CHAPTER XVII

THE REVOLT OF THE PEOPLE

I. THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE AND GENERAL NATURE OF THE REVOLT

The success of the mutineers at various places, and the massacre or flight of the local British officials, in particular their abandonment of the city of Delhi into the hands of the mutineers, led the people all over Rohilkhand and Awadh to believe that the British raj had ceased to exist. No visible symbol was left of its authority in many localities, and there was almost a complete political vacuum and lack of any kind of authority. In all ages and countries such a situation affords the best opportunity for popular outbreaks, varying in nature, according to the circumstances and temperament of the different types of people.

As already mentioned above,¹ all classes of people in India were thoroughly discontented and disaffected against the British. It is, therefore, quite natural, and no extraordinary phenomenon, that there should be a general rising of the people against the hated feringhees wherever the success of the mutiny had destroyed their power and authority. Hopes of personal gain also undoubtedly operated to a large extent among all classes, and were the sole motive of many, notably the goonda elements and those professional classes who were accustomed to live by plunder, such as the Gujars, Ranghars, Jats etc.

Another class, which was powerfully influenced by motives of self-interest and contributed largely to the origin and prolongation of the popular revolt, was the one connected with the land. The following analysis of the causes of the popular outbreak in the District of Allahabad by the then local Magistrate has a much wider application.

"In the Doab Pergunnahs the character of the outbreak was worse, and the extent greater than anywhere else. The Zemindars there were chiefly Mussulmen, and with scarcely an exception, they joined their brethren, with the object of exterminating the English, and upsetting the Government. Pergunnah Chail was the worst of all; the Moultie was a resident of Mahagaon, one of its villages, and every Mussulman there joined his standard. The Pragwal Brahmins of Allahabad, who were also foremost in the outbreak, carried with them the Hindu population. The District Police went almost in a body, and for a short time the greatest anarchy prevailed."
In the trans-Gangetic pargannahs, the causes which acted to excite the disturbances were different. Religion had little or nothing to do with it. The villages in these pargannahs were owned at the cession by large thakoor families in large talookahs. The old zemindars, habitually extravagant, because, by habit, livers on plunder, became ruined by their extravagance, and were sold up by our rule and by our laws. The cultivators and poorer classes still continued to look upon them with greater regard than the purchaser to auction, however long the latter may have been in possession of the property. The ex-zemindar and his family were still the most influential residents of the village. In most instances, they received a kind of tribute from the poorer inhabitants, and helped them in return.

The auction purchaser, on the other hand, was generally a resident of the city, and never visited his village, except for the hateful purpose of collecting his rents, or enforcing his decrees. The people, therefore, naturally sided with the zemindars to whom the outbreaks seemed a grand opportunity of recovering their position. They first set to work to destroy and plunder everything European, and took forcible possession of their old estates. Of course, the auction purchasers were our friends, and rendered every assistance in their power for the restoration of order." In the pargannahs south of the Jumna bad characters burnt and plundered villages but disturbances never took fair root owing principally to the great influence of the Rajas of Manda, Dihya and Barra....Such was the state of the district during the interval immediately succeeding the mutiny at Allahabad. The Doab population, led on by their Mohamedan zemindars, had risen with enthusiasm to take part in a religious war, and had marked their rising with the usual accompaniments of Mahomedan fanaticism. The rising had been quickly checked and a large proportion of the population had fled, leaving the district partially deserted. The trans-Gangetic population, led on by the old talookdar families, had risen to restore the old order of things, and remained in arms against us. The trans-Gangetic population has, as before mentioned, been restrained by local influences, and never openly threw off our Government."

Personal gain or satisfaction of personal ambition which impelled the people to rebel took many forms. The leaders and grandees thought of recovering the territories, honours and privileges they had lost, gaining new lands and wealth within easy reach, or paying off old scores against an enemy,—a natural instinct from which they were hitherto restrained by the rule of law established by the British. Some were eager to seize this golden opportunity of making amends for the grievous injuries they had suffered in the hands of the British. Less important persons sought to remove the sources of their misery and humiliation by (i) destroying the bonds for loans or title-deeds of land deposited with the baniyas at the time of borrowing money at high rate of interest which threatened to ruin them; and (2) killing the oppressive landlords or indigo-planters who had hitherto treated them as serfs. They welcomed, if not initiated, the revolt, because it did away with the inconvenient necessity of paying taxes to the Government and rent to the landowners, ushered in freedom from all vexatious restraints imposed by authority, and above all, meant the end of the various sources of discontent which the British rule had introduced in the country.
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In many cases the outbreak was merely a continuation or revival of the acts of resistance discussed in Chapter XIV, and many revolts were inspired by the same or similar causes.

It is possible that less selfish motives were also at work. The general discontent and disaffection against the British made some persons anxious to put an end to their rule, and they seized the god-sent opportunity to drive away the hated feringhee, now that they had lost the only prop of their rule in India, namely, the allegiance of the sepoys.

Some Muslim leaders and Maulavis were fired by the ambition of restoring Muslim rule in India. A few leaders, both Hindu and Muslim, might have been urged by the noble instinct of achieving freedom from foreign yoke, although their vision did not extend to the whole of India, and was limited to the narrow horizon of their own locality.

While these and other causes produced local revolts over an extensive area, it is significant to note that there was no common end, common plan, or common organization. In most cases the outbreaks were purely local affairs, and attempts to put in a joint resistance to the British were few and far between.

Another significant feature was that though the beginnings of the revolt were marked by timidity and hesitation, after the people had made their choice they often resisted the mighty British force with valour and heroism, sometimes to a remarkable degree. Once they had crossed the Rubicon, many rebels never looked back.

There are reasons to believe that an attempt was made to prepare the ground for popular revolt against the British by a number of persons, notably some Muslim Maulavis. The best known among them is Maulavi Ahmadulla of Fyzabad, originally a native of Arcot in Madras. Early in January, 1857, an incendiary address, written in Hindusthani, was placarded at Madras, calling upon all true believers to rise against the English infidels, and drive them from India. It declared that the English “had now abandoned all principles of justice and were bent on appropriating the possessions of the Mahomedans, and that there was but one way of resisting their encroachments—a holy war”. It is highly probable that this was a handiwork of the Maulavi or his party.

But evidently Madras did not prove a fruitful soil for his propaganda. So he turned his attention to North India. He made a wide tour, everywhere preaching a jihad or religious war against the British, and established his disciples in various localities. No doubt, they carried on the propaganda in their areas while the Maulavi
personally visited big and important cities like Fyzabad and Lakhnau.

While we shall not minimise the importance of this factor, it is difficult, in the present state of our knowledge, to find out, or even to make a general estimate of, the extent to which it influenced the outbreak of 1857. Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, who regards the outbreak as a war of national independence, has given a long and detailed account of a patriots' meeting held on May 1, 1857, at Shahjahanpur, at the house of Mazhar Karim. He gives the names of the persons, both Hindus and Muslims, who attended the meeting, and long extracts from the speech of Sarfarazali, the Gorakhpur Maulavi. The speech would do credit to the most seditious extremist in the first two decades of the twentieth century, if we only substitute religious frenzy in place of political aspirations for freedom as the compelling motive.

The Maulavi concluded his speech by reminding his audience that the centenary of the Battle of Plassey 'approaches', and asking them, "have I your unanimous vote to declare that the Kafr brood shall be stamped out on that date? The whole assembly with one voice cried out: No, sooner than that." The scene of frenzied enthusiasm that followed need not be described. "Nothing", says Dr. Chaudhuri, "illustrates more strikingly the spirit of contumacy and revolt which seized the people" than this speech. He admits that "the authenticity of this seditious speech cannot indeed be vouched for". But what he omits to say is that the whole scene, including the speech, is taken from a novel written in 1896 on the basis of the tale of Mariam, a victim of the outbreak of 1857. The author heard the story of Mariam from her own lips but added the necessary setting from his own imagination, for he candidly confesses that he was writing a novel and not history. The speech of Maulavi Sarfarazali has, therefore, no more historical value than the speeches put by poet Nabinchandra Sen in the mouths of Rani Bhabani, Raja Rajballabh, and other alleged conspirators against Siraj-ud-daulla, at the beginning of his famous Kavya (epic poem) Palasir Yuddha. It would be against all canons of historical criticism to accept, as Dr. Chaudhuri has done, the alleged speech of Sarfarazali, as "typical of the attitude of the general body of the rebels". If no better evidence can be furnished, the least that one can do is to profess ignorance of what that attitude was, and merely take note of the different motives, noted above, that impelled different classes and types of persons. For, this rests upon the unimpeachable testimony of actual facts.
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There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the various factors mentioned above were mainly responsible for the general "upsurge of the people", and it was thus that without any preconcerted plan and organization, the mutiny merged itself into a general rising of the civil population of all types and classes. The civil population was undoubtedly spurred on to revolt because of the grave discontent and resentment which different classes of people nursed in their heart for different reasons, but if the mutiny had not extinguished the local authority, the civil population would not have dared to revolt. The people's revolt was the effect, and not the cause, of the mutiny.

The outbreak at Muzaffarnagar, on May 14, the earliest instance of civil revolt, may appear to be an exception, for there was no mutiny of local troops preceding it. But when carefully analyzed, it also illustrates the general rule. The revolt was precipitated by the action of Mr. Berford, the Magistrate and Collector. He was unnerved by the news of the mutiny at Mirat, followed by the exaggerated and false account of the imminent approach of mutinous troops towards Muzaffarnagar. He at once ordered the Public Offices to be closed for three days. On the 12th evening he heard that the convicts in jail would rise that night, and he immediately fled through the jungle to a village where he spent the night, during which nothing occurred in Muzaffarnagar. On the 13th some officers' bungalows were burnt by the villagers, at the instigation, it is said, of the local 'Syud zamindars'. It was then decided by Berford to remove the treasure to the Tehseel on the 14th. The Treasury-guard refused to do it and broke open the treasure chests. They took away as much as they could carry and left. A number of people who were near by plundered the rest. As there were no regular sepoys, the Magistrate drew off the jail-guard for his own defence, and released the prisoners. As Mr. Grant, at that time the Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector, says in his report, the people were convinced by this act that the Government rule had ceased to exist. They saw that they could with impunity commit any excesses, that nobody interfered or meddled with them, and that even the incendiaries captured on the previous day were set free with others. The Civil, Criminal, and Collectorate dufturs were burnt by the people that night (May 14), and Mr. Grant was decidedly of opinion that the destruction of the records was brought about by the Syuds and that those individuals had spread the false tales of approaching mutineers and dacoits, and had induced them to take shelter in Aboopoorah with the sole object of getting them out of the way and burning the office papers in their absence. Mr. Grant also suspected the Tahsildars and Kotwal
of conniving at such destruction. Violent crimes of all kinds were
daily, almost hourly, committed throughout the district, not secretly
or by night, but openly and at noon day. It is needless naming the
chief crimes; it is sufficient to remark that here, as in other parts
of the country the baniyas and mahajans were in the majority of
cases the victims and "fearfully have many of them been made to
suffer for their previous rapacity and avarice".6

The same scene was enacted at Saharanpur. "The news of the
outbreak at Meerut reached Saharanpur on the 12th of May.......
The Goojurs and Ranghurs at once commenced plundering; and when
the disturbances began in the Moozuffurnagar district, disquiet
spread through that of Saharanpur. At first bankers were robbed,
or had to pay for exemption from plunder; money-lenders and traders
were forced to give up their books of accounts, and vouchers for
depts; old feuds were renewed; the first outbreaks were to pay off
old feuds, or to clear off accounts, or for the sake of plunder.......  
....In examining the extent of the damage inflicted by the 'dacoits'
at Naukoor, it appeared that all the mohullas had been attacked and
gutted......... All the government records with the mahajun's ac-
counts, bonds, etc., were torn up and scattered over the neighbouring
gardens......."

As in Muzaffarnagar, so in Saharanpur, the notorious lawless
elements broke out into an orgy of riots at the news of Mirat, even
before the local sepoys had actually mutinied.

According to the official narrative, on which the above account
is based, the disturbances in the commencement were less directed
against the Government than against particular castes. Ancient
tribe or caste feuds were renewed, and the zamindars and villagers
took advantage of the general anarchy to obtain from the mahajans
and the baniyas their books of business and bond-debts, etc. When
the fall of Delhi ceased to be looked upon as imminent, the agricul-
tural communities began to turn their eyes towards the local trea-
suries and did not scruple to oppose themselves to Government
officers and troops.7

But the character of the risings continued to be the same after the
sepoys had mutinied, killed their officers and released the prisoners
in jail. In two respects alone a difference was noticeable. In the first
place, the risings became widespread, particularly in Awadh and
Rohilkhand, and secondly, local leaders, big or small, established their
own raj, now that the British officers had vanished and the British
raj was believed to have come to an end. This has been regarded
by many writers as "a vast upsurge of the people", and by not a
few as 'war of Indian independence'. One of these writers has des-
cribed as follows the situation at Saharanpur, with a population of about forty thousand, after the sepoyds had joined the Gujars and Ranghars, who had commenced their depredations even before the sepoyds mutinied. "All throughout this period the turbulent elements robbed the bankers and money-lenders, extorted blackmail from them and sacked the police stations and tahsils. Umrao Singh, the headman of the village of Manakpur in Mangalaur tahsil declared himself a raja, levied money, though he failed in the long run. The tahsil and the thana of Nakur was completely gutted. The magistrate, Robertson, proceeded to punish the refractory villages on 20 June, but the country around rose up to effect the release of the prisoners. It was a war of the villagers—parties with the beat of dhols assembled on 22 June, and showed a grit and determination in the fight. Buddhakheri was a strong centre of Gujar disaffection where one Fatua proclaimed himself king of the Gujars." 9 This being the usual pattern of the ‘popular upsurge’ and ‘war of independence’, obviously these expressions have to be understood in a special sense.

The same story was repeated in other places. In Bulandshahr "mixed crowds of rebel forces, Gujars, villagers and townsmen took part in wanton destruction of civil and military establishments. Offices were gutted, records destroyed, and former proprietors ousted. Many other excesses were committed culminating in the temporary disappearance of the British rule by 29 May". 9

A scrutiny of these accounts reveals several prominent elements in these early risings. The first was the notorious goonda elements of the locality who never miss any opportunity of troubles or disturbances to carry on their nefarious activities. In a way the sepoyds encouraged these by opening the jails which became a regular feature of the mutiny. The ex-convicts and goondas were naturally joined by other elements of similar nature, and there are some grounds to suppose that most, if not the whole, of plunder and massacre was the work of these people who formed the scum of the population.

Next to the local goonda elements, we notice the activities of various marauding tribes, notorious for rapine, plunder and massacre, which formed their principal occupation and the only means of livelihood. The above account of the Gujars and Ranghars at Saharanpur gives us a fair idea of the quick reaction of the mutiny upon these classes of peoples.

It was not long before other classes seized the opportunity to exploit the situation to their advantage. The village Zamindars and villagers took advantage of the general anarchy to obtain from Mahajan and Baniyas their books of business and bond-debts etc.
The prominent chiefs of various localities could not be expected to sit idle. They took advantage of the general turmoil to regain what they had lost, or to gain new territories and privileges, and, not unoften, also to settle old scores with enemies. It would also appear that, at least at the beginning, the disturbances were less directed against Government than against particular people and classes. A contemporary writer has given a very vivid description of the state of anarchy and confusion that prevailed "in the open country... from Delhi over the whole of the cis-Sutlej States". After referring to the plundering raids and other atrocities perpetrated by the Gujars and other predatory tribes impartially on all classes of people—Europeans and Indians, civil or military—he refers to the activities of the normally peaceful folk as follows:—"Villagers fought with one another about boundary questions decided half a century ago. Hundreds of heads of cattle changed hands; murders and robberies were committed unpunished in the open day".10

II. DELHI

When the mutiny broke out at Mirat, the throne of Delhi was occupied by Bahadur Shah II. As mentioned above, the rights, privileges and honour attached to the throne of Delhi had been gradually reduced by the Governor-General. Bahadur Shah assumed the titles of Badshah (Emperor) and Ghazi (holy warrior). His empire hardly extended beyond the Red Palace in Delhi, and his revenue consisted of the annual pension of twelve lacs of Rupees paid by the British, the proceeds of some crown-lands near Delhi amounting to about a lac and a half, and rents of some houses in the city of Delhi. He felt the same grievances as his father and, following his example, engaged a generous-hearted Englishman to plead his cause with the authorities in England. But George Thompson was no more successful than Rammohun Roy before him.11

But Bahadur Shah was more seriously worried about the future prospects of his family. The secret but abortive agreement of the British with Fakir-ud-din was not unknown to him, and he was worried by the refusal of the Governor-General to recognize his nomination of Jawan Bakht as his successor. It could hardly be a secret to Bahadur Shah that even the titular dignity and the Red Palace—the only visible symbols of the House of Babur that still remained—would cease to belong to his family after his death. This caused him the greatest mortification, and probably produced the keenest sense of resentment against the British. But whatever feelings he might have nourished in his heart, Bahadur Shah could not ventiate his grievances publicly, and hence silently resigned himself
to his fate. For the Badshah Ghazi was no more a Badshah than he was a Ghazi or warrior. He had no military training or experience, but was rather a poet by inclinations. He wrote verses, sighed for the lost glory of his family, and, surrounded by a band of unscrupulous adventurers, indulged in all kinds of possible and impossible ideas. He seriously believed that he could transform himself into a fly or gnat. He dreamed of recovering the lost empire of his ancestors with the help of Persia, and sent two messengers for the purpose of exploring the situation. But he relied more on charmed amulets than on diplomatic alliance or a well-equipped army for gaining victory and recovering his ancestral throne and dignity. Afflicted with advancing age—he was about ninety—and worn down by worries and mortifications, Bahadur Shah might have peacefully gone to his grave, leaving nothing but a few Urdu verses as his memorial; but fate willed it otherwise.

The first news of the mutiny of the sepoys at Mirat was conveyed to Bahadur Shah by the mutineers themselves. On reaching Delhi on the morning of May 11, they went straight to the Red Fort and called upon His Majesty for help, declaring that they had killed the English at Mirat and had come to fight for the faith. Bahadur Shah was extremely unwilling to have anything to do with this motley crowd that continued pouring into the Red Fort and took position in the courtyard of Diwan-i-Khas. His chief adviser, Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, was of the same mind, and argued with the representatives of the sepoys for a long time. But more and more troops arrived and the Red Fort became a scene of the wildest confusion, quarrels, and dissensions. On the morning of May 12, the whole body of sepoys officers presented nazār to Bahadur Shah and described themselves as his faithful soldiers. At last, after a great deal of delay and wavering, and in spite of the warning of Ahsanullah Khan, Bahadur Shah placed himself at the head of the sepoys and assumed the title of the Emperor of Hindusthan.¹²

Bahadur Shah was quite unfit to discharge the responsibility thus thrust upon him, and would have proved a failure in any case. But his task was rendered hopeless from the very beginning by two circumstances. In the first place, the Emperor had no faith in the cause he was reluctantly forced to serve. His loyalty to the British remained unimpaired. One of his first acts was the despatch of a secret express message to the British authorities at Agra warning them of the mutinous outbreak at Mirat and Delhi.¹³ He also protected English fugitives from the wrath of the sepoys and even helped some of them to escape. Even when he was adopting measure to restore order in Delhi and set up a machinery to carry on regular civil
administration of the city, his heart was not in that task. While the sepoys were fighting in his name against the British and dying in hundreds to retain possession of the city, Bahadur Shah was secretly carrying on treasonable intrigue through an agent of Ahsanulla with the British General, offering to admit British troops secretly into the fort if they only agreed to restore him to his old position. Not only Bahadur Shah himself but his favourite queen Zinnat Mahal and the Shahzadas or princes also carried on similar intrigues both with the military authorities and with Greathed, the Political Agent of the Lieutenant-Governor of N.W.P. attached to the Field-force. The Shahzadas sent several messages to Greathed, and having no satisfactory response from him, approached the British General with "a distinct offer to destroy the Bridge and to enlist the services of the Cavalry, and with their aid to put an end to the Infantry, on condition of favour being shown to the Royal Family." But though the offers of the Shahzadas were not accepted, it appears that there was some secret understanding with Zinnat Mahal.\textsuperscript{14}

The second circumstance that proved fatal to the success of the mutiny was the conduct and attitude of the sepoys themselves. The citizens of Delhi looked upon them as an invading army rather than a force fighting for the freedom of the country.

A vivid account of the state of Delhi has been preserved in the diary of Jiwanlal Munshi\textsuperscript{15} who was in Delhi at the time. Writing under date May 12, i.e. the day after the arrival of the mutineers at Delhi, he records: "All trade in the city ceased entirely, for every shop that was opened was cleared of its contents."\textsuperscript{16} Ordinary business was suspended and shops were closed. There was difficulty in getting supply of rations and though Bahadur Shah, urged on by the turbulent mobs of sepoys, twice passed through the city, asking the people to resume their normal occupation, it had no effect, as the citizens' fear was not allayed. They had good reasons for their apprehensions. The spirit of cruelty and indiscipline which characterized the mutinous sepoys at Mirat and other places was not confined to their dealings with the British, but was displayed throughout, even in their treatment of the Indians. The sepoys hunted out the fugitive Europeans and Indian Christians and massacred most of them—men, women and children—and plundered the houses of, and otherwise cruelly treated, those who had given them shelter. Even respectable Indians were plundered, insulted, and humiliated on mere report of harbouring fugitives or on suspicion that they were in league with the English. Even the Emperor was powerless to stop the infuriated sepoys. The general condition of the city on May 12 is thus described by Jiwanlal: "From house to house the un-
willing King was distracted by cries and petitions—now from the
servants of Europeans who had been murdered, now from the shop-
keepers whose shops had been plundered, now from the higher
classes whose houses had been broken into—all looked to the King
for immediate redress. Appeals were made to him to repress the
plunder and rape now common throughout the city."

On May 15 he writes: "Several respectable men were seized and
made to carry burdens to intimidate them and extort money. Such
were their sufferings that the better class of city people offered prays this day for the defeat of the rebels. All valuable property had
by this time been buried, and a private police force had been raised
by the better class of citizens to protect themselves and their prop-
erty from plunder and violence."

We find the following entry in Jiwanlal's diary under the date,
May 23: "Seeing the atrocities the mutineers were committing in the
city, Hakim Ahsanulla Khan induced the King to issue an order com-
manding the troops to leave the city, on the ground that they would
only plunder and cause blood to be shed. . . . The soldiers plundered
the house of Kanheyal Lal, of Hyderabad, a severe fight having first
taken place between the retainers of Kanheyal and the mutineers. . . .
Nawab Mir Ahmed Ali Khan, under instructions from the King,
issued orders to seize all the bankers and wealthy men of the city—
particularly those favourable to the English—and to extort money
from them for the pay of the mutineers. Mirza Mohammed Ali Bey
was appointed tehsildar of the Mehrowli. Jiwan Lal's garden and
house were this day plundered by the soldiers, of property to the
value of 2,000 rupees, on suspicion of his being in communication
with the English."

Jiwanlal's diary shows that incidents like these continued al-
most throughout the period of the siege of Delhi. The following is
reported under the date, June 14: "Buldeo Sing, the brother of Lach-
man Sing, Thanadar of Alipur, was seized and brought to the
Kotwali. He was accused of sympathising with the English. He
was shot, and his body suspended from a tree. Thirteen bakers re-
siding at the Kabul Gate were dragged from their houses and killed,
on being suspected of supplying bread to the English. The shop of
Jamna Dass was plundered because he sold attah at a high price.
The mutineers committed many other oppressive acts this day." On
July 25, 400 sepoys plundered the houses of Alap Pershad and
others, and carried off property to the value of 50,000 rupees. "As
soon as General Mahommed Bakht Khan heard of this he sent off
several hundred men to stop the outrage, but these soldiers would not
interfere with the plunderers." Gordohan Das was forced on the
same day to pay 2,000 rupees. Rich bankers were placed in confinement on August 19, and were not released till they paid a heavy amount. Even on September 12, when the fate of Delhi was sealed, shop-keepers sent a petition that they were being molested and all the shops were closed.

Jiwanlal's account cannot be regarded as unvarnished truth, for he was no friend of the sepoys who had maltreated him, and his sympathies obviously lay with the English. Nevertheless, it is impossible to dismiss his diary as a deliberate forgery or fabrication, and therefore of no value as historical evidence. For it would require great ingenuity to draw up such a consistent account, interspersed with incidents, sometimes of a very secret nature, which have been corroborated by independent evidence. It is very likely that Jiwanlal magnified the crimes and cruelties of the sepoys to some extent, and depicted only the black side of the sepoys. But, in spite of possible exaggerations, the general state of things described by Jiwanlal cannot be very far from truth, for it is corroborated by independent testimony. There is on record a petition from Chand Khan and Gulab Khan of the Paharganj area that "the sepoys forcibly took away goods from shops without payment and entered houses of the poor people and took away beds, woods, vessels etc." Bahadur Shah, in course of his evidence during his trial, has given a similar picture of the sepoys. It has been suggested that no reliance can be placed on Bahadur Shah's statement, for he naturally tried to save his own skin by throwing all blame on others. But on 27 June, long before Delhi fell, and Bahadur Shah was still hopeful of victory, he wrote a letter to his Commander-in-Chief to the following effect: "Not a day has elapsed, since the arrival of the army, and its taking up quarters in the city, that petitions from the towns-people have not been submitted, representing the excesses committed by numerous Infantry Sepoys." This fully vindicates the statements of Jiwanlal, which are also corroborated by several witnesses during the trial of Bahadur Shah, and the records of the British. Besides, as will be shown later, the conduct of the sepoys in other localities, as described by eye-witnesses, is of the same sordid character.

Special reference may be made in this connection to a long statement which Ahsanulla made immediately after the fall of Delhi. It not only refers to plundering and burning inside the city of Delhi, but also cites instances of the sepoys forcibly collecting money in the neighbourhood. He refers to the report of "women killing themselves to be saved from dishonour", and, what is worse still, adds that investigation proved the correctness of this report. He further says
"that information reached the King that the quarter inhabited by the Dasas (a caste of Baniya) was being plundered and that many of them had been shot down by the sepoys." 27

But the domineering attitude of the sepoys was not confined to the people and chiefs of Delhi. They showed but scant respect to the Emperor himself, even from the very beginning. On May 12, after the King had returned from his first visit round the city, asking in vain the people to open their shops, "he found the courtyard of the Dewan-i-khas crowded with troopers and their horses. They assailed him with loud cries, complaining that the men of the regiment which had mutinied at Delhi had possessed themselves of the treasure from the Delhi Collectorate, intending to keep it, and had refused to share it with the Meerut mutineers. The King, utterly distracted and bewildered in the conflicting counsels, ordered the Princes, who had been appointed to the command of the troops, to send every mutineer out of the city..." 28

"Towards evening a number of native regimental officers came and again represented the difficulty they experienced in getting rations. Forgetful of the lofty tone of the morning's order, and of the high-toned phraseology expressive of the King's dignity, they addressed him with such disrespectful terms as, "I say, you King! I say, you old fellow!" ("Ari, Badshah! Ari, Buddha!"). "Listen," cried one, catching him by the hand. "Listen to me", said another, touching the old King's beard". 29

Bahadur Shah alleged in his written statement during his trial, that the sepoys paid no respect to him nor acknowledged his authority; they threatened to depose him, kill his queen and other officials, and one day even went to the house of the queen, Zinnat Mahal, intending to plunder it, but did not succeed in breaking open the door. Bahadur Shah said he was virtually the prisoner of the sepoys, who had set up a council of their own in which all matters were discussed and line of action decided upon. But there was no order or discipline among them. "Thus", continues Bahadur Shah, "without my knowledge or orders, they plundered, not only many individuals, but several entire streets, plundering, robbing, riling and imprisoning all they chose; and forcibly extorting whatever sums of money they thought fit from the merchants and other respectable residents of the city, and appropriating such exactions to their own private purposes...I did whatever they required, otherwise they would immediately have killed me. This is universally known". 30

Indeed things came to such a pass that Bahadur Shah, disgusted of his life, resolved to adopt the garb of a religious mendicant and go to Mecca. But the sepoys would not allow him to go.
If contemporary evidence is to be believed, the sepoys, perhaps with honourable exceptions, cared more for money than for their country or countrymen. Main-ud-din, an eye-witness of the events at Delhi,\textsuperscript{31} writes: "The rebels were becoming clamorous for pay. They were really laden with money, but they wished to extort as much more as they could. They threatened to leave the King's service unless paid..."\textsuperscript{32} Jiwanlal records in his diary on May 15, i.e. only four days after the Mutiny had broken out in Delhi: "News was received that the mutineers were intimidating the city people, and that 200 troopers, having plundered a quantity of money, had deserted and gone off to their homes, and had in turn been attacked by the Gujars and plundered'.\textsuperscript{33} The entry in his diary on May 21, is as follows: "The house of Sobha Chand Kaest was this day plundered on the charge that he was in league with the English and supplying them with news. It was reported to the King that the mutineers had possessed themselves of much money and were buying gold mohurs at 32 rupees apiece, and that many mutineers who had left the city with money had been plundered of everything and had returned to the city only with their lives'.\textsuperscript{34} We are further told that dishonest men took advantage of this craze for gold to defraud the sepoys and then "the soldiers revenged themselves upon the innocent people of the Mohalla.'\textsuperscript{35}

As mentioned above, the sepoys of Mirat quarrelled with those of Delhi over the loot of the latter place. Similarly, outbreaks took place over the rate of pay, on May 28. Jiwanlal writes: "Order was issued today to pay the mutineers: this was done at the request of Mahbub Ali Khan: deductions were ordered to be made on account of the sums already paid to them; nine for sowars and seven for infantry was fixed. A great uproar ensued. The cavalry demanded Rs. 30 for their pay, and no deduction for charges paid. The Subah-dars of the Delhi Regiment accepted Rs 7 as their pay. A violent abusive altercation followed between the Meerut cavalry and the mutineers of Delhi regiments. The Meerut sowars accused the Delhi regiments of having enriched themselves by plunder, whereas the Meerut men had by their good behaviour reaped nothing by plunder and robbery. They refused to receive Rs. 9. The foot Sepoys replied that the Meerut men were rebellious and utterly bad. Not only had they been the first to mutiny and kill their officers, whose salt they had eaten—and led others to do likewise—but they were desirous to quarrel and fight with their own countrymen. The Delhi Sepoys said they repented of their great fault—that they had not done their duty and blown them from their guns when they first reached Delhi. Fierce passions were so raised, that at one time there
was every probability of a serious encounter. The King's servants rushed in between the parties, and with great efforts quieted both sides, Mahbub Ali Khan promising the cavalry Rs. 20 pay per mensem".

All these indicate a complete break-down of the administrative machinery set up by Bahadur Shah. Another serious handicap was the lack of mutual confidence. If the Emperor, the chiefs, the aristocracy and the common people had causes of legitimate grievances against the sepoys, the sepoys had strong suspicions about their loyalty to the cause. They suspected them all as being attached to the English, intriguing with them, harbouring the fugitives and supplying regular news to the British force besieging Delhi. They brought open charge against the King, his favourite queen, Zinnat Mahal, and his chief adviser, Ahsanullah Khan. Jiwanlal records the following incident in his diary under the date, May 16.

"The sepoys assembled early this morning before the Palace, threatening the King and his officers, accusing them of saving the lives of European ladies and gentlemen and concealing them in the Fort, and through them communicating with the Europeans at Meerut...I learned today that nearly forty Europeans were concealed in the King's Palace. The sepoys went to the Palace in great anger, as they said they had seized a messenger with a letter cursing the mutineers. The sepoys threatened to kill Ahsanullah Khan and Nawab Mahbub Ali Khan, and also threatened to take away Zinnat Mahal Begum Sahiba and keep her as a hostage for the King's loyalty. There was a great uproar in the Palace, the sepoys on the one hand, and the King's household on the other, contending with violent language and harsh vociferations."

Fuller details of the incident are given by Chunilal, the news-writer, in his statement submitted during the trial of Bahadur Shah. This is also written in the form of a diary narrating the events from day to day. Under the date, May 16, he writes: "The troopers and infantry soldiers, accompanied by their officers, attended and presented a letter bearing the seals of the physician Ahsan Ulla Khan and Nawab Mahbub Ali Khan, which they said they had intercepted at the Delhi gate of the city, and complained that the physician and the Nawab had sent this letter to the English, inviting them to come into the city immediately, and proposing that provided the English should agree to acknowledge Mirza Jawan Bakht, the son of the King by the queen Zinnat Mahal, as heir-apparent, they would on their part engage to seize and make over all the soldiery now in Delhi". The letter was shown to Ahsan Ulla and Mahbub Ali who declared it to be a forgery. The sepoys however did not believe them and "drew their
swords and surrounded Ahsan Ulla declaring their firm belief that he maintained an understanding with the English”. “The King assured the soldiers that he was associated with them in a common cause, desiring them to place every confidence in Ahsan Ulla, Mahbub Ali and Queen Zinnat Mahal. The sepoys pointed out that Ahsan Ulla had in his custody European prisoners and obviously kept them for maintaining friendly relations with the British. They therefore took away from his custody all the 52 European prisoners, men, women, and children, and killed them with swords”. “The occurrence”, writes Chunilal, “caused a great excitement amongst the Hindus throughout the city, who said that these Purbeahs who had committed this heinous and atrocious cruelty could never be victorious against the English”.

That the suspicion of the sepoys was quite justified is proved by the secret intrigues disclosed by British records, as mentioned above. The proverb, ‘like master, like servant’, was perhaps nowhere better illustrated than by the conduct of the chiefs who joined the revolt of Delhi. Many of them were playing a double game like Bahadur Shah. Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabhgarh sent supplies and men to Delhi to support the revolt, but assured the British of his staunch friendship. The Nawab of Jhujhur did the same. Some of the chiefs joined or utilized the revolt to serve personal ends. Munshi Jiwanlal records (July 31) that Nawab Ahmed Ali Khan, chief of Farukhnagar, complained to the Emperor that Rao Tulla Ram of Rewari was going to attack him. At the same time a letter was read sent by Tulla Ram to Ghulam Muhammad Khan, with the words: “Are you intoxicated that you think the English are going away from Hindustan? They will most assuredly return and will destroy you”. Yet this Tullaram paid ‘Nazar’ and lip-allegiance to the King. But Tullaram was paid back in his own coin. He had sent some money to Rewari, which some landholders seized.

According to the testimony of Ahsanulla who, as the confidential adviser of the Emperor, was in a position to know the truth, letters were written to a number of chiefs. He then adds: “Replies were received from the chiefs of Jhujhur, Ballabhgarh, Farukhnagar and Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, but none were received from Jaipur, Alwar, Jodhpur, Bikanir, Gwalior, Jaisalmer, Patiala or Jummoo. These latter chiefs sent no reply, because they had no inclination to side with the King. The four chiefs who sent replies professed allegiance to the King and the first two of them sent some troops. But they excused their personal attendance on the ground that their absence would unsettle their countries”. Thus while only a few
showed any inclination to support the revolt, even the chiefs who went furthest, namely those of Jhujhur and Ballabhgarh, are definitely known to have been playing a double game as mentioned above.

Bahadur Shah is also said to have written two letters to Baiza Bai to whom reference has been made above, but she sent no reply. It is, however, curious that Bahadur Shah made no approach to either Kunwar Singh or Rani of Jhansi, and got no favourable response from Nana with whom he communicated through a confidential agent about two months after the outbreak of the Mutiny.\(^4\)

The facts, mentioned above, do not support the view that Delhi was a centre of peoples' revolt, or national struggle, or that there was an organized conspiracy to overthrow the British rule. It is not unlikely that we have an exaggerated or partial account and that there were other facts which would induce one to moderate this view. But such facts have not yet come to light. On the other hand, even as a centre of the mutiny of sepoys, the situation in Delhi hardly offers a pleasant picture. Reference has been made above to the greed of the sepoys which led them to plunder Europeans and Indians alike and caused bitter wranglings among themselves over the share of the loot. Instances are on record where the sepoys, after amassing wealth, returned to their homes to enjoy it without any further thought about the cause for which they fought.\(^4\)

There is indirect evidence that a section of the military had a wider vision and rose above mere considerations of personal gains. Their views are reflected in the proclamations issued at Delhi. One of them, issued on behalf of the officers of the sepoys, inviting the co-operation of the people, runs as follows:

"To all Hindoos and Mussulmans, citizens and servants of Hindustan, the Officers of the Army now at Delhi and Meerut send greeting: It is well known that in these days all the English have entertained these evil designs—first, to destroy the religion of the whole Hindustani Army, and then to make the people by compulsion Christians. Therefore we, solely on account of our religion,\(^4\) have combined with the people, and have not spared alive one infidel, and have re-established the Delhi dynasty on these terms. Hundreds of guns and a large amount of treasure have fallen into our hands; therefore, it is fitting that whoever of the soldiers and people disliking turning Christians should unite with one heart, and, acting courageously, not leave the seed of these infidels remaining. It is further necessary that all Hindoos and Mussulmans unite in this struggle, and, following the instructions of some respectable people, keep themselves secure, so that good order may be maintained, the poorer classes kept contented, and they themselves be exalted to rank and dignity".\(^4\)

This proclamation is interesting in more ways than one. In the first place, it shows that the cause for which the sepoys fought
was the removal, for ever, of the danger of mass conversion to Christianity by destroying the English. There is no reference to the abstract ideal of freedom or the struggle for achieving independence which is now gratuitously assumed to be their impelling motive. Secondly, it calls upon the Hindus and Mussulmans to unite in the struggle against the English. Thirdly, as the sepoys assembled in Delhi from different parts of North India, the above views may be taken to represent the general feelings which actuated the sepoys in different parts of the country.

The idea behind the proclamation was quite good, but the real question is how far did it influence the activities of the people. The proclamation rightly laid stress on the unity between the Hindus and Muslims, but one finds a lack of mutual trust between them in Delhi. There was a clear manifestation of it even while the British attack upon Delhi was imminent, and the fate of the whole struggle depended upon its successful defence by the combined efforts of all communities. Thus we read in Jiwanlal's diary, under the date, May 19: "This day the standard of the Holy War was raised by the Mahommedans in the Jumma Masjid. The people of Dharampur and the low characters of the city were concerned in this act. The King was angry and remonstrated, because such a display of fanaticism would only tend to exasperate the Hindus". On May 20, he writes: "Moulvie Mahommed Said demanded an audience, and represented to the King that the standard of Holy War had been erected for the purpose of inflaming the minds of the Mahommedans against the Hindus. The King answered that such a jehad was quite impossible, and such an idea an act of extreme folly, for the majority of the Purbeach soldiers were Hindus. Moreover, such an act would create internecine war, and the result would be deplorable. It was fitting that sympathy should exist among all classes. It was pointed out that the Hindus were leaning towards an alliance with the English and had no sympathy with the Mahommedans, and were already holding themselves apart. A deputation of Hindu officers arrived to complain of the war against Hindus being preached. The King replied: 'The Holy War is against the English; I have forbidden it against the Hindus'. At three o'clock Hakim Ahsanullah Khan represented that the soldiers were looting in the city, and requested that they should be expelled. To get rid of them, orders were this day issued to Mirza Mogul to proceed with a strong force towards Meerut to attack any English force assembled there".

The account of Jiwanlal is confirmed by the following extract of a letter written by Major General T. Reed from his camp at Delhi to Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb. "They
are displaying the green flag in the city and bullying the Hindus who are praying for our Government—so says our secret intelligence".\textsuperscript{47} This letter is dated June 14, 1857. Chunilal also refers to the incident in his written statement during the trial of Bahadur Shah.

To judge, therefore, from the data so far available, one must admit that there was hardly any combined effort or even unity of purpose between the sepoys and the Hindu and Muslim citizens of Delhi, though it was regarded as the centre of the general revolt against the English. Delhi presented a scene of chaos and confusion, of rapine and plunder, and intrigues and dissensions. The sepoys had definitely broken off from the British and burnt their boats. But not so the others. It was but natural that the sepoys would suspect them of loyalty to the British, and it is now known that their suspicions were not unjust or unfounded. Therefore the sepoys harshly treated all—both high and low—in Delhi, and this alienated them and made them wish for the return of the British. The sepoys were rude and insolent to the Emperor and the members of high family because they rightly suspected their loyalty, and this very fact probably increased the royal family’s dislike to the mutineers and turned them more and more towards the English for support. There was thus a vicious circle, daily widening the gulf between the sepoys and the civil population. No one seems to have trusted another, and everyone’s hand was against his neighbour.

The situation might have been considerably improved if the sepoys could distinguish themselves by some great military achievements. But their performance was hopelessly disappointing, as will be related later. This was due to several factors other than military skill and courage in which the sepoys were not deficient.

There was organizational difficulty. At first the King appointed Prince Mirza Moghul Commander-in-Chief, and conferred high military ranks on other princes. But they proved utterly incompetent and could not keep the sepoys under proper control. Bahadur Shah—it must be said to his credit—honestly tried to do his duty towards the people, though without success. He reprimanded in strong terms, on June 27, both Mirza Moghul, the Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army, and Mirza Khair Sultan, who held the rank of a Colonel, for failure to keep the sepoys in check. "But the princes on whom the King had to depend for maintenance of law and order could not always resist the temptation of helping themselves to other people’s property. From an undated petition submitted by two merchants, Jugal Kishore and Sheo Prasad, we learn that vexation and annoyance were caused by the functionaries of the State and the princes,
and royal troops still came to plunder their house and threatened to arrest them”. On July 1 and 2 the troops of Bareilly, with their Commander, Bakht Khan, arrived at Delhi. As he had a long military experience and belonged to a noble family, the King appointed him Commander-in-Chief in place of Mirza Moghul who was appointed Adjutant General. The other princes holding military ranks were much worse. “On the 4th July, two days after Subadar Bakht Khan had been invested with the office of the Commander-in-Chief, one Ahsan-ul-Huq complained about the dissolute and lawless conduct of Mirza Abu Bakr, the King’s grandson; and Mirza Moghul was ordered to recover the looted property. The very next day a more serious complaint was lodged against this prince by no less a person than Imani Begam, a daughter-in-law of the first Bahadur Shah. She represented, “that the night before Abu Bakr, in a state of intoxication, came to her house with several sowars to seize her, and fired several shots with rifles and pistols, and beat a number of people of the Mohalla. The police arrived, but Abu Bakr attacked the Kotwal with a sword, had him seized and taken away in custody, insulted him, and finally plundered her house”. The King was very indignant. He deprived the offender of his military rank and ordered him to be arrested. But the prince did not find it difficult to evade punishment. The King disgraced the princes and directed them to keep away from his levies. The headmen of the Mohallas were notified that the princes were to be treated like common men if they were found guilty of any lawless action. But it does not appear that royal displeasure had any sobering effect on these wayward youths”.

But a mere change of command could not do much good when the sepoys did not possess even a modicum of military discipline. From the very beginning they showed a spirit of indiscipline to an amazing degree. This is best illustrated by their conduct towards Bahadur Shah and the shop-keepers and other citizens of Delhi as mentioned above. The military officers reported on May 14 that unless food were supplied, the sepoys could not be prevented from plundering. The turbulence and insolence of the sepoys knew no bounds. Within a week they grew tired of Bahadur Shah. Jiwanlal tells us that on May 17 they deposed Bahadur Shah, as he was too old and infirm, and elected prince Abu Bakr in his place. Evidently the issue was not pressed, and Bahadur Shah continued to be the nominal king, daily suffering insults and humiliations from the sepoys.

But the climax of indiscipline and insubordination was reached when they refused to serve under Bakht Khan as Commander-in-
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Chief, and actually sent a petition to the King to that effect. When an army assumes the power and responsibility of making and un-making the King, and exercises a veto upon the appointment of their Commander-in-Chief; and when the officers openly plead inability to control their soldiers and save the civil population from their plunder; its chance of gaining success in a prolonged and sustained struggle may be regarded as negligible. Military history has shown again and again, that valour, courage, heroism and self-sacrifice of individual soldiers cannot make up for the lack of discipline of the army as a whole.

The character of Bahadur Shah, whom the sepoys themselves chose as their leader, was another handicap to their success. The sepoys had come from different and distant regions and had no cohesive force to bind them together. It was necessary to weld them into a compact and organized body and keep up their fighting spirit. All these needed a strong and efficient leader. Bahadur Shah was absolutely unfit for this task. He was advanced in age—almost a dotard—, and lacked military knowledge and personal bravery. The following incident recorded by Main-ud-din is an interesting commentary on his leadership of the great revolt: “The mutineers represented to the King that the sepoys were reluctant to attack the English, and demanded his presence in the field. This he promised to give. A large force was ordered to assemble in the evening. The King headed the force and passed by the Delhi Gate, and showed himself to the assembled troops. Passing by the Lal Dighi Tank he went on towards the Lahore Gate. One of the Palace dependants was substituted for the King, who secretly retired to the city by a back way. This show of force ended in nothing. The troops gradually moved back to their own quarters, and the threatened attack ended in smoke”.

The deficiency on the part of the King was hardly supplied by the Commander-in-Chief, Bakht Khan, who “was a braggart and hardly possessed the qualities expected of a commanding officer”. Indeed, the most significant trait in the war between the sepoys and the English was the perfect contrast shown by the two in respect of leadership, strategy and unity of plan and action. This was well illustrated in the grim fight round the city of Delhi which will be described in a later section.

III. N. W. PROVINCES

The state of things in Delhi has been described at some length, partly because it was the nerve-centre of the movement, and partly because it is a prototype of what happened in other localities where
the mutiny of sepoys merged in or led to the revolt of the people under a local leader. This is illustrated by the outbreaks in Rohilkhand which also, like Delhi, was entirely rid of British authority, civil or military, as all the British officers were either killed or left their station.

The chief centre of revolt was Bareilly where the sepoys suddenly and unexpectedly rose on 31 May, and the British officers fled for their lives. According to the account of a Bengali gentleman,65 the cavalry regiment was loyal, and gallopped to the help of the British officers, but the latter mistook them as pursuers, and rode forward as best they could without looking back to see the friendly signal. The cavalry regiment thereupon joined the mutineers.

Khan Bahadur Khan was the natural leader of the Rohillas. His grandfather, Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the ruler of Rohilkhand, was defeated and killed by the Nawab of Awadh with the help of British troops lent by Warren Hastings. But though the Nawab annexed Rohilkhand, he had to cede it to the British. As the head of the ruling family, Khan Bahadur Khan got a monthly stipend of one hundred rupees from the British Government, and he also enjoyed pension as a judicial officer in the British service.

Khan Bahadur Khan presents an analogy with Bahadur Shah in many respects. His family was ruined by the British and he had sore grievances against them, but being old and infirm, and a man of pacific disposition, he nursed his grievances at heart but never harboured any design of active resistance against the British. He was friendly to the British, and on May 30, warned the Commissioner of the impending mutiny. The latter writes in his report: "He shook hands with me and his last words were significant, apne jan buchao or look out for your life".66 Yet when the successful mutiny of the troops heralded the end of the British rule, Khan Bahadur Khan assumed the administration as viceroy on behalf of the Emperor of Delhi. He was either carried away by the tide of rebellion or was unwilling to see another elevated to the position which, he thought, was his due as the legitimate heir of the last independent ruler of Rohilkhand.

He began his reign by ordering the execution of all the English, and issuing a long proclamation enunciating the causes and general principles of the revolution, to which reference will be made later. He appointed district officers of different grades, began to collect revenue, and set up a regular system of administration broad-based on the sympathy and support of the Hindus and Muslims. He sent nazar and presents to the Emperor at Delhi and received
the firman of investiture as Viceroy. He appointed Hindus to important posts, and many chiefs, both Hindu and Muslim, acknowledged him as Lord. But the communal jealousy was too deep to be uprooted, and ruined the chances of a good administration. Sobha Ram, the head of the Revenue Department, was not liked by the Muslims, and one day, during his absence, a Muslim crowd forcibly entered into his house on the plea of searching for hidden Englishmen and plundered it. Mir Alam Khan, a relative of Khan Bahadur Khan, attacked the house of a respectable Hindu, named Baldeo Gir Gosain, and threatened him and his wife with violence. Gosain killed him in self-defence. But though Gosain was tried for this murder and acquitted, he was killed by Mir Alam’s brother who got off scot-free. Hindu officers were despoiled. Businessmen were heavily taxed and payment was enforced by severe measures. Not only some of them but even high officials of the newly established Government were secretly helping the British. In Budaon Thakur Harlal of Bakshiena collected his clan and declared himself independent of Delhi and his Nazim, Khan Bahadur.

We possess a long narrative of the mutiny at Bareilly written by Durgadas Bandopadhyaya, a Bengali gentleman in the employ of the British army. He was present there and had ample opportunities of seeing things for himself and securing information from reliable sources. Here we find almost an exact replica of the tales of woe and misery suffered by the people at the hands of the sepoys as witnessed at Delhi by Munshi Jiwanlal and Main-ud-din. Khan Bahadur Khan, the nominal ruler of Bareilly, was in a helpless condition like Bahadur Shah, and Bakht Khan wielded the real power. There was no discipline among the sepoys, who were engaged in indiscriminately looting the shops and plundering the rich and poor alike. As in Delhi, many sepoys amassed a rich booty and returned home. Most cruel tortures were applied to extort money from the people. The Hindus and Muslims were forced to reveal their hidden treasure by the threat of being forced to take respectively the flesh of cows and pigs. Men were made to sit on boiling cauldrons with the same object. Plunder, theft, robbery and rape were the order of the day. A circumstantial narrative of the indignities suffered by a rich woman of the town, named Panna, in the hands of the sepoys, makes most painful reading. The demon of communalism also raised its head. The Muslims spat over the Hindus and openly defiled their houses by sprinkling them with cow’s blood and placing cow’s bones within the compounds. Concrete instances are given where Hindu sepoys came into clash with the Muslim hooligans engaged in defiling Hindu houses, and a communal riot
ensued. The Hindus, oppressed by the Muslims, were depressed at the success of the mutiny, and daily offered prayers to God for the return of the English. Even many Muslims wanted the English to return. Large number of persons were recruited as mercenaries and joined the mutineers on payment of Rs. 5, 6, or 7 per month. The mutineers were very hard on the Bengali residents of Bareilly. Many of them were whipped, and seven were condemned to death, merely on suspicion and without any regular charge being framed against them.58

Another important centre of revolt was Farrukhabad. The cantonment at Fateagarh was about six miles from this place. The sepoys of the 10th N.I. mutinied on June 18 and formally placed the Nawab of Farrukhabad on the musnad (throne) under a royal salute, and tendered their allegiance to him. They had seized the treasure, but when the new Government demanded it, they resolutely refused to surrender a rupee. Even when the mutinous sepoys of 41st N.I. from the neighbouring district of Sitapur asked for a share of it, they refused to divide the spoil. Many sepoys of the 10th N.I. went home with their share of the loot and then there ensued a fight between the two groups—the remnant of the 10th and 41st N.I.—in which several sepoys on both sides were killed. At last, the survivors joined together in attacking the fort which fell, and many British were killed, or drowned in course of their flight. The Nawab, Tuffuzzal Husain Khan, then set up an administration with the help of the old native officials. He made an attempt to conciliate the Hindus who formed the majority of the Sitapur regiment, but communal riots broke out here and there.59

It is interesting to note that not only local chiefs but even Government officials sometimes made themselves masters of the territory evacuated by the British. The most notable instance is that of Fatehpur. It was not a military station, but had about sixty or seventy sepoys as treasury-guards. The civil population, assisted by escaped jail birds and roving bands of sepoys, rose in rebellion, released the local prisoners, plundered the treasury, and burnt a number of Government offices. All the European officers left except Mr. Tucker, the Judge, who held out till he was killed. After the British were thus liquidated, Hikmatulla, a Deputy-Magistrate, began to rule the district in the name of Nana.60

The outbreak at Bijnor possesses some features of special interest. It was not a military station and offers an undiluted picture of the revolt of the civil population. On May 19, the news of Mirat let loose not only all the lawless elements but even more respectable
classes. The plunder of tahsil, burning, and other usual excesses were committed by the Gujars, Banjars, Mewatis, Jats, Chauhans, and escaped prisoners over an extensive area. Even more respectable classes joined in the fray, the lead being taken by Mahmud Khan, Nawab of Nazibabad, who arrived at the place with a band of sturdy Pathans to take possession of the rich treasures which were kept at the station. The Magistrate, however, unable to save the money in any other way, threw it into a well, the mouth of which could be defended from the roof of the treasury building. The Nawab had brought a number of empty carts to carry away the money, but was thwarted by the Hindu Zamindars and sepoys, on leave, who came to the aid of the Magistrate. But the revolt at Bareilly cut off Bijnor from all communications with the outside British authorities, and naturally encouraged the Nawab. The Magistrate, therefore, through the good offices of a loyal Government servant, who afterwards became famous as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, entered into an agreement with the Nawab by which the latter was placed in charge of the district for a period of ten days, during which, it was expected, Delhi would fall and the Magistrate would be able to return in full force. But as Delhi did not fall, and the Magistrate did not return, the Nawab proclaimed himself ruler of the district under the King of Delhi. He had already received the money in the treasury under the agreement and now fished up the remainder of the money from the well. After setting himself firmly in his authority, the Nawab began to oppress the Hindu chiefs. These, however, combined and drove him from Bijnor. Then followed a bitter and prolonged fight between the Hindus and the Muslims in which the ultimate victory rested with the latter. This was celebrated by a wanton massacre of unoffending Hindus. But soon a dispute arose between the Muslim leaders themselves, and the power was shared by three of them. They held it till April, 1858. During this period freebooters from neighbouring districts joined the party, and burned and plundered the neighbouring localities, including the two sacred sites of the Hindus, viz., Haridvar and Kanakhāl.61

Bareilly, Farrukhabad, and Bijnor furnish typical pictures of the numerous tiny kingdoms that were established all over Rohilkhand as a result of the withdrawal of the British. Though some of them nominally acknowledged the authority of Delhi, they were all independent for all practical purposes. They rose and fell like a meteor, and before a year was over, vanished, all of them, leaving behind nothing but sad memories of rapine and plunder, occasionally enlivened by the stories of heroic courage shown by some of the leaders in their life-and-death struggle against the British force.

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In some places, as in Moradabad, these tiny kingdoms, left by the British as parting gifts, proved a veritable apple of discord. Gulzarali, a Sayyid of ruined fortune, proclaimed himself Viceroy of the King of Delhi at Amroha, 21 miles from the city of Moradabad where the sepoys mutinied on 3 June. The 29th Regiment proclaimed Mujoo Khan governor of Moradabad, while the artillery chose Asadali Khan. Another candidate was Abdul Ali Khan, the uncle of Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan of Rampur who came down to Moradabad early in June and received salute and held darbars. As soon as he returned to Rampur, a proclamation was issued on 17 June in favour of Mujoo Khan. Some of the Muslim nobles joined his government, and a jihad was proclaimed against the English. But the Nawab of Rampur was loyal to the British and really held the district for them in spite of the revolt of a number of Muslim leaders. The communal bitterness, as usual, marked the outbreak.62

Shahjahanpur, another centre of popular rising, tells the same tale. On 31 May, the mutinous sepoys, excited by Surfuraz Ali, a Maulavi of Gorakhpur, killed a number of Europeans, two of them at the church. The survivors found a temporary refuge with the Zamindar of Pawain, but while proceeding towards Aurangabad were cruelly massacred. While the Maulavis and Ghazis were dominating the city, "the villagers broke out into rebellion; tahsils were plundered, records were destroyed and police stations sacked. Valuable materials connected with the sugar refinery and rum factory of Messrs. Carew and Co. were gutted by the people of the neighbouring villages nearly twenty in number. On June 1, a procession proclaiming the overthrow of the British rule was led by Hamid Hasan Khan and Nizamali Khan. The rule of the Rohillas under Khan Bahadur Khan was announced with Qadirali Khan and Ghulam Hussain Khan as local chiefs. But the mutual jealousies of the Mahomedan rulers and the resistance to their exactions by the Rajput chiefs who were killed in large numbers by Mardanali Khan in a fierce encounter, led to an indifferent situation. No less depressing was the hostile attitude of Ghulam Kadir Khan who replaced Qadirali Khan as nazim and appointed his own men as officers". Ahmad Yar Khan, a tahsildar, called in the aid of Ismail Khan of Bareilly to crush the Rajputs.63

The revolutionary outbreaks of civil population took place over such an extensive area in the region now known as Uttar Pradesh, that it is not possible to refer, even briefly, to all the affected localities. Nevertheless, as the 'popular upsurge' has been constructed as a struggle for national independence, it is necessary to form an accurate view of its nature. This can best be done by referring to the incl-
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dents that took place in a few selected localities. The following summary is based upon an official publication entitled "Narratives of Events Attending the Outbreak of Disturbances". It was compiled by the various District Officers and the Divisional Commissioners in the North-Western Provinces in obedience to the instructions contained in the General Order No. 212 of 30 April, 1858, and contains almost a day to day account of the incidents that happened under the very eyes of the officials concerned, or of which they got information from men who witnessed them. Whatever we might think of the views and comments of these officers, the events recorded by them may be regarded as fairly authentic. The resemblance between the incidents recorded by different officials in different localities is a strong evidence in support of their general accuracy. Besides, the general picture that emerges out of these accounts is fully corroborated by the accounts of contemporary Indians to which reference has been made above. In any case, it is not possible to get a more authentic detailed account of the various local outbreaks. It is interesting to note that even those writers, who represent the outbreak of 1857 as a national war of independence, have freely drawn upon these accounts, at least whenever they suited their purpose. Most of the passages in the following summary are verbatim quotations of these reports, though, here and there, they have been condensed without making any substantial or material change. Many details have necessarily been omitted.

A. Budaun

The popular upsurge at Budaun is instructive in so far as it shows very clearly how different classes used the movement to their own advantage. Inhabitants of some villages commenced plundering travellers, while those of others plundered the boats laden with grain belonging to 'Beoparees' (corn-dealers), which were moored on the ghats of the Gangā.

The Aheers of Nundpooor, Lawur and others banded together and murdered Heera Singh and Kulloo Singh, Zamindars of Putheria; they wounded Gopal Singh, the brother of the above, and plundered their property. The Narrative contains many gruesome details on the basis of which Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri describes the progress of popular agitation at Budaun in the following words:

"Though internal dissensions between the different communities weakened the basis of the movement, the popular fury was there to feed sedition. Blackmail was freely levied from all the baniyas and mahajans, and valuable indigo factories were gutted and even the iron boilers were melted down for shot and records were burnt ex-
tensively. While the masses had done everything to efface all traces of British rule, the talukdars took the opportunity of expelling the auction purchasers, and resumed possession of their hereditary states." Many Government servants, mostly Hindus, took service under the rebels and more than fifty chiefs carried on rapine and violence all over the district.

B. Aligarh

"Before the middle of June, the Chohans of the Pergunnah, intent on revenge, called in the Jats to their help, attacked Khyr, plundered and destroyed nearly all the government buildings, as well as the houses of bunyahs and mahajans. In July a regular government was set up by the rebels under Nusseemoollah.

... Feuds: The old Rajpoot and Jat feuds raged strongly in the western parts of this district, and towards Saidabad, in the Muttra district, and was only stopped by the fall of Delhi. The feeling of animosity between Hindoos and Mahomedans was also generally bitter in the towns of this district, especially after the excesses of Nusseemoollah and the elevation by us of Thakoor Gobind Singh. As to the behaviour of the people to the Christians, only one Christian was murdered. The refugees were given shelter by the people.

Of the European-owned indigo factories, a very large one was plundered and burnt by the villagers, i.e., Mr. Nichterlein's, and three others were plundered by mutineer troops; the other considerable ones were saved by the zemindars, who had the sense to perceive that their destruction would benefit no one. The records of the Sudder cutcherry, and those of four of eight tehsels, were destroyed; of these one act of destruction only was purely the work of villagers, i.e. the case of Khyr. In the other cases, the populace took a share after order had been first upset, or plunder commenced by mutineer troops. As elsewhere, the people plundered one another freely. Two towns of importance were plundered; Khyr to the amount of one lac of rupees, and Hurdooh Gunge, four lacs; these estimates are moderate. Coel was also a great deal plundered by Mewtees, etc. of the town, by passing rebel troops, by Nusseemoollah during his 11 days' reign, and by our own troops (British troops). There was an attack on Mr. Watson at Mudroc by the Coel Mahomedans on June 30, and on Major Burlton at Iglas by the Jats. The rise of the Mahomedan zemindars and other inhabitants of Atrowlee (September 25) leading to the murder of Mahomed Allee Tehseeldar, was a case of worst description. The influential inhabitants, chiefly converted Mahomedans of old, bore turbulent character. During the disturbed months, they took the management of
the town into their own hands. Early in September, Mahomed Allee was deputed by Mr. Cocks as Joint Magistrate, with Daood Khan as Nazim; but the zemindars refused to acknowledge him and on September 25, when the Mahomedans (at the time unaware of the fall of Delhi) broke out into open rebellion, he unfortunately left the tehsel building and was murdered. I never saw him but I have little doubt that government has seldom had a better servant. The behaviour of Ghaus Khan of Secundra Rao and of the Mahomedans of Coel, has been mentioned above. The only other case of marked rebellion among men of consideration is that of Mungal Singh and Mahtab Singh, Rajpoot zemindars of Akrabad, who after the plunder of Akrabad tehsel treasury by sepoys, permitted the destruction of the records by their own people, refused all aid to the tehseldar, and generally lived a life of open rebellion. Though aid in the struggle has been in many instances rendered us by the natives, especially by the Hindoos, after they had received a foretaste of a Mahomedan government, still their general attitude must be characterised as apathetic. The large number of persons who had so much to gain from the overthrow of our government were content to annex their lost estates and await the result of the struggle..."

C. Mathura

"The news of the insurrection and the proclamation of the king of Delhi had now become known among the native population, and the country immediately became disturbed. The disturbances were chiefly attacks on buniahs and ejectment of new zemindars by the old...A large number of new police had been raised and I endeavoured to raise new sowars, but with very little success. The great protection of the city consisted in the seths Radha Kishen and Gobind Das, who raised a large body of men at their own expenses and by their influence kept the other inhabitants quiet. They also lent Captain Nixon two brass guns...The disturbances in the district had been increasing both in number and enormity. Kuer Dildar Ally Khan, a large zemindar in Pergunnah Maot, was murdered by his villagers. On the 23rd May, Omrow Bahadoor, a relative of his who had estates in Pergunnah Nohjheel had been besieged in his house, but on the approach of our force, the villagers had retired and he made his escape. Several other murders were committed and other outrages, the particulars of which I do not remember...The news of the mutiny had spread with a great rapidity and the whole country had risen almost instantaneously. We were fired from several villages and had several narrow escapes. On reaching Muttra Mr. Burlton put the treasures on carts and gave
the word to march. The Subahdar said “where”? “To Agra, of course,” Mr. Burlton replied, on which a shout arose “no, to Delhi, to Delhi”. Mr. Burlton exclaimed “you traitors”, and he was shot dead by a sepoy. The sepoys then set fire to the office; the flames were the first notice the Europeans in the station had of the Mutiny; they instantly left and all succeeded in making their escape to Agra; the office being well on fire, the sepoys marched off with the treasure; they sent a detachment to release the prisoners in jail. The jail guard at once joined them; they then marched on towards Delhi. They burnt two bungalows besides the office, but did no other damage; they, however, burnt all the government buildings on the road, customs chowkies and bungalows, police chowkies, etc. The zemindars of all the villages along the road joined and assisted them.

“As the news spread, the country arose; by the time I returned, the whole district was in anarchy. The police and revenue establishments were everywhere ejected, or if permitted to remain, allowed to remain on mere sufferance; the buniahs were plundered, new proprietors ejected and murdered, and the king of Delhi proclaimed... From the Seth’s house, I used to see the villagers fighting across the river, and as soon as my return was known, the villagers sent to threaten the Seths if they did not eject me; the villagers on both sides of the river were disposed to plunder Muttra and commenced collecting men from Bhurtapore and elsewhere for the purpose... In all these measures (for defending Muttra) I was ably assisted by the Seths; in fact, but for their assistance and that of some other of the wealthier inhabitants, I could not have remained... The outrage committed by the insurgents had been very great; the town of Rayah had been completely plundered; the very houses dug to pieces in search of treasure. The atrocities committed on some of the buniahs’ wives will not bear repetition. The confusion and anarchy of the country exceeded belief; in a circle of a few miles, above five or six zemindars had declared themselves independent, assumed the title of rajah and proclaimed the king of Delhi. In one instance a single village split into two factions, one-half proclaimed a rajah, the other half the zemindars; the impression that the English rule had ceased was universal”.

D. Agra69

- The retreat of the British force to the Fort was signalised by the burning of buildings. The rebel troops followed it beyond Shahgunj. The march of the insurgent rebel army had been accompanied by hordes of villagers, ready to take advantage of a reverse on
either side, and to plunder the vanquished; they were seen before
the battle, by many, to the amount of some thousands, near the
European lines. The entry of the British force into the fort was a
signal for a general onslaught and plunder. All that night the fires
of the blazing bungalows lit the sky.

"On the morning after the battle the town crier, at the order
of Morad Alee Kotwal, proclaimed the reign of the King of Delhi,
through the city. The armed procession that accompanied the crier
was composed of most of the leading Mahomedan Police officers,
attached to the Kotwalee, headed by the Kotwal himself, and fol-
lowed by a crowd of inferior grades and rabble; there is no reason
to suppose that a single Mahomedan of any respectability was in
any way engaged or accessory to this proceeding........from
the time of the proclamation the property of Christians, wherever they
could be found in the city was plundered, and themselves, both man,
woman and child, ruthlessly murdered. In these murders the leaders
were the Police, who had been, in great numbers, armed with
muskets, ammunition and side-arms; these were joined by the
Butchers and Mewatees of Wazeerpoorah and other places, and by
the low Mahomedan rabble..........The state of the District out-
side the city was, in one word, anarchy. The repulse of the British
troops and the entry into the fort joined to the inaction of the three
days, wherever reported, everywhere gave the signal for attacks on
the tehseels and thanas...............The first attacks were made
by the Goojurs of the neighbouring villages..........Goojurs had
been joined by some of the followers of Deohunse Goojur, soobah
of the neighbouring state of Dholepoor..........Deohunse then gave
up the town of Iradtnugur to plunder. For five weeks carriages
laden with the spoils of the plundered villages continually passed
along the road to Dholepoor. Proprietors of estates bought at auction
were ejected by the former owners. Anarchy prevailed and plunder
on all sides..."

E. Banda

The insurrection commenced in June before which no actual
outbreak or even a dacoitee had taken place in the Banda district.
The released convicts from Allahabad and Kanpur, however, soon
spread over the country and found the Banda people only too ready
to join them. 'The Tehseeleel of Mow was first attacked and plundered
by the zemindars of Mow and the neighbouring villages, and
the records torn up and distributed to the winds, in order, as they
said, that no record of their liabilities might remain to the govern-
ment. The Tehseeleel and Thannah establishments did their best;
but were overwhelmed by thousands, and compelled to seek safety
in flight. The loss of other Tehseelees soon followed in a like manner. I saw Tehseelee after Tehseelee going, and the waves of the rebellion rapidly approaching Banda itself, and was totally helpless to prevent it. The whole district went to the bad in less than a week. The town and bazar of Rajapoor was saved from plunder by the merchants themselves who assembled a large force and repelled the repeated attacks of the surrounding villages... As for the people, ruined as they were by over-assessment and bad seasons, and half starving, still they would, I think, not have risen in rebellion if they had been left to themselves. It was only when excited by the reports from other districts, and hearing of the excesses committed elsewhere, and of what was then supposed the total massacre of all Europeans at Allahabad, that they too came to the conclusion that the British rule was at an end, and every man had best take care of himself....

'On the same night that the British officers left Banda, all the bungalows in Cantonments were plundered and burnt to the ground and Nawab Ali Bahadoor proclaimed his own rule; and through the government police made arrangements, which saved the town from being plundered. He gave out that the Collector and Magistrate had entrusted the district to his care and desired all Government servants to remain at their posts... The Adjygurh chiefs, who had been sent by their ranees to our assistance, and who had at my request undertaken to protect the jail, joined in releasing the prisoners. Many of the leading bungaas of the town were also present on this occasion and sweetmeats were distributed by them to the mutineers. The sepoys then proclaimed their own Raj in opposition to that of Nawab Ali Bahadur issued on the previous night at which they were much incensed. The Nawab, however, managed to appease their wrath by giving them a great dinner of sweetmeats and by acknowledging their authority. They then called the Amilahs and told them they would be maintained in their several appointments; and Mahomed Sidar Khan, the Deputy Collector, was appointed by the sepoys 'Nazim of Banda' with full powers of life and death. The slaughter of cows and bullocks was then forbidden throughout the town. Mr. Cockerell, the Joint Magistrate and a number of East Indians were murdered.'

"In the pargunnahs the news spread like wildfire, and the villagers rose in every direction and plundered and murdered each other promiscuously. Old enmities and the long smothered wish for revenge were forthwith satisfied. Auction purchasers and decreeholders were ousted, travellers and merchandize plundered, and the servants of Government compelled to fly for their lives; and, in all
instances government buildings and property of every description were plundered and destroyed. Everyman’s hand was against his neighbour, and the natives revelled in all the license and madness of unchecked anarchy and rebellion in a manner such as only Asians can revel in those pleasures. Tulwars and matchlocks were scarce in Bundelcund; but armed with spears and scythes, and iron-bound lathies and temporary axes formed by chopping knives fastened on sticks, they imagined themselves to be warriors, chose their own Kings, and defied all comers. Never was revolution more rapid, never more complete”......The sepoys left on the 19th June with their plundered treasures (2 lakhs), guns and ammunition. Pending a reference to Nana about the claims of two rivals—the Nawab and the chieftain of Adijyur— for the throne of Banda, the former was allowed to take charge of the country. The dispute led to a fight between the two about the middle of August, and again in October. But Nawab Ali Bahadur was not the only ruler of the district. At Kirwi, in the western part, Narayan Rao and Madho Rao declared themselves as Peshwas, both being second to bear these names in that illustrious line. Thus, in the words of a modern historian, who fully relied on the account given above, in Banda, “the revolutionary flame was in full blaze”, and “the popular character of the rebellion” was manifested in the “destruction of the church and the desecration of the Christian burial ground.”

F. Hamirpur

“After the murder of the Europeans, including the Magistrate, anarchy was the order of the day; the mob and sepoys rushed up to the town, plundered everyone they could lay their hands on; old scores were wiped out in blood, and the Christian preacher, Jeremiah, with his whole family were slaughtered unresisting.

“The Bengalee Baboos as writing English were next attacked, and though they begged their lives, lost everything they possessed... There were three boats of unarmed sepoys of the 44th and 67th Regiments, those I believe who were disarmed at Agra, passing by on the 18th June; the guns were turned on them and opened, many were killed, the boats taken and the goods found in them made over to men of the auxiliary chiefs, the sepoys being left to get on their way as best they could. The sepoys and the auxiliaries now fell out about the money in the treasury amounting to a lakh and a half; on July 1, the Peshwa’s rule was proclaimed. Once more anarchy prevailed in Hamirpur, the Romere Zemindars levying blackmail on whom they pleased, and committing all kinds of violence; these men with the exception of Thoke Teroze were the
leaders in everything bad, and were well backed up by those of Serowlee Buzoorg and Khoord. The Humeerpore zemindars seem to have behaved decidedly well, but are so weak and poor as to have been able to do little.

"I need scarcely say that the great feature in the rebellion here has been the universal ousting of all bankers, baniyas, Marwarees, etc., from landed property in the district, by whatever means they acquired it, whether at auction, by private sale or otherwise, and also that the larger communities have profited immensely by the time of anarchy, while many of the smaller ones have been ruined and dispersed; those who were strong enough to plunder with impunity did so, the others were the victims. This, however, must have been equally the case all over the country; but it is strange that in no instance do the classes so favoured by our rule, the bankers and other traders, appear to have been able to keep their own in the struggle..."

G. Jhansi

Jhansi presented a similar scene of anarchy and confusion. The Rani, who is supposed to have led the war of independence, thus describes the condition of the District in a letter to the Commissioner of the Saugor Division:

"The Urzee of the Tahsildars and thanadars of Puchare dated 11th June 1857 states that the Jagirdar of Khuneeadhana of Elaka Jhansee has attacked the district with a hundred matchlockmen and taken possession of the fort of Ahar and the Thakoors of Kuphar etc. have taken forcible possession of the fort Mehraunee and turned away the police sephaees from there, and the same things are going on in other places. No policeman can be got to take service. If all the Gurhees are in this manner taken possession of by these people, the district will be ruined; if assistance be rendered some arrangements can be made, otherwise everything must go to ruin.

"The Urzee of the Thanadar of Rahpoor Dhala dated 11th June states that it appears that Thakoors of Kyrwa have dismissed the police from the chaukee at the post and the Pawars are marching about in bands. The Thakoors of Kyrwa have got together some 200 or 150 men with evil designs towards the inhabitants.

"It has been rumoured that the Thakoor of Chargaon has taken possession of the place and is collecting the revenue of the Pargananah and ruining the inhabitants."

The Rani sums up the position by saying that "in all the elaqas (subdivisions) subordinate to Jhansi the chiefs have taken pos-
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session of the Gurhees, while others are plundering the country”, and that “it is quite beyond her power to make any arrangement for the safety of the district”.

H. Other Areas

There were outbreaks in Jubulpore District where 179 rebel leaders appeared in arms. It is unnecessary to describe at length the activities of such local chiefs who established their ephemeral authority over small areas. Some of them assumed royal titles. For example, the fort of Rahatgarh, 24 miles from Sagar, was seized by Fazil Muhammad who assumed the title of Prince of Mandasor. Faizuddin Muktear proclaimed Soal Singh as the Raja of Ajaigah. Many of them are definitely known to have old scores to pay against the British. The Raja of Banpur, the most prominent of them, who later fought hard against the British, “had many grievances to complain of”, and cherished the hope of gaining the entire kingdom of Chanderi, the ancient possession of his ancestors, on the expected fall of the British rule. He at first played a double game, negotiating for terms and territories, but eventually rebelled and seized Chanderi. Many other chiefs rose in revolt because they “had lost their obari rights in several of their villages”, or their estates “had been in whole or in part resumed by the Government”. The Rani of Jaitpur, a state annexed by Dalhousie on the Doctrine of Lapse, set herself up as a ruler at Jaitpur, but was driven away by the Chirkaree troops. The Rani of Ramgarh took up arms to get rid of the Court of Wards which managed the State.

I. General Review

Although many chiefs in Bundelkhand, Sagar and Narmada territories sooner or later threw in their lot with the rebels, one can hardly accept the statement of Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri that “by the end of August, all places to the north of the Narmada with the exception of the Sadar stations were in flames”. Jalaun and Charkhari were unaffected, and the Raja of Panna continued to be the most faithful ally of the British. The same was the case with the ruler of Orchha and Datia, who attacked the Rani of Jhansi and won the support of the British by representing her as a rebel. The Raja of Rewa helped the British with troops, and the whole Baghelkhand remained quiet.

It is equally untrue to say that the “rebellion culminated in the complete subversion of the British power”. It would be more appropriate to say that the subversion of the British power by the mutiny of the sepoys culminated in the rebellion of the people as
they thought that “the British raj was over.” This, again, is true only in a general way of Rohilkhand and the adjoining area immediately lying to the south of the Yamuna.

So far as Rohilkhand is concerned, the British authority almost disappeared for nearly a year. The whole country presented a scene of plunder and devastation, in which almost everybody’s hand was against his neighbour. Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly and many other chiefs exercised independent royal authority, fondly believing that the British rule had gone for ever and the Muslim power was going to be revived in all its glory. Nevertheless, wherever there was a vestige of British authority left, large sections of people submitted to it. Referring to Muzaffarnagar where the civil population broke into revolt on May 14, before there was a similar revolt elsewhere, the Magistrate reports: “By the end of August, I collected Rs. 2,95,000 (as revenue) without the sacrifice of a single life (employed in collecting revenue). Later, disturbances occurred in various parts of the district, but the authority was maintained”.

Dr. Chaudhuri seems to convey the impression that the region north of the Narmada was in flames kindled by the torch of freedom. But what are the actual facts? We have got a fairly good picture of the state of this region in those days, based on authentic testimony. It portrays Indian chiefs fighting against one another, some of them befriending the English for securing the help against rival chiefs, others helping the British at first, then changing, or forced to change, their attitude by the unjust suspicion of the latter, brought out in no small measure by the machinations of their Indian enemies; the petty local chiefs only busy with establishing their own authority and enriching themselves by all unscrupulous means; plunder and murder going on on all sides. This hardly fits in with the romantic picture of Jhansi as the centre of a national war of independence. But such was, in brief, the condition of the whole of North-Western Provinces.

It is a fitting occasion to pause and reflect on the nature of this short spell of independence for which no war had to be waged against the English, and no blood was shed, except that of European and Indian victims of the mutinous sepoys and infuriated populace. In order to understand the nature of the revolt in N.W.P., we must take note of the fact that the class that perhaps contributed most to the wide-spread character of the rebellion was that connected with land. The agrarian system adopted by the British in the Ceded Provinces, as mentioned above, had entirely changed the character of land tenure. In particular, the heavy assessments of
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revenue, combined with two innovations introduced in 1833, namely, a complete cadastral survey and large-scale resumption of rent-free grants of lands, proved disastrous to the people.

The result was that the cultivators, already in debt on account of over-assessment prior to 1833, were forced to borrow more money, at heavy rate of interest, from traders, merchants and money-lending classes, who sought to invest their spare cash in land which came to be regarded as a secure and stable form of property. By the new legislation of 1848 it became quite easy for the money-lenders to get decree in courts and auction the property for non-payment of loans. As a consequence, these wealthy classes got the proprietary rights, while the old cultivators became mere tenants-at-will, and such a change affected nearly one-third of the cultivators. The cultivating classes naturally resented the intrusion of these monied classes, mostly absentee, and looked upon the overthrow of British rule in 1857 as a God-sent opportunity to redress their grievances. They not only took advantage of it to reassert their old rights, but wreaked vengeance upon those traders and money-lenders who were at the root of all their sorrows and miseries. This explains not only the wide and rapid spread of the revolt of civil population, but also some of the characteristic features of the rowdyism displayed by the people, namely, destruction of courts and records and the cruelty to the Mahajans and Bunyas, which were reported from almost every place affected by the outbreak.

In the opinion of a class of historians the rising of civil population invests the outbreak of 1857-8 with the character of a national war of independence. Few of them, however, have made a detailed study of these risings in order to assess their real nature. Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri is perhaps the only exception, and his careful compilation of facts is therefore of special importance. His comments, however, betray a lack of proper understanding of what a popular rising for independence really means. His account of Bijnor serves as a typical example. He stresses the “spontaneous rising of the people”, though he admits that it really meant the plunders and other excesses committed by the Gujars, Banjars, etc. as mentioned above. He recognizes that “the independent government of Muhammad Khan, the Nawab of Nazibabad, could not restore law and order; far less stop the bloody wars between the Hindus and the Muham-madans in which the former were eventually defeated with great slaughter at the battle of Haldaur on 18 September”. He admits that “the Bijnor rising clearly brought out into prominence the lines of cleavage working to antagonise the two communities”. “But,”
he adds, "the rebel cause was strengthened by the participation in it of the noted Gujar Chiefs, ... an outlaw, the Delhi princes and Sirdar Khan." 84

Dr. Chaudhuri's comment on the general character of the revolt is still more explicit: "The revolt in Rohilkhand was mostly confined to the muslim community who were inflamed by fanaticism to an intense hatred of the English. They raised the green flag, shouted for the revival of the Islamic State and despoiled the hindu bankers and merchants. But these features did not warp the popular character of the rising." 85

It seems to be the view of Dr. Chaudhuri that the hatred of the English is the only factor that counts in a popular national movement, even though the resulting activity was wanton plunder and destruction by the rowdy elements who were hitherto kept in restraint by the English authority and therefore very naturally hated it. The popular character, it seems, is not lost even though the Hindus fight against Muslims, one faction fights against another, and every body's hand is against his neighbours. Even Dr. Chaudhuri's detailed account does not show that the people, while thus engaged, bestowed a moment's thought upon devising measures to maintain the independence they had so miraculously won without any effort on their part, or that any class or group of persons looked upon this independence in any other light than as a means to gain their personal ends. It is therefore difficult to hold that the revolts in N.W. P. deserve the name of popular rising or popular upsurge, as part of a national movement for independence. The spontaneity of the popular risings, on which Dr. Chaudhuri lays stress, does not necessarily indicate prolonged and eager expectancy to free the motherland or drive away the English, but may be easily accounted for by the long-standing grievances, mentioned above, of the cultivating class which constituted 90 per cent. of the people, and the godsent opportunity to loot, kill, and burn with impunity, which no Gujar, Banjar, escaped convicts or people of that sort are ever known to have missed. Nor does history record any instance where these classes of people hesitated or waited for a moment when such an opportunity presented itself. Dr. Chaudhuri claims that even apart from these marauding elements there was 'tension among the landed chiefs as well as the people', and the mutiny of sepoys acted like a spark on an ignited substance. This tension was due to various types of discontent, mentioned above, causing disaffection and hatred against the British, but the ignition did not kindle the torch of patriotism and a burning desire for freedom. The so-called popu-
lar upsurge, to start with, was really a scramble for power and plunder, and even the popular cry of 'drive away the English' lost its force and fervour after the first orgy of riots was over. This alone can explain how Syed Ahmad, a Government official, could hold Bijnor for some time on behalf of the British, without any military force, and the District of Moradabad was similarly held by the loyal Nawab of Rampur. Moradabad, in any case, had tasted the bitter cup of freedom. The Hindus, disaffected by the communal policy of the Government, welcomed the return of the British forces. On April 21, Firuz Shah, a prince of the royal House of Delhi, who had cast in his lot with the Rohilkhand rebels, marched upon Moradabad and demanded money and supplies. But the townspeople refused, and Firuz Shah, after making a vain attempt to subdue them, was forced to beat an inglorious retreat.  

Another point of interest in the so-called popular upsurge in Rohilkhand is the equal readiness of the people to fight for or against either Khan Bahadur Khan or the British, so long as they were paid for the work. Much is made of the fact that Khan Bahadur Khan had raised an army of forty thousand troops. But as Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, who was present in Bareilly at the time, observes, these recruits, mostly poor men, were attracted by payment alone; the common folk had no enthusiasm for any party or cause, and thousands joined the British army for exactly the same reason.

It is true that many landlords joined the revolt, but many also remained loyal and faithful to the British till the last. As regards the common people the contemporary British writers themselves admit that a large section of them in N.W.P. showed friendly feelings to the British. As an evidence thereof it is pointed out that otherwise supplies could not be obtained, and small groups of Englishmen could not move through Rohilkhand without any escort and hold important posts "amidst the swarms of mutineers passing up the Grand Trunk Road to Delhi". If there are instances where the Englishmen were cruelly butchered, there are perhaps more numerous examples where English fugitives—men, women, and children—owed their lives to the kindness and sympathy of the Indians, both chiefs and common people. All this does not necessarily mean that these were loyal to the British; they might have been passive or indifferent, even though disaffected towards the British. But the existence of a large element of such people certainly takes away from the universal character of the 'popular rising' which has been claimed by some writers.

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Mention has been made above of the grave discontent caused by the annexation of Awadh among all classes of people. Apart from the general discontent that inevitably followed all such annexations, the popular discontent was aggravated by the subsequent incidents, such as the spoliation of the Nawab's palace; the lack of timely help which reduced the members of the royal family to utter penury, even to the miserable condition of begging for food; the new policy of land-settlement which deprived the Talukdars of their property; the imposition of new and obnoxious duties such as those on stamps, petitions, food, houses, eatables, ferries and opium which laid a heavy burden on the common people,—mostly peasants who were already suffering from heavy assessment of land-revenue. These were quite recent happenings, hardly a year old, and the people still remembered how the outlying portions of Awadh, then constituting the North-Western Provinces of the British, were forcibly taken away by them. No wonder that the people of Awadh—meaning the original kingdom—who fully shared the general discontent and grave apprehension of loss of religion would grow specially restive. In Awadh, again, the sepoys were mostly recruited from the people and there was no hard and fast line of demarcation between the two as in other parts of India. It is no wonder, therefore, that the sepoys, as well as other classes of people, would grow more excited than elsewhere, and the civil population would show more sympathy to the mutinous sepoys who were mostly their own kith and kin. Events proved this to be the case. Nowhere else, outside the old Suba or kingdom of Awadh, were the mutinies of sepoys so successful and wide-spread, and, what is more important, led to outbreaks of civil population on such a large scale. It is only against this background that the civil rebellion in Awadh can be understood in its true perspective.

Reference has been made above to the mutiny of the sepoys at Lakhnau on May 3, which was easily suppressed. The news of Mirat and Delhi reached there on May 14 and 15. On the night of May 30, there was another rising in course of which the Brigadier was shot and the officers' bungalows were burnt. But nearly five to six hundred men of the three native regiments remained loyal, and next morning Sir Henry Lawrence, who had been given plenary power in Awadh, had no difficulty in dispersing the mutineers who all fled after a few discharges from his guns and marched to Delhi. The same afternoon (May 31) about five or six thousand Muslims raised the standard of the Prophet and attempted a rising of the civil population, but the police put them down.
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During the month of May the province of Awadh had remained comparatively quiet and, unlike Rohilkhand, British administration was regularly carried on throughout the province. But after the mutiny at Lakhnau on May 30/31 mutiny became general throughout the province. This was evidently due, partly to the example of Lakhnau, and partly to the constant stream of mutineers pouring into Awadh from outside. But whatever may be the cause, “every detachment without exception threw off control”. “In every instance the mutiny of a regiment was followed by the loss of the district to which it belonged”. In the course of ten or eleven days, English administration in Awadh had vanished like a dream, and not a single representative of the British Government was to be found at any of the stations in Awadh. It is, however, a singular fact that the common people as well as the Talukdars, with a few exceptions, treated the fugitive Europeans with genuine sympathy and kindness.60

The political vacuum thus created led to a situation not much dissimilar to what took place in Rohilkhand. But there were some special features. The Talukdars of Awadh, who had lost their lands by the new system of land tenure, immediately rose as a class and resumed the lands, which had been taken away from them, by forcibly ejecting their new masters who had purchased them at auction sale. The Talukdars had not only powerful motive but also a strong incentive to revolt by the strength and security of their position. Their numbers were great and they had a common cause to fight for. They were well armed and almost every Talukdar had a fort surrounded by dense jungles. It has been estimated that in course of the suppression of the outbreak, “1572 forts had been destroyed and 714 cannon, exclusive of those taken in action, surrendered”.60

Although the common people had not the same grievances as the Talukdars, all classes of people joined in the fray for reasons mentioned above. Even the cultivators, who were protected by the British against the rapacity of the Talukdars, joined their old masters who were their natural chiefs, and with whom they had a special tie.

The rebellion in Awadh had another advantage over that in Rohilkhand. It had a rallying point in the Nawab family which was dispossessed of its domains only a year back. The last Nawab was practically a prisoner in Calcutta, but his cause was upheld by his queen, Begam Hazrat Mahal. Her minor son, Birjis Quadir, was selected as Nawab on 7 July and his coronation in Lakhnau was accompanied by booming of guns. A regular administration was set...

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up with Sharf-ud-Daulah as Prime Minister and the important offices were judiciously distributed among the Hindus and Muslims. The chief authority was however wielded by Begam Hazrat Mahal.

It should not be supposed, however, that the whole of Awadh rallied round the authority of the Begam. As in Rohilkhand, so in Awadh, a number of local chiefs set up tiny independent kingdoms, some of which were contested by more than one rival claimant. Almost the whole of Awadh and bordering regions were parcelled out among the Talukdars and other chiefs, many of whom possessed one or more well-fortified strongholds and a large number of troops. Among these may be mentioned Muhammad Hasan of Gorakhpur, Mehndi Hasan of Sultanpur, Beni Madho Baksh of Sankarpur, Narpat Singh of Ruya, Udit Narayan and Madhu Pershad of Birhur, Devi Bux Singh and the three Singh Zamindars of Dhurua.38a

As the first-mentioned has recently obtained celebrity as a great patriot and national hero, his career may be traced in some detail. Mir Muhammad Hasan served as a Nazim of Gonda under the Nawab of Awadh. Like many other Zamindars of Awadh, he did not at first join the revolt and gave shelter to Colonel Lennox and his family. When disturbances broke out in Gorakhpur, the local authorities tried to set up a committee of local Zamindars to administer the district, but the scheme failed as there were dissensions among the local chiefs. The Government practically ceased to function and there were chaos and confusion everywhere.

"The northern and western pargunnahs were at this time (end of June) utterly disorganised. The Gyoutum Rajpoots, under the instigation, and sometimes under the personal command, of the Raja of Nuggur, everywhere rose and dispossessed the present proprietors of all the lands tradition assigned to their race. Most of the Amurha zamindars openly defied the Government officials, and proclaimed that our rule had given place to the 'Nawabee', while the Rajpoots of Fynah and the neighboring villages, by their piracies, closed the navigation of the Gogra. At the same time it was known that frequent meetings were being held by the Rajahs of Nurharpore, Nu-gur, Sutassée and the Baboos of Panderpar and others, in which it had been decided to obtain assistance from Oudh."

In the meantime Hasan had joined the rebels and first appeared at the head of a rebel party on 12 July. He was however defeated by the British forces on the 18th. On 20 July he arrived at the bank of the Rapti, opposite to the city of Gorakhpur. He was welcomed by the leading Muslim inhabitants of Gorakhpur and easily made himself master of it. "His first act after the assumption of power was to order all Government employees to enter his services on
pains of punishment. None of the Deputy Collectors and only one Tehseeldar obeyed, but several thanadars accepted him as their master. He maintained the existing fiscal and criminal jurisdictions to the great disgust of many of his partisans among the landholders, who objected that thanadars were unknown under the Nawabee as the district had become. The records were preserved. From these documents, and the cannongoes who mostly joined him, he obtained full information of the demand due from each landholder. The great proprietors who early made their submission to him in person received dresses of honour, salutes of guns and were permitted to exercise full civil and criminal authority within the limits of their respective estates, or what they claimed as such, for obsolete titles were revived. In return they furnished contingents to his army. The chief among these were the rajahs of Suttasee, Nuggur, Nurhurpoore, Burh yapore, Nichloul, Shahpore, the baboons of Tega Pandepar, Khadowlee. The wealthy Mahomedan families of the town naturally were among the first to welcome him and from them his officials were mostly selected. There was a judge, a collector, and naib nazim, Mooshurruf Khan, who perhaps enjoyed more real powers than Mahomed Hussun himself. Large sums of money were extorted by violence or threats of it from the merchants and bankers of the city, and the female members of many families were dishonoured by his lawless and licentious soldiery. In the district, those who had lost their estates through the agency of the civil courts, now ousted the purchasers and reentered in possession; great search was also made for deeds and decrees. The strong preyed everywhere on the weak".91

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the risings in different parts of Awadh which followed the pattern of Rohilkhand. For henceforth the chief interest of the rebellion in Awadh is centred round Lakhnau, the capital city of the late Nawabs, the British, and the rebel government of Birjis Quadr; as it was only in that city that the remnants of the representatives of the British Government were concentrated in the Residency building besieged by the mutineers. It is therefore necessary to trace the origin and history of the memorable siege of Lakhnau which, along with Delhi and Kanpur, formed the chief strongholds of the rebellion of 1857-8.

As mentioned above, the mutiny of the sepoys at Lakhnau on May 30 and 31 set ablaze the whole of Awadh; yet, strangely enough, the British authority in Lakhnau remained undisturbed and intact for some time. But Sir Henry Lawrence was fully alive to the impending danger. The first step he took was to set up two strongly fortified centres in the city, where all the forces would be concen-
trated. These were the Machchhi Bhavan, a large fortified palace situated on a natural eminence, and his own residence, known as the Residency. Later, he selected the Residency, on the bank of the Gumti river, as the place of refuge for all Europeans. It consisted of a number of detached dwelling houses and other buildings, of which the Residency itself was the most conspicuous, the whole area being defended only by rude mud walls and trenches. He took measures to improve the defences and erected batteries along the line of entrenchment.

He was soon to face a delicate problem. As noted above, several Indian regiments helped the authorities to suppress the mutiny of May 30-31. One party, headed by Mr. Gubbins, the Financial Commissioner, regarded even the loyal sepoys as a potential danger and wanted to disarm them, but Lawrence disagreed. Taking advantage of the latter’s illness Gubbins managed to carry his point, and all the sepoys except about 350 were ordered to go home; but as soon as Lawrence heard this he sent messengers to recall the sepoys, about 150 of whom returned. Lawrence also invited the pensioned sepoys to rally round their old flag. All these sepoys remained faithful till the last and played an important part in saving the Residency. Lawrence had asked for, and obtained the command of the army. Meanwhile there were disquieting reports from all parts of the province, and even Lakhnau did not remain unscathed. The military police revolted on June 11-12, and joined the mutineers in the districts. Nevertheless, Lawrence, though in shattered health, worked unceasingly for strengthening the defence of the Residency and Machchhi Bhaban and collecting stores. His defensive policy was not liked by many who wanted to march out and attack the rebels. Here, again, it was Gubbins who led the dissentient section, and at last lawrence yielded.

On June 29, 1857, a large body of rebel army was reported to be advancing towards Lakhnau. Lawrence started the next morning and met them at Chinhat, about ten miles to the north-east of the city. After an artillery duel, the mutineers, advancing with a steadiness that extorted the admiration of the British officers, were already threatening to outflank their handful of opponents, when the desertion of some of Lawrence’s native gunners, and the flight of his native cavalry decided the fortune of the day. Lawrence gave order to retreat and “the retreat soon became a rout.” The mutineers blocked the way to Lakhnau by occupying a bridge over a small rivulet. But a small squadron of British volunteers, with sabres flashing, hurled themselves upon the dense masses, and the sepoys broke and fled. 92

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The remnants of the British army reached the Residency, but the rebel force followed in their wake and invested it the same afternoon (June 30). Thus began that memorable siege which is perhaps the most amazing episode in the whole military history of the Mutiny. It is difficult to conceive of a more unequal contest. A small force of British soldiers and civilians and loyal sepoys, altogether numbering less than 1,700, burdened with a number of women and children, had to defend themselves in ordinary buildings with mud walls, protected by hastily improvised defences, against six thousand trained soldiers, who were soon reinforced by a constantly increasing number of Talukdars and their retainers, till their number reached one hundred thousand or perhaps even more. Lakhnau and Kanpur were the only two theatres of war where the mutineers or the revolutionaries took the offensive and the British had to defend themselves against enormous odds. As such both require careful consideration.

The besieging sepoys at Lakhnau were inspired by the presence of the Begam of Awadh and Maulavi Ahmadulla who were the leading spirits in the resistance against the British; yet, to the astonishment alike of friends and foes, the tiny garrison held out for nearly three months till relief came on September 25. At first the sepoys confined themselves to cannonading from a distance and a galling musketry fire from the neighbouring buildings, causing nearly fifteen to twenty deaths every day during the first week. One of the victims was Henry Lawrence himself, who was wounded by the bursting of a shell on July 2 and died two days later. Unable to create much effect upon the defenders by mere cannonading and musketry fires, the besiegers made a general assault on July 20; but although they reached the walls and some of them displayed great feats of courage, the attack was repulsed with heavy loss after four hours’ desperate fighting. The general assault was repeated on August 10, August 18, and September 5, but always with the same result. The siege continued, and its further course will be related later. It will suffice here to state that while the rebels could not capture the Residency at Lakhnau, several British expeditions also failed to dislodge them, and Lakhnau was not re-occupied by the British till the beginning of March, 1858.

During the prolonged siege of Lakhnau the mutinous sepoys and the rebel leaders had a splendid opportunity to combine their resources and put up an organized fight against the British, if any such were intended. But there was no regular plan of campaign, not even any serious attempt to prevent the relieving army from Calcutta to reach Lakhnau, Kanpur, and adjoining regions. More
than a hundred thousand men, many of them well-trained and well-equipped soldiers, were engaged for eight months in a single military operation against less than two thousand men behind a hastily improvised defence, and failed miserably to dislodge them. These were the eight crucial months in course of which the fate of the Mutiny and Civil rebellion was decided. Taking a long view of things, it must be said that the futile siege of Lakhnau, in spite of the terrible misery and hardships it inflicted upon the besieged, was a godsend to save the British empire, inasmuch as it kept back a hundred thousand of the rebel fighters from participating in actions which decided the fate of the rebellion.

The siege of Lakhnau is also a crucial test of the nature of the revolt in Awadh. The banner of the defunct kingdom of Awadh was unfurled again after a year, and if there were a genuine spirit or a real mass movement to fight for the King and the Country (even taking it in the narrow sense of Awadh rather than India), one would expect a ready response from the hundreds of chiefs who set up baronial principalities all over the province. Lakhnau was the focal point of the fight for freedom and Begam Hazrat Mahal was a brave and resourceful leader, not unworthy of the cause. Nothing is more natural than that the chiefs of Awadh should rally round her flag and place their entire energy and resources at her disposal without a moment's hesitation. The general truth of this is admitted by all classes of writers, even though they hold different views about the nature of the outbreak. Thus Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, to whom reference has been made above, writes: "The rising at Lucknow was the central event of the rebellion in the mutinies. Both in dimension and character it embodied the revolutionary urges of the time". Proceeding further he says: "The operations at Lucknow took the form of a great war of liberation. It marked the climax of India's struggle against Britain a guerre a la mort".94

But what were the actual facts? The most crucial point in deciding this question is the behaviour of the chiefs and Talukdars. As there are sharp differences of opinion on this issue, specimens of different types of views may be quoted: Innes is definitely of opinion that only a very few Talukdars joined in the attack of the Residency before Havelock's withdrawal in the early part of August, and that even on the 10th of the month, the mass of the Talukdars was holding aloof. Later on, their retainers joined in the attack on the Residency on September 5, but as a body, they had not even then taken any active part in the siege or shown hostility to the British. Holmes, agreeing with Innes, comments as follows on the
second unsuccessful attempt of Havelock to relieve Lakhnau, on August 12.

"The retreat had a serious political effect. The talukdars of Oudh, with few exceptions, had hitherto remained passive, watching events. One of their number, Man Singh, who played a double game with great craft throughout the struggle, had advised them to have nothing to do with the mutineers. But when Havelock withdrew from the province, they felt that the British Government was doomed; and some of them wrote to inform the authorities at Benaras that they had no choice but to send their retainers to join in the siege of the Residency".96 Elsewhere, Holmes mentions that even at the beginning of the siege there were "a large number of talukdars' retainers".96

The views of Innes, supported by Holmes, have been bitterly criticised by Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri. But it seems he has not succeeded in rebutting the arguments advanced by Holmes in support of Innes and demolishing the conclusion of Holmes that there is no positive evidence that before the issue of Canning's Proclamation (March, 1858) any Talukdar took the field in person, except Man Singh, the three Talukdars who fought against the British at Chinhari (30 June) and four others, mentioned by Gubbins.97

Dr. Chaudhuri says: "That the talukdars, with a few exceptions, actively aided and abetted the mutineers during nearly the whole of the struggle stands confirmed by authentic evidence".98 The nature of this evidence may be examined a little more closely. The first is a report, dated June 12, by Henry Lawrence that the Talukdars had been arming themselves. This is a vague statement and may be easily explained by their forcible seizure of lands belonging to others and a natural desire to retain them. The second is a statement of Lieutenant Crump who served under Havelock in his Awadh campaign, that before August 5, the English had to contend against a few Talukdars who were on the side of the mutineers. The actual words used by Crump are: "Before (August 5) we had only a few wrong-headed zemindars to contend with, on the side of the mutineers—now, the whole population is against us". By "the whole population" he evidently meant the population along the line of march. Dr. Chaudhuri misses the real import of this statement, namely, that the Talukdars (if 'Zamindars' referred to them) and general people were indifferent to the fate of Lakhnau until the month of August. This is rendered more explicit by another statement of Crump, namely that "the great landed proprietors......have, up to the present time,"—the first week in August—"been perfectly still, standing at gaze". Dr. Chaudhuri does not
quote this, nor the relevant statement of Outram on September 17, 1857, that his information shows that "there is a large and influential class in Oude. . . . among the more powerful, and most of the middle classes of chiefs and zemindars, who really desire the re-establishment of our rule; while others, well disposed towards us, have only been induced to turn against us because they believe that our Raj is gone". On the other hand, Dr. Chaudhuri makes much of the statements of Outram on March 8 and 30, 1858, to the effect that there "are not a dozen land holders who have not themselves borne arms", and that 'there are few Talukdars who have not taken an active part in the rebellion.' Outram did not make it clear at what stage the Talukdars actively fought against the British. In any case Outram's statement as well as the one made by his successor Montgomery, to the effect, that between June and November, 1857, with "a few honourable exceptions the whole province of Oude was in arms against the British Government" does not support Dr. Chaudhuri's contention "that the talukdars with a few exceptions actively aided the mutineers during nearly the whole of the struggle. Nor is this contention supported by the few specific facts mentioned by Dr. Chaudhuri, as they all refer to the resistance to Havelock, in August and September, and a confidential official report from Lakhnau in October, that Man Singh and four others were fighting against the English at Lakhnau.99

If, even the most minute investigations of Dr. Chaudhuri have failed to elicit more positive evidence than what he has collected in a special appendix and has been discussed above, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Talukdars, with a few exceptions, did not join the revolt and rally round the flag of Begam Hazrat Mahal at the beginning of the struggle. The majority included those who, at a later date, joined the rebellion, a few of whom swore to fight for their country till the last.

Dr. Chaudhuri has referred to Man Singh as one of the Talukdars taking a prominent part in the rebellion, and his being elected leader by the sepoys of Fyzabad on June 10 in preference to the Fyzabad Maulvi who was deposed from the leadership after two days.100 Fortunately, a few positive facts are known about him on unimpeachable authority. Henry Lawrence had appealed to the Talukdars for support before the outbreak, and Raja Man Singh of Shahgunj, one of the most powerful and influential among them, had promised his loyal support to the British101 and gave shelter to fugitive British women and children in his fort.102 In July he addressed a circular letter to the other Talukdars urging them to support the British.103 According to Gubbins, he sent his brother
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on a mission to Nana and at the same time carried on correspondence with the British. Early in September he encamped with a large army near Lakhnau, but did not take any part in the siege. He was still negotiating with the British, and the besieged at Lakhnau did not know whether he was a friend or foe. Dr. Sen observes: "His presence, therefore, was a source of anxiety as well as hope. If he chose to join the rebels the handful of Englishmen and Indians in the Residency would be simply crushed by overwhelming numbers. On the other hand, if he decided to help them the garrison could reasonably expect to hold their own and beat back the enemy." But Man Singh did not definitely commit himself to either party though he professed allegiance to the English; he evidently desired to be on good terms with both the belligerents until, at least, he could be more sure about the possible result. After the failure of Havelock to relieve Lakhnau, Man Singh joined the mutineers, probably because he thought that theirs was the winning cause. In September and October, 1857, he was fighting against the English; in February, 1858, he remained entirely neutral; and in July he actively joined the British. Lieut. Majendie justly observes that "it is very difficult to specify the number of occasions when Man Singh changed sides."

Man Singh and his brother Ramdin Singh, who followed his example, may be regarded as typical of the Talukdar class as a whole, so far as their mentality, if not activity, is concerned. Most of them had been stirred up to action by the withdrawal of the British officers, and made haste to recover the lands they had lost. Then they played a waiting game, looking for the winning horse. A few of them backed the right horse, but most backed the wrong one. The second retreat of Havelock in August seemed to them to be decisive, and many of them, now for the first time, sent their levies to Lakhnau. Whether they were at first really as friendly and loyal to the British, as Innes supposed, may be doubted, but they certainly were not actuated by any special love for, or allegiance to their country or its defunct royal house. There were a few exceptions, here and there, but there is no evidence that their number was large. Reference may be made to some of them in order to give the other side of the picture. Hanumant Singh of Dharupur gave shelter to the British fugitives from Salone in his fort. When Captain Barrow, Deputy Commissioner of Salone, on the eve of his departure a fortnight later, expressed a hope that the Raja would help the British in suppressing rebellion, he replied: "Sahib, your countrymen came into this country and drove out our king. You sent your officers round the districts to examine the
titles to the estates. At one blow you took from me lands which from
time immemorial had been in my family. I submitted. Suddenly
misfortune fell upon you. The people of the land rose against you.
You came to me whom you had despoiled. I have saved you. But
now,—now I march at the head of my retainers to Lakhnau to try
and drive you from the country”. 108 “The true-hearted Rajput, how-
ever, did not fight his new masters”. 109

Hanumant Singh was dispossessed of the greater part of his pro-
erty and he had a sore grievance against the British. Rana Beni
Madho of Sankarpore, who lost 119 out of 223 villages, also said
that he fought against the English for his country, but it is not
difficult to imagine where his real grievance lay. Muhammad Hasan
was the Nazim of Gonda under the Nawab of Awadh. But, as
mentioned above, 110 he established himself as Nazim of Gorakh-
pur. He also established his influence at Basti, the neighbouring
district, though his authority was challenged both by the Raja
of Bansi and the Rani of Basti. 111 He did not come into promi-
nence in the early phases of the revolt, but held out against the
British till the end. What invests his revolt with importance is the
sentiment he expressed in November, 1858, when asked by a friend
to submit and take advantage of the Queen’s Proclamation. His re-
ply is an interesting one. On the one hand he points out that the
“phraseology of the proclamation where it promises pardon of
offences is somewhat obscure and indefinite”, implying that he would
have submitted if he were sure of pardon. On the other hand, he
says that he regards himself as a servant of the King of Awadh
and would rather die “fighting for my religion and earthly
sovereign.” 112

Hanumant Singh, Beni Madho and Muhammad Hasan represent
a new class who, in addition to recovery of their landed properties
and preservation of religion, also include allegiance to the king of
Awadh among the motives which impelled them to fight. But it is
interesting to note that none of these three, though powerful and
valorous, did rally round the Begam Hazrat Mahal, and unreserved-
ly placed his resources at her disposal. None of them played
any important part in the life-and-death struggle before Lakhnau
which was to determine the fate of the revolt. 113 The position of
this centre of rebellion, even so late as the end of December, was
very frankly put by the Begam.

“...In a meeting of all the chiefs, held on 22 December, she
severely harangued the leaders and denounced them for their in-
difference. She is reported to have said: Great things were pro-
mised from the all-powerful Delhi, and my heart used to be gladden-
ed by the communications I used to receive from that city, but soon
the king has been dispossessed and his army scattered. The English
have bought over the Sikhs and Rajas, and communications
are cut off. The Nana has been vanquished, Lucknow is endangered
what is to be done? The whole army is in Lucknow, but it is
without courage. Why does it not attack Alumbaugh? Is it waiting
for the English to be reinforced and Lucknow to be surrounded?
How much longer am I to pay the sepoys for doing nothing? Answer
me now, and if fight you won’t, I shall negotiate with the English
to spare my life.

The chiefs answered: Fear not, we shall fight, for if we do not,
we shall be hanged one by one, we have that fear before our eyes.
The party swore to stick by one another and then dispersed”.

If this contemporary account may be taken to be substantially
correct, it must be regarded as of great importance. The laconic
reply of the chiefs throws welcome light on the psychology of the
rebel chiefs. They were at first content with the limited objectives
of recovering their lost lands, establishing local authority, and
achieving similar other selfish ends. It was only in the last phase,
when faced with the imminent danger of gallows, that they awoke
to a sense of responsibility to fight the English with their might.
The reference to the payment of sepoys is also an interesting
revelation.

Throughout his work Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri has waxed eloquent
over the great war of liberation in Awadh, calling forth fervent
activities of the chiefs and people. It is significant, however, that
the most important of these activities referred to by him were,
ejecting the auction-purchasers, resuming the lost lands, and estab-
lishing the personal rule within a prescribed limit. Dr. Chaudhuri
often refers to their throwing off the British yoke. But this was
already achieved by the mutiny of the sepoys, and required no
efforts on their part. So the detailed account of the activities of the
numerous chiefs in Awadh and neighbouring regions which fills
the pages of Dr. Chaudhuri’s book does not really give an impression
of a great war of liberation from the British yoke.

It is true that many influential landlords joined the revolt and
when, after reaping a rich harvest, they were brought to bay by
the returning—and avenging—English force, gave a good account
of themselves. The fight they fought, be it remembered, was for
retaining the wealth and privileges which they had unlawfully
secured, and not for gaining freedom for the whole or part of India.
When the day of reckoning came many of them fought till the last
ditch and showed skill, heroism and courage, which extort our un-
stinted admiration. In that hour of trial, they gave a dignity to their action by invoking high principles in support of their conduct. A few of them, but very few, even openly professed to fight for their king and country, but there is no evidence that even a year back they cared much for either the one or the other.

V. OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

The mutiny of the sepoys outside the areas discussed above did not lead to the revolt of the civil people on a large scale, except in a small part of Bihar, particularly the Shahabad district and the Santal Parganas, Bundelkhand and the Sagar and Narmada Districts, and the eastern fringe of the Panjab. These formed an outer circle to Awadh and Rohilkhand which constituted the central zone of the civil rebellion.

A. Bihar

The Rajput Kunwar Singh, an old man of seventy or more, played a leading part in the outbreak of 1857, and as such a correct knowledge of his antecedents and motives is of great importance. He had extensive landed estates, but they were heavily encumbered. He was a friend of the British officials, and with their help petitioned to the Board of Revenue to take up the management of his estates. This proposal, strongly recommended by two successive Commissioners of Patna, was at the last moment turned down in 1857 and Kunwar Singh found himself on the brink of bankruptcy.

According to the testimony of Tayler, the Commissioner of Patna, Kunwar Singh was all along a friend of the British, but “was afterwards driven into rebellion by the short-sightedness of the Bengal Government.” Kaye, Holmes, and Dr. Sen, the eminent historians of the Mutiny, also agree with this view. But recently an attempt has been made to prove that Kunwar Singh had “been meditating on a plan to assail British authority at least for some time on the eve of the outbreak of this movement (Mutiny of 1857) if not all along from 1845”. The only evidence that Kunwar Singh meditated rebellion as far back as 1845, is a statement by J. J. Hall that the former was suspected of being involved in the anti-British plot of 1846 at Patna. William Tayler, Commissioner of the Patna Division till August, 1857, knew all the details about it and regarded this plot as a part of a general conspiracy to destroy the English authority. He was accused, very justly, of indiscriminate arrest of Indians on mere suspicion of rebellious activities. Yet, as mentioned above, Tayler had full confidence in the loyalty and friendship of Kunwar Singh till the last. The mere suspicion of Hall cannot weigh against this evidence.
Similarly, the view that Kunwar Singh was preparing for the revolt for a long time, and even organized the mutiny of sepoys at Danapur, rests upon suspicions only and no positive evidence. Reference has been made to the reports published in the *Englishman*, a Calcutta daily.\textsuperscript{119} No more importance attaches to these than the reports made by "trustworthy agents" to various British officials to the effect that Kunwar Singh "had enjoined upon his ryots to be ready when called", "had written to two of the largest Zamindars of the Gaya district", "was collecting arms and men", "had been selected by the Danapur sepoys as their Raja", and "supplied boats to them to cross the river Son", and so on.\textsuperscript{120} It is interesting to note that such reports, not only against Kunwar Singh but against many other Zamindars of Bihar, reached Tayler, but he attached no credit to them.\textsuperscript{121} The fact that Kunwar Singh did actually revolt, is held out as convincing evidence of the truth of these reports. But it is conveniently forgotten that reports against the rest proved to be untrue. Much has been made of the report of Mr. Wake which runs as follows:

"I know that there is an idea prevalent that Kooer Singh's treason was not premeditated, but I am certain that for three months at least he was only biding his time. There is or ought to be in the commissioner's office an anonymous petition, from a man who would not come forward by me to Mr. Tayler, the late Commissioner, detailing the whole of the Baboo's plans and preparations and even the date (the 25th July) on which the Dinapur Regiments would mutiny. This was forwarded by me I think a week before the meetings and every word in it proved true."\textsuperscript{122} This report was written on 29 January, 1858, when Kunwar Singh had proved to be a formidable leader of the revolt. But the same Mr. Wake wrote a letter to the Government on July 19, 1857, in which he makes the following observation on Kunwar Singh:

"He is nominally the owner of vast estates, whilst in reality he is a ruined man, and can hardly find money to pay the interest of his debts. As long, therefore, as law and order exist, his position cannot improve: take them away, and he well knows that he would become supreme in his district. I do not think he will ever openly oppose the Government as long as he thinks that Government will stand, but I do think that, should these districts be ever the scene of a serious outbreak, he may take it into his head that it is time to strike a blow for his own interests, and his feudal influence is such as to render him exceedingly dangerous in such an event."\textsuperscript{123}

It is to be noted that on the day he wrote this letter, Wake was in possession of the "anonymous petition" on which he later
laid so much stress. Evidently he did not put much faith on it then. It is on record that on the basis of this petition the Government searched the house of Kunwar’s Arrah agent, Kaliprasad, but no incriminatory evidence was found. Mr. Wake conveniently forgot this when he wrote the report on 29 January.

An important evidence which ought to weigh most in arriving at a right conclusion about Kunwar Singh is generally ignored and therefore deserves mention in some detail. On receiving various adverse reports against Kunwar Singh, Tayler asked him to come to Patna, but he excused himself on the ground of illness. This is regarded as an evidence that he had already been meditating rebellion and therefore “tactfully avoided it”. But what is generally ignored is that Tayler, at the same time, instituted confidential enquiry about Kunwar Singh.

“On 19 July Syed Azimuddin Hussain, the deputy-collector of Arrah, was at the same time directed to scrutinise everything connected with and about Kunwar Singh and to submit a confidential report regarding it to the commissioner. Azimuddin visited him, and found him lying on bed. He pleaded extreme sickness, and added that being old and infirm he was unable to take the journey to Patna at that stage”. Azimuddin’s report was favourable to Kunwar Singh. “I could elicit nothing”, he says. “by secret enquiry which might warrant the conclusion that Kunwar was making secret preparations for a revolt. Nor was there any reason to suppose that his people were particularly disaffected”. All that he could find was that “should he raise the standard of revolt his people would follow him”. He exculpated Kunwar Singh on the ground that he made payments to his creditors in the months of May and June and did not lay by supplies of war. Azimuddin could not believe that a man who was penniless could afford to make preparations to go to war. Some persons questioned the bona fides of Azimuddin, but it should be remembered that he “gave proofs of rare fidelity to the British and was one of the besieged in the fort”.

On the whole, it is impossible to hold, on the basis of available evidence, that Kunwar Singh’s action was a premeditated one, far less that he organized the rebellion as a war of independence, or joined the mutinous sepoys in order to liberate the motherland. The most reasonable view of his conduct is that contained in Mr. Wake’s letter of July 19, quoted above. This is further supported by the statement of Nishan Singh, an able lieutenant of Kunwar Singh, who attended his leader throughout his campaign. He was at Arrah when the mutinous sepoys from Danapur reached that town. What followed is thus described by him:
"Meanwhile the rebellious sepoys of Dinapore reached Arrah and looted the town. And they threatened the servants of Kunwar Singh to bring him there or they would loot Jagdishpore (i.e. the native place of Kunwar Singh). This threat was not made in my presence and I state it according to what I have heard. Accordingly Kunwar Singh came from Jagdishpore to Arrah on the very day the sepoys had arrived at Arrah i.e. 18th Savan".  

Arrah was situated twenty-five miles west of Danapur. Tayler had warned the European residents and sent fifty of Rattray’s Sikhs to help them. They had put the house of Boyle in a state of defence. As soon as the news reached Arrah that the mutinous sepoys had crossed the Son river, the fifteen European and Eurasians, the Deputy-Collector Azimuddin, mentioned above, and the fifty Sikhs took shelter in Boyle’s house.  

On July 27 the Danapur mutineers reached Arrah and, as usual, looted the treasury and almost every bungalow, released the prisoners and burnt the civil court and many other houses. Then they attacked Boyle’s house, under the leadership of Kunwar Singh who joined them on the same day, as mentioned above. But the small besieged garrison kept up a sharp fire and forced the mutineers to retreat. The brave Sikhs stood solidly behind the European besieged, and were not moved either by an appeal to their religious and racial sentiments or by the tempting offer of Rs. 500 each as a price of desertion.  

On the 29th a detachment under Captain Dunbar, sent from Patna for the relief of the garrison at Arrah, was attacked at night when it was entering the suburbs of Arrah, and forced to retreat with heavy loss. Kunwar Singh now proclaimed himself the ruler of the country and set up his own machinery of administration. But it was shortlived. Arrah was relieved, on August 3, by Vincent Eyre, an artillery officer who was proceeding by river from Calcutta to Allahabad. With the help of some troops from Buxar he advanced towards Arrah, and was opposed by Kunwar Singh. But Eyre defeated his force at Gujrajgunj, close to Arrah, and not only relieved the garrison at Arrah, but also sacked Jagdishpur, the residential village of Kunwar Singh, after again defeating him on August 12. After this disaster Kunwar Singh proceeded with the sepoys and his own retainers towards Sasaram in the south.  

In the meantime the rebellious spirit affected the civil population in Shahabad as in Rohilkhand and Awadh. The administrative machinery set up by Kunwar Singh must have collapsed after his defeat and flight. But sporadic acts of rebellion continued on a wide scale. It was estimated that seven to ten thousand men were involved—
mostly “the war-like population of the Rajput villages headed by brave chieftains”.

“The basic feature of the rebellion in Shahabad”, says Dr. Chaudhuri, “is reflected in the wholesale destruction of European property effected by the rebels”. In particular, quite a large number of indigo factories were destroyed. This shows that the “nature of the upsurge in Shahabad” did not materially differ from that in Rohilkhand, described above. The rebellion was stiffened by the threat of “wholesale burning and destruction of all villages” by the Magistrate.\textsuperscript{130}

There was a similar upsurge in the Gaya district, in which several local leaders followed in the footsteps of those of Rohilkhand. Hyder Ali Khan of Rajgir Pargana “collected a large body of men, proclaimed himself Raja and drove away all Government servants”. Judhar Singh of Arwal also played a similar part. “He set up his own rule making grants of land and even whole villages to his followers”. Fourteen villages in Wazirgunj, 14 miles to the east of Gaya, raised the flag of independence under Kusal Singh, a ticadar of many villages. Other local leaders also proclaimed the fall of the “English raj” and prevailed upon the shop-keepers and traders not to pay their dues to the British Government.\textsuperscript{131}

There was also a wave of insurrections in Chota-Nagpur among the aboriginal tribes.\textsuperscript{132} “...The military at Hazaribagh revolted on 30 July, 1857, the Ramgarh battalion on 1 August, the infantry and artillery at Lohardaga on 2 August, and the detachment of the Ramgarh troops of Purulia on 5 August...”\textsuperscript{133}

Both Ranchi and Doranda soon fell under the control of the mutinous sepoys who, as usual, plundered the treasury and released the prisoners. Some of the Zamindars helped the mutineers, while others helped the British officials. The rebels were defeated in a severe engagement at Chatra on 4 October, 1857, in which 46 British soldiers were killed or wounded. Though, as a result of this victory, Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Purulia were re-occupied by the British, the mutiny was merged into a general rising of the civil population in Singhbhum and Palamau. There was a widespread insurrection among the Kols of Singhbhum organized by Raja Arjun Singh of Porahat and his brother. To quell this insurrection proved to be a difficult task. On one occasion a small military force led by Mr. Lushington was suddenly surrounded by about four thousand infuriated Kols and met with a serious reverse, about the middle of January, 1858. “Not an officer escaped unhurt”, says the official report. An attack made by the British troops on Chakradharpur, the residence of the Porahat Raja, was also repulsed, but it was soon
captured after the arrival of reinforcements. Though repeatedly defeated, the Kols bravely resisted till the capture of the Raja of Parnhat in 1859.

The Cheros and Khairwars of Palamau rose under the leadership of two brothers, Pitambar Sahi and Nilambar (or Lilambar) Sahi. They attacked Chainpur, 2 miles distant from Daltonganj, on 21 October, 1857, but were repulsed by its owner Raghubir Dayal Singh, who gave protection to Lieutenant Graham and his small force when, by the end of November, "the whole country appeared to be up in arms", according to an official report. It was a difficult job to put down the revolt in an area of 40 miles square of intractable hills and dense jungles,—so dense that an enemy might be within a few hundred yards of troops without being discovered. It also appears that the rebels were promised help from Kunwar Singh and his brother, though it is not clear whether any such help was actually received. After several skirmishes, the British force attacked the fort of Palamau and captured it on 21 January, 1858. Though several leaders were captured, Pitambar and Nilambar evaded arrest. As measures of retaliation "their villages were destroyed, their goods and cattle seized, and their estates confiscated to the State". But the insurrection continued throughout 1858 with unabated vigour, marked by plunder of villages and guerilla fights with British forces. Nilambar Sahi and Pitambar Sahi were ultimately captured and hanged, and the revolt was completely subdued in 1859.

Sambalpur was the scene of a prolonged and protracted rebellion under the leadership of Surendra Sai. Reference has been made above to the disturbances created by him as his right to the throne was not recognized by the British Government, and his imprisonment for life for committing a murder in 1839. While he was serving the sentence, Sambalpur was annexed to the British Dominions by Lord Dalhousie in accordance with the Doctrine of Lapse. As in other localities, newly annexed, British administration was signalised by an enormous increase in the amount of land revenue and the resumption of Inam lands. According to official figures the revenue, amounting to Rs. 8,800 before the annexation, was raised to Rs. 74,000 after the introduction of British administration. It caused profound distress and discontent, and when the mutineers released Surendra Sai along with other prisoners in the Ranchi jail, he raised the banner of revolt which was joined by all and sundry. "From the close of 1857 to the commencement of 1862 he remained in a state of war, ran a parallel government of his own and kept the whole country in a dangerous state of excitement". He sur-
rendered in 1862 and the disturbances ceased for the time being. But they were renewed within a few years as will be related later.

The rebellion in these hilly regions was no doubt of a 'popular character', but there was nothing new in it. They had similarly rebelled many times before,\textsuperscript{134} and in several cases, as in Sambalpur, the outbreaks in 1857 were mere legacies of the past. To describe it as "a people's war fought with the passions roused up by deeply stirred political sentiment",\textsuperscript{135} can only be regarded as hyperbole. They differed in degree, but not in kind, from the previous disturbances noted above.

B. The Panjäb

In the Panjäb the Government successfully worked upon the traditional hostility between the Muslims and the Sikhs, and the Panjäbis and Hindusthanis. The important chiefs, like those of Patiala, Nabha, and Jhind, stood firmly by the British. The Panjäb therefore remained mostly unaffected by outbreaks of civil population, save in the eastern fringe, contiguous to Delhi and Rohilkhand.

In the Western Panjäb the civil population remained unaffected, a notable exception being the rising of the Kharrals under Ahmad Khan in Multan on September 17. Joined by several other tribes on the Ravi, he fought several engagements in one of which he was killed. At one time the insurrection took a serious turn, but was thoroughly crushed in November.\textsuperscript{136}

In the Eastern Panjäb the mutineers were joined by the civil population in several places and the mutinies almost partook the character of those of Rohilkhand. At Hissar and Hansi a large number of Europeans and Christians were killed, and a petty official put himself at the head of the administration under the style Shahzada. At Sirsa the rising took a communal turn. The Hindus fled, and the Muslims plundered not only the treasury but also the town and the neighbouring villages. The predatory tribes of the locality took full advantage of the situation, and the Gujars, Ranghars, Pachhadas, Bhattias etc. looted all alike. Some Jath villages in Karnal district refused to pay revenue. They drove out the Government officials, burnt Government buildings, and committed robberies and murders. They had little respect for the mutineers and freely robbed the sepoys who were proceeding to Delhi. In some cases even the ordinary villagers helped the Government against the sepoys. There were also outbreaks at Rohtak and Rewari, but these were easily suppressed.\textsuperscript{137}

1. See Ch. XIII.
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5. Ibid, 75.
8. SB-II, 76-7.
11. See above, pp. 18-19.
13. Metcalfe, 83. The fact is admitted by Ahsanulla himself (TB, 252). As such things must have been treated as confidential, Jiwanlal’s knowledge of it shows that he had very reliable and important source of information.
14. For all these disgraceful intrigues, cf. Majumdar, 120-24; PIHRC, XXXIII, Part II, p. 115; Sen, 94-7.
15. Jiwanlal Munshi and Mainuddin were in Delhi during the siege of 1857, and wrote accounts of what they saw and heard during these eventful months. Their accounts, originally written in Persian, were translated into English by C. T. Metcalfe, and published under the title “Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi”.

Jiwanlal Munshi was an officer attached to the household of Bahadur Shah. A writer by caste and profession, he recorded, in the form of a diary, each day’s events as they happened. He employed some men to secure information from all quarters. He was undoubtedly pro-British, and may have acted as their spy or secret agent. But that does not take away from the authentic character of the news recorded (and probably supplied to the British) by him. His profession required the supply of accurate information, and Jiwanlal had ample means to secure it (see fn. 13 above). Many of his important statements have been corroborated by independent evidence. Mr. S. A. A. Rizvi has argued that no value should be attached to the account of Jiwanlal as he was a British spy (Freedom, UP, p. xix). The profession of a spy is no doubt an ignoble one, but that does not take away the value of information supplied by him, so far at least as the facts, not views, are concerned.

Mainuddin Hasan Khan was a Police Officer in Delhi before the Mutiny, and, though not disloyal to the English, transferred his service to Bahadur Shah when he was declared King. In view of his official position he must have possessed an intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in Delhi.

17. Ibid, 86.
20. Ibid, 121.
21. Ibid, 166.
22. Ibid.
24. Ibid, 228.
28. Metcalfe, 86.
29. Ibid, 87.
31. See fn., 15 above.
32. Metcalfe, 65.
33. Ibid, 92.
34. Ibid, 100.
35. Ibid, 100-1.
36. Ibid, 104-5.
37. Ibid, 93.
38. TB, 165-6.
39. See p. 506.
40. Sen, 91.
41. For a detailed account of negotiations of Bahadur Shah with the Indian chiefs,
which came to nothing, cf. Ahsanullah's evidence (TB, 263) and Majumdar, 124-27.

42. Jiwanlal writes: "News was received that the mutineers were intimidating the city people, and that 200 troopers, having plundered a quantity of money, had deserted and gone off to their homes, and had in turn been attacked by the Gujjars and plundered" (Metcalf, 92). A few other instances of this character will be referred to later, in course of the narrative of the mutiny in other localities.

43. Italics mine.

44. India Office MSS.

45. Metcalfe, 98.


47. India Office MSS.

48. Sen, 85.

49. Sen, 85-6.

50. Metcalfe, 91.

51. Ibid, 95.

52. TB, 270.

53. Metcalfe, 68.

54. Sen, 84.

55. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, a Bengali, employed as a clerk in the Cavalry Department at Bareilly at the time. He has written a book, in Bengali, narrating in detail the incidents of the mutiny at Bareilly. For his account of the beginning of the mutiny at Bareilly see Sen, 345-7.


57. Sen, 349.


58. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, Bidrohe Bangali (in Bengali), pp. 146, 206, 211, 215-6, 343, 459. The official Narrative (p. 374) also refers to the anti-Bengali feelings of Khan Bahadur's Government. As regards the communal tension mentioned by Bandyopadhyaya, the following statement in the official Narrative (p. 378) corroborates it: "Nana arrived at Bareilly on 25 March and remained there till the end of April (1858). He found that the rebellion had assumed an entirely Muhammadan character; he made some attempts to put a stop to cow-killing in the city and also to induce the Hindus to join the Mahomedans in opposing the English, but without success." Another statement in the same official Narrative may also be quoted in this connection: "After the fall of Lucknow Firoz Shah returned to Bareilly with about 1,000 men, and then by a sudden attack got possession of Moradabad for one day; he at once issued orders for a tax on all Hindus. Next day, being attacked by the troops of the Nawab of Rampur he fled to Bareilly (Narrative, I, 378).


62. SB-II, 110; Malleson, II, 520.


64. Referred to in this chapter as Narrative.


66. SB-II, 115.


68. Ibid, 92 ff.

69. Ibid, 64 ff.

70. Ibid, 521 ff.; SB-II, 209.

71. SB-III, 209-10.


73. Majumdar, 240. For the documents cf BPP, LXXVI, Part I, p. 52, III-B and pp. 53-4, III-D.

74. Holmes, 496.

75. SB-II, 223.

76. Ibid, 207.

77. Ibid, 215.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid, 207.

80. Ibid, 226.

81. Ibid, 223.
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83. Narrative, p. 357.
84. SB-II, 109.
85. Ibid, 108; Italics mine.
86. Malleson, II. 530.
86a. Sen, 409.
87. Cf. Raikes, 156 ff., quoted in Majumdar, 219; also Sen, 410-11, where other views are quoted.
88. See above, pp. 309-10.
89. Holmes, 259-60; Forrest-I, I. 217.
90. Holmes, 523, f.n., 1.
90a. For a list of the rebel Talukdars, cf. SB-II. 121 ff., 129 ff., 305 ff.
91. Narrative, 53 ff. Muhammad Hasan is usually referred to as ex-Nazim of Gorakhpur. In the earlier stages of the mutiny he should, more properly, be called ex-Nazim of Gonda, the post he held under the Nawab of Awadh. (Cf. Forbes's letter quoted in SB-II, 306).
92. Holmes, 265.
93. The account is based on Holmes, 273 ff. The date of the first general assault is given as 21 July by Malleson (I. 449).
94. SB-II, 127, 135.
95. Holmes, 297.
96. Ibid, 271; For a list of the Talukdars who joined the besieging force at Lakhnau, cf. SB-II. 130-31.
97. Holmes has elaborately discussed the question in Appendix S, pp. 624 ff.
98. Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri has discussed the question at length in Appendix C(SB-II, 309 ff.).
99. For the statements referred to above, cf. the two Appendices of Holmes and Chaudhuri referred to in the two preceding footnotes.
100. SB-II, 119.
101. Sen, 197.
102. Ibid, 187.
103. Ibid, 224.
104. Gubbins, 156.
107. For the names of a few Talukdars who were at first loyal to the British, but later turned against them, cf. SB-II, 120, 121, f.n. 2. Dr. Chaudhuri is constrained to admit that “the widespread idea that the British rule was fast disappearing induced many chiefs like the rajas of Nagar and Satsi and the zamindars of Amorah to take up arms” (p. 145).
108. Gubbins, 158.
109. So comments Dr. Sen (p. 188). Whether Hanumant Singh deserves the epithet ‘true-hearted’ will perhaps be questioned by many. But according to some official records (Secret Letters from India, India Office, London, Vol. 163, pp. 403-5) Hanumant Singh fought against the British at Lakhnau in October (Cf. SB-II. 139, 141, 143, 310).
110. See above, p. 538.
111. SB-II, 145,147. The Rani of Basti was the niece of Kunwar Singh, the great leader of the rebellion in Bihar. The fact that she challenged the authority of Muhammad Hasan shows that there was hardly any conception of common cause even among the leading figures.
112. The whole correspondence between Muhammad Hasan and Khair-ud-din has been given by Sen (App. II, pp. 385-91). Hasan’s letter contains noble sentiments and presents a refreshing contrast to the cringing appeal of Nana, for mercy, to the British Government, in similar circumstances. But it would be a mistake to elevate him to the status of a national hero. The following passage in his letter is significant: “This rebellion arose solely out of the annihilation of Oude. Had that not taken place there would have been no bloodshed, because no defection of the chiefs, who would have on the contrary, inflicted chastisement on the mutinous sepoys.” (p. 388). But one may legitimately doubt whether the allegiance or loyalty to the king of Awadh was the sole cause or even the main spring of his action. He did not join the mutineers of Awadh at the beginning. Nor does it appear that he flocked to the standard of Begum Hazrat Mahal and placed his resources at her service.

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113. The name of none of these is included in the list, given by Gubbins, of the rebel leaders who distinguished themselves by the most active and unprovoked hostility in the early phase of the war. Dr. Chaudhuri also does not refer to their activities in connection with the siege of Lakhnau (Gubbins, 487; SB-II. 131-2).


115. That is, when the King of Awadh was deposed.

116. The age of Kunwar Singh is given as about 70 by Dr. Sen (p. 255) and 75 in the *Freedom*, Bihar, I. 27.

117. For detailed discussion, cf. Majumdar, 166 ff.; Sen 255 ff.


119. SB-II. 167.


121. Sen, 257.

122. SB-II. 170.

123. Kaye-I. III. 100, f.n.

124. SB-II, 170, f.n., 1.

125. Neither this, nor the evidence of Nishan Singh is mentioned in the big three-volume official publication, *Freedom*, Bihar.


127. *Patna University Journal*, VIII (1954). Dr. Sen has satisfactorily explained how Kunwar Singh could join the mutinous sepoys at Arrah with his retainers at a very short notice.

128. Sen, 255; Holmes puts the total number as 68 (p. 191).

129. The resistance of the small garrison to the force led by Kunwar Singh is one of the most thrilling episodes in the history of the Mutiny, perhaps not ranking below the heroic defence of Lakhnau. The failure to reduce the garrison reflects the greatest discredit on the valour and resourcefulness of the sepoys, and shows, in striking contrast, those very qualities so remarkably displayed by the handful of Englishmen.

130. SB-II, 173.


132. For a detailed account of the rebellions, cf. SB-II, 183 ff.; Freedom, Bihar. 50 ff.; Journal of the University of Bihar, II. 78.

133. SB-II, 183.

133a. Sambalpur DG, 26-7; SB-II. 196 ff.

133b. SB-II. 196.

134. See above, pp. 444, 454 ff.

135. SB-II. 191.

136. Sen, 343-4.

137. SB-II. 235 ff.