanour, both of a private and public character,

[1] A. N. III, 148; Tr. 209-210.
[2] Manucci, I, 203.
[3] R and B. I, 432.
[4] A. N. III, 733. Tr. 1093 (42nd year of reign).
[5] Ibid, 758.
[6] Ibid, 569.

such as tyranny or cruelty towards the subjects, treason and sedition, adultery of a heinous type, homicide, and so on. The Emperor Akbar, however, was inclined to be mild even in cases of seditious conspiracy or actual rebellion, and only punished them with imprisonment, unless considerations of the safety of the kingdom or of public peace necessitated the extreme penalty.[1]

Cases of rebellion

Khan-i-Zaman (1567 A. D.), his brother Bahadur and his companions were executed. But those who had fled from the court and joined the enemy were thrown under the feet of elephants.[2] Twelve deserters were captured during Kabul expedition. The emperor investigated their case and ordered their execution, but forgave them because a cynical fellow among them pleased the emperor by his antics.[3]

Cases of adultery

Seducers or adulterers were strangled or gibbeted.[4] Akbar's chief trade commissioner was remorselessly strangled by the king's orders for violently debauching a Brahman girl.[5]

Cases of murder

1. Two officers were executed for causing the murder of muftis in Kashmir which was yet an allied state (1569 A. D.).[6]

2. Pahar Singh, governor of Jalaur fort, for murdering his mother.[7]

[1] Muhammad Ali Alam Shahi and his accomplices in a conspiracy of revolt were only imprisoned. See A. N. III, p. 298. But having proved incorrigible had to be executed.

[2] Bad. II, 97-101.

[3] Monserrate, 109.

[4] Ibid. 210-211.

[5] Bad. II, 124.

[6] Bad. II, 124.

[7] R and B. I, 353.

3. Jala, a favourite, for seducing a woman and killing her husband.[1]

4. Subhan Quli, son of Akbar's chief huntsman, attempted to murder Islam Khan, governor of Bengal. He fled and was captured and executed.[2]

5. Hoshang, Khan Alam's nephew, executed for committing murder.[3]

6. Sometimes, though very rarely, the culprits were thrown under the feet of elephants. Fulad and his accomplice were tied to the feet of an elephant and paraded through the city for trying to murder and for seriously wounding Mullah Ahmad from religious fanaticism.[4] Jujhar Khan, a powerful officer of Gujrat, was thrown under the feet of an elephant for committing the murder of Chingez Khan whose mother sought justice.[5] (1574 A. D.).

7. A krori was hanged for tyrannical behaviour in Thaneswar,[6] on the complaint of the people.

8. In Sylhet and Bengal there was a custom among the people of making some of their children eunuchs and of giving them to the governor instead of revenue. Jahangir prohibited this cruelty by order and executed all those guilty of that act.[7]

9. Only in one instance we find impalement being resorted to by Jahangir, viz., in that of the rebels who sided with Khusru in his persistent rebellion against the emperor. This was evidently an outcome of the exasperation to which the incident had roused the emperor.

Manucci mentions the case of an old woman and her young accomplice, who carried on immoral traffic, and laid false claim to a chaste woman, having been buried in

[1] A. N. III, 390.
[2] Ibid, II, 27-28.
[3] R and B. II, 211.
[4] A. N. III, 527.
[5] A. N. III, 32.
[6] A. N. III, 748.
[7] R and B. I, 150.

the ground up to the waist and shot by arrows. A similar case of a woman in Kabul, who used to entice men, cut their heels and sell them into slavery, came to the notice of Mahabat Khan, the governor, who considered it extraordinary and forwarded it to the emperor who had the woman torn to pieces by dogs.[1] But Manucci's statements must be taken *cum grano salis*. Habitual thieves and robbers were given deterrent punishment in order to frighten the others. Their heads were cut and built into towers for others to see, and sometimes they were thrown under the feet of elephants.[2]

But it must be noted in this connection that the death penalty was given with extreme care and precaution even where the culprit fully deserved it. It was not in the power of the provincial courts to pass a sentence of death on any man, except in cases of dangerous sedition. If they thought anyone deserving of it, they had to send the whole proceedings of the case to the emperor for his final judgment and sentence. Further, capital punishment could in no case be inflicted without the previous sanction of the emperor.[3] Even in cases where the sentence was passed by the emperor himself, the rule was that the executioner was not to carry out the sentence until the emperor had repeated the order for execution for the third time.[4]

[1] Manucci also talks of people being thrown to dogs sometimes, or even bitten to pieces by men. These stories are based on hearsay and not on personal observation. Nor are they supported by other sources.

[2] Mundy, II, 232.

[3] Thevenot, Pt. III, 19; Mirat (Bar. Text), p. 164.

[4] Among the suggestions for the improvement of the administration which, on the emperor's invitation, were submitted by his courtiers in the 27th Ilahi year, Khan-i-Azam Mirza Aziz Koka had represented that the provincial governments should not have the authority of capital punishment without laying the matter before the king. The various suggestions were accepted and carried out by the emperor. Vide A. N. III, 380; Monserrate, p. 209.

In the 13th year of his reign Jahangir passed an order 'that whenever an order was given for anyone's execution, notwithstanding

Procedure of criminal trials in court

The incident of the arrest of Manrique and his companions during their journey from Hugli to Gaur referred to above, furnishes a good example of criminal trials in court. The accused, four in number, were considered to be felons of the worst sort, having been taken for the Feringhi pirates, and were firmly secured and forwarded under a strong guard of six soldiers to the court of kotwal at Midnapur. As soon as they entered the court where the kotwal was sitting the head of the guard asked them to make obeisance to him by bowing their heads. Then the head guard made due courtesies and proceeeding forward handed to the kotwal the shiqdar's letter, the prisoners meanwhile standing behind. The kotwal, having read the letter, ordered the accused to be brought forward, telling an officer to read the shiqdar's letter aloud, so that they might hear the charges against them. (The shiqdar had made a false statement that they had been taken raiding). The charges having been read, the kotwal asked the prisoners to answer. One of them who knew Hindustani well explained the whole position and the shiqdar's treatment of them. The kotwal on hearing this assured them of justice and asked them to sit down. A written reply was given to the head guard (evidently a receipt of the prisoners) and he and his men were dismissed. When the guards had gone the kotwal had their hands untied and asked if they had any acquaintance in the city. They said they had none. Then the kotwal himself sent for some merchants and one of them ultimately discovered that Manrique was a friend of one of the most respected Christian Fathers at Banja. Through this man's assistance the case remained pending until Manrique wrote a letter to the 'Father' at Banja and

that the commands were imperative, they should wait till sunset before putting him to death. If up to that time no order for release should arrive,' the execution should without fail be carried out. R and B. II, 27-28.

the latter's reply, attesting their identity, was received. As soon as this arrived, their merchant friend went to the kotwal, showed him the letter he had received, gave security and bail and got the order for their release. Two officers of the *chabutra* (magistracy) were then sent with the merchant to get them released from the public prison (*bandikhana*) where they had been kept meanwhile.[1]

Prisons and their administration

Under this head it is proposed briefly to review the system of punishment of criminals by imprisonment, banishment and internment. Banishment and internment have already been dealt with above and a few examples have been also adduced to show in what cases these punishments were resorted to. These two, therefore, need not detain us any more.

The regular jails for confining convicts were of two classes which, for the sake of convenience, I shall call A class and B class jails. The A class jails were meant for imprisoning men of high rank, high government officials and princes, that is to say, they were meant for the royalty and aristocracy. The B class jails were meant for criminals of ordinary status, that is, for the rank and file. For the royalty and nobility several fortresses situated in different parts of the country were used as prisons. Occasionally, however, the same fort was used as a prison for both classes of prisoners, although there were separate apartments for them inside the fort. The forts which were used as prisons were Gwalior, Ranthambhor, Rohtas (East)[2] Bhakkar,[3] Junnair[4] (south) and Biana.[5] Probably some other forts were also used for the purpose. It seems that the central prisons of provincial capitals were also used to imprison political convicts of

[1] Manrique, II, 415-425.
[2] Finch, 145.
[3] Bad. II, 300 and 366, also III, 88.
[4] Or. 175, fol. 177a.
[5] M. U. (Tr.) I, 134.

high standing and high government officials. For instance, when Shah Abul Maali turned treasonous and was arrested, Akbar spared his life, but sent him to be imprisoned at Lahore under the custody of the chief kotwal. On hearing the news of this incident Munim Khan, governor of Kabul, put Abul Maali's brother, Muhammad Hashim, Jagirdar of Kahmard, into the local prison.[1]

But besides the forts and central prisons of the capital towns, there were jails also at the headquarters of the sarkars and parganahs. These public jails were called *bandikhānās*. But it seems that besides the public prisons for common criminals there were some better places for keeping under custody prisoners of a higher station in life. (See Manrique, I, p. 421). We know, for instance, from Manrique's account of his arrest on two occasions referred to above, that there were regular bandikhānās in Midnapore which was the seat of a sarkar and at the seat of the shiqdar which was a parganah. A similar reference to these smaller jails is to be found in a communication of Khan-i-Dauran, governor of Orissa (1660-1667) to his agent Muhammad Jan, when sending to him some fraudulent qanungos and zamindars who had been released from prison.[2]

The most prominent fort which was used mainly as a prison for princes[3] and occasionally for nobles and high officials was that of Gwalior.[4] But part of it seems to have served as a prison for ordinary men also.[5] Next to Gwalior in importance was the fort of Ranthambhor. This was likewise used for both classes of prisoners.[6]

[1] A. N. II, (Tr.) pp. 29-30

[2] Sarkar: Studies in Mughal India, p. 216.

[3] Monserrate, 211; Finch, 145; Bernier, 14; Mundy, 61.

[4] Bad. III, 79.

[5] Or. 175, foll. 72b-73a. (In the 5th year of his reign emperor Shah Jahan inspected the Gwalior Fort and released those prisoners who did not deserve long sentences).

[6] In the 11th year of reign, Jahangir, when moving from Ajmer, halted near Ranthambhor and 'as the neighbourhood of the said fort

It is not unlikely that the other forts might also have served both purposes although I have come across no evidence to that effect.

Administration of the prisons

The length or period of imprisonment does not seem to have been defined by any definite rules, its determination being left to the discretion of the trying magistrate. It would seem that most of the criminals were disposed of by being punished in the various other ways described above. The penalty of imprisoment seems to have been administered in the main to the government servants, high as well as low, who were guilty of breach of trust, fraud, oppression or treason. The common people were consigned to custody in the jails pending their trial and judgment.[1] In the case of government servants, it seems, the time and conditions of release depended on the discretion of the emperor or the local authorities concerned. Three circumstances provided the occasion for the exercise of discretion in regard to the release of prisoners. The relatives or friends of the prisoners or the prisoners themselves made supplications and begged forgiveness which was often granted if the convict was considered to have undergone enough punishment for his crime. Not unoften the influence of a noble or minister came to the rescue of a prisoner. Besides this the emperors themselves frequently inspected the prisons, enquired into the conditions of the convicts and released those who had suffered enough. Similarly in the provinces and districts it was the duty of the governors and qazis regularly to inspect the prisons in order to see the con-

had become a halting place for royal standards, I released some of the prisoners who were confined in that fort'. R and B. I, 345.

[1] Manrique and his companions were, for instance, put in custody in the prison, pending their trial. Similarly the boy servant who killed his master at Patna (described by Tavernier) was put under arrest and was released when the governor could not further proceed against him. See also the provisions of the Farman of Aurangzeb to officers of Gujrat. (I. O. MS. 3597) foll. 162-166.

ditions of the prisoners and to release the innocent and those who deserved to be released. Suspects of any sort of habitual crimes, such as theft, murder, robbery, larceny, were put under arrest to ensure public safety.[1]

Bail

It was possible to get the release of accused persons from prisons, on bail. Manucci was accused of theft by Muhammad Amin Khan the retiring governor of Lahore and put into jail. But being a favourite of Fidai Khan, the governor designate, the latter had sent orders for his release. But the kotwal told Manucci that he had to produce bail according to the law, for his release.[2] Another and more clear instance is that of Manrique and his party having been released by bail produced by a Muslim merchant of Midnapore.[3]

Life in the prisons

We owe once again to Manrique a very lucid and full account of the conditions of the life of prisoners in the jails. When Manrique and his party were arrested on suspicion of being the pirates of Chatgaon and sent to the kotwal's court at Midnapore, certain merchants were called to identify them. One of these merchants was quite intimate with a revered priest at Banja who was a friend of Manrique's too. On the strength of this acquaintance Manrique requested his merchant friend to have them sent to some more comfortable place instead of the ordinary jail where he was afraid they might be ill-treated. But as their identity was not yet proved, his request could not be granted. The merchant, however, offered to see the jailer and provide for their comfort. Being taken for pirates they were manacled and collared with an iron ring.

[1] All these points are given in full detail in the farman of the emperor Aurangzeb to the officials of the Ahmedabad province. Vide Mirat (I. O. MS.), foll. 162-166.

[2] Manucci, II, 198.

[3] Manrique, I, 424.

But through the good offices of their merchant friend who stood security for them, not only their chains and collars were removed but they were given beds to sleep and supplied with food from the merchant's home. Moreover, a surgeon was called to treat their wounds and his application worked like magic, curing them completely in a few days, to the great admiration and wonder of Manrique. Their merchant friend also visited them daily and provided them with all possible comforts.[1]

The police system

The police system of the Mughals combined in itself both foreign and indigenous elements. The Islamic states of Western Asia professing to be purely theological states, had police officers whose main duty originally was to examine the conduct of the subjects and keep them on the path of religion. This officer was called the muhtasib (literally, an account-keeper), that is to say, an officer who took the accounts of the conduct of the people. He may appropriately be translated as 'Censor of Public Morals.' With the establishment of stable empires and the consequent growth of civic obligations, the muhtasib's duties gradually became very wide, and included municipal and police functions in addition to his original religious functions.

In the Muslim kingdom of India, the muhtasib's duties were originally restricted to religious scrutiny only, although later we find him also inspecting the markets and performing certain other police duties. The police functions proper were, however, performed by the kotwal, who came to inherit, under the Mughals, all the municipal and police duties of the muhtasib of the Persian Khilafat together with those of the sthanik of the Hindu period.

[1] Manrique, I, 421-424.

The development of the Mughal police system: its foundations

The Mughal police organisation, like most other branches of administration, was shaped out of the vestiges of the police system of Sher Shah which had survived the disorders following his death. The wonderful and unprecedented security which Sher Shah had succeeded in establishing throughout his kingdom was the unique achievement of that brilliant Pathan ruler. Indeed it was so effectively established that it became proverbial and was remembered long after his death. Sher Shah built his police system on the basic principle of local responsibility.[1] The leading men of a locality, the headmen and muqaddams, for instance, of a village were held responsible for the safety of the area within their village. In maintaining security and guarding their jurisdictions the headmen were assisted by the amils and shiqdars. If the headmen were unable to trace the thief or the robber they were thrown into prison and made to compensate for the stolen property. If a murder went untraced the headmen were to be hanged instead. Sher Shah's justification for this severity was that the headmen and muqaddams of a particular locality are always in the know of the

[1] Prof. Sarkar's interpretation of this system is again rather unfair. On pp. 12-13 of his Mughal Adm. he says that the Mughal Government instead of undertaking responsibility for rural peace and security made the villagers responsible for the safety of their own property and that of the travellers on the neighbouring roads. He further says that the faujdar who was the only government agent in the sarkar was unable to supervise such a large area. In the first place it is quite wrong to suggest that the common populace of the villages was made responsible for the protection of their own and that of the travellers' property. It was the headmen who were made responsible, among other duties, for assisting the local officials in policing the rural areas, for which they were paid certain commissions out of the land revenue. Secondly, the faujdar was not all alone to supervise the whole sarkar. He always had a contingent of horsemen in his charge, and under him there were thanadars in charge of smaller areas into which the sarkars and parganahs were divided for policing purposes as we know from the Mirat-i-Ahmadi.

habitual miscreants of that place and the neighbourhood and no theft, robbery or murder can take place without their knowledge. At any rate even if any such occurrence took place without their knowledge they could always find out the culprit. Sher Shah was very severe also in his punishments, so that the evildoers were so terrified that none dared to do anything wrong. In the parganah the shiqdar and the amil were supposed to share between them the responsibility of policing their charge. Above them in the sarkar the faujdar was in charge of the police, while the chief amil, it seems, was mainly concerned with revenue affairs.

The Mughal system proper

It is not easy to determine to what extent the principle of local responsibility as the basis of rural police was kept up by Akbar and his successors. But it was maintained inasmuch as the local police officers, i.e. the faujdar and the kotwal were held responsible for thefts and robberies committed within their jurisdictions. It is not unlikely that the headmen also continued to give a certain amount of assistance to the government in the maintenance of peace and safety just as they did in the assessment and realisation of the revenue. But we find that the government organisation of police was made more elaborate and thorough. In the first place it should be noticed that under the Mughals the functions of police were no more confined to the maintenance of peace and protection of the people and their property. Religious supervision had always been a semi-police and semi-judicial function, and although it does not seem to have been enthusiastically maintained under Akbar, it soon revived under his successors. But in addition to protection and religious supervision, municipal duties of the most comprehensive character also came within the ambit of the police obligations and jurisdiction. In the organisation very important modifications were brought about as we have indicated above while discussing the judicial duties of the kotwal.

The entire responsibility and authority of the police department in the sarkar was divided between the faujdar and the kotwal, the former being in charge of the rural area and the latter in charge of the chief town and its suburbs.[1] These two officials were assisted by the shiqdar and amil in the parganah. Wherever necessary the parganah was divided into several smaller jurisdictions each consisting of a few villages under a thanadar.[2] Places which were very dangerous and infested with thieves and robbers were entrusted to the care of special faujdars provided with adeqaute forces and a suitable subordinate staff. The road between Agra and Dihli required a special guard. Daud Khan Qureishi who was faujdar of Mathura, Mahaban and Jalesar, was also put in charge of that road with a contingent of 2,000 horse under his command.[3]

The duties of the kotwal and faujdar have already been described at length in Chapter VII. It will be seen that the kotwal combined nearly all the functions of the muhtasib of the early khilafats of western Asia with those of the sthanik of the Hindu period. The origin of the word kotwal[4] is from kot and pal (कोट—पाल) that is,

[1] Vide Thevenot, Part III, pp. 19-20. This question has already been discussed above. Thevenot says that the police officers performed their rounds thrice in the night, i.e., at 9 and 12 p. m. and 3 a. m.

[2] Mirat-i-Ahmadi, Supplement (Bar. Text). The nine sarkars were divided into parganahs and parganahs into thanas.

[3] M. U. (Tr.) I, 462.

[4] Some British historians think that 'kotwal' is a Persian word. But in some standard Persian dictionaries, such as the Ghiyas-ul-Lughat, the word is not to be found. The Hindi Shabd Sagar (K. N. P. Sabha, p. 642, Vol. II) gives the derivation of the word from Sanskrit 'kot-pal' (कोट-पाल या वाल). The Karim-ul-Lughat, a standard dictionary (pub. A. D. 1867) says that it is derived from *kot* and *wal* or *koth* and *wal*.....and that it is beyond doubt of Hindi origin. In the Farhang-i-Anand Raj (an authoritative lexicon of Per. Arabic and Turkish, pub. by N. K. Press 1894, 3 Vols.) on p. 1140, Vol. II, the meaning is thus given: کوتوال – ف – مفرس – لفظ هندی است

'keeper of a fort'. When this word actually came into vogue and how it came to signify the chief of a city police is more than the facts at present available tell us. The duties of the muhtasib may now be briefly given, in order to show how very much they resembled the duties of the kotwal in Muslim India.

The Muhtasib

The muhtasib was an important police officer in the Muslim Khilafats. Under the Abbasides the muhtasib was an overseer of markets and morals, or prefect of police. The muhtasib's duties were very wide. He was to maintain good morals and prevent unlawful acts. He had to uphold institutions and make regulations conducive to public prosperity and general security. It was his duty to make municipal regulations and enforce them. In the interests of morality it was also his duty to find husbands for widows and to see that no divorced woman remarried before the expiration of the legal period; to investigate complaints regarding paternity; to protect slaves and servants from the cruelty of their masters; to punish owners of beasts of burden for ill-feeding or overloading them; to see that foundlings committed to his care were properly looked after, etc. etc. He had also to forbid visits to questionable quarters of the town, and the public sale of wine and drugs.. He was, however, forbidden to meddle with the secrets of families.

Among municipal laws his duty was to enforce laws governing trade or forbidden transactions, e.g., usury, unlawful sales, counterfeiting of goods, extortionate charges, and so forth. He was to inspect weights and measures; prevent fraud and the use of counterfeit weights in sales. He could also compel debtors to pay debts but only on the application of the creditor, and was not to use coercion. It was not in his power, however, to decide

بمعنی صاحب قلعه – چه دراصل کوت والی بود i.e., originally it was a Hindi word but has come by usage into Persian, and really it was kotwal, i.e., master of a fort.

judicial matters, or to adopt judicial procedure except when commissioned, in which case he combined the functions of both muhtasib and qazi.

The rule generally obtained that when the accused denied his guilt or his liability the jurisdiction of the muhtasib ended and that of the qazi began as it needed evidence and legal procedure. The muhtasib could interfere on his own initiative but the qazi only on complaint.

Fraud in weights and measures was especially penal and the muhtasib's duty was to provide standard weights and prevent use of unstamped weights and measures. It was also his duty to protect people from molestation by neighbours ..... and to punish Muslims slandering and ill-treating persons of other faiths.

One of the important duties of the muhtasib was to see that shops in the market did not protrude too much into the street so as to occasion obstruction to traffic. It lay within his authority to grant permission for erection of balconies, projections to buildings, canals, latrines, etc. These, in brief, were the duties of the muhtasib.[1]

The administration of the police

The state of security and protection in the country during the reign of Sher Shah has been very highly admired by all contemporary and later writers. And it is not unreasonable to presume that by his stern policy of holding the important persons of the locality responsible for all sorts of criminal occurrences, and by his ruthless punishments of the miscreants, he struck such terror into the heart of everybody that they did not dare commit any wrong. His policy was to give deterrent punishments and to use a drastic remedy against every source of trouble or evil. This policy, though it looks very harsh, achieved its purpose admirably throughout his kingdom. But no such uniform and summary answer can be given in

[1] Von Kremer, pp. 292-296.

respect of the efficiency or otherwise of the extent of general peace and security achieved by the police under the Mughals. That question calls for a more detailed consideration.

In times of stable government and under strong rulers the general state of security in the country was quite satisfactorily maintained. The contemporary European travellers and merchants who form the main sources of information on this subject, testify to the peace and prosperity of the people and the abundance of all sorts of commodities, both of necessities and luxuries. The roads and highways enjoyed a degree of safety which was quite enough for trade and commerce to go on unobstructed. Trade and commerce were carried on between the most distant parts of the country both by rivers and roads, and there were sarais and halting places provided with every comfort for travellers at short distances on road-sides. These provisions made travelling in normal times quite easy and safe and encouraged commerce. Manrique speaks very highly of the courtesy and serviceableness of the men attached to the sarais and contrasts them with the very opposite conditions in Europe at that period.[1] He also refers to the great prosperity of the people who could feed their horses and cattle on ghi (butter), boiled sugar and chick pea (mung). He further says: "There are some who go to such lengths in showing this consideration that they give their dogs wadded cotton coats in winter. In the kingdom of Gujrat I saw cows and calves clothed in fine coats of this kind, buttoned and tied over their chests and round their bellies."[2] These conditions point to a general state of security and the efficient work of the police. This conclusion is amply borne

[1] Manrique, II, pp. 101-103.

[2] Luard (Editor of Manrique) hesitates to accept this statement as too improbable and in support of his theory refers to the indifference observed at the present day towards dogs in certain quarters. But such indifference hardly justifies a generalisation. The same love and care are still shown to dogs by many people. But towards cows,

out by the writer quoted above. Describing his journey from Agra to Lahore Manrique speaks highly of the buildings of the caravansarais, and expresses surprise at the great volume of commerce and number of travellers, and adds that they (Manrique and his party) could not sometimes find room to stop owing to the great stream of passengers of all sorts and conditions[1] Further on Manrique says: "What struck me most were the low prices at which these things were sold.....I was no less struck by the good order that those barbarians maintained ..... It was seen not only in the abundance of the provisions but in the order and cleanliness of the streets and markets and in the peace and quiet maintained in them, and also in the great justice and rectitude they observed whereby all lived safely with their property, free from all cares as to the attentions of active and cunning thieves. Against these the watch on duty night and day is sufficient. If they catch any they punish them then and there on the spot, in accordance with the gravity of their offence."[2] This is undeniable testimony to the general safety and protection enjoyed by the people and the efficiency of the police. On the other hand it cannot be expected that in a vast country like India comprising all manner of geographical variations, deserts, forests, mountains and river ravines which provide shelter to the robbers and marauders, theft, robbery or murder should have been unknown. Such an ideal state is perhaps impossible to attain. Lonely roads, jungly paths and deserted places were not quite safe for travelling at night time. But these conditions were not worse than normal in our period, else all trade and commerce, all movement of the people between distant places, and the very brisk activity of the merchant classes

horses and oxen, and cattle in general, people are extremely tender even now and those who can afford, chiefly in the villages, take great pride and pleasure in making very fine coverings padded with cotton-wool, for their cattle, chiefly for oxen.

[1] Manrique, II, p. 184.

[2] Manrique, II, p. 188.

would not have been possible. The modern means of fast mechanical locomotion being entirely unknown, travelling was generally done in groups both for the sake of comfort as well as safety. Hence the system of caravans.

There was state insurance against theft. The faujdar and kotwal being responsible to make good the loss of any person occurring by theft or robbery within their jurisdiction. Moreland has rather too much belittled the practical value of this state insurance against thefts by taking up stray cases. While it may be admitted that to give it full effect under all circumstances would have been impossible and also that many police officers would have tried to escape the responsibility of compensating the thefts, it would be far from correct to think that it had no practical value. Moreland draws his conclusion from a single incident of an Armenian merchant, given by Thevenot, who was frightened by the kotwal into keeping quiet and waiving his claim. But it should not be forgotten that such incidents could not be the rule as the kotwal could only do so by the connivance of the subahdar, which was not often the case. The kotwal (magistrate) of Midnapore did not refrain from reporting against the shiqdar under him even though he had, in ignorance, behaved harshly with Manrique and his party as we have seen above. The shiqdar escaped severer punishment with great efforts but still had to pay a heavy fine.....Instances are available of the emperor himself paying part compensation for the amount claimed by some people for somewhat heavy sums having been stolen. It would seem that this state insurance would have given to the mischievous persons an excuse to trouble the police officers also. They might claim much larger amounts than the actual loss and the kotwal or faujdar would have found it hard to disprove the authenticity of their claim. On the whole it is clear that in order to avoid being involved in such entanglements which might lead to their own ruin at any moment the police officers did try to be on the alert and to prevent the occurrence of such incidents.

This is borne out even by the Armenian merchants' case referred to by Moreland. When the Governor of Surat came to know of the incident he called the kotwal and severely instructed him to make up with the Armenian, otherwise, he said, if the king should come to know of the affair, it would go hard with them all. This shows that the highest government officials stood in dead terror of the king's stern punishments against laxity or injustice in administration.

Regarding the security of the country, as apart from the large towns, it is entirely wrong to say that there was no officer for law and order in the mufassil.[1] It has been shown already that the faujdar was responsible for the policing of the country and had a suitable staff of thanadars and soldiers under him, according to the need of each place. Thevenot plainly says that the faujdar was responsible for the security of the country around just as the kotwal was responsible for the town.[2]

Education and religion

Although with the advent of the 16th century of the Christian era the spirit of rationalism in man was awakened and asserted itself robustly in certain directions against the forces of reaction, it had yet to fight a long struggle before the age-long, deep-seated, lifeless traditions could be set aside. It is a great testimony to the unique genius and long vision of Akbar that he freed religion from being imposed by the state in a narrow parochial sense on its subjects, and left them free to exercise their own judgment and follow their own inclinations and beliefs. Religion under Akbar continued to be the concern of the state to some extent, but in the broader and more universal sense of it. Apart from this general sense religion remained a part of the state departments inasmuch as the law by which men were governed was believed to be of divine origin and the law-officers, the qazis and ulemas

[1] Moreland: India at the Death of Akbar, 41.
[2] Thevenot, Pt. III, pp. 19-20.

acted as judges. The head of the religious department used to be called the Sadr, but, as we have seen, these two departments were combined and the same man held the office of both sadr and qazi. Education was also similarly allied to the religious and judicial department. It was in the hands of the leaders of religion, the qazis and the pandits, although since time immemorial, institutions imparting secular instruction, of the so-called three R's existed all over the country. These latter were generally run by private enterprise and effort and did not provide for teaching in higher knowledge. The religious schools were generally held in the mosques[1] or temples or at the house of the qazi or pandit and imparted education in theology, elementary philosophy and mathematics, and a practical as well as theoretical training in social etiquette and ethics. Such works on the principles of conduct and behaviour as the Panchtantra,[2] Nitishatak of Bhartrihari, Gulistan and Bostan of Sadi, were very popular and almost universally studied both by Muslims and Hindus.

The religious department was maintained under Akbar for the sake of managing the charities, endowments and suyurghals made by the state to deserving institutions and men. The head of this department had also the power of settling disputes regarding suyurghals etc., between rival claimants. But the Sadrs greatly abused their powers and were found guilty of bribe-taking and other fraudulent practices, which compelled the emperor practically to deprive them of authority. So far as the supervision of religious rites was concerned, that is to say, the practice of the Islamic states to inspect by means of a regular staff whether the people performed the religious injunctions, the five prayers, fast, etc., and to punish those who were found neglecting them, Akbar did not think it

[1] Mirza Muflis, the Uzbak, who came from Transoxiana to India, taught for four years in the Jami Masjid of Khwaja Muinuddin-i-Faran-khudi in Agra. Bad. III, 156-157.

[2] The Panchtantra was translated into many languages, including Persian, and was, perhaps, the most popular book of the time.

proper to enforce the formalisms of religion upon men. Hence we hear of no muhtasibs going about that business in his time. But as shown above, the office of muhtasib was evidently revived in later times, with partly the duties of a police officer included therein.

Educational activities of the state

There are scarcely any records to give us detailed information about the schools and seminaries run by the state. We only know that almost all Muslim rulers of India were patrons of letters and learned men. They not only encouraged the study and cultivation of higher art, literature and philosophies by their liberal grants and rewards to deserving men but also founded a good many schools and colleges and gave adequate endowments for their upkeep in addition to the regular grant by which the religious schools in the mosques and houses of qazis were in every town and village maintained. The educational institutions founded by Firoz Tughlaq are well-known. Sher Shah had built a madrasah in Narnaul[1]. Abul Fazl incidentally mentions the building of a college at Fatehpur Sikri on the hill, which was considered a unique seat of learning.[2] While these meagre references do not help us much, Abul Fazl has fortunately a fairly informative note on the improvements which the emperor made in the curricula and the scheme of education. These improvements, like so many other reforms of that great emperor, entitle him to a unique place among the most enlightened rulers of all time. To quote Dr. Law: "We see in Akbar, perhaps for the first time in Muslim history, a Muslim monarch sincerely eager to further the education of the Muhammadans and Hindus alike. We also notice for the first time the Hindus and Muhammadans studying in the same schools and colleges."[3]

[1] Cunningham, Rep. of Arch. Sur. Vol. xxiii, p. 27.
[2] Ain, I, 442.
[3] Promotion of Learning under Muslim Rule, p. 160.

It sounds almost like our modern scientific methods of education to read that Akbar laid down some very definite instructions as to the method of teaching in schools in order to save the great waste of time involved in the methods which were then in vogue. The teachers are enjoined first to practise the pupils in writing and then to make them commit to memory some moral sayings and precepts. "Care is to be taken that he learns to understand everything himself; but the teacher may assist him a little."[1] The following subjects were prescribed by the emperor as essential for everyone to study according to the need of the time: morals and social behaviour (اخلاق), arithmetic (حساب), notations of numbers (سیاق), agriculture (فلاحت), mensuration (مساحت), geometry (هندسه) astronomy (نجوم) the science of foretelling (رمل), household economy (تدبیر منزل), rules of government (سیاست مدن), medicine (طب), logic (منطق), the tabi, riyazi and ilahi sciences (طبعی ریاضی و الهی)[2] and history (تاریخ). Those who studied sanskrit were required to study grammar and philology (व्याकरण), logic (न्याय), Vedânt and Patanjal[3] (योग).

We cannot presume that every student who went to school studied the whole of the course prescribed above, but it indicates the earnestness of the emperor to stimulate and encourage an interest among the people in general for higher knowledge. It enables us also to presume the existence of schools and seminaries throughout the country which seem to have been dependent mostly on private enterprise but were helped in a somewhat irregular manner by the state. On another occasion Abul Fazl tells us that schools and places of worship were being founded

[1] Ain. (Blochmann) I, pp. 222.; Phillott's edition p. 289.

[2] These are the three broad classes of all sciences.

[3] The last two comprise three of the six great schools of ancient Aryan philosophy, Vedant including Purvamimansa and Uttar-mimansa, and Yog of which Patanjali was the author.

and the triumphal arch of knowledge was 'newly adorned'.[1] The students were encouraged by the grant of stipends and were more or less entirely supported from the funds of the assignments made for the help of educational institutions, as we learn from a farman of Aurangzeb.[2]

We may aptly conclude this brief review of Akbar's educational activities by a quotation from a modern thinker and writer: "He knew nothing of the growth of a popular consciousness in Europe and little or nothing of the wide educational possibilities that the Church had been working out in the West. His upbringing in Islam and his native genius made it plain to him that a great nation in India could only be cemented by common ideas upon a religious basis, but the knowledge of how such a solidarity could be created and sustained by universal schools, cheap books and a university system, at once organised and free to think, to which the modern state is still feeling its way, was as impossible to him as a knowledge of steam-boats or aeroplanes.

The essential factor in the organisation of a living state, the world is coming to realise, is the organisation of an education. And he had no class of men available who would suggest such an idea to him or help him to carry it out. The Moslem teachers in India were not so much teachers as conservators of an intense bigotry, they did not want a common mind in India, but only a common intolerance in Islam. The Brahmins who had the monopoly of teaching had the conceit and slackness of hereditary privilege. Yet though Akbar made no general educational scheme for India, he set up a number of Moslem and Hindu schools. He knew less and did more for India in these matters than the British who succeeded him. British viceroys have aped his magnificence, his costly tents and awnings, his palatial buildings and his elephants of state, but none have gone far enough beyond the political outlook

[1] Ain, I. (Blochman) p. 222.

[2] See Sarkar, Mughal Admn. (2nd Ed.) p. 159.

of this mediaeval Turkoman to attempt that popular education which is an absolute necessity to India before she can play her fitting part in the commonwealth of mankind."[1]

[1] H. G. Wells, Outline of History, (First Edition, 1920) pp. 382.

CHAPTER X

PUBLIC WORKS

The Public Works and other schemes of general benefit undertaken by the Mughal government, were in the main initiated and financed by the central government. Many of these, however, were carried out through the agency of the local authorities and perhaps they had also very often to share part of the expenditure. But besides those works which were initiated by the central government numerous charitable schemes and works of public benefit were carried out not only by the local governments but by the officials on their own account as well as by wealthy citizens. In fact making charitable donations in order to render service to society was considered a religious duty for everyone who was financially capable of it. This is manifest even to this day in the innumerable gardens, water distributing places, rest-houses, dharmshalas, wells and tanks and reservoirs, both for bathing and irrigation with which the whole country is bestrewn.

Buildings

The most prominent feature of the public works[1] of the Mughal emperors were their buildings. The Mughals were great builders. To them we owe some of the finest edifices which are altogether unexcelled in the sphere of world's architecture. They were chiefly interested in erecting mosques, tombs, palace-forts, towers, and great audience halls. They embellished these grand edifices with the most delightful gardens and canals of

[1] I use that term in a somewhat wider sense to include also their private buildings.

exquisite charm which infinitely enhance their beauty. These buildings, however, may not properly be called public buildings, because they had no utility for the people in any way except providing them aesthetic pleasure.

But the Mughal emperors were not less enthusiastic in erecting public works of real benefit and service to their subjects. They adorned the land with innumerable wells, tanks, reservoirs, bridges, canals, gardens, step-wells, dams, ferries, bathing ghats, baths, sarais and halting places, public kitchens, roads, hospitals, schools, temples, mosques, etc. Only a few examples of these will be adduced in the following pages to give an idea of the magnitude and usefulness of these works.

Sher Shah has justly been applauded by all writers for his extensive works of public benefit. He is said to have built several trunk roads which traversed his kingdom from east to west and north to south connecting distant places of importance. By the sides of his roads he erected 1700 sarais and planted fruit trees for the comfort of travellers.

The Mughal emperors likewise constructed roads and sarais and planted fruit trees on both sides of the roads. In the 19th Ilahi year a *minar* (pillar) was ordered to be set up at every kos from Agra to Ajmer, and adorned with deer horns to serve as sign-posts for wayfarers.[1] In the 23rd year an order was given for the erection of sarais in various quarters of the capital and they were to be made over to generous and benevolent persons, to provide homes for the poor and needy travellers.[2] Palsaert says: The Empress Nur Jahan "erects very expensive buildings in all directions—sarais or halting places for travellers and merchants, and pleasure gardens and palaces such as no-one has ever made before....."[3] Travelling from Lahore to Agra Withington, an English merchant, saw trees on both sides of the road, 'the most incompar-

[1] A. N. III, (Tr.) 156. Some of these pillars exist to this day.
[2] Ibid — 381; Text 262; see also Ain, I, (Blochmann) p. 222.
[3] Palsaert (Moreland's Tr.) p. 50.

able show of that kind that my eyes ever surveyed'.[1] Peter Mundy refers to various sarais which he saw; one of these, situated on the other side of the river in Agra, was called Nur Mahal-ki-sarai, having been built by that queen, and was large enough to accommodate 500 horses and two or three thousand men. It was all made of stone and stood between two gardens which were also laid out by Nur Mahal.[2] A similar sarai he saw in Patna.[3] The Emperor Jahangir caused trees to be planted on both sides of the road from Agra to Attock on the Sindh, and up to Bengal in the east. In his 14th year he ordered a mile-post to be put up at every kos from Agra to Lahore, and at every three kos a well to be dug, for the comfort of wayfarers.[4] Thevenot also saw mile-posts as well as wells and sarais on the road from Agra to Dihli and Lahore.[5] Bernier too saw caravansarais and the small pyramids (mile-posts) of Jahangir, still existing on roadsides, and wells which were frequently to be met with, serving both irrigation and drinking purposes.[6]

Tanks, reservoirs and lakes

The construction of tanks, (कुण्ड) reservoirs and artificial lakes was an ancient social institution in India. It was at once the finest, the simplest and the most useful social institution. The Hindu rulers as well as their subjects, rich and poor alike, enthusiastically co-operated in constructing wells, tanks, reservoirs and lakes in every locality, wherever possible, and their zeal was manifested in the innumerable works of that class which we find scattered throughout the whole country even today.[7] There

[1] Withington, p. 244; Peter Mundy, pp. 83-84.
[2] P. Mundy, p. 78.
[3] Ibid., p. 159.
[4] R and B. II, 100.
[5] Thevenot, Pt. III, pp. 42-43.
[6] Bernier, (Smith's Ed.) p. 284.
[7] Vide Agra Government Gazette VOL. IX. (Published by Authority).

is not a village in India without its tank of earthen (kaccha) embankments, and not a group of villages without a pacca tank or lake in their midst. Separate bathing ghats for men and women and a drinking ghat for cattle, large brick or stone platforms, a temple, and one or more rest-houses, kitchens and other necessary apartments, are the usual features of these tanks. One need only go round the district of Benares, for instance, to come across a kund of this kind at every mile or half-mile, apart from the hundreds which are to be found within the city itself. In some parts of the country they are less numerous, but nowhere entirely lacking. There are surajkunds (sun-tanks) in almost all important places.

Issue No. 9 *Dated* 28-2-1848.

Notification by the Hon'ble the Lt. Governor of N. W. P. Judicial and Rev. Dep. Feb. 19, 1848, pp. 72-73.

Abstract report of works of Public Utility, constructed by individuals at their own cost within the Dihli Division during the year 1847.—

In Panipat, three pacca wells and one pacca Dharmshala for the comfort and accommodation of travellers.—

In Dihli,—five pucca wells and 2 pucca bridges...

In Gurgaon—one pacca Dharmshala. This included a bridge built by the Emperor.

Issue No. 12 *March* 21-1848 pp. 101-103.

Notification re. works of Public Utility in Ilahabad Division in the year 1847.

In districts of Cawnpore, Fatehpore, Hamirpur, Kalpi, Banda and Ilahabad—Nearly twenty wells, one kaccha sarai and bazar, one pacca sarai and well, several other sarais, four pacca tanks etc.—for the public benefit.—This included a bridge by Baji Rao, near Lachmanghat, Bithur.

Issue No. 15, *April* 11-1848, pp. 133-141.

Notification dated *March* 31-1848, re. Rohilkhand Division.

More than fifty pucca wells are mentioned together with the name of the locality, the builder and the cost, and it is clearly noted that they are all built for the convenience of travellers and the village community.—A baoli is also mentioned.—

Issue No. 19, *May* 9, 1848.

Notification dated April 29, 1848.—pp. 185-189 re. *Meerut Division.*

Other tanks are similarly named after some holy association symbolical of the eternal forces of nature. These tanks have had a combined religious, economic and social significance for the people of India. It has been a religious custom in India, since time immemorial, for all the people to go and bathe in these tanks on certain days in the month, when a small fair is held around them. Larger fairs are held at more central places, on the banks of lakes and rivers every year or sometimes in several years. On these occasions the people not only find various means of diversion and enjoyment, but also derive all kinds of benefit, physical, spiritual, social and economic, because besides the health-giving baths in the fresh river waters they get opportunities of listening to religious discourses and sermons, and

In this division mention is found of as many as sixteen gardens, a masony *dalan* (pavilion) at Sikandra Rao, a *piao*, (water-distributing place) several kankar wells, and about sixty pacca wells, all made in 1847.

Similar abstract reports exist about other divisions. It is noteworthy that these works are constructed by all manner of people and all sections of society including the zamindars, the poorer cultivators, traders, men of lower castes such as *Kahars*, *Soonars*, *Jogis*, and also by Musalmans, and even by prostitutes, as well as by the Mughal emperor himself who at that time was but a pensioner and by Baji Rao, a scion of another great family, but a pensioner then.

The importance of tanks and wells in agriculture is fully recognised by *Baden-Powell also. On pp.* 10-11 *of his Land Rev. in Br. India* (Ed. 1913) he says that well-irrigation is common in the Punjab and Northern India generally 'Tank irrigation is common in Central and Southern India. The word *tank* is said to be a *Central Indian term* and not an English word. It refers to some natural soil depression, which being dammed up at one end, catches and retains the rain water as it flows off the high land or hills in the vicinity. Some tanks in Ajmer and elsewhere are great lakes, sometimes they contain water perennially; often, however, when the water has run off, the level bottom (enriched with water deposit) is allowed to dry for a time and is then ploughed up and sown. (This is the *ābi* cultivation of Ajmer). In South India the term *anyacut* refers to the area commanded by the tank and its distributary channels. Where irrigation is effected by a dam or weir for confining the waters of a river and distributing the aggregate by suitable channels, the arrangement is called an *'anicut'* (annekuttu).'

of meeting friends and relations from far and near.[1] These larger fairs are held for several days, varying between a fortnight and a month. Hence merchants from all over the country come and large markets are thus opened where all necessary commodities are available. Thus while these fairs, on the one hand, provide the necessary commodities to the consumer with facility, on the other, they encourage the trade of the country. In modern times district and provincial exhibitions are held in order mainly to stimulate trade and to encourage manufactures and handicrafts. But the earlier Hindu fairs comprised the principle of these exhibitions and much more. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that if these ancient fairs were cleared of the many abuses which have grown up in them in the course of ages, they can prove of immense benefit to society.

Thus the tanks and lakes which we find scattered all over the country constitute a unique feature and are standing monuments of an age-long institution, the incalculable benefits of which are now fast being partly abused or forgotten and partly washed away in the rush of modern

[1] Describing the manner in which he earned religious grace by chastising the Hindus and destroying their holy places, Sultan Firoz Tughlaq in his Fatuhat-i-Firoz Shahi, (Elliot, III, 380-'81) incidentally refers to the 'tank' as an institution of social life.—

"In the village of Maluh there is a tank which they call 'kund' (कुण्ड). Here they had built idol temples, and on certain days the Hindus were accustomed to proceed thither on horse-back, and wearing arms. Their women and children also went out in palankins and carts. There they assembled in thousands and performed idol-worship. This abuse had been so overlooked that the bazar people took out there all sorts of provisions and set up stalls and sold their goods. Some graceless Musalmans, thinking only of their own gratification, took part in these meetings. When intelligence of this came to my ears my religious feelings prompted me at once to put an end to this scandal and offence to the religion of Islam. On the day of the assembling I went there in person and I ordered that the leaders of these people and the promoters of this abomination must be put to death.....I destroyed their idol temples and instead thereof raised mosques."

capitalist industrialism. These tanks were built not only by the rulers but also by well-to-do persons and occasionally by the co-operative effort of whole communities or villages.

The artificial lakes of which hundreds still exist chiefly in Rajputana and Central India served also the purpose of irrigation. These lakes were made by collecting the catchment water of the hills surrounding a valley by throwing a dam across the outlet through which the water flowed away during the rains. We hear of the Hindu rulers constructing such lakes since the most ancient times. Raja Bhoj of Dharanagri had constructed a lake by this device near Bhopal of which the area was 250 square miles. The Mughal rulers also kept up some interest in this direction. Akbar's lake at Fatehpur Sikri which was seven kos[1] in circumference was constructed on this principle. The vestiges of its extensive embankment extending from Sikri as far as Bharatpur are still in existence. The embankment served also as a beautiful promenade overlooking the lake. An incidental reference in the Akbar Nama furnishes clear evidence of how the lakes and tanks were used for irrigation purposes in those parts of the country where there were few rivers or canals. In the 22nd year, when the emperor was returning from Ajmer, at Merta it was brought to his notice that the country was lying waste owing to the bad condition of the reservoirs. His Majesty himself inspected the neighbourhood and had the reservoirs cleaned immediately.[2] Tavernier saw numerous lakes of this kind in Golcunda in which water was collected for irrigation purposes.[3] In the 9th year of his reign Shah Jahan, while proceeding to Daulatabad, is said to have camped on the bank of a lake in the country of Jujhar Singh Bundela, which, the author of the Mulakhkhas tells us, was the most important of the three hundred similar lakes in that parganah.[4] Terry

[1] R and B. II, 66.
[2] A. N. III, 220 (Tr.) 308-309.
[3] Tavernier, p. 121.
[4] Or. 175, fol. 139a.

says: "They have many ponds they call tanks, some of them more than a mile or two in compass, made round or square, girt about with fair stone walls within which are steps of well-squared stone which encompass the water, for men every way to go down and take. These tanks are filled with rain and they keep this water to relieve the inhabitants that dwell far from springs or rivers..... This ancient drink of the world is the common drink of India. It is more sweet than ours, and in those hot countries agreeth better with men's bodies than any other liquor.[1] In Kashmir Akbar saw a lake 30 kos in circumference. Canals were also constructed for irrigation wherever need was felt.[2] Sultan Firoz Tughlaq is renowned for his public works, chief of which were his several canals cut from the Jamna and Satlaj. Shihabuddin Ahmad, governor of Dihli in Akbar's time is said to have put into repair the Nahar-i-Jawan (Jamna Canal) of Firoz Shah. When Shah Jahan started building the red fort and palace at Shahjahanabad that canal was again thoroughly cleaned and repaired and further excavated so as to connect it with the capital. It was named Nahar-i-Bihisht.[3] Shah Jahan had another canal cut from the Ravi which was completed under the supervision of Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian Commandant of Qandahar. A sum of 150 thousand rupees was spent on this canal.[4] But it seems that wells for irrigation purposes were more popularly used than canals. Reference has already been made to the wells on the road-sides from which the farms were also irrigated. In one of his farmans Aurangzeb instructs his croris (diwans) to repair the old and disused wells and sink new ones.[5] This implies clearly the existence of wells as the most common

[1] Terry, pp. 299-300.

[2] Akbar issued a sanad of regulations about the W. Jamna canal. Vide J. A. S. B. (1846), p. 213.

[3] Or. 175 fol. 346a,b.

[4] Add. 6588 fol. 40a, b.

[5] Sarkar's Mughal Admn. p. 217 (Mirat).

means of irrigation, in the construction of which the government took keen interest and at least bore part of the expenses if not the whole. Firoz Shah's canal, as repaired and extended later, was seen as late as 1795 A.D. by Wm. Franklin to be "fertilising in its course more than ninety miles in length, and bestowing comfort and affluence on those who lived within its extent. This canal as it ran through the suburbs of Mughalpura, was about 25 feet deep and as much in breadth and cut from the solid stone quarry on each side, from which most of the houses in the neighbourhood are built. It had small bridges erected over it at different places some of which communicated with the garden houses of the nobility."[1]

Apart from the government, private enterprise also contributed an equal or even greater quota to the numerous buildings for the benefit of the public. The origin of an incalculable number of works of public charity such as rest-houses, irrigation works, water-distributing stations during hot weather, is to be traced in the belief of the people that it is a religious duty for every member of the society, poor or rich, to contribute his mite to the common welfare. Hence the existence in the country today of innumerable charitable works of public benefit. "The indigenous irrigation system", says Lord Ronaldshay, "consisted of tanks and channels which were built partly by individual benefactions and partly by communal enterprise." Tavernier observed that all territories of the Great Mughal were well cultivated and the fields were enclosed by good ditches and each had its tank or reservoir for irrigation[2]. But the well-to-do and rich vied with one another in spending as much as they could on such works and thereby to earn both, good name here and spiritual bliss hereafter. No fund-subscribing organisations were needed to remind them of their duties. Lord Ronaldshay (the present Marquis of Zetland) notices this

[1] Asiatic Researches, Vol. IV, p. 420.
[2] Travels, p. 33.

traditional custom of building public works by private enterprise, which still prevails. "It is worth recalling that under the old Indian system of village assemblies this practice of making gifts for public purposes was carried far."[1] Various instances of such works having been donated for public use are available. Sheikh Farid in the reign of Akbar and Jahangir constructed many public works in Dihli and Faridabad, such as tanks, mosques, hostels, sarais, puras (small colonies) etc.[2] Rai Gordhan Surajdhwaj erected many sarais, spacious tanks and other buildings on the road from Dihli to Lahore, besides many buildings in his small town of Khari. He also constructed large tanks and temples in Mathura and Ujjain.[3] Incidental allusion is made in the Akbar Nama to a pond which Raja Todarmal had made at Lahore.[4] "Many rich men", says Terry, "build sarais or make wells or tanks near highways that are much travelled where passengers may drink; or else allow pensions unto poor men that they may sit by the highway side and offer water unto those that pass."[5] In the 25th year of Shah Jahan's reign a mosque in Kashmir was completed at a cost of 40,000 rupees and 20,000 more were spent in building out-houses for sheltering the poor and destitute. The whole cost was borne by Nawab Begam (Princess Jahan Ara)[6].

Hospitals for animals

In this connection we may briefly refer to the hospitals for the treatment and sheltering of the sick and decrepit animals, which were found in all parts of the country. It is not possible to ascertain how they were maintained

[1] India: A Bird's-eye View, pp. 146-148.
[2] M. U. (Tr.) I, 525.
[3] Ibid. (Tr.) I, 574.
[4] A. N. III, 569, Tr. 862. Raja Todarmal also constructed a step-well in Benares and another at his native town Chunian, both of which are still in existence.
[5] Terry, 323-324.
[6] Or. 175, fol. 389.

but the greater likelihood is that they were mainly supported by private contributions. Many travellers have recorded detailed accounts of the hospitals for birds and cattle in large cities such as Ahmedabad, Cambay, Patna, etc. Here not only sick and disabled birds and beasts, oxen, cows, dogs, cats, sheep, horses, monkeys, goats, etc., were treated with great care and love but also shelter was given to old and crippled animals.[1] In Ahmedabad there were two or three such hospitals.[2]

Hospitals for men

The eighth institute of Jahangir was an order for the establishment of hospitals in all chief towns and for the appointment of physcians to attend upon the sick. The emperor directed that the expenses were to be defrayed from the Imperial Exchequer. That this was not merely a vainglorious and hypocritical order not intended to be translated into practice is fully borne out by the evidence of the Mirat-i-Ahmadi.[3] We are told that hospitals were established by the Imperial Government for the treatment of the sick and those who could not maintain themselves or bear the expenses of treatment. There was a physician-in-chief, and several others under him, of both the Ayurvédic and the Yunani systems. They were paid by the government and 2,000 rupees annually was granted for the distribution of medicines. It is unfortunate that the contemporary Muslim chroniclers never thought of including

[1] Fitch (Talking of Cambay in 1483) p. 14; also p. 25. Thevenot, Pt. III, p. 11.

[2] Tavernier, p. 63. Further account of these hospitals is found in Fryer, I, 138; Linchosten, 253; Ovington, 300 ff.

[3] Mirat (I. O.) fol. 731a. Commenting on the 8th institute of Jahangir Sir H. M. Elliot observes: "This is one of the institutes of his lying ancestor Timur, and was, no doubt, as much observed in one instance as the other." (Vide Elliot V, p. 513). This comment is, as the above evidence shows, absolutely unjust, and to connect it with Timur's similar institutes is irrelevant. Even supposing that Jahangir borrowed this idea from Timur, there is no ground to suggest that it was never meant to be sincerely put into practice.

such matters of social importance in their records. Nor do we have, about the other provinces of the empire, any such excellent accounts as the Mirat-i-Ahmadi. This lack of interest in social affairs on the part of the writers of the age has robbed us of much valuable and interesting knowledge of some important and vital aspects of history. Nevertheless, however scanty the data we have, we can reasonably presume that there were hospitals and free dispensaries, established and maintained by the government in all important towns of the empire.

Dams, bridges, walls, gates

Dams, embankments and bridges across rivers and lakes, and walls to protect the towns, were also constructed wherever necessary. Within the towns gates were erected to protect the various wards and streets. In the 28th Ilahi year Akbar constructed a dam to protect the city of Ilahabad from the flood of the river Ganga during the rainy season. This dam was one kos long, 40 yards wide, and 14 cubits high.[1] A similar embankment, nearly four miles long, was built by Aurangzeb to protect Lahore from the encroachment of the Ravi.[2] Bridges were built across rivers and canals. The most famous bridge which has stood upto our own day is at Jaunpur across the Gomti, connecting the town which is situated on both banks. It was built by Akbar's minister Munim Khan (A. D. 1564-'68). It has been so nicely ornamented with kiosks on both sides as to show how a work of utility, can, by a judicious addition of artistic elements, be converted into a delightful piece of art. Jahangir had granted five thousand rupees for the construction of a bridge at Baba Hasan Abdal.[3] The Lahore Gate in Dihli being too narrow caused obstruction and much delay to traffic. Aurangzeb, therefore, ordered three gates to be made whose erection involved the demolition of several private mansions,

[1] A. N. III, 420; Tr. 625.
[2] Manucci, II, 119; Khulasat (I. O.) Ethe. 3242, fol. 47a,b.
[3] R and B. I, 160.

'the cost of which was paid by the king without hesitation'. In order to protect the cities of Aurangabad and Burhanpur from Maratha raids, Aurangzeb built walls around those cities.[1]

Baths

The system of ordinary public baths and medical baths which were used for healing many kinds of diseases, was very popular in those days. Akbar, with the advice and assistance of his physicians, had built several hammams (baths) with ingenious arrangements and each having several chambers admitting varying degrees of sunlight, for the treatment of chronic diseases. These baths are still extant but their use is forgotten. But apart from the baths meant for treating diseases there were many ordinary baths. Thevenot says that there were 800 baths in Agra.[2]

Post and communications

It cannot be ascertained whether the government made any arrangements for the transmission of private letters and communications from one place to another. But this much is certain, that side by side with the official post, private post (dak) was also carried with equal facility, regularity and speed. The government organisation of post was a very elaborate one. The farmans were usually sent through harkaras and letters were issued to the local police officers to provide the harkaras with guards within their respective boundaries. We have dealt with this subject in an earlier chapter. Although none of the modern means of fast communication were at all known, they did manage to transmit their post with considerable speed. Mainly two kinds of agencies were employed to carry posts. Heavier dak was conveyed by means of carriages drawn by fast stallions who were replaced at short intervals of about eight miles by a sort of relay system. The horses and other necessary postal equipment were

[1] Manucci, II, 119.
[2] Thevenot, III, 34.

stationed in sarais on the road-side in order to avoid delay and to ensure the quickest possible transmission. The other agency employed was the runners who, according to Monserrate, in one day could run on foot as fast as a horseman could ride at full speed. They practised running in shoes made of lead or trained themselves by repeatedly lifting their feet and moving their legs (while remaining standing still in one place) till their heels touched their buttocks. When their leaden shoes were removed they were seen to be magnificent runners, by the help of whose swiftness the king could very rapidly and regularly obtain news or send orders to any part of the empire.[1] We learn from Palsaert that the foot-runners could bring their masters who held high official positions as governors either great credit or disgrace with the king, because 'letters on important official business are sometimes delayed, and if the news they contained should reach the king first from some other place.....the officer would be blamed for negligence.'[2] That this agency worked efficiently is proved by the fact that reports of the local occurrences of all sorts, public and private, used to be sent by the waqia nawises. Palsaert also testifies to the great swiftness with which communications were carried. The foot runners were called *pathmars* or *patmars*.[3] It seems that these official runners who carried the public post regularly were also employed by private persons to carry their communications. Peter Mundy when going from Agra to Surat with a caravan was met near Merta (1633 A. D.) by one such foot-post who told them of a robbery near Abugarh.[4]

As regards private post it is not possible to ascertain the actual agencies commonly employed for it. But

[1] Monserrate, 212.

[2] Pelsaert, 62.

[3] The report of Jahangir's death was carried by one Banarsi (a messenger) sent by Asaf Khan, from Lahore to Shah Jahan who was at Junnar (in District Poona), in 20 days.

[4] Mundy, II, 246; Withington (1612-1616 A. D.), 202.

it seems that in ordinary cases it was the custom to use the same agencies which conveyed government post, but by what sort of arrangement we do not know. For important matters, very likely, special runners were engaged for the purpose. As a testimony to the speed of communications Hawkins tells us that what had transpired between him and the governor, Muqarrab Khan, on his arrival at Surat, had already been reported to the king before Hawkins arrived in the Darbar to complain of it. When Jahangir wrote to Muqarrab Khan at Surat, ordering him to treat the English well, Hawkins sent a letter by the same messenger reporting his arrival at Agra.[1] There are sufficient evidences to show that private communications passed between the various parts of the country quite regularly and we can safely presume that some adequate kind of postal organisation must have been in existence. Badaoni tells us of a regular correspondence and even transmission of parcels which was carried on between him and his friend Sheikh Yaqub of Kashmir.[2] When Shah Jahan declared rebellion against his father and was near Gujrat, Sher Khan, the governor of Ahmedabad, reported to him that he had learnt from the letters of the Hindu merchants of Gujrat residing at Lahore that the princes (sons of Shah Jahan) and Asaf Khan, Yamin-ud-daulah, had defeated and imprisoned Shahryar the Nashudni.[3] Hawkins refers to the news sent by the merchants of Goa, of the arrival of English ships in that port. Three days after this another report came of their arrival at the bar of Surat.[4]

Famine-insurance and poor relief

Akbar adopted permanent measures of famine insurance and poor relief by establishing stores of grains in every place. These stores were maintained by the *dahseri*

[1] Hawkins, 81.

[2] Bad. III, 144-148.

[3] Qazwini (Or. 173) foll. 118b-119a. This incident is also referred to in the Mirat (I. O. No. 3597) fol. 52b and fol. 118a.

[4] Hawkins, p. 94.

tax, i.e. a tax of ten seers of grain taken per bigha of tilled land by the government. The grain thus collected was stored in store-houses which were constructed in every district for the purpose. These stores served several purposes: (1) They supplied the government live-stock with food, which was never bought in the bazars; (2) poor cultivators received seed grain from these stores for sowing purposes; (3) poor people could buy cheap grain from them in time of famine. Besides these stores, Akbar had also established in his empire charity houses where the indigent could get their food. A regular staff of clerks and a Darogha or superintendent managed this department.[1] In 991 A. H. (A. D. 1583) Akbar opened three free kitchens which were built outside the town: one supplied food to the Hindus and was called Dharmpura, the second to the Muslims and was known as Khairpura and the third to the jogis and was named jogipura.[2] In the time of famine more kitchens (langars) and almshouses were opened for the feeding of the poor, and some indigent persons and beggars were handed over to rich men to be fed. This shows that the famine was not so severe as to have materially affected the rich people. Deficiency of rain had caused scarcity of food-stuffs and consequent rise in prices so as to make life hard for the poor and the beggars. Able officers were appointed in every district to render relief to the poor people.[3] In the 42nd Ilahi year similar measures were taken in Kash-

[1] Ain, I, pp. 199-200.

[2] Ain, I (Blochmann) pp. 200-201.

[3] A. N. III, 714 (Tr.) 1064. The author of the Zabdat-ut-tawarikh reports the effects of this famine to have been very horrible, to such an extent that 'men ate their own kind' and then shows the great bounty of the king to relieve the suffering of the people. As is clear from Abul Fazl's account the famine was not half so severe. Evidently the author of the Zabdat exaggerates it to heighten the effect of the king's magnanimity. But he testifies to the fact that the emperor opened alms houses and free kitchens in all cities and enlisted more men in the army in order to provide them sustenance. See Elliot, VI, 193.

mir. Twelve free kitchens were opened in Srinagar and 80,000 needy persons were fed. The emperor started building a fort also in order to provide work to the workless, whereby many persons got their livelihood.[1]

During the reign of Shah Jahan several famines occurred. A very severe famine occurred in Kashmir in the 15th year of the reign (A. D. 1642). The emperor took all necessary measures of relief. Thirty thousand poor people are at this time said to have migrated to Lahore in search of livelihood. The emperor adopted the following measures for their relief: (1) They were sheltered under the walls of the palace, (2) one lakh of rupees was distributed among them for general expenses, (3) as long as they remained in Lahore 200 rupees worth of victuals were daily distributed to them from several centres, (4) 30,000 rupees were sent to Tarbiat Khan, the governor of Kashmir, to be distributed among those who were too indigent to provide themselves or unable to move to Lahore, (5) in addition to this Tarbiat Khan was ordered to distribute one hundred rupees worth of daily food to the poor from five centres. It is noteworthy that all this was to be charged to the private purse of the emperor and not to the Public Treasury. The governor Tahir Khan, however, was found incapable of organising famine relief satisfactorily and was consequently removed from office and Zafar Khan sent to take up charge... Twenty thousand rupees more were sent with the new governor for relief work.[2] Subsequently an order was issued that fifty thousand rupees more should be distributed to the poor and famine-stricken husbandmen of Kashmir in order to enable them to resume agriculture and thus recover their economic prosperity. This sum was to be spent from the provincial exchequer.

In the 19th year the Punjab was stricken with a famine of such severity that the poor people were compelled to sell their children in order to save them from starvation.

[1] A. N. III, 727.
[2] Or. 175, foll. 250-251.

and to obtain sustenance for themselves as well. The emperor issued orders that all such persons should receive the price of their children from the government treasury and thus be saved the pangs of separation from them. Alms-houses were opened in different places where 200 rupees worth of food was distributed daily among the poor and the destitute.[1]

The Gujrat famine which occurred in the fourth and fifth years of Shah Jahan's reign (1631-32) was the severest of all and was long after remembered as the *satāsiū* (of the 87th year, having occurred in 1687 V. S.). The facts of this famine require a thorough examination chiefly because Vincent Smith and certain other modern writers have greatly exaggerated the extent of the calamity on the one hand and under-rated the measures of relief adopted by the government on the other. It is not possible here to subject the whole history of famines to a comparative study from the economic point of view. Only the broad aspects of the question may here be discussed. There are thus three main issues which demand our attention: (1) the extent of the territory involved in the calamity; (2) the degree of the severity of the famine; and (3) the measures taken by the emperor to relieve the suffering caused.

Before considering the above points, however, a word may be said regarding the nature of the famines which occurred at that time. As Moreland has pointed out, in those times the famines which occurred were food famines affecting a particular locality, large or small, and not work famines. In normal times the problem of unemployment seldom arose. But whenever owing to some natural calamity the crops either failed or were ruined consecutively for two or three years, the lot of the poorer classes was undoubtedly hard. This seems to have been due to the fact that the state did not exercise foresight and made no permanent provisions against such unfore-

[1] Or. 175, fol. 284b.

seen calamities. The government awoke to the necessity of providing relief at the eleventh hour when the locality had been already overtaken by the disaster. The result was that, however generous and vigorous were the measures of relief taken at this time, they failed to save many poor people from ruin. Thus want of foresight and of a regular department in each locality to provide against unforeseen calamities was, perhaps, the main weakness of the Mughal system after Akbar.

Turning to the three points stated above, the extent of the locality affected by the famine has been somewhat wrongly understood by modern writers. The words of the contemporary Muslim historians should not be taken too literally. It is only too well known that they never cared to be precise in the use of their terms. Although Lahauri says that the Deccan and Gujrat were afflicted by the famine, we should be mistaken if we supposed that the whole of the territory connoted by those terms today was affected; yet this is just the impression conveyed by Smith.[1] But a close perusal of Lahauri's account makes the position quite clear which is corroborated by Mundy's account. The extreme severity of the famine had been caused by the failure of rains for two successive years in the neighbouring districts. In the first year they had failed in the mahal of Balaghat, chiefly around Daulatabad. In the second year they failed completely in the 'Deccan and Gujrat' although in the neighbouring districts they had been scanty. The part of the country included between Ahmedabad, Surat and Burhanpur was chiefly afflicted and within it the utmost severity was experienced by Ahmedabad and its suburbs. This is clear from the fact that when the emperor issued orders to the officers to organise relief works and open free kitchens for the poor and the destitute, the officers of the above three districts alone were ordered to do so.[2] Champaner, which is only about eighty miles south-east of

[1] Oxford History of India, 393.

[2] See Lahauri, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 392-393.

Ahmedabad was not affected.[1] Even at Chopda between Surat and Burhanpur, nearly a hundred and fifty miles from Surat the market was 'pretty well furnished with provisions both for horse and man.'[2] From Burhanpur onwards the traces of famine were not so much in evidence. So that it was mainly Khandesh which had felt the severity of the famine. The country to the south of Khandesh had been victim to the calamity in the previous year and had not yet recovered. But in Gujrat only the central districts were severely affected. Indeed at Sironj, on the north-west borders of Gujrat, Mundy saw a horde (tanda) a mile and a half in length, consisting of many thousand oxen laden with provision. Moreover all the land around was covered with green corn and full of abundance.[3]

As regards the extent of the calamity, there is no gainsaying the fact that the famine was of unprecedented severity and caused untold misery. But all the accounts available point to the scarcity and prohibitive prices of food materials and the consequent inability of the poor people to procure sustenance rather than the complete or nearly complete lack of provisions of any kind. The poor and indigent people, therefore, greatly suffered and many died from hunger. The greater number of deaths were, however, caused by the pestilence which broke out and as it were completed the tragedy. Smith has confused the whole account in such a manner as to give the impression that the large number of deaths were caused by the want of food alone.[4] The deaths among the well-to-do classes were caused by pestilence and not by want of food.

[1] See Mirat (I. O. MS.) fol. 125b, where it is said that the cattle of Ahmedabad having all died, a male buffalo was brought from Champaner for breeding purposes.

[2] Mundy, II, LXV.

[3] Mundy, II, LXVI.

[4] Vincent Smith pays a compliment to Lahauri saying that 'contrary to the frequent practice of the writers of his kind Lahauri makes no attempt to disguise the horror of the calamity which he describes in a few phrases of painful vividness'. But the compliment is quite ill-deserved, as the practice of the writers of that period, on the con-

Nor is it reasonable to take the account of Lahauri (Mirat and Mulakhkhas have copied Lahauri almost verbatim) to be literally true. Anyone acquainted with the incurable and almost universal habit of the writers of that period of indulging in rhetorical descriptions of such occurrences cannot fail to recognise the flourish of language behind which Lahauri has veiled the true facts. But on a careful perusal of it one can detect the real truth without the least difficulty. I give a translation of the relevant portion here: "Life was offered for a loaf but none purchased it, rank was to be sold for an insignificant meal,[1] but none cared for it. The hand which was ever held out with charity to others had now to beg for food, and the feet which had moved with pride within the four walls of wealthy courts and palaces, had no other way of getting sustenance left (but to go out a-begging). For a long time dog's flesh was sold for goat's flesh and pounded bones of the dead were mixed with flour and sold. When this was discovered the sellers were brought to justice..... Eventually destitution reached such a pitch that men began to devour each other, and the flesh of a son became sweeter than his love. The numbers of the dying were so large that they caused obstruction on the roads, and those who escaped death.....moved away to the towns and villages of neighbouring countries. In these lands which were renowned for their prosperity and plenty, no trace of abundance was to be seen."[2] There was no

trary, shows that they delighted in making the account of famines and like calamities as picturesque as possible. This was the common practice of nearly all writers in those days. But partly it was due to a desire to heighten the effect of the emperor's magnanimity by contrast. Witness, e. g. the account of the famine in Akbar's time by Nurul Haq, the author of Zabdat-ut-tawarikh, already quoted (ante, p. 42, f.n. 4).

[1] The word in the original is غیفی which according to Steingass means 'a flock of birds'.

[2] It seems necessary to reproduce the original here, to enable the reader to compare:—

جانے نبانے میداند وکس نمیخرید و شریفی بر غیفی میفروختند و نمی ارزید – دستی که پیوسته بانغام دراز بودی جز بگدیهٔ طعام نه کشودی – و پائے که

occasion for nor any instance of nobles selling their rank to purchase loaves, nor of the parents eating away their children. The whole description is evidently a mere literary flourish. For instance, it may be asked that even if the wealthy people and the residents of palaces and courts were reduced to begging, from whom did they beg and what—money or food? No comment is necessary to show that this is merely a flourish of the pen without any reality. This is corroborated by the evidence of all the English travellers whose reports of the famine have been collected *en bloc* by Sir Richard Temple in his edition of Mundy, Vol. II, Appendix A. There is not a single case of parents eating their children mentioned in these accounts. They mention the painful spectacle of poor people dying, but of many people among the weavers, dyers, washers, having gone away to neighbouring territories where there was plenty. Mundy mentions that at Dhaita men and women were driven to such an extremity for want of food that they sold their children...or gave them away to any that would take them so that they might preserve them alive, although they did not expect to see them again. This only shows the helplessness of poor parents to find sustenance for their children and their consequent resort to giving them away to those who could afford to feed them. Moreland quotes the description given by van Twist, the Dutch merchant.[1] In the last

همیشه ساحت استغنا سپردی جزراه دریوزه نه پیمودی – مدت گوشتِ سگ بجائے گوشت بزّ و استخوان آهن کردهٔ اموات به آرد آمیخته بفروخت رفت – چنانچه بعد ظهور این معانی فروشندگان از پیشگاه عدالت بادشاه حق شناس.. بسیاست رسیدند – انجام کار از عموم اظهار شروع در خوردن گوشت یکدیگر نمودند – گوشت فرزند شیرین تر از مهر او میدانستند – و از بسیاری جان سپردگان طرق بر اهل تردد تنگ شد و هر کس که پس از جان کندن بسیار تا اجل موعود مهلت یافت و نیروی ره نوردی در خود دید بقریات و قصبات ممالک دیگر انتقال نمود و درین ولایات که بابادی مشهور و معروف بود اثر معموری نماند –

[1] India from Akbar to Aurangzeb, pp. 211-212.

paragraph Twist mentions the case of a mother having eaten her child and 'husbands having eaten their wives, and wives their husbands, and children their parents'. It is difficult to believe this account in the face of the numerous reports of the English merchants, none of which came across or even heard of any incidents of that type. It is evident that van Twist was not an eye-witness, and that his description is based on hearsay. But certainly the roads and paths had become very unsafe for travel on account of the many poor people driven in desperation to robbing and killing in order to get food. The slowness with which relief measures were organised was responsible for this state of affairs and casts a most deplorable blot on the administrative efficiency and despatch of Shah Jahan's government. Perhaps the only extenuating circumstance is that the means of transport being slow in general and all the more so in Gujrat, there being no waterways connecting it with the other parts of the country, it was not possible to import sufficient grain in a short time. Bullock-carts or pack animals were the only means that could be employed for the purpose. But that is no excuse for a government to be so short-sighted as to make no permanent provisions against such sudden calamities, just as Akbar had done by making state granaries all over the empire.

This brings us to the question of examining the extent and nature of the state measures of relief. The emperor first issued orders to the executive officers of the three districts of Ahmedabad, Surat and Burhanpur to open free kitchens and distribute food-stuffs to the poor and the destitute. These kitchens were not merely 'a few soup kitchens', as Vincent Smith contemptuously puts it. The language of the chronicles is quite unambiguous and clear on the point that the kitchens and alms-houses were opened not only in the three chief cities but in all places throughout those districts.[1] The orders of the

[1] Lahauri, Vol. I, Part I, p. 363; Mirat (I. O. MS.) fol. 120a. و متصديان مهمات برهانپور و احمدآباد و ولايت سورت آش و پيز خانها كه

emperor were that every day sufficient bread and rations should be distributed to satisfy the wants of the hungry. In addition to this 20,000 rupees were to be distributed among the needy every Monday, which was the day of the emperor's accession. As Ahmedabad had suffered the greatest severity a sum of 50,000 rupees more was ordered to be distributed specially in that city. Smith treats this charity too on the part of the emperor with an undeserved contempt.[1] But his scornful estimate and criticism of the revenue remission that was made by the emperor is not only quite wrong but also most unfair and unbecoming. Without troubling to consult the original Smith has relied merely on Elliot's translation of Lahauri, which is entirely incorrect. Here is the original passage in question[2]:—

هفتاد لک روپیه ..... در هشتاد کرور دام محال خالصهٔ والا که یازدهم حصهٔ ممالک محروسه است تخفیف دادند –

Elliot's translation on which Smith has relied is: "taxes amounting to nearly seventy *lacs* of rupees were remitted by the revenue officers—a sum amounting to nearly eighty *crores* of *dams*, and amounting to one-eleventh part of the whole revenue."[3] But the correct rendering is that the emperor made a reduction of 70 lakhs of rupees out of the total revenue of the crown-lands in that province which amounted to eighty crores of dams and which was one-eleventh of the total revenues of the imperial territories. Although the meaning of the passage is quite clear yet one can understand its meaning being misunderstood by Elliot. But it is surprising that both Elliot and Smith, with their knowledge of the relative value of the dam and the rupee, should have been satisfied to think that 70 lakhs of rupees were nearly equal to

بزبان هندوستان لنگر گویند برائے فقرا و نیازمندان ترتیب دادند – و هر روز آن قدر آش و نان که بکفاف در ماندگان طعام کفایت کند مطبوخ گشت –

[1] Oxford Hist., p. 394.
[2] Lahauri, Vol. I, Part I, p. 364.
[3] Elliot, VII, 25.

80 crores of dams. Eighty crores of dams which amounted to two crores of rupees, was the total revenue of the crownlands in Gujrat.[1] The reduction therefore amounted to more than one-third of the total revenue. The Jagirdars were also ordered to make a reduction at the same rate. Thus, while on the one hand, the short-sightedness of the government cannot be denied, on the other, it is but fair to say that the emperor made such arrangements as were possible under the circumstances on a very generous scale. And yet all these measures were not enough to relieve the extent of the suffering, nor to save from destruction many people who had already fallen victims to hunger before food could reach them. But, as a more balanced writer says, 'Although their inadequacy may be obvious, it is not easy to suggest what more could have been done.'[2] In view of the correct estimate of the position as stated above the comparison which Smith draws between the conditions existing under the rule of the Mughal dynasty and those under the modern British Government would appear to be utterly groundless and incorrect, for it needs no proof that under the British rule the majority of the village population all over the country suffer perennially from famine conditions and scarcely get a square meal.[3]

[1] According to the statistics of revenue given elsewhere by Lahauri the province yielded 53 crores of dams—1,32,50,000 rupees (Vide Lahauri, Vol. II, p. 711). The Mulakhkhas has only 50 crores of dams (Vide Or. 175, fol. 458b). According to these figures the remission was even more than half or 50 per cent. It should also be noted that the remission was more necessary in the case of zabti or surveyed lands only. Where the land had not yet been surveyed and the old *Batai* or sharing system of assessment prevailed, even if the crops were divided proportionate to the yield, it constituted an automatic relief.

[2] Moreland: India from Akbar to Aurangzeb, p. 213.

[3] A brief review of the recent famines in Western India, extending from Southern Panjab as far as Gujrat, will suffice to show how ignominiously the present government has failed to provide relief to the people and consequently how disastrous and devastating these famines have been. Thus no such comparisons would be of any avail unless some real solution for the calamity is found.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

The study of the Mughal Provincial Administration contained in the preceding pages is, as I have said in the Introduction, an essay in interpretation. In this study it has been my sincere endeavour to estimate the value and significance of all those institutions, political, social or economic, which had a share in the provincial administration of the country. It was a noteworthy characteristic of that age that the social, religious and economic institutions of the people were not distinct or isolated from one another, as now, but worked in co-operation to promote the general welfare and happiness of the community. Most of these institutions were ancient and not innovations of the Mughals, having been assimilated by them into their system. Consequently no study of these institutions which ignores the share that the earlier institutions had in the administration of the country can be complete.

But the student of institutions and systems labours under the severest disadvantages and limitations. His task is not merely a colourless mechanical narration of incidents and facts, but is concerned rather with an interpretation of events, phenomena and movements, with a comprehension of their inner relations and significance and with an analysis of problems, situations, motives and causes. To present a faithful picture of the institutions of any country these factors must be synthesised into a harmonious syntax. Of course, it is not his business to sit in judgment and pronounce verdicts, but he must try to understand, criticise and appreciate his subject as dispassionately as he can. And yet it must be confessed, as I have said in the Introduction, that a purely impersonal and objective

attitude in the study of institutional history is almost impossible. There need, however, be no conscious attempt to force interpretations which the facts will not bear. History demands from us no more and no less.

Studied in this spirit the Mughal period of Indian history would appear to be one of the most magnificent periods in the history of the world. Among its contemporaries the Mughal empire was perhaps the greatest and most powerful and its achievements not only in the sphere of art and culture but also in the creating of a political personality, robust and well-organised, as well as in welding the Hindu and Muslim communities into a nation, was not unworthy of its great moral and material resources. When at its best, it attained a level of efficiency of which any government may well be proud. As a great English administrator of the late eighteenth century has observed, "On a consideration of the information obtained, it appears that although great disorder prevailed in the internal administration of the provinces on the Company's accession to the Diwanee, a regular system of government had subsisted under the most intelligent and powerful of Mughal governments, in which the rights and privileges of different orders of the people were acknowledged and secured by institutions derived from the Hindus, which, while faithfully and vigorously administered, seemed calculated to promote the prosperity of the natives, and to secure a due realisation of the revenues of the state."[1]

Thus the Mughal government was no mean administrative experiment. It was an experiment which has left a lasting impress on the present administration. It was an experiment which both by its policy and its practice, by its achievements as well as failures, has bequeathed to the succeeding generations a valuable political heritage.

The most outstanding of these lessons, which Akbar's far-sighted policy has conveyed, is the sound prin-

[1] Vide Sir John Shore in Ascoli, p. 118.

ciple that a government, to be secure, must rest on the affection and confidence of the people. The confidence and affection of the ruled towards the ruler is always conditional on the general prosperity and security which they enjoy under his rule. When the Mughal government failed to secure these conditions and chose to discard Akbar's wise policy, its foundations were shaken. Popular reaction against such conditions was inevitable and it was not long in bringing about a complete collapse. Next to this, the beginning of a general decline, both in policy and administrative efficiency soon after Akbar, reminds us of the inherent weakness and impermanence from which all despotisms suffer. A government which owes its success and vitality to the personal character of the ruler affords no guarantee for continued progress. A great ruler like Akbar might achieve much success in his own lifetime but he cannot be sure of perpetuating his good work after him. This law found its best example in the Mughal government.

Thirdly the influence of the personality and character of the ruler was also felt on the local administration, and although the village community system stood as a permanent bulwark of safety against disorder, the regularity, vigour and efficiency of the higher agencies of administration were always uncertain, depending as they did on the personal character of the ruler. This is the chief drawback of a personal rule as exemplified in Mughal despotism.

On the other hand, the principle of local responsibility on which the system of local administration was based was of incalculable benefit to the people. It saved them from being bullied and oppressed by an irresponsible and all-powerful police, secured them justice in their disputes and provided them protection from robbers and thieves. Moreover, with the headman and qanungo as the semi-official guardians to protect his interests coupled with the fortunate absence of any such intermediary as the modern zamindar, the peasant was not exposed to

the dangers of a ruinous system under which he labours today, a fact now universally recognised, and which has led to the condition described by a modern authority in the following words: "The money-lender tempted him to borrow, the lawyer to quarrel and the trader to waste."[1] Thus it may be justly hoped that the study of the local administration under the Mughals should be not only interesting but instructive.

[1] Darling: 'Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt.'

MAPS

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

A Note on the Main Sources and Authorities

I propose to discuss here the value of only the main sources for the study of Mughal Administration. The two broad classes into which the entire body of contemporary sources can be divided are: (1) Indigenous, and (2) Foreign. The indigenous sources which contain information on the present subject are mainly of two kinds, (1) General histories: (2) Statistical and institutional accounts. The other classes of writings such as biographies, or archeological and topographical accounts also contain some valuable matter. The accounts of foreigners are by travellers, merchants and missionaries.

The Indigenous Sources

The Ain-i-Akbari

The Ain-i-Akbari still remains an unrivalled source of our knowledge of the political institutions of the period. The Ain is a mine of details and statistics of a vast variety of subjects, social, political, economic, religious, etc., but it fails to throw sufficient light upon the actual working of the administrative system. Nor does it furnish enough information about the organisation of the various branches and departments of government. Nevertheless a close study of its contents yields quite unsuspected results and repays our labour fully. On certain topics the Ain tells us the theory and the ideal only and not actual facts, while on many others it furnishes the actual facts and details. For instance, it contains a very profound and lucid discussion of the theory of government, the principles of taxation, the origin and nature of sovereignty and its powers and

duties, of the different branches into which a government should be divided and of the qualifications of persons who should be entrusted with the different branches. But it also deals fully with the powers and functions of the various responsible officials, and tells the manner of their appointment, the disbursement of salaries, and so on. The statistical tables given in the Ain throw light on the actual relations subsisting between the government and the subordinate chiefs and jagirdars.

Blochmann and Jarrett's Translation of the Ain

Blochmann's translation of the first volume and Jarrett's translation of Vols. II and III of the Ain are very erudite, and are indispensable for the invaluable and learned foot-notes given chiefly by Jarrett, and for the note on Mansabdars by Blochmann. But they must never be relied upon without reference to the originals because firstly their translation of many controversial texts is not always unexceptionable, and secondly, Vol. II is full of errors and omissions in the transcription of statistics. Many scholars have been mislead by solely depending on the erroneous figures given in Jarrett's translation.

Akbar Nama

The Akbar Nama is no less important a source of the political and administrative institutions than the Ain-i-Akbari, although in its general narrative owing to the verbosity and tortuous imagery of Abul Fazl's language it tries the patience of the reader to the utmost. But the labour devoted on its perusal is fully repaid because embedded in the midst of Abul Fazl's heavy language lie most valuable pieces of information concerning the organisation as well as the working of the government. Indeed it is the Akbar Nama which enables us to trace the successive stages of the process by which the various branches of the administrative machinery were reared and perfected by Akbar. What we find lacking in the Ain is supplied in a great measure by the Akbar Nama. Thus in a way it serves as a

supplement to the Ain, so far as the study of the administrative system is concerned. I consider it therefore as indispensable as the Ain.

Mirat-i-Ahmadi

The Mirat-i-Ahmadi, a History of Gujrat, written in 1748 by Ali Muhammad Khan, the last Diwan of that province, is our third great and detailed source and for provincial administration it is perhaps the most important in many respects. It is, in fact, a unique work of its kind. As the author makes it clear, he has based his account on the state papers which were available to him, although he bewails the loss of almost all records from the provincial secretariate of Gujrat. The Mirat contains verbatim copies of several very important farmans which the emperors from Akbar to Aurangzeb had from time to time issued for the guidance of their officials. The third part of the Mirat consists of a supplement (ضمیمہ) in which the author has given a full and detailed description of the provincial administration, besides statistics of revenue, topography, important places, and numerous other facts about the province.

Riyaz-us-Salatin

Riyaz-us-Salatin, or the history of Bengal, written by Ghulam Husain Zaidpuri in 1786-1788, is another provincial history of considerable importance although it contains nothing approaching the contents of the Mirat. It is only a general history, but is quite reliable, being based on earlier Persian sources, and is written in a simple, straightforward style.

For the history of the Sur administration, (1) the Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi (Tuhfa-i-Akbar Shahi), (2) the two redactions of the Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan Lodi, (3) the Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi and the Tarikh-i-Daudi give enough information to enable us to form an outline of their administrative system.

Daulat-i-Sher Shahi

This is a rare work which was discovered by Prof. Rushbrooke Williams, who regards it as an authentic work of great value. The author Hasan Ali Khan says that he was a confidant of Sher Shah since the latter's boyhood. His name is mentioned by Abbas among the grandees of the state. Only a portion of this invaluable work was recovered by Prof. R. Williams. This portion contains the farmans and rules issued by Sher Shah for the governance of the kingdom to his officers, and to regulate the various affairs of administration. These farmans are a unique and very excellent source of our information regarding Sher Shah's government.

Other histories, chronicles and memoirs are all very valuable and contain abundant data bearing on the administrative system. But they say nothing directly concerning the government. We have to rely on incidental references only. Occasionally some revenue, army or other statistics are also mentioned.

The Dastur-ul-Amals called Manuals are mostly full of details of revenue, army, distances between towns, salaries of officials, and so forth and hence, with the exception of a few which contain some really valuable information, they do not yield a return commensurate with the time and labour that has to be spent in plodding through them. The most important and valuable Dastur-ul-Amals are Or. 1641; Ethe 370; Add. 6598; Add. 6603.

The value of the foreigners' accounts consists mainly in the descriptions of the country and its economic, social and political condition as they saw it in different places and at different periods. Some of them have also attempted to describe the administrative organisation, but in this respect they have nearly always failed to give a correct description. The various details, however, of departmental activity, such as the police or judiciary which they have described from personal observation or from experience are of great value.

APPENDIX B

The Significance of Nasq and Chowdhry

1. *Nasq*

Professor Sri Ram Sharma's paper on 'Nasq' in the 'Indian Culture' (for July 1936 to April 1937), pp. 543-545 calls for notice. In this paper 'Nasq' has been defined as 'a method of assessment when paying heed to *the last ten or twelve years*' land revenue demand, 1/12*th* of the total was fixed permanently as the land revenue of the land in question. The basis for this definition is a Dastur-ul-amal of Todar Mal Shah Jahani[1] which was professedly compiled between A. D. 1620 to 1646, and 'the different parts of the work were written at different times.' The same Dastur-ul-amal is said to describe six different systems of assessment, viz., (1) Nasqi, (2) Zabti, (3) Kankut, (4) Ghalla Qismi, (5) Lola Bandi, (6) Deh Bandi.

This statement raises three questions which demand clarification. (1) It seems to differ from my contention, viz., that Nasq and Kankut were different names of the same system during Akbar's period. As regards Muqtei the writer says nothing. (Vide ante Chapter VIII) (2) Whether Kankut was distinct from Nasq and (3) whether more than three systems of assessment were prevalent at the time.

As regards the first point the reasons for my view may be summed up as follows: Firstly Abul Fazl speaks of the existence, prior to and during Akbar's period, of only three systems of assessment, viz., (1) Ghalla Bakshi or Batai, or Bhaoli (Vide Ain-i-amal guzar: Jarrett, Vol. II,

[1] This was *Rai Todar Mal* (not Raja Todar Mal of Akbar's Court), a grandee of Shah Jahan's time and a mansabdar of 1500. He was faujdar of Sarhind. See Lahori (Bib. Ind. Text, Vol. II, page 728).

p. 44). (2) Zabti, Paimaish or Naqdi (Vide Jarrett, Vol. II p. 69) and (3) Nasq. Secondly we find that the third system is referred to as '*Muqtei*' and '*Kankut*' in different places.[1] It is clear from these references that Kankut and Muqtei were both distinct from the other two systems referred to under the different names indicated above but about the significance of which there is no doubt. Thus they, (i.e., Kankut and Muqtei) can be reasonably taken to refer to the only other system, that obtained viz., Nasq.[2]

[1] Vide Ain II. (Jarrett, page 44, 61 and 69).

Abul Fazl's enumeration of the systems under which payments in kind were permitted, among which Kankut is included along with the three different forms of Batai or Baholi has led some writers to misunderstand Kankut to be a form of Batai. But it should be remembered that in the passage under reference Abul Fazl is describing the different forms of assessment in which realisation of revenue in kind was generally carried out, as distinguished from Paimaish or Zabti under which generally revenue was realised in cash.

[2] It is curious that Prof. Sharma (I. H. Q., Vol. VIX, 1938, p. 720) says that 'We know of no older system known as Nasaq. Nasaq and Zabti were two new terms introduced by Akbar's land-revenue officials.' It is one thing to say that the terms Nasq and Zabt were not in use prior to Akbar's time and quite another to say that the systems themselves described by Akbar's officials by what may have been new terms did not exist. Prof. Sharma's language is ambiguous, but from the context he would seem to suggest as though both the systems were newly introduced. About the existence of *Zabti* (under whatever name) prior to Akbar, Abul Fazl has left no room for doubt (Vide Ain. Cal. Text I, p. 296). But no less clearly has he mentioned the existence of Nasq prior to Akbar, both in his account of Suba of Bengal and of Berar. In regard to the former after stating the reasons why the other two systems were not introduced he says:—

و خواهشگری مال بر نسق رود – گیتی خداوند از مهربانی دلی هماں آئین برجا داشت

which means that the system of Nasq by which the revenue demand was determined was confirmed by the Emperor. But in the case of Berar Abul Fazl says: از دیر باز نسقی است—From an early period revenue was assessed by the method of Nasq. As regards the introduction of the terms Zabti and Nasaq by Akbar's officials the mere fact that these terms have not yet been found in the available chronicles of the pre-Akbar period does not justify the inference that

Thirdly the essential and basic element of Nasq, Muqtei or Kankut which distinguishes it from the other two systems[1] is the fact that it signified a sort of compounding or arriving at an agreement between the Government and the ryot, by *means of a general estimate* carried out by representatives of both the parties. Fourthly it is clear that Nasq is admitted to have prevailed before Akbar's time and so is *Muqtei*. Fifthly a careful perusal of the chronicles makes it clear that the system of assessment by estimation being the most easily workable and open to much less abuse and corruption than Batai was resorted to under two circumstances: either at a time when the elaborate and complicated Zabti system was not easy to establish,[2] or in a place where owing partly to distance but mainly to the climatic conditions, the nature of the majority of crops being unpreservable, such as vegetables and fruits, to which this system of assessment alone can be most easily applied, and above all owing to the bias that gathers round a long established custom to which the people want to cling,[3] it was neither necessary nor advisable to enforce it, and such were precisely the conditions and circumstances where and when Nasq or Kankut or Muqtei is said to have obtained.

To turn now to the definition found in the Dastur-ul-

they were not in use at that time. On the contrary the manner in which Abul Fazl has used them affords a strong ground to presume that they were in use before Akbar.

[1] The distinguishing feature of Batai being '*actual division of the produce whether in the corn or in the farm,* and that of Zabti being *the determination of the King's share by the elaborate process of measurement* with a view to reduce to the minimum the scope for inaccuracy and for deliberate cheating on the one hand, oppression on the other.

[2] This might be due either to the general feebleness and inefficiency of the Central authority, or to the fact that a distant or newly conquered province such as Berar, could not be brought under Zabti. It was also resorted to by way of an experiment as in the 13th year of Akbar.

[3] The reasons for retaining the Nasqi system in Bengal set forth by Akbar amply illustrate this point.

amal referred to above. The chief point to note in this definition is that the fundamental and distinctive feature of Nasq was determination of revenue by *estimate* as against actual division or measurement. It will be noted that according to this definition also the fundamental feature of Nasq was *estimate*. It only differs in making Nasq an average of the previous ten or twelve years' crops instead of an estimate of the expected crop every harvest. But accepting Prof. Sharma's definition to be an accurate rendering of the text there is strong reason to presume that Nasq had undergone, in course of time, some modification in the method of its application. But in view of the reasons stated below it will be difficult to maintain that during Akbar's reign, Nasq could have obtained in this form. For, in the first place, Nasq is said to have obtained in Bengal, Berar and certain other parts of the empire from early times and was confirmed by Akbar without any modification. It is difficult to imagine of which ten or twelve years in the long previous history of these territories the average had been fixed as the permanent demand or share of the State, and equally difficult to suppose that such a demand, (if ever it existed) determined at an unknown past, should have continued unchanged. Through all the economic and political vicissitudes which these localities had undergone. But it is still more difficult to presume that even Akbar should have accepted without suitable and necessary adjustments certain ante-deluvian rates which were out-of-date and out-of-place—all the more so if they are supposed to have been cash rates and not produce rates. Nor does it seem likely that the ryot should have clung to such an iniquitous and inelastic demand. On the other hand all the circumstances of the case tend to strengthen the presumption that it was a system of which the basic principle was 'estimation of every harvest' by a very easy and practical method satisfactory to both the parties. In the second place Nasq is said to have been resorted to in the 13th year by Shihab-uddin in the whole empire. We also know that for the '*Dah-sala System*'

no precise rates for the years 15th to 19th were available. Can it be reasonably presumed that Shahab-uddin could obtain even approximate rates current in the early years of Akbar's reign in those territories which had after the lapse of thirteen years become included in the empire? On the contrary the Nasq was admittedly resorted to in order to avoid all such complications involved in the elaborate yearly Zabt at a time when the administrative mill had not started moving smoothly. So the object was to substitute a simpler and summary method. Again it is stated by Abul Fazl to have been adopted in such a short time in which the collecting of ten or twelve years' rates was obviously impossible. Lastly Abul Fazl's silence about the nature of this system is significant. In the Ain-i-amalguzar he explains Kankut which is only another name of Nasq and Muqtei.

The above discussion enables us to conclude (1) that at any rate Nasq as defined in the Dastur-ul-amal under reference did not exist under Akbar, (2) that it may have assumed a modified form under Shah Jahan in whose time the Dastur-ul-Amal mentioned above was compiled, (3) that as such it might have come to be applied as a variety of *Kankut* the basic feature, viz., *general estimate* of both remaining the same, in the same way as there were several forms of Batai slightly differing from one another, (4) that there is no warrant for the Statement that Nasq necessarily entailed cash payments, although it appears to have been a usual feature of Nasq.

The answer to our second question being included in the above disquisition only the third question remains to be dealt with. Concerning this it is clear that during Akbar's period there is definite mention only of three systems, while two other varieties of Batai or Bhaoli are also mentioned. But under Shah Jahan either some new systems had arisen or Lola Bandi (*Dana Bandi*?) and Deh Bandi might have been varieties of either Ghalla Qismi or Kankut.

2. *Chowdhry*

The origin and status of the office of Chowdhry during the Mughal period has, like many other equally obscure terms occasioned considerable discussion. The fact that 'Chowdhry' is an old, pre-Muslim, term is quite definite. As Abul Fazl says, (Ain, 476, Bib. Ind. Text) in the Deccan the Chowdhry was called Deshmukh and Qanungo, Deshpande. On the basis of this statement and certain Farmans, Parwanas and Nishans, all pertaining to the Deccan, the late Mr. Moreland suggests (Vide J.R.A.S., 1938, pages 511-521) that Chowdhry was the head of the *parganah* with revenue and police duties. But by completely ignoring the Shiqdar,[1] Amin and other parganah officers clearly mentioned by Abul Fazl[2] he would appear to suggest that these officers had nothing to do with the parganah. The question is how to reconcile the existence of a parallel set of functionaries, viz., Chowdhry and Amin who seem to have performed the same duties. This riddle had led Moreland to ignore the existence of Shiqdar, Amin and Karkuns in the parganah.

But the position becomes clear by acquainting ourselves of the fact that the term *chowdhry* was and is still applied to a large variety of functionaries both in the political and social life of our country—a system of which the vestiges are still found to exist in every sphere of Indian social life and which can be well understood only by personal contact and experience of a privilege which foreign writers like Moreland do not happen to enjoy. We are however, only too familiar with the chowdhries of castes and *biradaries*, (brotherhoods) who, besides presiding over the panchayat meetings, perform certain important duties on all socio-religious occasions such as nativity, wedding, death. Then there are chowdhries of villages irrespective of caste who preside over the panchayat of the whole village. Above them there are chowdhries of a group of

[1] Vide C. H. I., IV, 452.
[2] Jarrett, II, 66.

twelve villages and above them again of 84 villages. The number 84 is only too familiar in Hindu life and literature as possessing a special charm and sanctity.[1] The *chowdhrahat* (चैधराहट) or the office of Chowdhry of 84 and 12 villages is still in existence in Northern India and it may be presumed that it continues in other parts of the country also. We have enough epigraphical evidence to show that in the early Rajput period *Chaurasi* was a sub-division of Vishaya (विषय) and a Chaurasi was subdivided into Dwadashaks or groups of twelve villages.[2] Thus it would appear that the custom of grouping villages into 84's and 12's (Chaurasis and dwadashaks) has come down from the early Rajput times. Tod also bears testimony to the fact that although the sub-divisions might contain any number of villages between 50 and 100, their classical number was 84, and hence the sub-divisions were called Chaurasis. (See Tod I, Crookes Ed., p. 166).

Now we have it on good authority that the traditionary custom of constituting villages into groups of 84 also prevailed in the Deccan[3] of which the revenue officer was Deshmukh whose position seems to have already become hereditary like that of the Chowdhry in Northern India

[1] The figure 84 so universally pervades the facts and phenomena of Hindu life and thought that we meet with it at every step. Tradition, confirmed by historical data, has it that the villages were constituted for politico-social administration into groups of 84 or into multiples and divisions thereof. Sir H. M. Elliot has collected numerous illustrations of this. Vide Memoirs of the Races of N.-W. Provinces of India, Vol. II, pages 47-78.

[2] Vide Mozumdar's paper 'a short cultural History of the Chahmanas in I. H. Q., Vol. XV, 1939, pages 624-626. I owe it to the kindness of Mr. V. S. Agrawala, Curator, Provincial Museum, Lucknow, to draw my attention to Mr. Mozumdar's paper and also to the existence of chowdharies of 84 and 12 villages even now. He also suggests that chowdhry is a corruption of the Sanskrit *chaturdhurin* (चतुर्धुरीण) Maulana Moh. Husain Azad, however, says that it is a corruption of chitradhar (چتر دھر) see Ab-i-Hayāt, p. 35.

[3] Vide Elliot: Mem. of the Races of N.-W. Provinces of India, II, p. 55. Also Elphinstone's History of India, 9th Ed., p. 266 et. seq.

during the early Mughal period.[1] The Mughal emperors recognised the parganah and village chowdhries who thus became semi-official functionaries; on the one hand they served the state by assisting in the assessment and collection of revenues and on the other protected the rights of the ryot against the rapacity of Government officials. It seems that in the village the term chowdhry was substituted by Muqaddam while in the larger divisions it persisted. In consideration for their services the chowdhries were assigned Jagirs which were as usual subject to transfer or resumption by the crown. But in course of time the Chowdhry families became hereditary Zamindars.[2]

From this it will become clear that a Deshmukh's division comprised less than a hundred villages. The fact of the matter was that while the actual number of villages might slightly vary, theoretically the name and number chaurasi was maintained.

[1] Numerous illustrations of this are quoted in the District Gazetteers and chronicles e.g., C. A. Elliott's Chronicles of the District of Unao. The *deshpandes*, *patels* and *kulkarnis* of the Deccan and qanungos of the North but not patwaris, also became hereditary resulting in these titles being adopted by their descendants as family titles.

[2] See Tagore Law Lectures by A. Phillips, p. 61.

APPENDIX C

Explanation of Maps

The importance of a knowledge of *Geography and Topography* for the study of History is being more and more recognised. But still almost no attention has been paid to the study of the historical geography of India. The maps that are found in books no less than those contained in the few atlases in the field are mostly inaccurate. A glance at these maps is enough to convince a careful and attentive student that no one has taken pains over their preparation. Some authors of note, for instance, have included Gujrat and trans-Jehlum territory (i.e., the Sind Sagar Doab) in Sher Shah's dominions, or shown a road connecting Abu and Chittor right across the intervening mountains, where no road has ever been made even to this day. Moreover no attempt has so far been made (save the maps of the Mughal territories included within the then N. W. Provinces of Agra and Awadh, prepared by Sir H. M. Elliot, about 70 years ago) to determine the boundaries of provinces and their sub-divisions. Even Vol. IV of Cambridge History of India seems to have copied the inaccurate outline map of Akbar's Empire given by V. A. Smith in his Oxford History of India. Thus for the first time an attempt has been made to utilise all the data available in the preparation of the three maps appended to the present work.

In the case of Sher Shah while the boundaries of his empire can be more or less accurately ascertained we have no means to determine anything more than mere conjectural limits of his provinces. I have therefore given the outline of the Sur Empire and indicated the provinces by their Capital towns.

The second map is the most important. Abul Fazl's Gazetteer has furnished the fullest details necessary for the preparation of an accurate political map including provinces as well as Sarkars. But infinite difficulties have had to be encountered in identifying the names of places given in the *Ain* owing to the changes of names, wrong transcription by copyists, and many other similar reasons. None the less several hundred places have been identified. But it being impossible to note all these places in a map of this size I have shown only those which happen to be on the border line so as to draw the provincial boundaries correctly. Out of the Sarkars only Ajmer, Thatta, Kashmir, and Orissa have been marked.

The Western boundaries of the provinces of Kabul and Multan are still not quite definite. But they are approximately correct and had to be left as such owing to the inaccessibility of sufficiently large scale maps at present.

The third map roughly shows the distribution of different systems of assessment. But anything like finality on this point in the case of some provinces and districts is very difficult to attain. I have however made an attempt to elucidate the point in my chapter on Finance.

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