CHAPTER XVIII
PORTUGUESE CHURCHES

The Bandel Convent, Hooghly

Barely twenty miles away from Calcutta lies this grey and hoary building—the Augustinian Convent and Church of Bandel, Hooghly.* It is the oldest Christian Convent and Church in Bengal, being founded in 1599, the year when Manoel Tavares in virtue of a farman of Akbar established the great Portuguese settlement in Hooghly.† According to Manrique the foundation stone was laid on the day of the feast of our Lady of Assumption, that is on the 15th of August.‡ The Convent was dedicated to the Augustinian saint, St. Nicholas of Tolentino and the attached Church to

* There are some vague ideas current as to whether the Bandel Convent was a Nunnery or a Convent or a Church. I have been told by the present Prior of the Bandel Convent that some visitors inquire after the nuns in the belief that a Convent always harbours Nuns. The Bandel Convent was really a monastery of Friars, called convento in Portuguese, and a Church dedicated to O. L. of Rosary was attached to it. At present there are no friars in the Convent but one priest who ministers there, is still called a Prior because he is the head of the Convent at the same time that he is the Vicar of the Church.

† That the Convent was founded about the same year that Tavares founded the Settlement of Hooghly, i.e in 1599, is asserted by Manrique. Cf. Fr. Cardon’s Trans. of the Itinerario in Bengal Past and Present 1916, Vol. XII, p. 290. Above the eastern gate of the Convent there is a copper plate with the inscription: Founded 1599; and on the western gate there is a stone bearing the same date. D. G. Crawford (A brief History of the Hughli District) and L. S. S. O’Malley, (Hooghly Gazetteer) evidently relying upon him, state that this stone was the key-stone of the original building. The former says it was set up at the eastern (should be western) gate when the Convent was re-built by Gomez de Soto in 1660. Whether this stone is the key-stone or not there is no doubt the Convent was founded in 1599.

‡ “On the day of the triumphant entrance into heaven of the Heavenly Empress.” Vide Itinerario, Fr. Cardon’s Trans. Bengal Past and Present, at supra.
Our Lady of Rosary. This Convent was, however, burnt down during the siege of Hooghly in 1632, by the Portuguese themselves while retreating.* For a time all commercial hopes of the Portuguese merchants and the religious enterprises of the Portuguese Missionaries seemed destined to be at an end in Hooghly. But the Portuguese managed to obtain a new farman from Shāh Jahān and returned to Hooghly before July of the following year.†

After their return the Portuguese established their settlement not on the site of the former one in Hooghly but a little to the north, the present Bandel. Hence the present Convent cannot be standing on the same site as the original one. Fr. Hosten, however, supposes that the Augustinians and the Jesuits must have insisted on getting back the sites of their former establishments for “it would have saved the expense of buying new ground, and would have made it possible to utilize the foundations and old materials of the earlier buildings; moreover the sanctity attaching to the spot where their Church had stood and where many of the faithful and of the Missionaries must have been buried made it desirable that they should return to the same place.”‡ These suppositions do not warrant any definite conclusion and for an

* Vide Fr. Cabral’s letter from Ceylon, Fr. Besse’s Trans. in the Catholic Herald of India, 27 Feb. 1918, p. 166.

† The popular tradition recorded in various modern writings is that the farman was obtained as a consequence of a miracle worked by Frei João de Cruz in Agra before Shāh Jahān. The question has been discussed on p. 145 et seq. It remains to be said that George Germain (Vide Addenda II) remarks that the Portuguese returned to Hooghly through the influence of Frei da Cruz but makes no mention of the miracle. He asserts that the farman was signed by Shāh Jahān. That twenty Portuguese persons returned to Hooghly in 1633 with the farman of Shāh Jahān is also evident from John Poulle’s (Powell’s) letter written from Harishpur, Orissa, to Cartwright of Balasore on July 17, 1633. Cf. p. 141 et seq.

archaeologist there is a vast field within the narrow limits of Hooghly.

The date of re-erection of the Convent forms a controversial point. In an inscription to John Gomes de Soto, which Asiaticus published in 1803, but is no longer existing, it was mentioned that the Convent of Bandel was rebuilt by him or his relatives, the last words of the inscription being ANNO 1661.* Fr. Hosten remarks that from this inscription the Rev. Long,† appears to have concluded that the Church was built in 1660. Crawford,‡ O'Malley § and others have repeated the Rev. Long's statement. However, from this inscription it is plain to a Portuguese archaeologist that the date does not signify the date of the erection of the Church but the date when the inscription was put. It is more likely that the Rev. Long's date 1660 is a misprint for 1640, which was the date assigned by Asiaticus to the re-erection of the Church, and with which the Rev. Long was acquainted. Else, he would have given the date 1661 according to the inscription. Asiaticus does not give any evidence in support of his date but it may be taken as correct for he had good access to all the documents of the Church. Yet, it is strange that the Augustinians took seven (1633-1640) years

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* Asiaticus, Ecclesiastical Chronology and Historical Sketches respecting Bengal, Calcutta, 1803. The inscription was the following:—

**ESTE CARNERO MANDÓV FASER IOM GOM**
**ES.DE SOTO E SUA MOLLER PERA ELES E S**
**EVS DESSENDENTÉ**

**S ONDE ÊSTAM SVAS FILHAS SOGRA E CV NHADO. OS QVAIS MA NDARAM FAZER EST**

**A IGREJA ANNO 1661.**

Translation:—Jom (Joam or João) Gomes de Soto and his wife ordered to make for them and their descendants this tomb, where lie their daughters, mother-in-law and brother-in-law, who ordered to build this Church: Year 1661.


‡ *A Brief History of the Hooghly District*, p. 8.

§ *Hooghly Gazetteer*, p. 265.
before they re-erected their Convent, considering they were in such favourable circumstances and that their chief ambition must have been to have their temple again.

The farman of Shāh Jahān, which allowed the Portuguese to return to Hooghly in 1633 and which was confirmed in 1646 by Shāh Shuja, granted the Prior of Bandel the right of administration of justice to its inhabitants in all offences excepting those punishable with death.* This right the Prior exercised till 1797, when the English Government took it away though the Prior of Bandel protested to Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, that since the time of the grant of 777 bighas of land, he had exercised civil and criminal jurisdiction over the raiyats of the Bandel lands; that this grant was confirmed in 1646 by a new farman; that the Bandel lands were distinct and were not included in the Sarkar of Sātgāon; that a letter from William Cowper, dated 17th July, 1787, showed that the Collector was prohibited from exercising any civil or criminal jurisdiction over the inhabitants of Bandel. The Government decided that no claims could be admitted, but that there was no objection to the Prior’s “continuing to arbitrate and settle the disputes of the Christian inhabitants of Bandel as heretofore, whenever it may be agreeable to the parties to refer to him for the purpose,” but that “the inhabitants of Bandel are subject to the jurisdiction of the Courts equally with other inhabitants of the Company’s provinces”.† Even till the death of the last Augustinian friar, Frei José de S. Agostinho Gomes in 1869, the Prior was like a petty Governor, having a police force of his own. At present the Convent has none of the privileges which the Mughal Government

* For other privileges granted by the farman see p. 143 et seq.
† G. Toyneae, Sketch of the Administration of the Hooghly District, p. 6.
had given to it and out of the 777 bighas of land there remain only 380 bighas yielding a rent of Rs. 1,240 per annum the rest being lost through carelessness and litigations.*

Bowrey remarks that in 1676 the Portuguese pulled down their Church and began to re-build it, but that when it was one-fourth finished the Moors stopped the work only for the sake of demanding a sum of money.† Now Bowrey is not definite at all where this Church was, but L. S. S. O'Malley and Fr. Hosten believe it must have been in Hooghly. The story itself is doubtful and Sir R. C. Temple, acknowledges that he could not find any confirmation either in the printed or Manuscript records of the period available.‡ Fr. Hosten argues that the Church referred to by Bowrey was the Bandel Convent built by John Gomes de Soto in 1640.§ The statement of Bowrey as referring to the Augustinian Convant, is at best a conjecture. If it be a fact, then it is probable, as Fr. Hosten supposes, that the old Church must have been too small to accommodate the vast number of Portuguese who flocked to Hooghly from their other places taken by the Dutch, and that it was necessary by 1676 to replace it by a new one.

When Siraj-ud-daula marched on Hooghly in 1756 and levied a toll of Rs. 5000 on the Portuguese he pillaged the Bandel Convent and ransacked all documents. Hence the Convent possesses

* Toynbee op. cit. p. 6 and O’ Malley, Hooghly Gazetteer p. 267.
** Frei J. So de S. Nicolau said in 1785 that more than two-thirds of the 777 bighas were lost, which means that less than 260 bighas remained to the Convent. In 1784 George Germain said that only 270 bighas were remaining, Vide Addenda II.
† Countries round the Bay of Bengal, pp. 194-95.
‡ Temple’s note to Bowrey’s Countries Round the Bay of Bengal p. 195.
no registers previous to that date. He did not however destroy
the building. During the taking of Hooghly by the English
in 1757, the Bandel Convent was a scene of military activities.
On Wednesday morning, 12th January, 1757, Lieutenants
Morgan, Lutwicch and Hayter, 150 seamen and 10 boats
landed at the Bandel Convent, where they were joined by
Captain (afterwards Sir) Eyre Coote with 100 battalion men
and 100 sepoys. From the tower of the Church the English
made a survey and discovered that three to four thousand
of the enemy were encamped two miles away. Bandel was
full of provisions for Siraj-ud-daula's army. The English
drew up "abreast of the Portuguese Church", hoping to
give battle but the enemy avoided it, till the Nawab's camp
was attacked.

In 1897 another accident befell the convent. The memor-
able earthquake of that year completely destroyed the tower
that was at the south entrance of the Church; the statue of Our
Lady of Happy Voyage was badly damaged and the walls of
the Church and the Convent were considerably cracked. The
Prior, Father P. M. da Silva, collected a subscription of
Rs. 1000 and with "wonderful rapidity" erected a new tower
with architectural improvements. The Church, the Augustinian
Hall, the cloisters and the Statue of Our Lady of Happy
Voyage were quickly repaired, and there this wonderful Church
stands after the vicissitudes of more than four centuries, as
stately and admirable as it ever was.

What scenes has this Church not witnessed since its
original foundation in 1599! Who could read in those

* Vide Remarks on board His Majesty's ship Bridgewater in Hill's
Coote, entry Jan. 12th, Ibid. p. 43.

† The English must have drawn up along the southern side of the
Bandel Convent, as they saw a forest to the right.

‡ Indo-European Correspondence, Calcutta, June 23, Sep. 6 and
Nov. 17, 1897.
mouldering stones around that Church the tale of so many races, of so many nations that strove for supremacy in that narrow area! The Muhammadan, the Afghan and the Mughal power, pomp and pride are all buried in the dust around it. The efforts of the Danes, the French, the Flemish, the Dutch and the Prussians who all sailed up the Hooghly with their goods are all a matter of history. And where is the Portuguese power that once was so great? It has long vanished but that old antiquity-aureoled Church is a living monument to the martial valour and the religious zeal of Portugal.

Thousands of people of every race and caste, flock to this Convent with costly offerings, fulfilling their vows and praying for more favours. Wonderful stories are told of the miracles worked in that Church by Our Lady of Happy Voyage, whose very statue is associated, in public faith with miraculous facts. Let a tradition be recorded, which though unhistorical in some points counts so much in the piety and faith of hundreds of pilgrims that resort there every year. It is supposed that the statue of Our Lady of Happy Voyage was in the Military Chapel attached to the Portuguese factory destroyed in the siege of Hooghly. A pious Portuguese merchant who had special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary caught this statue and jumped into the river in order to save it from the sack of the Muhammadans, but was heard of no more. When the Bandel Church was being rebuilt (how long after?) the river Hooghly burst into a furious storm and one night Frei João da Cruz who was roused from his sleep heard the voice of the Portuguese merchant who had gone down in the river with the statue crying out: _Salve! Salve, a rossa Senhora de Boa Viagem que deu nos esta victoria. Levante, levante, oh padre e orai por todos nos!_  

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*Salve! Salve, a rossa Senhora de Boa Viagem que deu nos esta victoria. Levante, levante, oh padre e orai por todos nos!*
The holy friar thought it was a dream and slept again. But
next morning some pagans were bustling around the Church
shouting that Guru Mad (Blessed Virgin Mary) had come. Frei
João da Cruz found the statue on the bank of the river near the
Church where a ghat still visible was built in commemoration
of the event. This image with a pompous ceremony was
placed on the tower facing the river and was afterwards
transferred to the place it now occupies. This is not all.

Every visitor (and it may be said, by the way, Sir John
Woodburn, Sir Andrew Fraser, Sir Edward Baker, Lord and
Lady Minto with a big party and many other distinguished
persons have been visitors) is struck by the sight of a mast
standing before the main door in the piazza of the Church. This
mast is supposed to be the offering of a Portuguese captain,
whose ship was miraculously saved by a vow to Our Lady
of Happy Voyage. The tradition is that this occurred during
the life time of Frei João da Cruz who died in 1638 and Lt.
Col. Crawford says that the mast was offered in 1655 by a
Portuguese Captain as a thank-offering for a miraculous escape
from storm.

The Rev. Long asserted in 1848, that there was a Nunnery
in Bandel.† Taking this on trust, others have repeated the
statement. Asiaticus had, in fact, suggested in 1803 or rather insinuated in a flippant
language that the Bandel Convent itself was a mixed
convent of Friars and Nuns. "When I had gratified my
curiosity," he writes "in examining the Convent, Imagination
pointed to me sequestered Nymphs in the cloysters: I sought
what Fancy represented but alas! I sought in vain:—No
speaking eye—no panting bosom—no graceful form appeared
to rivet my soul to Bandel? Pure Holy, but solitary Bandell—

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* A Brief History of the Hughli District, p. 11.
† The Portuguese in North India, Cal. Rev. 1846, Vol. V. P. 260.
I wished to have imbibed religious admonitions from the rosy lips of Beauty—How strongly impressed must they have been when delivered in a Cloyster!"* There are no records yet found in the archives of Goa or Mylapore referring to the erection of a Nunnery in Bandel. Fr. Hosten S. J. who has investigated the question very deeply, says that a Nunnery was probably contemplated in Hooghly.† Mannuci refers in 1707 to an Augustinian hospice with a sisterhood in Mylapore, Madras, ‡ and it would not be strange if something of the kind was attempted at Hooghly, which was under the jurisdiction of Mylapore. In 1714 the Augustinians of Bandel did actually declare before Don F. Laines, Ordinary of Mylapore, that a widow named Izabel de Jesus was a professed Religious of their Order and claimed exemption for her from his authority. They confessed, however, that she had never lived in a monastery, such being the distance from Bengal to Goa (sic); but they contended that this was not an essential condition. They said they had the power to admit her to the profession, and that she depended from the nearest convent, St. Monica's of Goa.§ It is beyond doubt that there was no Nunnery in Bandel. Izabel de Jesus may, however, be said, though not quite strictly, to have been the first nun in Bengal.

The power of creating nuns which the Augustinian friars claimed though there was no canonical nunnery, added probably to other scandals, has given rise to many allegations against their morality. It is easily conceivable that the Augustinian friars, having no proper discipline and having a Superior who was far away in Mylapore had for a time degenerated in their morals. Captain

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* Ecclesiastical Chronology, etc., p. 48.
† The Catholic Examiner, 1913, p. 349.
‡ Storia, de Mogor, Vol. IV. p. 68.
§ The Cath. Exam. ut supra.
Alexander Hamilton describing Bandel, as he saw it in about 1710, writes: "The Bandel at present deals in no Sort of Commodities, but what are in Request at the Court of Venus, and they have a Church where the Owners of such Goods and Merchandize are to be met with, and the Buyer may be conducted to proper Shops, where the Commodities may be seen and felt, and a priest to be Security for the Soundness of the Goods."* These remarks have served to inflame the religious prejudices of writers like the Rev. Long and prompted Asiaticus to write: "The lascivious damsels of this once gay city slumber under its ruins. When Pomp withdrew from thence, Debauchery vanished. Poverty now stalks over the ground where once beguiling Priests led the unwary stranger in the morning to the altar of God and in the evening to the chamber of riot: regardless of their sacerdotal robes here Priests for gold were the Factors of Pleasure."† It is possible that there were serious abuses in Bandel on the part of the priests but it is clear that imagination has been unduly strained in the descriptions and generalized statements about Bandel, even if they could be applied in 1710. Writers who visited Bandel shortly before A. Hamilton and after him, have nothing to say about the immorality of the priests of Bandel. Charpentier Cossigny who has used bitter Voltairian sarcasm against the Bandel Church which he visited in 1798 (7th year of the Republic) has nothing to say about the immorality of Bandel and only describes it as a poverty-ridden place, with a few huts and barracks of the Portuguese.‡ It is possible, however that during his time debauchery had yielded place to poverty. But yet the very next year Sir Robert Chambers, Judge of the Supreme Court, went to spend the vacation at the "pleasant

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Eccl. Chron., p. 44.
and healthy settlement of Bandel."* He calls the Bandel Church a huge barn (grange), describes the Portuguese descendants as spending their lives in begging, stealing and saying Paternosters (Lord's Prayer); the Prior of Bandel, whom he calls the Governor of the town, as employing his days and nights in drinking and fighting with his subordinates, and gives a sarcastic account of the Procession of the Lady of Bandel, which he saw being attended by Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Muhammadans, Hindus and others.

The Bandel Church is administered by the Portuguese Mission in Bengal which maintains there a Prior. It is under the Diocese of Mylapore. Four solemnities are held every year in the Church:—The feast of Our Lady of Happy Voyage in the month of May; the feast of Our Lady of Rosary in November; the feast of St. Augustine in August and the feast of Domingo da Cruz on the first Sunday in Lent (February or March), when a solemn procession is held representing the journey of Jesus Christ to the Calvary.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL.

Murghihatta, Calcutta.

Though this Church is no longer under the Portuguese Mission, its history deserves a place in this chapter as it was the chief and the oldest Portuguese Church in Calcutta, and as its past is entirely or almost entirely associated with the Portuguese. It was referred to by Cottineau de Kloguen as the "richest in all India" and considering the legacies that have been kept for it, is still one of the richest in India.†

* Calcutta Gazette, 3rd September, 1799.
† C. de Kloguen, An Historical Sketch of Goa, p. 123.
Its origin dates back to 1690, when Job Charnock gave
the Roman Catholics who followed him to Calcutta a plot of

ground at the site of the Old Fort ten

bighas in area for the purpose of erecting

a Chapel.* The Augustinians at once erected a temporary

chapel of wooden and mud walls covering it with mats

and straw. This little temple can be said to be the oldest place

in Calcutta, where Christian worship was performed. In 1693,

however, the Chapel was pulled down by order of Sir John

Goldsborough who arrived at Sūtanūti on the 12th of August

of that year as Commissary-General and Chief Governor of

the Company's settlements. His immediate attempts were

directed towards correcting the abuses of the Company. In

a long account which he has kept, he states that he found the

merchants and factors of the Company marrying black wives

who were Roman Catholics and that they were too much

under the influence of the Augustinian friars. He, therefore,

turned all friars out of Sūtanūti and ordered the destruction

of the Chapel which he called the “Mass-house.”† After the

lapse of hardly three months, Sir John Goldsborough died

in Sūtanūti and ceased to be worried over the Company's

abuses and the Augustinian “Mass-houses.”

The Portuguese friars replaced the Chapel in 1700 by a

brick-built one, further away from their old Chapel, in

Murghihatta where now the Cathedral Church stands.‡

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* Rev. Long, Portuguese in North India, Cal. Rev. 1846, Vol. V.
† Hyde, Parochial Annals of Bengal, p. 21; Cf. also Wilson's Early
‡ How this quarter came to be known as Murghihatta (Murghi, a
  fowl; hat, a bazar) is explained in the Census of India 1901, vol. VIII,
  pt. 1 p. 80. “With the growth of a heterogeneous population came the
  necessity of allotting particular areas to particular races. Thus shortly
  after the English came, the Portuguese who were the only people who
  kept fowls, the rest of the inhabitants being Hindus to whom fowls are
  forbidden, were allotted a quarter which came to be designated as
  Murghihatta and the Armenians a tola or division which was named
  Armanitola.”
The expenses of the erection were defrayed by Mrs. Margaret Tench whose tomb may be seen in the Churchyard, and by other Roman Catholics who contributed to it. In 1720 the Chapel was enlarged by Mrs. Sebastian Shaw under the direction of the Vicar Frei Francisco d'Assumpção. This Chapel was however ransacked and the records destroyed in 1756 during the sack of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-daula. The Chapel escaped destruction.

On the return of the English to Calcutta in 1757 they took possession of the Church and made use of it for Protestant worship for four years, and Roman Catholic religion was interdicted in the Church. The Council in Fort William reported this action to the Court of Directors at Home in its letter dated January 31st, 1757. The letter runs: “The inconvenience we experienced at the siege of Calcutta from the prodigious numbers of Portuguese women who were admitted for security into the Fort, the very little or no service which that race of people are of to the settlement, added to the prospect we had of a war with France in which case we had reason to suppose they would refuse to take up arms against an enemy of their own religion (should we be attacked) induced us upon our return to interdict the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion and to forbid the residence of their priests in our bounds”.*

The high-handedness of the Governor met with the disapproval of the Court of Directors. In the letter of the 3rd March 1758, they said “we cannot approve of your so generally interdicting the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion within the whole bounds, as such a step may be attended with many inconveniences. But if any priest is troublesome or suspected of doing anything prejudicial to our

affairs, we would have such an one immediately dismissed and not permitted to reside any where within the bounds. As to Fort William itself it will be a prudent measure so long as the French War subsists not to suffer any person professing the Roman Catholic religion, priests or others, to reside therein, and this you are strictly to observe".*

After Frei Caitano de Madre de Deus, the Vicar, was expelled from the Church, Rev. Richard Cobbe officiated as the Chaplain and conducted the English services. He was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Northcotte who put the Church in repairs. He having complained to the Council that "it be entered and Captain Brohier do put the church and churchyard in proper repair; and that the Secretary do acquaint Mr. Northcotte he may appoint his own clerk, sexton and undertaker."† Rev. Henry Butler was next appointed Chaplain by Governor Drake. It was this chaplain who, in the ministry of the Murghihatta Church, first entertained the Rev. John Zachary Kiernander, the founder of the Old Mission Church. Rev. Butler seems to have done some more repairs to the Church for on the 10th September he wrote to the Council asking that, "as the roof of the Church was much decayed and in danger of falling, Mr. Plaisted may be ordered to survey and examine the same."‡ Soon after, two other Missionaries Rev. John Moore and John Cape were sent out from England.

Meanwhile the English community discontented with the religious affairs as they were going on, and possibly resenting that the services should be held in a misappropriated Church, appealed to the Council for a new Church. On the 24th March

† Hyde, op. cit., p. 117.
‡ Hyde, op. cit., p. 120.
1760 the Council decided: "Taking into consideration the unwholesomeness and dampness, of the church now in use, as well as the injustice of detaining it from the Portuguese—Ordered the surveyor to examine the remains of the gateway in the Old Fort, and report to us what it will cost to put it in tolerable repair and make it fit for a chapel till such time as the chapel designed to be erected."* On July 17th the surveyor having reported to the Council that the Chapel ordered to be built was ready "agreed that the Church belonging to the Portuguese be restored to them and that the secretary do advise Padre Caitan the head priest, of our resolution." Thus the Portuguese got back the Murghihatta Church. The Chapel which the English built was called St. John's Chapel, the predecessor of St. John's Church.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Catholic Community in Calcutta was growing in numbers and a need was felt for a bigger Church which could accommodate the Catholic population.

Two philanthropic brothers, Joseph and Louis Barretto, initiated the movement and at a general meeting of the Catholics it was decided to build the Church which is now known as the Murghihatta Church. The first stone of the Church was laid on the 12th March, 1797, by the Augustinian Vicar Frei Joaquim de Santa Rita assisted by his wardens Louis Barretto, Gabriel Vrignon, Antonio de Coito and Diogo Pereira. On the 21st of November, it was consecrated by the Rev. Francisco de Santa Maria and dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary. The architect was Thomas Syars Driver who having died before completion, the work was carried on by Monsieur Hemo of the Chief Engineer's office. The building cost 90,000 Sicca rupees, 30,000 of which were collected from the revenues of the Church and the remain-

* Hyde op. cit., p. 120.
ing from subscriptions which having fallen short, the Barrettos made up the deficiencies.

Many endowments have been made to this Church especially by the Barrettoes, Count John Lackersteen and two ladies, Mrs. Rita Griffiths and Mrs. Philadelphia Bonfield. Over some legacies kept for this Church and over the management of its affairs many lawsuits have taken place in the Supreme Court of Judicature, Calcutta, and Joseph Baretto as a warden of the Church took active part in some of them.

On either side of the high altar of the Cathedral are the tomb-stones to the memory of Mrs. M. Tench and Mrs. E. Shaw. There are many monuments in the Church some of them dating as early as 1712. The tomb stones of most of the members of the Barretto family are in this Church. Archbishop Patrick Carew and Archbishop Goethals have also been buried in the Church.

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF DOLOURS

Boitakhana, Calcutta

The Portuguese, their descendants and their converts first settled in Murghihatta and then dispersed to other parts of Calcutta, as the population increased and especially when the Maharatta ditch was filled up and the Circular Road was constructed off Boitakhana.* Along with the English and the

* Boitakhana was so called from a tree, under which pedestrians were wont to sit on account of the shady rest it afforded. It was a pipal tree, standing at the junction of Bow Bazar Street and Lower Circular Road. Captain Alexander Hamilton (New Acct. of East Indies) wrote that Job Charnock chose Calcutta on account of a large shady tree and in Tekchand Thakur's Alaley Gharer Duild (Ch. 7) it is mentioned: “Job Charnock was often passing and repassing by the place of Bothukhaná; there was an immense tree there, and sitting at the foot of it, he would rest and smoke tobacco; at that place many merchants would meet. He had so much affection for the shade of that tree that he resolved to fix his factory there.” Cf. Bengal Past and Present Vol. VIII, 1914, p. 137.
English descendants they occupied the locality between Dharamtala and Bow Bazar Streets. This locality was once the fashionable quarter of Calcutta and was called the European quarter of Calcutta. The Catholics who settled near Boitakhana, felt the necessity of having another Church for divine worship as the Murghihatta Church was far away from them. Louis Barretto was the first to take steps to found a Church near Boitakhana. In 1804 he obtained permission from the Marquis of Wellesley to do so, but he died soon after and the project was not carried out. The idea was taken up by an Indian Christian lady, Mrs. Grace Elizabeth, who with the help of four Portuguese gentlemen Diogo Pereira, Jesoph Pereira, Philip Leal and Charles Cornelius, founded the Church of Our Lady of Dolours at Boitakhana. The foundation stone was laid on the 13th June, 1809. The foundress bought the plot of ground (2 bighas, 4 cottas and 12 chattacks) from an Indian firm of goldsmiths; she offered in addition Rs. 20,000 for building expenses and then again 10,000 as a fund for defraying current expenses and lastly 2,000 more on completion of the work. The Church was consecrated by the Rev. Frei Francisco dos Prazeres on the 30th June, 1810, and dedicated to Nossa Senhora de Dores. The foundress made over the Church to the Portuguese Augustinian Mission but reserved for herself the right of presentation of the Vicar. The first Vicar was an Augustinian named Frei Antonio de Padua. This Church still belongs to the Portuguese Mission and is under the diocese of Mylapore. During the Padroado question attempts were made by the English Mission to take over the Church. Bishop St. Leger interdicted the Church in 1835, and the wardens of the Murghihatta Church erected a Chapel for religious worship in the burial ground at Boitakhana. By virtue of the Concordat between the Holy See and the King of Portugal in 1887, this Church came under the Jurisdiction of the Portuguese Bishop of Mylapore.
PORTUGUESE CHURCHES

CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Dharamtala Street, Calcutta

This Church was founded by Mrs. Pascoa Barreto e Souza, the grand-mother of Sir Walter de Souza, in fulfilment of a vow. Louis de Souza had in 1821 been tried by the Supreme Court for causing grievous hurt to a Mr. Joseph Gonsalves, by shooting at him in a buggy, when returning one night from the Old Chowringhi Theatre—not wounding him in a duel as is generally believed—and Mrs. de Souza made a vow that should her son be acquitted she would build and endow a Church on her own land. The foundation stone was laid by the foundress on the 12th February 1832, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. Frei Simão de Conceição, then Vicar of the Boitakhana Church. On Easter Sunday, the 30th March 1834, Frei A. Antonio Assumpção, Provisor of the Bishop of Mylapore, consecrated it, dedicating it to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. One Mrs. Sheriff erected the building and all the costs including those of the purchase of the ground, organ bells, vestments, ornaments, furniture and the erection of a cemetery in Entally for the poor, amounted to more than 200,000 sicas rupees which Mrs. Pascoa Barreto e Souza paid.

The Church is now under the ministration of the Jesuit Mission and not of the Portuguese Mission.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS, MARIA, JOSE

Chinsura

This is one of the three Churches that belong to the Portuguese Mission in Western Bengal, the other two being the Bandel Convent and the Boitakhana Church. The funds for the erection of the Church were left by Mrs. Sebastian Shaw on her demise—the same lady who in 1720 enlarged the
Murghihatta Church. The Chapel was built in 1740, but according to Asiaticus, there was a Chapel of mats and straw in Chinsura before 1740. The two-storied building attached to the Chapel was called the Hermitage of the Infant Jesus as the Augustinian friars were dwelling there. The Church is under the care of the Prior of Bandel.

**CHURCH OF SANTA MADRE DE DEUS**

**Serampore**

This Church owes its existence to the Barretto Family. It is a beautiful edifice situated on the Strand. It was consecrated in 1783 and dedicated to Santa Madre de Deus. (Holy Mother of God). The erection of the Church cost Rs. 14,000, part of which (Rs. 600) was contributed by the Hon'ble Colonel Bie, the Danish Governor of that Settlement. It is no longer under the Portuguese Mission.

**ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH**

**Dum-Dum**

When Dum-Dum became the head-quarters of an artillery regiment, the Catholic soldiers had no means of attending divine service except in a hut which a pious Indian lady, Mrs. Moran, lent to a Portuguese priest for the purpose of saying mass on Sundays. This humble practise continued till 1822, when Joseph Barretto learning the state of affairs offered to erect a Chapel at his own expense and obtained from the Government a plot of ground for the purpose. Major-General Hardwick, the commandant of the artillery regiment, was unwilling that Barretto alone should bear the cost and proposed that the regiment itself should raise the necessary funds. He himself subscribed Rs. 100, but though even the Protestant soldiers subscribed, the amount realised was only Rs 3,000. The
Catholics of Calcutta, among whom Joseph Barretto was most conspicuous, raised a subscription and Rs. 11,000 was realised. The foundation stone was laid in Feb. 1822, and Major General Hardwick and the regimental officers attended the ceremony. The erection of the Chapel had not extended far, when the architect, Mr. Goss managed to run away with a considerable part of the funds. Another subscription was raised in Calcuttā and the work was completed. The Chapel was consecrated on Good Friday in 1823 and dedicated to St. Patrick. The Rev. Misquita was appointed the first Chaplain. This Chapel now belongs to the Jesuit Mission.

**CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINO**

*Nagori, Dacca*

The Church of Nagori had its origin in the Mission of San Nicolau de Tolentino, that first started in Coxabanga (?) in the lands of the King of Busna (Faridpur ?), and then spread all over Eastern Bengal.* In the conversion of Eastern Bengal Christians, the figure of a layman, D. Antonio de Rozario the son of the King of Busna, stands pre-eminent above all others. In 1663 he was taken prisoner by the Maghs and carried to Arakan, where an Augustinian Friar, Manoel de Rozario, bought him and tried to convert him in vain, until St. Anthony is said to have miraculously appeared to him in a dream and beckoned him to embrace the Christian religion. Having thus become a Christian, he began to convert others with a fervour and zeal, that eclipses that of the Missionaries themselves. He composed dialogues and canticles, argued and preached in public about the faiths of the Christian religion, extended the field of his Mission to the whole of Eastern

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Bengal, and is credited with having performed miracles and converted thirty to forty thousand souls.

According to the Madras Catholic Directory (1912) the Church of Nagori was built in 1664. But according to the Relation which the Father Provincial of the Congregation of St. Augustine of Goa, Frei Ambrosio de Santo Agostinho, gave to the Viceroy of Portuguese India in 1750, the Aldea (village) of Nagori was not acquired until 1695, when Frei Luis dos Anjos bought it, because the Christians of the place were subjected to vexations by other landlords. Nagori, eventually became the head of the Mission of St. Nicholas of Tolentino in Eastern Bengal and the Church of Nagori was dedicated to the patron of the Mission, St. Nicholas of Tolentino.

From Frei Ambrosio de Santo Agostinho's Relation, it appears that the Church of Nagori in 1750 was a big thatched building with mud walls. There were in that year in Nagori 600 Christians grown to an age of confession, besides a large number of children. There was a school attached to the Church, which was frequented by 150 boys. Hence Nagori was known as a Rectorate. Besides, there were about 9,000 occult Christians who, though really Christians, would not openly avow their religion for fear of losing their caste. Frei Ambrosio also mentions that the Mission counted among its members 1500 public Christians, 8,000 occult ones and 9,733 Christians who dressed like Europeans.

The Church was accidentally burnt almost completely on the 8th of April, 1881. The present Nagori Church was built in 1888 on a site about 150 yards away from the place where the old one stood. Its foundations were blessed on the 24th August, 1885, the Church itself being consecrated on the 22nd February, 1889. Its parishioners number 2,185. It has a confraternity of the Apostleship of Prayer. It maintains a dispensary in which free medical advice and medicines are given. There are many schools under its direction—St. Nicholas'
School for boys; St. Joseph's School for boys and girls at Culon; St. Anthony's School for boys and girls at Doripara; St. Anthony's Convent School for girls; Sunday School for boys; Sunday School for girls; Eleven Cathecism Schools in eleven villages. It also maintains Homes for the poor and the destitute such as St. Joseph's Cathecumenate for women St. Anthony's Cathecumenate for women and a Home for widows.

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF ROSARY

Tesgaon, Dacca

This Church, dedicated to our Lady of Rosary, was built in 1679. The Madras Catholic Directory however gives the date of erection as 1714. This is evidently wrong as there is an inscription in the Church bearing the date 1706 and as early as 1682 its parishioners are recorded to have been 700, exclusive of the Portuguese and their families.* The Church was re-built in 1779, in its present form. The stone floor is full of inscriptions to the memory of those who are buried beneath it. The present congregation of the Church is 309. The Church was for a time the mother Church of many Churches in Bengal including those of Nagori and Chandernagore.

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF ROSARY

Hasnabad, Dacca

The original Church of Hasnabad was built in 1777, but it was broken down and the present one erected in 1888. In some old papers of the Church it is recorded that the first Missionary came to Hasnabad as early as 300 years ago. The Zemindar of the place, enraged at his success amongst his

tenants, ordered the priest to be bound hand and foot and thrown into a well. But the priest having survived this treatment, the Zemindar taken by surprize made him the grant of land for erecting a Church.* It is scarcely possible to make out how much truth and how much fiction lie in such traditions. The Catholic population is 3,146. The Church maintains St. John’s School for boys; Our Lady of Rosary’s School for girls, Sunday School for boys and girls. It has a Confraternity and three Sodalities.

**CHURCH OF THE HOLY GHOST**

Tuital, Dacca

The Church of Tuital was built in 1894 and is comparatively modern. The villages of Old Tuital, New Tuital and Sonabazar were under the religious ministration of the Church of Hosnabād. But as these villages were distant from the Church of Hosnabād it was difficult both for the people to attend their religious duties and for the parish priest of Hosnabād to minister to their religious welfare. Hence by the decree of the 25th May 1894, the Bishop of Mylapore, Dom Henrique de Silva had the Church of Tuital erected.

Its parishioners number 920 and it maintains St. Thomas’ School for boys, Our Lady of Lourdes’ School for girls and a Sunday School for boys and girls.

**CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF PIETY**

Dacca

The Church was built in 1815. Its parishioners number 125. It has a Confraternity of the Apostleship of prayer.

* Allen, *Dacca Gazetteer*, p. 69.
PORTUGUESE CHURCHES

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF GUIDANCE

Shibpur, Bakarganj District

The Portuguese Missionaries acquired the taluk of Shibpur in 1764, the lease being granted to Frey Raphael dos Anjos on or previous to the 9th Phalgun 1171 B. S. by Rajah Raj Ballab Sein. In the decision of Sadr Diwani Adâlat, dated 18th April 1856, it is mentioned that the lease was granted by Rajah Pitambar Singh (Sein), Zemindar of Arangabad, who was the grandson of Rajah Raj Ballab. But Beveridge remarks that the date of the lease bears out the tradition that it was Rajah Raj Ballab who granted the lease. Pitambar Sein only confirmed the lease. "The tradition is," says Beveridge,* "that he (Raj Ballab) wanted to coerce his tenantry, who were inclined to be disobedient to him, and that he judged that Christians would be well fitted for the purpose, as mere contact with them would be sufficient to destroy the ryots' caste and that the latter would therefore gladly come to terms in order to avoid the visits of the Christian servants. He accordingly applied to the Portuguese Mission at Bandel for some Christians, and four were sent to him. They afterwards applied to him for a priest, in order to perform their religious ceremonies. He procured one from Bandel and assigned him four pieces of land or howalas for his maintenance. The four Christians were put in charge of the property, but in consequence of their dissensions the howalas were formed into a taluq, and made over to the priest, in trust for the mission." This priest was Frei Raphael dos Anjos. The taluk at present yields an income of about Rs. 800.

The original Church in Shibpur was built by one Pedro Gonsalves, but in 1823 Manoel de Silva pulled it down and

constructed the present enlarged building with the funds left by his father Domingo de Silva.

Till 1836 the Portuguese Mission administered the Church in peace, but in that year, disputes arose between the Portuguese and English Missions. St. Leger, the Vicar Apostolic of Bengal, attempted to bring the Church under his jurisdiction and dismissed the Vicar, Frey José das Neves, appointing Ignatius Xavier Mascarenhas to be the incumbent in Shibpur. Beveridge supposes that the parishioners of Shibpur, owing to their quarrels with the Vicar, placed themselves under the protection of Dr. St. Leger.* The Augustinians sued for recovery of their Church and lands and for twenty-one years litigation followed. Longman, the Judge of Bākarganj, being a Roman Catholic, desired that the suit be transferred to the court of the Judge of the Twenty-four Pargannas. This Judge, Robert Torrens, as well as the Sadr Diwani Adâlat decided the suit in favour of the Portuguese priests who in 1857 not only recovered the possession of their Church and lands but obtained a decree for mesne profits.

The parishioners of the Church number a thousand. It maintains a dispensary where free medical advice and medicines are given and has under it, St. Anthony's School for boys, St. Joseph's School for girls and a Sunday School for boys and girls.

* The District of Bākarganj, p. 108.
ADDENDA

Some Plants Introduced by the Portuguese in Bengal*

The Portuguese not only brought to India new kind of goods, a new language and new creeds, but also added very much to the flora of India. The following is a brief list of some of the plants which Bengal owe to the Portuguese. Some of them were introduced directly and others found their way to Bengal from other parts of India where the Portuguese had introduced them. The list is, however, far from being complete as there are many plants which were not known in India before the arrival of the Portuguese and may have been introduced by them though there is no record of the fact. On the other hand, a few of the plants mentioned below have a doubtful origin and it is only by botanical and not written evidence that it is ascertained that they owe their introduction in India to the Portuguese. Though in this line of enquiry much has been done, much has still to be done. Not only did the Portuguese bring new plants to India but they carried Indian plants to Europe, America, and Africa. Some kind of canes carried by the Portuguese from Bengal and used in the Portuguese army were called Bengalas and still the word is a common application to any sort of cane.

1. Achras Sapota (Sapotaceae)—Beng. Sapota, English, Sapodilla plum.

This tree originally a native of America is cultivated in Bengal and on the Western Coast, its fruit being in great demand in the markets of Calcutta and Bombay. It is sold in Calcutta under the name of Mongosteen which it resembles.

2. Agave Americana (Amaryllidea)—Beng. Jungli or bilati ānānāś, bānskēora, bilāti pāt, koyan incorrectly called murga murji. English, The American aloe, the century plant, the carata.

The plant was originally a native of America, and is supposed to have been introduced in India by the Portuguese. Vide Watt, Dict Econ. Prod. of India.

* The chief works consulted in the preparation of this list of plants, are Garcia d'Orta’s Colloquios dos Simples e Drogas e Cousas Medicinaes da India; Watt’s The Dictionary of the Economical Products of India, Dymock’s (and others) Pharmacographia Indica, G. Dalgado’s, Flora de Goa and Savantvadi. I am also indebted to the articles on the subject of Mariano de Saldanha in the Oriente Portugues, Nova Goa, vols. V and VI, 1908, and 1909.

This plant was introduced from Brazil by the Portuguese (Dymock *Pharm. Ind.*). It is a common creeper in Indian gardens.


This plant originally introduced from South America is well established in the forests of Chittagong and all over the coast forests of India and Ceylon. Its name *Bādām-i-farangi* among the Muhammadans and *Boa Farangi* in Amboyna (Rumphius) point to its being introduced by the Portuguese.


Introduced in Bengal by the Portuguese in 1594 from Brazil. This fruit was daily served at the table of Akbar each costing 4 *dams* (¼ of a rúpee).


The plant is well naturalized in Bengal. General Cunningham held that there is an exact representation of the plant in the Bhārut Scriptures and also in the Scriptures of Ajanta caves, indicating that the plant was cultivated in India long before the Portuguese came. Watt, however, states that botanical evidence is against Cunningham's contention. For other details, *vide* Watt and Hobson-Jobson s. v. Custard-Apple.


Introduced from Africa and America. Dymock thinks that the Ground nut reached India through China. Its Konkani name *Mosbinchim biknam* shows that in Western India the Portuguese must have introduced it from Moçambique, Africa.


The plant is common in Bengal and in fact in the whole of India. Valued for its oil and medicinal properties. “Its use as an external application in conjunctivitis was probably introduced into this country with the plant by the Portuguese”, Dymock, *Pharm. Ind.*

10. *Artemisia Sieversiana* (*Composita*)—The plant forms one of
the kinds of Afsantin sold in Indian Bazars. The plants "were no doubt introduced into the country by the Portuguese", Dymock, Pharm. Ind.


Introduced by the Portuguese in India probably from Moluccas. Cf. Dymock Pharm. Ind. Completely naturalized in India. In the courtyard of the Portuguese Church of Bandel there can be seen some of these plants, having been long ago planted by the friars.

12. Averrhoa Carambola (Geraniaceae)—Eng. Carambola tree. Beng. Kāmrāngā, kamarak. In the Sunderbunds the wood of the plant is used for building purposes and for furniture. Its apples are very palatable when stewed.


Cultivated all over India and especially in Bengal Orissa and Madras. It is one of the chief condiments in India dietary. The Portuguese brought the plant to India from Pernambuco according to Clusius (quoted by Dymock).


This common plant in India was not known before the Portuguese came and Atkinson (quoted by Watt) affirms it was introduced by the Portuguese.

15. Cereus Pentagonalis (Cactæ)—English, Cactus.

This plant was probably introduced from Brazil by the Portuguese. Cf. G. Dalgado, Flora de Goa e Savantvadi.


The controversy about the introduction of the orange-tree in India is a long one. It is admitted by most writers that there were orange trees in India as well as in Portugal long before the Portuguese came to India. It is more likely that the Portuguese introduced the plant in Europe. Watt says that the names Portogalls (Ital.) Protokhal (Alb.) and Portogal (Kurdish) "indicate the intimate relation which the Portuguese bore to the diffusion of the plant." There is no doubt the Portuguese spread the orange trees in India even though they were to be found before the arrival of the Portuguese.

This plant cannot be said to have been introduced by the Portuguese in Bengal for it seems to be a native of Chittagong but they spread it in other parts of India especially, as Dymock thinks, in Bombay.

According to G. d'Orta the Portuguese brought these plants to India from Malacca.

This tree was brought to India from Malaca by the Portuguese. G. d'Orta says he himself planted some in his own garden.

In Bengal the plant does not grow so well as in Burma and Madras. The plant unknown to India before the arrival of the Portuguese came from Malaca and G. d'Orta says he had planted some of them which shows the Portuguese were the first to introduce them in India.

Of this variety of Indigo plant, Watt says, "It nowhere exists in a wild state in India and was probably introduced during the period of Portuguese ascendancy in the Western and Southern Presidencies."

All forms of sweet potato are not native of India but have been introduce from Africa or Brazil probably by the Portuguese. Watt remarks that the Batatas mentioned by Linschoten were a form of *Dioscorea* (Yams).

"The drug appears to have been first introduce into India by the Portuguese......Flückiger and Hanbury's researches have traced its introduction into Europe to the Portuguese as far back as 1671." (Dymock *Pharm. Ind.*)

This plant is said to have been introduced from Brazil by the Portuguese", Dymock *Pharm. Ind.*

"The plant appears to have been introduced by the Portuguese from Brazil", Dymock, *Pharm. Ind.*

"Five varieties of this plant with red, white, yellow, red and white, and red and yellow flowers were introduced from the West Indies in 1596 and must have been carried by the Portuguese to the East shortly afterwards, as the plant is said to have been introduced into Persia in the reign of Shah Abbas the first and was established on the Malabar Coast in the time of Van Rheede," Dymock Pharm. Ind.


From the Mauisir-i-ralumi and the Darashikohi we learn that Tobacco was introduced into the Deccan by the Portuguese about A. H. 914 (A. D. 1508) and that it began to be smoked about 1605 towards the end of the reign of Sultán Jaláleddeen Akbar." Dymock, Pharm. Ind. Watt also admits that the Portuguese introduced the Tobacco plant in India.


"It is most probable that it was introduced by the Portuguese", Watt. "This plant is a native of Mexico and Central America, and was introduced into India by the Portuguese, doubtless with the object of feeding the cochineal insect upon it, but it is uncertain whether they ever carried out their intention." Dymock, Pharm. Ind.


The shrub is abundant in Eastern Bengal, Sylhet and the Garo and Khasia hills. Garcia d'Orta says that the plant was first introduced by the Portuguese into Goa from China about 1535. Dymock adds "The Portuguese however, appear to have lost no time in carrying it to their factories in Persia, as it was mentioned, a few years after its introduction into Goa, by Mir Imad-ed-din Mahmud of Shiraz Mirza Kazi of Yezd and Mir Muhamad Hashim of Teheran."


"It appears to have been introduced into India by the Portuguese from Brazil, as it is usually planted in the churchyards of the native christians in order that it may deck the graves with its white deciduous flowers, which are produced almost all the year round." Dymock Pharm. Ind. C. T. Peters says that the plant is known as Dalana phula in Northern Bengal, where its milky juice has been found to be an effectual purgative (Quoted by Watt)

The guava-tree which is common in Bengal as everywhere in India, was introduced by the Portuguese from America (Royle). Cf. Watt Dict. of Econ. Prod.

32. **Spilanthes Acmella** (Composite)—Eng. **Pars-cress**.
This plant cultivated thoughout India is “supposed to have been introduced into India from Brazil by the Portuguese” Dymock Pharm. Ind.

33. **Strychnos Ignatii** (Loganiaceae)—Eng. **Nux-vomica or Strychnine tree**. Beng. **Kuchilá thalikesur**.
This plant very valuable for preparation of strychnine was introduced in India by the Portuguese Jesuit Missionaries Dymock Pharm. Ind. The plant is rather rare in Bengal, but common in Madras and Tenasserim.

34. **Tagetes Erecta** (Composite)—Eng. The **French and African marigolds**. Beng.—**Genda**.
“Rojia the name current in Western India perhaps denotes the introduction of the plant by the Portuguese with whom it appears to represent the **Rosa do ouro** or golden rosa, which the Pope usually blesses at Mass on Sunday in Lent” Dymock Pharm. Ind.

35. **Zea Mays** (Gramineæ)—Eng. **Maize, Indian corn**. Beng. **Janar, bhutta, Jonár**.
It is probable that this important plant was introduced in India by the Portuguese. Cf. Watt’s lengthy discussion (Dict. of Econ. Prod.)

II

**Appeal of a Portuguese from Calcutta to Queen D. Maria I. of Portugal (1784)**

I give below a translation of an important document which was found by J. E. de Souza Vellozo in the archives of the great archæologist Filippe Nery Xavier in Goa, and was registered in one of the volumes in the office of the Ouvidor of the City of Santo Nome de Deus in Macau. This document is published by Mr. Souza Velloso in O Oriente Português, Nova Goa, 1906, Vol. 111 pp. 129-134. It is an appeal made to Dona Maria I, Queen of Portugal, by a Portuguese from Calcutta on the 31st of December 1784, regarding the rights and possessions of the Portuguese nation in Bandel, Hooghly. (For the attempts of the Portuguese Government to recover Bandel, Vide p. 148 et seq.)
[P. 129] Your Majesty!

With due and most profound respect, your most obedient vassal appeals to your Majesty, representing through your Chamber of Commerce, the possessions and privileges which the Mughals of Delhi, conceded to the Portuguese nation in Bengal, and which are now forgotten; and [showing] how by obtaining them considerable benefit might result to the commerce of the vassals of your Majesty, and how these might be exempted from the burden which weighs on them, as they are obliged to deal in commerce with the English [nation] in their port of Calcutta, if your Majesty causes to examine through your Chamber of Commerce what I propose in my letter, so as to grant it according to your Royal pleasure (agrado). I wish that this little demonstration may affirm (comprove) before your Majesty my submission and obedience and respect, which with the greatest credit and honour of the faithful, humble and obedient vassal he professes to your Majesty.

Calcutta 31st of December 1784—George Germain.

[P. 130.] Knowing through a long experience the trade of the whole of India and particularly the disadvantages which, through their commercial non-equality, the Portuguese are labouring under in Calcutta because they do not know their ancient possessions in Bengal I resolve, through my love for my country and nation, to expose through this narrative, what these possessions are.

The Portuguese possessed in the year 1632 by means of a farman of the Mogor i.e. the Mughal Emperor on the borders of the river Hooghly in Bengal above Chinsura, the Dutch factory, the lands of Hooghly (Ugoly) which they peopled and called the city of Hooghly and [also possessed] the Bandel with 777 bighas of land contiguous and in a square, containing the villages of Christians, Hindus and Moors. They enjoyed through these possessions various immunities, exemptions, faculties privileges and different parvanas, also conceded by the Mogor, such as of tobacco areca and salt.

At this time the Mogor maintained a seraglio in the city of Hooghly and the Europeans who were there under one Correa the last Captain-inchief* infringed upon the liberty of this seraglio and without attention or satisfaction, they continued in this behaviour, till at last the Mogor scandalized, sent troops from Agra, which rushed on the city of Hooghly and Bandel and put to the sword all the Europeans and Christians, who resisted, and the remaining they took prisoner before the Mogor.

* According to Fr. Cabral the last Captain of the Portuguese in Hooghly was Manoel d’Azavedo. Vide Chap. XII.
With them (prisoners) went Frei João da Cruz, Religious of St. Augustine and Vicar in Hooghly. This man was of an exemplary life and habits and of an affable behaviour and at his instance the Mogor pardoned all the Portuguese and conceded liberty to the Portuguese to return to Bandel. He confirmed the possession of 777 bighas of land conceding them the same immunities, exemptions, faculties and privileges as before, by a new farman signed by his own hand in 1633, only with the reservation that they should not convert the Moors to Christianity, and punish with death the subjects of the land without handing them over for the purpose, to the Faujdar at Hooghly, of the [P. 131] Nawab of Bengal, to whom only the right of such knowledge belonged.

According to this, the Portuguese re-established themselves in the Bandel and as the Europeans (European Portuguese) went on dying, and there was no more attention paid to it (conditions of re-establishment) the Augustinians who had there a Parochial Church which they called a Convent, took charge of the land and of the Christians, who still are sub-ministered by the Prior. He and the other Religious, thinking they were masters of the possessions, lost the farman of the Mogor as I shall presently tell, and after the English Company took possession of Bengal, and govern (now) with the title of Nawab, they (the English Company) arranged with the Prior and made him remain content with keeping for him in Bandel only 270 bighas of land,* telling that this was for the oil of the lamps, and gave him a document (papel) for this.

The Priors subjected themselves to this, I do not know why, when other European nations which were in Bengal, at this time, did not suffer anything, neither the English usurped their factories; and the 60 bighas of land which each of them have, they maintain in virtue of the respective farmans of the Mughal Emperor, their ports being protected and their commerce being indisputable.

The Dutch then extended their factories to Patna on account of opium which they export, prohibiting this trade, especially to the English in their ports in Asia.

The French imitated them in commerce and both of these nations with their meagre (tenues) possessions to negotiate in the land, without privileges, exemptions and prerogatives (regalias) as those of the Portuguese nation, always gave trouble to the English after they (the English) possessed Bengal.

The farman of Mogor was lost by Frei José d'Apresentação in the year 1740 when he was prior of Bandel and the reason was this: An

* Vide p. 232.
Englishman whose name I do not know, happened to die. This man was rich, brought there all his wealth and possessions and died without a will and heirs. In such matters the Nawab considering himself inheritor in places under his jurisdiction, the Faujdar inferred that it was Bandel, and consequently took possession of what belonged to the Englishman.

The Prior being frightened, applied to the Nawab to give satisfaction through one Antonio George, native christian, who was a favourite of the Nawab of Cuttack (Cataque). This Nawab was at this time Nawab of Bengal, to whom the Prior sent the daran through the said Antonio George, instead of a copy. The Nawab in view of the daran at once ordered the Faujdar of Hooghly to deliver, as he indeed did, all the goods of the Englishman to the Prior. But Antonio George refused to give it back and then died in his place near Dacca, the daran remaining in the possession of his family which denied it. There is a man, sixty years old, in Hooghly, named Ignacio Correa, who they say is a natural descendant of a European named Correa, the last Captain-in-chief of Hooghly, who has in his possession various parvanas of the powers and the privileges which the Mughals granted to the Portuguese.

In the Convent of Bandel also, there are various papers of immunities, exemptions and privileges conceded by the Mughals to the Portuguese, which the Priests do not understand being in Persian and if they had understood, they would know their value (soberido se lhes fasia conta). The privilege of salt, according to the minutest (bem particular) information which I can have on everything, was sold by a Religious to an American for ten thousand rupees, who utilized it as long as he could till the English arrogated to themselves this contract.

And the rights of tobacco, and areca nut are also forgotten, though they may be among the papers of the Convent and among the ones of Ignacio Correa.

This well shows how all the papers are scattered.

It is however the politics and the custom of the Mughals to keep always a general register in their court, in which everything is registered without failing (sem falencia), besides many others (registros) in all its dominions; there are near Hooghly certain bramhins of authority, who keep one of these registers [p. 133] with great care, so that the English might not destroy it, which they sometimes fear (atrafaalha) very much and in it can be found all the information which is wanted. And there is no public or even private success (successful event) that may take place among the English which does not appear in
the gazettes which are scattered almost always from the court of Delhi in Calcutta in the Persian language and thus one can infer that all the grants of the Mughals to the Portuguese are registered in all these registers and in the general register, which shall serve for all times whenever any document (peda) may be wanting.

Considering that all these possessions and privileges (titulos) can be recovered, even though they are in a notable oblivion, provided that this is ordered and that there are faculties (disposições) for it, [and the fact of] there being no person with power and authority who may take cognizance of every thing, using caution and precaution with all, particularly, with the Religious [Priests] the investigation will be more arduous; but I shall do what I can to take copies of the originals, titles, faculties privileges, if I succeed in getting them from the Religious when I see this raises no suspicion; for if it is raised they would deny and burn all the papers, before there is one who can seize them by force, and compel them to give all satisfaction which may be necessary.

Thus foreseeing all these circumstances, if I manage to get the originals so as to copy them in Persian and in Portuguese, I shall send them at the first occasion to the Chamber of Commerce in order to lay them before Your Majesty; but I cannot guarantee this, as I am only a private individual in these matters, which depend upon the facility (faculty?) of the Religious. But as the possessions and rights of the Portuguese nation in Bengal are for such a long time consigned to oblivion through the fault of the Priors of Bandel, who accommodated themselves to [the will of] the English without informing the Governor of Goa, [in spite of] having the farman and the other papers and titles at this time, which the Mogor never so far revolted and which still less the English had dared to infringe, it seems, with all due [P. 134] respect to be necessary that the commerce (commercial men) above all should implore the benign favour and grace of your Majesty, so that being pleased (servindo-se) to grant it, you may order your Government to interfere in the matter before the Mogor and that the latter may in attention to the distinguished request, renew by a new farman the ancient possessions, immunities, exemptions, faculties and privileges, by referring to its general register of all these concessions, if any papers or titles be wanting, with more faculties for whatever more may be considered to be necessary to obtain, according to the proposal of the Plenipotentiary who may be entrusted with the orders of the Estate in this respect.

( Done in ) Calcutta on the 31st of December 1784.

[Signed] GEORGE GERMAIN
HENRY LOUIS VIVIAN DEROZIO.
III

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio

A Luso-Indian Poet

It is a memorable fact in the history of the Luso-Indians that, in general, they have never attained to any literary or scientific merit. From the surrounding gloom, there emerges, however, one illustrious and brilliant name, worthy to be inscribed in the Pantheon of the World’s Poets—Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, who blazed in the skies of the realms of poetry like a meteor and as quickly disappeared. An account of his life is a record of the achievements of only 23 years of existence. Yet this brief span of life sheds an undying lustre on the whole Luso-Indian community.

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, the son of Francis Derozio was born in 1809. The house in which he was born is still in existence. It is a large two storied building in Lower Circular Road facing the new St. Teresa’s Roman Catholic Church. This house is distinctly shown as “Mr. Derozio’s house” in Major J. A. Schalch’s Plan of Calcutta and its Environs (1825). That Henry Derozio was a Luso-Indian is beyond doubt because his grand-father Michael is mentioned in the Bengal Directory of 1795 as “a Portuguese Merchant and Agent” in Calcutta. But E. W. Madge has pointed out that in St. John’s Baptismal Register 1789 he is called a “Native Protestant.”

When a lad of scarcely eighteen summers, he published his first book of poems, which unlike the destiny of budding poets, met with immediate success. The poems were spoken of in the London press, and Dr. John Grant to whom the work was dedicated managed to give him an appointment as sub-editor of the India Gazette in 1826 and soon after that of a professor in the Hindu College, now Presidency College. (As a professor, Derozio was remarkably successful. He taught literature, history and philosophy and “possessed the rare power of weaving interest around any subject that he taught.” He started an Academic Association, which was a sort of a debating club. Its meetings were attended by the elite of Calcutta, including Deputy Governor of Bengal, Chief Justice, Private Secretary to the Governor and others.

Beloved as he was by his pupils many of whom, like Peary Chand Mitra, became very distinguished men of Bengal, Derozio, played the role of a reformer. He worked for the emancipation of Hindu society and instilled into his pupils the ideas of liberalism. and taught
them to think for themselves. But orthodox Hinduism revolted. Derozio was publicly denounced as having denied the existence of God, having taught that obedience to parents does not form any part of moral philosophy and even that marriages between brothers and sisters were permissible. But these were base calumnies, to which Derozio emphatically replied, “Not guilty.” In a letter to Dr. H. H. Wilson he refutes what he calls “the infamous fabrications.” An inquiry was instituted and though the charges against Derozio were proved to be unfounded, he was compelled to resign. His pupils, however, frequented his house where he taught just as he did in the school. As Edwards says, “the gifted Eurasian teacher philosopher and poet, during the short period of his connection with the Hindu College did more to arouse, quicken and impel the thought of Young India than any man then living or since dead.” He indeed, was the oracle of Young Bengal, as he is called.

Derozio’s journalistic career was remarkable. Under the pseudonym Juvenis he contributed to the Calcutta press when a young lad at Baghalpur. He helped his pupils to run a magazine called The Enquirer. He was sub-editor of the India Gazette which afterwards appeared as the Bengal Harkar and is now the Indian Daily News. He also conducted the Hesperus. His chief journalistic achievement was the The East Indian, a daily paper which he founded and edited till his death.

Derozio was very tender and affectionate towards his friends and relations. He was lively and humourous in his conversation. He was an eloquent orator, as it was evidenced in the Town Hall meeting of March 28th, 1831, when, he made his great speech on the occasion of the return of J. W. Ricketts who had gone to England with the East-Indians’ petition to the Parliament.

The fame of Derozio now chiefly rests on his poems. During his short life Derozio poured forth his heart in sweet lyrics, which though cannot be said to rise to the highest order yet betoken a poetic genius which in maturer years, might have greatly enriched the English literature. His poems are chiefly influenced by Byron, and like him his feelings, his hopes and his disappointments constantly recur in his poems. He had all the pathos and depth of feeling of a poet. Music rings in his strains. Ornament and rich colouring abound in his stanzas. But there is lack of form and originality. In his only long poem Faizir of Jungheera which runs into two Cantos there is a wealth of Eastern imagery and the scenes breathe an oriental atmosphere. It has all the charm of Byron’s Childe Harold or Scott’s Marmion. D. L. Richardson included Derozio’s poems in his Selections from the British Poets. Toru Dutt,
ADDENDA

(Bengal Magazine, December 1874), W. T. Webb (The Indian Review, December 1883), R. W. Frazer (The Literary History of India), have high encomiums for Derozio's poetry. References to Derozio are even found in Kipling's and Max Muller's works.

As in the case of Keats, fate was unusually cruel to Arts. Death singled out the great Luso-Indian poet, philosopher and reformer, in the midst of his ambitions still unrealized and at a time when his genius was blossoming forth in the fairest flowers of the maymorn of his life. A victim to cholera, Derozio departed from the world on December 26th, 1831, in the 23rd year of his life.

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IV

Feringhi Kali, Calcutta

At 244, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta, there is a temple of Kali known, very curiously, as Feringhi Kali. It is a little building in which the Kali stands on a white figure representing a dead male. This temple was built by a Feringhi (probably a Bengali Christian) named Antonio at the desire of
a Brahmin widow, both of whom lived as husband and wife, though they were not married. This Antonio had amassed immense wealth by trade and dwelt in Ghereti near Chandernagore, where the remains of his house can still be seen. Though he was a Christian he did not interfere with the religious views of the Brahmin lady and in fact joined in the Hindu ceremonies that were performed in his house. During the Hindu festivals his house was a resort of Kaviwallas who were a kind minstrels, consisting of men and women who went about singing songs and composing extempore verses on the highest religious subjects as well as on the lowest incidents of human life. He knew the Bengali language well and soon outstripped the Kaviwallas in the composition of extempore verses. Leaving aside his coat and trousers he would wear the chadar and the dhoti and sing Bengali songs on the stage or in praise of the Goddess Kali. He indeed founded a party of Kaviwallas who excelled all others in satirical extempore compositions.

Wilson has another story about the foundation of the Feringhi Kali. He says, "The Kali was established by one Srimanta Dom of very low caste who himself used to perform the duties of the priest for a period of not less than 70 years to this goddess up to the time of his death. The Dom used to treat the people of this quarter suffering from smallpox and for this reason an idol of Sitala is kept adjacent to that of Kali. In this way the Dom became popular among the Eurasian residents of this quarter thankful for cure from this particular disease. Hence the goddess has earned the name of Feringhi Kali."

V
Early Indian Christians of Eastern Bengal

The following excerpts from the Relation which the Father Provincial of the Congregation of St. Augustine of Goa, Frei Ambrosio de Santo Agostinho, gave to the Viceroy of India and which is preserved in the Livro das Monções No. 125, fol. 391 and published by J. H. da Cunha Rivara in O Chronista de Tissuari Vol. II, 1867, throw much light on the method of conversions of the Eastern Bengal Christians and the social conditions prevailing among them in 1750. I have followed the translation of Fr. Hosten in The Catholic Herald of India, Dec. 19, 1917 and succeeding Nos.

* Dinesh Chandra Sen, History of Bengali Literature, p. 707.
† For some of his satires Cf. Dinesh Chandra Sen, op. cit. p. 708 et seq.
‡ List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal 1896, Calcutta, p. 106.
§ The doms are a caste of a very low type in Bengal. But Dom is also a honourable Portuguese title prefixed before a name, and many Indian Christians were at one time given this title.
"The Christians of this particular Mission are all husbandmen (homem s tavoradores) who do not understand a word of Portuguese and they are and were all of them freemen, so that neither they, nor their fathers and grand-fathers, were ever bondsmen (captivos)...

Here I must remark that our Christians of Bengal, whether those who dress after the fashion of the country or those who dress like Europeans, were all of them equal once they become Christians (alias que cardo Christãos); they eat and drink and intermarry without minding the castes to which they belonged in heathenism—a thing which does not happen in other Missions where the converts keep the castes they had; and as they, loose their castes all at once so too do they give up their heathenish belief, all of which is due to the good education our Religious Missionaries gave them from the beginning...

The occult Christians of whom a greater number are converted, are the best christianity, because they are people living in the fields and having no intercourse whatever with the towns, and also because they have not learnt and understood much of the accursed sect of Mahomed (Mafoma). These men are easy and docile to convert not the Gentios who are hard and wedded to their idolatries and their castes, so much so that it is very rare for one of them to embrace the law of Jesus Christ from really spiritual motives; those of them who come over are those who first lost their caste; their relatives refuse to receive them, and then they are obliged to become Christians; for instance those who fall into captivity (slavery?) those who wish to marry a Christian girl; but those who belonged to the law of (Mahomed) are converted for truly spiritual motives. They are occult because they have not the permission from the Great Mogor to make use of their liberty for changing their religion, nor are we allowed under pain of death for us and them, to admit them to the Law of Jesus Christ...

We have many Catechists who serve us without receiving any payment from us because we have not the means; their disciples both neophytes and catechumens maintain them. They call them masters (mestres) and treat them with every respect; catechising has now become for them an occupation and a means of living...

This is the way they are catechised. They begin to sing some canticles which they have, of the Mysteries of the Rosary. Dom Antonio composed them. And as the people collect to hear them and put some questions about their meaning the occasion arises for conversion. These canticles are very pious and very devout and all the Christians of the mission, public and occult, know them and they are the Psalms with
which they praise God both in the Church and outside it, according to
the time of day (segundo os tempos)...

Martyrs killed in hatred of the Faith there are none because the
Moors of Bengala are not enemies of the Christians; they esteem them
rather. Until now there never was any persecution in Bengala except
when I was Rector, when there was a beginning of one, but it did not take
effect, because the Moor would not...

The Christians of Bengala are brought up in such a way that they are
free from all error, or heathenish ceremony; they are brought up like
the Christians in Portugal and all the ceremonies of the Church are
observed in the administration of the Sacraments. If we were to bring
them up as they do the Christians of Malavar, we might have a
greater number of Christians than we have; but they (the Fathers) under-
stood it was better to have few and good ones than to have many and bad
ones. There are at present in this Mission 1,500 public Christians, and
8,000 occult ones or 9,500 all together; the Christians who dress like
Europeans are 8,733 which with the 9,500 of the Mission makes 18,233 a
little more or less."

VI

The Dominicans in Bengal

Among the Portuguese Religious Orders that worked in Bengal,
the Dominicans remain to be mentioned. The Franciscans confined
themselves to Burma and Arakan. But the Dominicans who had convents
and houses in Goa, in other parts in Western India, in Ceylon, Cochin,
Mylapore and Negapatan, also made Bengal for a time the scene of
their activities. At the request of some Portuguese from Chittagong, Frey
Gaspar d’Assumpção and Frei Belchior da Luz came to Dianga in 1601
and raised a Hermitage with a Church, which were however soon after
burnt down and sacked by the King of Arakan during his war on the
Portuguese. * The Jesuits also suffered during this year and one
of the eyes of Fr. F. Fernandes S. J. was nearly torn out (vide p. 102)
The King however made peace with the Portuguese and desired the
Friars to remain in his kingdom and even built a new home and Church
for the Dominicans at his own expense. The Dominicans however

* Vide Frey Luis de Cacegas Historia de S. Domingos 1767, Vol. III,
Liv. chap. XI or Fr. Hosten’s Translation in the Bengal Past and Present
Jul.—Sept. 1914, pp. 1—5.
did not remain long in Chittagong on account of the "danger and
treacherous wars menacing their residence and the little protection
it afforded."

VII

A Governor of Chittagong Slain by the Portuagse

The following account of Caesar de Federici regarding the
Portuguese of Chittagong in 1569 is interesting. Cf. Hakluytus Posthumus
Purchas, His Pilgrimes by Samuel Purchas Vol. X pp. 137—138,
Glasgow, M C M V.) :-

"This Island is called Sondiva belonging to the Kingdome of
Bengala, distant one hundred and twenty miles from Chatigan, to which
place we were bound. The people are Moores, and the King a very good
man of a Moore King, for if he had bin a Tyrant as others bee, he might
have robbed us of all because the Portugall Captaine of Chatigan was
in armes against the Retor of that place, and every day there were some
slaine, at which newes wee rested there with no small feare, keeping
good watch and ward aboord every night as the use is, but the Governour
of the Towne did comfort us, and bad us that we should feare nothing,
but that we should repose our selves securely without any danger,
although the Portugals of Chatigan had slaine the Governour of that
Citie, and said that we were not culpable in that fact; and moreover
he did us every day what pleasure he could, which was a thing contr-
rarie to our expectations considering that they and the people of
Chatigan were both subjects to one King."

VIII

Luso-Indian Names

To the Luso-Indian surnames mentioned on pp. 179-180, the following
may be added :-

Coelho, Cunha or D'Cunha, Gabriel, Joaquim, Luz or DeLuz, Rangel,
Rego, Sanches or Sanges, Vieyra.