

Indian Historical Records
Commission

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INDIAN
HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION

TWENTY NINTH SESSION

BHOPAL, 1953

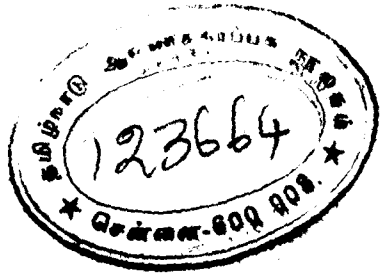
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SUMMARIES OF PAPERS

(1)

A NEWLY DISCOVERED MANUSCRIPT OF INAYATULLAH'S AHKAM-I-ALAMGIRI, BY S. H. ASKARI, PATNA COLLEGE, PATNA.

As the manuscripts of such a primary source of information as *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri*, compiled by Inayatullah Kashmiri, the Chief Diwan and favourite Secretary of Aurangzeb are extremely rare, an unknown copy of the work, recently discovered at Lucknow whereof a transcribed copy has now been procured for the Patna University Library, has been made the subject of the present paper. It has been compared and collated with the copy available in the Oriental Public Library, Patna, described by Sir J. N. Sarkar, and some of the glaring divergences have been noted. One of the distinctive features of the newly-discovered manuscript is its apparent completeness. While it contains all the letters in the Oriental Public Library Manuscript, though not always in the same order, it furnishes us with many new ones, e.g., 22 against 2 letters addressed to Prince Muizzuddin. Similar other differences have also been noted.

An attempt has also been made to bring out the importance of the work and draw the readers' attention to such of the contents as have not hitherto received proper attention. Not only the Emperor's policy of religious discrimination and even of intolerance but his sense of justice, concern for the weak and the oppressed, for the peasantry and the grain dealers and traders, his anxiety to check official corruption and laxity in administration are reflected in the letters. The letters relating to Jai Singh Sawai, Durgadas Rathor, Guru Gobind Singh, contain much that is revealing and has remained previously unnoticed. Some of the letters—more than 30 in number—concerning European traders and pirates in the western waters, their activities and the Emperor's policy towards them have also been noted.

(2)

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ASSAM IN THE DAYS OF THE COMPANY. BY H. K. BARPUJARI, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to throw some light on an unknown chapter of the history of education in Assam. It is based on unpublished official documents preserved at the Commonwealth Relations Office (formerly India Office), London. It gives an idea of the system of education that prevailed in Assam in the pre-British days and also the policy pursued and measures adopted by David Scott, Adam White, Captain

Jenkins and James Matthie for the promotion of learning in the early days of the Company. Incidentally, it also shows that the attitude of the East India Company towards education of the masses was then one of total indifference.

(3)

EXCLUSION OF HIGH CASTE HINDUS FROM OUDH POLICE
AFTER THE MUTINY, BY NANDA LAL CHATTERJEE, UNIVERSITY OF
LUCKNOW.

Among the old district records of Lucknow, there are some extremely interesting and historically valuable post-Mutiny police circulars and memoranda which throw a flood of light on the inner springs of British policy in connection with the maintenance of law and order. A study of these documents reveals that after the Mutiny the British Government deliberately excluded from the police force Hindus of higher castes, and sought to make it a close preserve for Muslims and Hindu Kayasthas. The records show that the authorities had evolved an interesting theory in justification of the planned exclusion of high caste Hindus and the preferential treatment shown to Muslims and Kayasthas. Lt. Col. D. S. Barrow, Officiating Inspector General, Oudh Police, wrote in the course of a secret memorandum (dated Lucknow, 18 June 1872) "*.....Mussulman and Kaiths are generally speaking the best and sharpest men.....*" It is indeed a paradox that a certain officer protested against this policy in these words, "*.....it seems to be very unwise that we should have such a large number of any two castes holding the most important posts in the force*". This comment apparently went unheeded, and probably it was to answer such criticism that the convenient theory about the "*best and sharpest men*" was propounded.

(4)

AN OLD VILLAGE SURVEY REPORT, BY K. K. DATTA, PATNA COLLEGE,
PATNA.

The old survey reports like those of Major James Rennell and Francis Hamilton Buchanan contain plenty of important information relating to the history of India, in its different aspects, during the last three decades of the eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth century respectively. All this can be, however, supplemented by additional information from the old reports of the village surveys, which the English East India Company's Government had to conduct in the course of land settlements of various kinds. Recently the writer obtained one such Report in Persian, dated 1825, from the old records in the Record Office of the Divisional Commissioner at Patna.

This Report, included in the *Proceedings of the Court of the Collector of Shahbad*, dated the 12th September, 1825, relates to the survey of village Kaithi in *tappa* Bharki of *pargana* Sasaram in Bihar. Besides mentioning the usual modes of settlement survey and discussing the reasons for undertaking it, the Report traces the history of this village, and also contains highly interesting facts relating to socio-economic conditions of the time, such as different castes and their professions, prices of commodities, agricultural produce, conditions of labourers and slaves, population census figures, etc. It further shows how the village was a self-sufficient unit for its practical needs.

(5)

SALT MONOPOLY IN ORISSA AND ITS EFFECTS DURING THE
EARLY BRITISH RULE, BY S. C. DE, ORISSA STATE ARCHIVES,
BHUVANESWAR.

Orissa was conquered by the English in 1803 A.D. Soon after the conquest, the English authorities established their own system of administration, rather too hastily, without any study of the character of the people, their history and traditions. The result was that the new system did not work properly, and the people were discontented. One of the main causes of the discontent was alleged to be the distressing effects of the salt monopoly introduced by the Company soon after the conquest of the province. The paper deals with the correspondence that passed between the authorities on the subject. Salt which was available at eight to fourteen annas a maund during the period of Maratha rule gradually became costlier till its price was Rs. 3-4-0 per maund in 1817. This was solely due to the effect of the salt monopoly. To add to the distress of the people, salt became scarce in the market on account of the impudent policy of the Government. About one-third of the total salt required for internal consumption was supplied to the market, the rest was exported, as external trade was more lucrative than the internal sale. For these two reasons, the price of salt was abnormally high, and it was even difficult to procure it.

(6)

MAHARAJA RAJBALLABH, RAY RAYAN OF THE KHALSA AND
HIS FAMILY ESTATES, BY HARI RANJAN GHOSAL, L. S. COLLEGE,
MUZAFFARPUR.

The paper is based on a number of unpublished documents of the years 1783, 1798-1801 and 1834-35 found in the archives of Muzaffarpur Collectorate. The documents are very important for a fresh study of Maharaja Rajballabh, about whose family and estates our knowledge is still imperfect. These records reveal the number of landed properties (jagirs) which Ray Rayan Rajballabh possessed in North Bengal and in Tirhut, and the manner

in which the Company's Government ruthlessly resumed almost the whole of the properties soon after his death in 1798, in complete disregard of the solemn assurances given by Vansittart, Carnac, Verelst and Warren Hastings that they would for ever protect and honour the prestige and interests of his family. The misfortune which befell the family on Rajballabh's death and the hard circumstances of his adopted grandson Gourballabh have also been noticed in the article.

(7)

LORD ELLENBOROUGH AND THE HOME AUTHORITIES 1843-44,
BY S. GOPAL, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA.

The second and last year of Lord Ellenborough's tenure of office in India is of importance in the history of the relations between the Governor-General, the Cabinet and the Court of Directors. The Gladstone Papers in the British Museum, which shed fresh light on the matter, have been utilised to re-assess the developments of these twelve months.

(8)

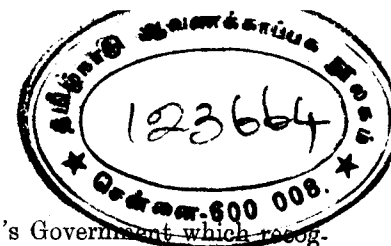
THE REBELLION OF MAN SINGH RAO PATANKAR, BY HIRA LAI,
GUPTA, UNIVERSITY OF SAUGOR.

Man Singh Rao Ratankar, a subordinate jagirdar of the State of Gwalior, who was in charge of the districts of Powagarh and Panch Mahal on the Gujarat frontier, was a very ambitious, and turbulent officer. His son, Appa Sahib, was the son-in-law of Maharaja Daulat Rao Sindhia who was weak in health and had no male heir to succeed him after his death. Man Singh Rao Patankar exploited this relationship and, taking advantage of the state of affairs existing in Gwalior, rebelled against his authority hoping to obtain countenance of the British officers. His rebellion and the measures adopted for his suppression give an insight into the British policy towards the Indian states and throw a side-light on the important question of succession that engaged the attention of the state before as well as after the death of Daulat Rao Sindhia.

(9)

THE EVENTS LEADING TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE TREATY
BETWEEN BHOPAL AND THE ENGLISH IN 1818, BY S. C.
GUPTA, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA.

The State of Bhopal, an enclave surrounded by the Maratha States of Central India, had to wage an intermittent struggle for its very existence and it was not unnatural that it veered towards the British authorities in India for support and protection. Its strategic position made it a particular



object of solicitude on the part of the Company's Government which recognized the value of an independent Muhammadan principality in the midst of the none too friendly Maratha States.

The State's contact with the British, first established in 1778, found its culmination in a treaty in 1818. The present paper deals generally with this relationship and particularly with the circumstances that led to the conclusion of the treaty of alliance between Nawab Nazar Muhammad Khan and the Government of Lord Moira.

(10)

FOOD SCARCITY IN BOMBAY ISLAND, 1737-1739: A SIDE ISSUE
OF THE MARATHA CAMPAIGN AGAINST BASSEIN, BY P. M.
JOSHI, RECORD OFFICE, BOMBAY.

When the Maratha plans of the invasion of Salsette island and the storming of Bassein fort were known to the Portuguese, they naturally looked to their friends, the British in Bombay, for help. But in helping the Portuguese the British drew on themselves the wrath of the Marathas who stopped the supply of food grains to Bombay island. The Maratha invasion of Salsette island, as a preliminary to the siege of Bassein, began with the occupation of Thana after which the invaders quickly spread all over the island occupying one point after another. Many people from Salsette island sought refuge under the British flag in Bombay and added to the anxiety of the administration of the island with regard to the adequacy of food grains. Governor Horne took the extreme step of issuing a proclamation requiring refugees to quit the island and declared that any inhabitant of the island harbouring refugees would be considered to have violated the law. All inhabitants of the island were also required to communicate to the heads of their respective castes the quantity of rice and other food grains in their possession. Attempts were made to import rice into Bombay from Mangalore, Surat and Bengal and an envoy was sent to Chimaji Appa to negotiate in this behalf.

These facts provide one aspect of Inchbird's embassy to Chimaji Appa. Excerpts from eleven consultations of the Bombay Council dealing with the subject have been reproduced in the article.

(11)

RAJENDRAS OF GANGAKHED AND THEIR RECORDS, BY R. M.
JOSHI, CENTRAL RECORDS OFFICE, HYDERABAD.

The Central Records Office, Hyderabad-Dn., has come to possess family records of the Rajendras of Gangakhed. Like the Pratapwants and the Ray Rayans, the Rajendras rendered valuable services to the Asaf Jahi State. The earliest known ancestor of the family was Balajipant who

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served under the Nawab of Kurnool. But it was Haibat Rao Gopal who came into lime-light during the reign of Nawab Nizam Ali Khan (1761—1803). He was posted as *Akhbarnavis* at Purandar about May 1774, and the despatches he sent from the Peshwa's Court sufficiently indicate how he meticulously and faithfully recorded the events at Poona and in other parts of India. Recognised as he was for his acumen in political matters, he was entrusted by the Nizam with delicate duties of negotiations with Nana Farnavis and other *Karbharis* at Poona.

Raghottam Rao, Haibat Rao's son, was the first who earned the title of "Rajendra". The family records reveal that he was a scholar and a great linguist. He had a detailed knowledge of the conditions at Poona and the day-to-day happenings at the Nizam's Court. Accordingly he was made in 1791 the Nizam's Vakil at Poona in succession to his father.

Another important member of the Rajendra family was Raghottam Rao's grandson Gopal Rao who rose to a position of honour in the time of Mir Mahboob Ali Khan Bahadur (1869-1911).

(12)

RECORDS FROM A GHATPANDE FAMILY OF JUNNAR (POONA),
BY G. H. KHARE, BHARATA ITIHASA SAMSHODHAKA MANDALA, POONA.

A member of the above-mentioned family brought to the Bharat Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala a bundle of 243 old documents for examination. It consisted of 176 Persian, 2 Perso-Kannada, 18 Perso-Marathi and 48 Marathi documents. The ancestors of this family were the hereditary accountants of 12 passes and 27 centres of toll-collection that lay in the tract between the Nira and Pravara rivers. Most of the documents refer to the administration of these passes and centres, and the *Vatans* and *Inams* of the family. Three documents, however, from this collection which are Adilshahi farmans bring to light for the first time a new expedition of Afzalkhan into the Karnataka against, most probably, Shivaji the Great in which Shahaji was asked to participate and fight, if required, against his own son.

(13)

TIME SIGNAL, FORT WILLIAM, BY R. H. PHILLIMORE.

The writer describes the origin of the daily time signal made on the ramparts of Fort William, Calcutta. He derives his account from the original records of the General and Military Departments of the Government of Bengal, and of the Surveyor-General's Department.

In 1834 Captain Alfred Chapman, a retired ship's master, asked the Bengal Council to arrange such a signal that the ships in the harbour might set their chronometers to ensure safe navigation at sea. The Surveyor-

General's office was able to meet the request as daily astronomical observations had been regularly taken from an observatory that had been built on the roof of the office in 1825.

From January 1835 daily signals were made at this observatory by dropping a ball from the top of a mast at the office, and these were repeated at the Fort from a point visible to the shipping on the river.

The signals were interrupted for more than a year by the move of the Surveyor-General's office to a building in Chowringhee, but they were continued regularly from 1837, being controlled by electricity from 1858. Responsibility for the signals was later transferred to the Telegraph Department, and from 1935 to the Meteorological Office at Alipore.

(14)

INSHA-I-NAURANG, BY SHEIKH ABDUR RASHID, MUSLIM UNIVERSITY,
ALIGARH.

A Persian manuscript entitled *Insha-i-Naurang*, lent by Dr. Abdul Huq of Madras to the writer, is a collection of miscellaneous letters in Persian. It consists of 173 pages; $9\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5\frac{1}{2}''$ in size. The name of the compiler or the date or purpose of compilation are nowhere mentioned. The date of the transcription of this manuscript is also unknown.

There are 102 letters in this collection: an extract relating to the sack of Muhammadpur in 1782 by the ruler of Mysore and another extract from Khafi Khan's History pertaining to a letter written by Shah Jahan in the early days of his captivity to Mahabat Khan are also given. Among the notable persons whose letters are to be found in the manuscript are Vansittart, Mir Jafar Ali Khan, Mir Qasim Ali Khan, Shah Alam and Shitab Rai. These deal with a variety of subjects and throw valuable light on the social, economic and political conditions in Bengal after the battle of Plassey. Two of these letters are reproduced in the paper as specimen. Both were addressed by Nawab Qasim Ali Khan to Vansittart. In the first letter (written in 1762) the Nawab requested Vansittart to let him know the probable expenses involved in the proposed expedition against Orissa. In the second he reported the machinations of Shitab Rai and expressed an urgent necessity of punishing him.

(15)

AZAM-UL-AKHBAR, BY K. SAJAN LAL, OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD.

Azam-ul-Akhbar (the Great Newspaper) is the earliest Urdu Newspaper of Madras, first published in 1848 by Haji Sayyid Rustam. The writer of this article possesses a few issues and volumes of *Azam-ul-Akhbar* for the years 1849, 50, 51 and 52. This weekly covered news from all parts

of India and devoted special attention to the cultural activities of Madras. As a sample of news-reporting, the issue of February, 1850, is taken, wherein appear detailed account of the foundation of the Madras Muslim Public Library, interesting news about intrigues at the native courts, especially at Gwalior and Lucknow.

(16)

A COURT BULLETIN OF PRINCE JAHANDAR SHAH, BY G. N. SALETORE, CENTRAL RECORD OFFICE, ALLAHABAD.

The paper contains a descriptive account of manuscript No. 182 of 1951-52 acquired by the U.P. Regional Records Survey Committee.

The document is entitled "Akhbar Deorhi Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah", but as it contains historical information relating to the Nawab Wazir, Prince Jahandar Shah, the Imperial Court and many other contemporary events, it is believed that it is a Court Bulletin of Prince Jahandar Shah. The document relates to the events that occurred between 10 December 1784 and 10 April 1785 and is obviously fragmentary in nature.

The 55 entries concern Asaf-ud-Daulah, Prince Jahandar, the Imperial Court, Mahadaji Shinde, Ambaji, Najaf Quli Khan, Afrasiab Khan's army, Nawazish Ali Khan, Faizullah Khan, Rajah Jagan Nath, Maharaja Surat Singh, Ghulam Qadir Khan, Bala Rao, Eltimas Ali Khan, Sikh invasions and the affairs of Akbarabad, Allahabad, Benares, Etawah, Farrukhabad, Muradabad, Shahjahanpur, etc.

Among the interesting items, the details of which are available, are the sojourn of Prince Jahandar Shah in Lucknow; Emperor Shah Alam's *darbar* held after the fall of Akbarabad; Mahadaji Shinde's relations with Khadim Husain Khan, son of Afrasiab Khan; dealings between the family of Afrasiab Khan, Mahadaji Shinde, Himmat Bahadur, etc.; a conference between Ambaji, Najaf Quli Khan and the Sikh Chieftains; and the Sikh invasions of the Doab.

(17)

SAMBHAJI ANGRIA—A PRETENDER TO THE GADI OF KOLABA, BY UPENDRA NATH SARKAR, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA.

The infant Kanhoji II, Chief of Kolaba, died on 9 April 1840 and the state was annexed to the British territories in 1842 for want of legitimate heirs, though the succession to the Kolaba state did not regularly descend from father to son and was not strictly confined to the legitimate line.

There are several records in the National Archives of India which show the systematic efforts made by Sambhaji Angria to succeed to the *gadi* of Kolaba ever since the death in 1814 of his uncle Babu Rao Angria, the ruler of Kolaba; but all his endeavours proved to be fruitless.

(18)

• WARREN HASTINGS AND CHAPMAN'S MISSION TO THE EASTERN SEAS, (1778), BY SRI KRISHNA SAXENA, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA.

The unexpected arrival in Calcutta of two Cochin-Chinese Mandarins of high rank in February 1778 gave an opportunity to Warren Hastings of sending a mission to Cochin-China under the leadership of Charles Chapman for forming an alliance with the ruling power of that country in order to prevent expansion of French influence there and to establish a base for the East India Company's trade with China. Chapman found the country in the grip of a civil war and could achieve nothing tangible. Although his experience was not happy, yet his account was not totally discouraging. He was firmly convinced that once normal conditions were restored, Cochin-China, with its abundant resources, could be easily developed into a base for the expansion of British commerce in the Far East.

The Supreme Council were "pleased with his conduct in this troublesome and perilous service" but his recommendations were not found acceptable for reasons discussed in the paper.

(19)

A LETTER OF NAWAB NIZAM ALI KHAN ON HOLLAND'S MISSION, 1779, BY SAYYID MOHIUDDIN, CENTRAL RECORDS OFFICE, HYDERABAD.

The paper deals with an unpublished letter by Nawab Mir Nizam Ali Khan Bahadur preserved in the records of Daftar-i-Darul-Insha, a part of the Central Records Office, Hyderabad State. It throws light on the activities of John Holland, as an envoy on behalf of the Madras Government in 1779 A.D. and reveals the diplomatic relations subsisting between the Nizam and the English Company.

(20)

THE DIPLOMATIC INTRIGUES OF CHEVALIER, GOVERNOR OF CHANDERNAGORE (1767-1778), BY S. P. SEN, UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA.

In this paper an attempt has been made to give a connected account of the diplomatic intrigues of Jean Baptiste Chevalier, Governor of Chandernagore from 1767 to 1778, based on his own letters to the Minister of Marine and Colonies preserved in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris (Mr. N. A. 9366). Chevalier was a most colourful personality. He kept himself in constant touch with the Princes of north India and with the French military adventurers scattered all over the sub-continent, intrigued at every Darbar

and never doubted for a moment that it was possible, for France even at that hour to drive the English out of Bengal with the help of some of the Indian Princes. We may discern three distinct periods in his ideas about French intervention in Indian politics. In the first period, from 1769 to the installation of Shah Alam on the Imperial throne at Delhi in 1772, his policy was rather vague and aimed at forming a heterogeneous coalition of all the north Indian Princes against the English. In the second period, from 1772 to the broaching of the Tatta project in 1775, he dropped the idea of a number of heterogeneous allies and advocated a policy of strengthening the hands of the Emperor by lending him 5,000 French troops and organising a large sepoy force trained and armed in the European fashion. In the third period, from 1775 to 1778, Chevalier's policy was based on a solid alliance with the Emperor in return for the cession of the province of Tatta or Sind. When the opportune moment arrived the French troops stationed in Tatta could move on to Delhi, effect a junction with the Imperial forces and swoop down on Bengal. The new project held the attention of the French Government for two and a half years. But before any active step could be taken two essential factors for its successful execution were removed, the first by the departure of Madec from north India in 1777, and the second by the sudden outbreak of war between France and England and the prompt capture of Chandernagore in July 1778.

(21)

NEWSPAPERS AS SOURCE OF MODERN INDIAN HISTORY,
BY SRI RAM SHARMA, D. A. V. COLLEGE, SHOLAPUR.

Newspapers can form useful source materials for the study of modern Indian history as in their selection of facts they reflect the contemporary taste for news and in their comments they mirror the contemporary public opinion. They are also valuable for information on significant public events. A study of the first two volumes of the *Gnan Prakash*, a Marathi newspaper which started publication in 1849, supports this view regarding the importance of newspapers, as its issues contain materials on political, economic, social and religious conditions in India, particularly those prevailing in Maharashtra in the middle of the 19th century.

(22)

MINTO AND GOA, BY SHILENDRA K. SINGH, UNIVERSITY OF AGRA.

Goa was dangerously near Bombay. Its government which was Portuguese was both weak and corrupt. The apprehension of a Napoleonic invasion of India was an obsession with the British statesmen in this country. Events in Europe were moving with a kaleidoscopic rapidity and were, at times, disturbing. News travelled slow and many rumours were afloat.

Wellesley had provided for a British garrison force for protection of Goa, and also appointed a British Envoy there. When Minto was at the helm of affairs in India, Schuyler was the British Envoy at Goa. Conditions in Portugal were confused. First the Portuguese Government, out of fear of Napoleon, made an anti-English proclamation and then soon after, the Prince Regent chose to escape to Brazil with English help. These events had repercussions in India. The Company's Government did not know whether to occupy Goa or leave it alone. Minto adopted a middle course taking the entire defences of Goa into British hands but leaving the local administration alone. Admiral Pellew, the Naval C-in-C. in India was over-enthusiastic about taking Goa under complete occupation. He took some rash measures, but Minto was patient and handled the matter with great delicacy and statesmanship. Schuyler was rewarded for his careful conduct of the negotiations with the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa.

(23)

AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN ASAF-UD-DAULAH OF AWADH AND MUZAFFAR JANG OF FARRUKHABAD (1775), BY A. L. SRIVASTAVA, AGRA COLLEGE, AGRA.

Muzaffar Jang Bangash, Nawab of Farrukhabad, who succeeded his father Ahmad Khan in 1771, was a very weak and timid ruler. Shuja-ud-Daulah of Awadh, anxious to detach him from the Ruhela confederacy, promised to restore his parganas that were occupied by the Marathas and obliged him to accept the status of a vassal. A letter of the British Resident John Bristow preserved in the Secret Proceedings of 1776 in the National Archives of India gives an account as to how Asaf-ud-Daulah (1775-1797) went a step further, reduced the power of Muzaffar Jang, stationed a battalion of his troops permanently at Farrukhabad and compelled the Bangash Nawab to surrender his defence and foreign policy into his hands.

(24)

RAJAB ALI MANUSCRIPTS IN THE PUNJAB GOVERNMENT RECORD OFFICE, BY V. S. SURI, THE PUNJAB GOVERNMENT RECORD OFFICE, SIMLA.

The Punjab Government Record Office, Simla, has in its possession a valuable collection of historical manuscripts which belonged to Moulvi Rajab Ali, who played an important role in the field of Anglo-Sikh relations both before and after the annexation of the Punjab. These materials which have so far remained unpublished are of great importance for the study of the history of the province in the first half of the 19th century and for the life of Rajab Ali. The most significant among these manuscripts are:—

- (1) *Darbar Akhbarat* (Court Chronicles) of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Maharaja Sher Singh;

(2) *Muraslajat*, copies of official communications and despatches addressed by the British Government to chiefs and notable personages of northern India;

(3) *Siyahat-i-Kashmir* by Lala Ganeshi Lal;

(4) *Roznamchajat* or Diaries;

(5) *Zabat-ul-Tawarikh* or tables of corresponding Hijra, Bikrami and Christian dates; and

(6) *Mukatabat* or letters of Moulvi Rajab Ali.

The article contains a short description of these manuscripts and appraisal of their value as source material for the history of the Punjab.

(25)

SOIROBA NAIG, BY K. D. SWAMINATHAN, UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS.

The Political Residents of the East India Company, during the early years of the 19th century had the particular knack of choosing appropriate persons among talented Indians, to occupy positions of importance. Soiroba Naig, a resident of Tanjore, was one such man, spotted out by Sir William Blackburn, Political Resident at Tanjore. Being sent out of the Tanjore court for some unknown reason, Soiroba Naig, was appointed as principal Manager in Pudukkottai State. By honesty and integrity Soiroba rose to the highest position in Pudukkottai. He occupied the position of *Sirkil* from 1822 to 1853 [though it had been kept vacant for seven years (1814-1822) for want of a suitable person].

Sir William Blackburn's letters to the Rajas of Pudukkottai and Tanjore bear ample testimony to the integrity and experience of Soiroba Naig.

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SOME UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS ON THE DEATH OF THE RANI OF JHANSI AND THE MUTINY IN CENTRAL INDIA.
BY M. H. R. TAIMURI, CENTRAL RECORDS OFFICE, BHOPAL.

The re-examination of the Persian records in the Central Records Office, Bhopal, has recently revealed the existence of some valuable letters which throw fresh light on the circumstances of the death of the Rani of Jhansi and some other events connected with the Mutiny in Malwa. These communications, six in number, were all addressed to Nawab Sikandar Begum of Bhopal, from 18 June to 4 July 1858 by Munshi Bhawani Prasad, the Begum's representative with the Political Agent to the Governor-General in Central India. The documents can be regarded as a reliable source of information as Bhawani Prasad was very close to the

field of operations of the British force employed for the suppression of the rebellion in Malwa.

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MICROFILMING: IMMENSE POSSIBILITIES OF ITS USE IN INDIA.
BY M. C. TRIVEDI, GOVERNMENT PHOTO REGISTRY OFFICE, POONA.

The process of microfilming evolved at the Government Photo Registry Office, Poona, for use for the facsimile copying of all kinds of records, historical and others, is described. A case is made out showing how it can be given a fillip by the Central Government (Ministry of Education), so as to be utilised by all States, in several departments such as Registration, Archives, Archaeology, Museums, Libraries, etc.

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SOME PROMINENT PARSIS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.
BY B. A. SALETORRE, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA.

The Public Department Proceedings in the National Archives of India contain some records relating to some prominent Parsis of Bombay who were responsible for the maritime prosperity of that city in the latter half of the 18th century. These documents which range from 1782 to 1800 throw valuable light on the ship-building activities of the Parsi Master Builders of the Bombay Dockyard. One of the papers relating to the case of Jurajee Bhewunjee tried on a charge of perjury in the Mayor's Court is important for the study of administration of justice in the island.



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