CHAPTER VIII

MINOR SETTLEMENTS OF THE PORTUGUESE

Situated on the banks of the Bouriganga, or as Manrique says, on the banks of the famous (and at that place fertilizing) Ganges, Dacca commanded an extensive trade and was the resort of many foreign merchants especially since Islam Khān made it the capital of Bengal in 1608. At the time of the Portuguese settlement in about 1580, Dacca did not hold this proud position though it was noted for its rich industries. After the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly, they were not slow to avail themselves of the benevolence of Akbar and establish themselves in Dacca to secure the trade of this important centre. Her richest muslins and her various kinds of cloth found their way to Portugal, Italy, Malacca, Sumatra and Goa in the Portuguese ships. Ralph Fitch describes Dacca in 1586, as abounding in rice, cotton and silk goods. From the account of Ralph Fitch it can be gathered that only six years after the Portuguese had settled in the Dacca district they had grown into traders of much importance especially in Sripūr. Manrique says that Akbar as well as Jahāngīr offered the Portuguese Fathers lands for their maintenance or as an assignment of revenue, which they refused because the Asiatic princes were wont to take advantage of the favours they conferred to turn the foreigners out. When the natives of Dacca were terrifying the people against the Portuguese because they ate pork, and drank wine, Akbar sent a positive order that no harm should be done to them. Caesar de Federici found the Nawab of Dacca in very friendly terms with the Portuguese and the Christians; and Tavernier records that in 1670 he saw
in Dacca a Church of the Augustinians, built of brick, and of a very fine workmanship.*

These Portuguese settlers did not belong to the other section of the Portuguese who were powerful in Sandwip and in Arakan and who during Shaista Khān’s viceroyalty settled in Dacca at a place called Feringhi Bazar. In fact, when Shaista Khān was bent upon the conquest of Chittagong he sent Shaikh Ziauddin Yusuf to the original Portuguese settlers trading in salt in Loricul near Dacca asking their countrymen in Chittagong to abandon the King of Arakan and enter the Mughal service.† They having agreed to do so, were given by Shaista Khān the land known as Feringhi Bazar. About twelve miles from the city, springing from the banks of the Ishamutti, lies this Feringhi Bazar calling to mind the days of the Portuguese domination in Bengal. Dacca possesses another relic of the Portuguese. Though every trace of the factories of the Dutch, of the French and even of the English is gone;‡ a part of the Portuguese factory, beautiful in its ruins, still exists in Dacca close to the Church of O. L. Rosary. Bradley-Birt remarks§ “All that remains to-day of the various factories (in Dacca) is a portion of the house which the Portuguese once made their headquarters. It must have been in those days a fine commodious building, but like every thing else in this city of the long sleep it is sadly fallen and decayed retaining but a memory of its better days.” Many, many of the early European archaeological remains are so ignominiously disappearing and crumbling into dust that a

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* Tavernier, Ball’s, Ed. Vol. I, p. 128.
‡ The Dacca College stands on the site of the English Factory; the palace of the Nawab of Dacca covers the French factory; and the Milford Hospital tends to suffering humanity where the Dutch factory once stood.
Lucretius might have well exclaimed "et etiam perierunt ruinae."

In the Dacca, Bākarganj, and Noakhali Districts the Portuguese had numerous minor settlements where they did not erect factories or forts, though they carried on a considerable trade. Many of them were entirely Christian centres, where the Portuguese Missionaries built their churches and effected the conversions of the inhabitants. Most of the names of these places, once the scene of considerable activities are no longer current. But Dr. Wise and Beveridge, and latterly Fr. Hosten have thrown much light on the identification of the places that belonged to the twelve Bhūyās of Bengal.

Sripūr, situated according to Ralph Fitch six leagues below Sonargaon, has played an important part in the history of Bengal, being the seat of the kingdom of Chand Rai and Kedar Rai. De Barros, Blaev and Van den Broucke differ in the exact locality which they assign to it in their maps but all of them place it south of Sonārgāon. De Barros and Blaev, whose map as far as relates to Bengal is almost a re-print of that of de Barros, mark Sripūr as Bunder. Van den Broucke calls it Sherpur Feringhi, which shows it was an important Portuguese settlement. Ralph Fitch says in 1586 that the Portuguese had sole authority in Sripūr. He speaks of having gone to Pegu from Sripūr in a Portuguese ship belonging to one Alberto Carvalho.*

Chandecan was another small settlement of the Portuguese, where the Jesuits built their first Church. Beveridge considers Chandecan to be identical with Dhumghat or Jessore after an elaborate discussion.† He has not however considered Van Linschoten’s references in his Le Grand Routier de Mer to the river of Chandecan which

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* Purchas, His Pilgrimes, Ralph Fitch p. 185.
† The District of Bākarganj p. 176 et seq.
appears to have been a part of the river Hooghly or one of its channels near Saugor Island. Though, he says, he could not find Chandecan in any maps, it is marked in Sir Thomas Roe's map of 1632 and in Fr. Monseratte's map of 1580-1600. Much information about Chandecan can be derived from the letters of Fr. Fernandes and his companions who carried on missionary work in Chandecan at the express invitation of the King*. The Portuguese built a Church in Chandecan which was formally opened on January 1st, 1600. As it has been shown, the Portuguese activities in Chandecan were checked when the King of Chandecan, whom Beveridge supposes to be Raja Pratāpāditya soon changed his attitude towards the Portuguese, and in order to please the King of Arakan treacherously murdered Domingo Carvalho, the gallant captain of the Portuguese.

The Portuguese had a small settlement in Bākla which according to Beveridge included a great part of the Bākarganj district and was really identical with the Chandradwip pargāna. Fr. Melchior Fonseca who came to Bengal in 1599 has left a very good account of Bākla, which materially helped later investigators in tracing on the history of its rulers. Bākla, was under the rule of a Hindu prince who was one of the twelve Bhūyās of of Bengal.† He was well disposed towards the Portuguese and granted Fr. Fonseca a decree allowing the Jesuits free liberty to preach their religion and erect their churches. Fr. Fonseca found a colony of the Portuguese under a captain II (Capitano) in Bākla, which for many years had not been visited by priests.

Catrabo called by Manrique one of the Kingdoms of

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* Du Jarric, Histoire, Part IV, Chap. XXIX.

† According to Fr. du Jarric out of the twelve Bhūyās of Bengal only three were Hindus, those of Sripūr, of Bākla and of Chandecan.
Bengal was under the rule of one of the twelve Bhuyās of Bengal. Van den Broucke places it below Sonārgāon and Beveridge identifies it with Katrabuh or Katibari in the Mānikganj sub-division.* Dr. Wise however suggests† “Catrabō is Katrabō, now a ‘tappa’ on the Lakhya opposite Khizrpūr which for long was the property of the descendants of ‘Isā Khān Masnad-i-‘Ali”. Fr. Fernandes was in 1599 in Catrabō and relates that the population was mainly Muhammadan. The people were convinced through his efforts that the Christian law was true and good but they were not willing to be converted.‡ It was a place where the Portuguese founded a small colony which at one time was very influential.

Loricul, twenty eight miles south of Dacca, was another Christian settlement of the Portuguese. It appears in Van den Broucke’s map (1660) as Noricoel and is marked by a cross like all the other christian settlements. La Touche very curiously suggests§ the place was so named after the Portuguese Viceroy, Marquis of Louričal, who ruled from 1741 to 1742, but as Fr. Hosten points out, the place was much older. Blochmann identifies it with Morculij of Blaev’s map (1650). Merculij also is marked in de Barros’s map, which was the origin of Blaev’s information about Bengal. Manrique mentions that the Augustinians built a Church in Loricul though he does not give the date. It must have been built towards the end of the sixteenth century when the Augustinians had spread all over Dacca. According to Sicardo, the Augustinian historian, the Church existed in

† J. A. S. B. 1875, XLIV p. 182.
‡ Du Jarric, Histoire, Part IV, p. 829.
1682 but Rennel wrote on February 14, 1765 “Here are ye ruins of a Portuguese Church and of many brick houses.”

The famous Portuguese merchant Nicolo de Paiva who left twenty thousand xerasins for the upkeep of the Jesuits at Hooghly and farmed the customs of the Nawab of Dacca lived in Loricol in 1675.† One Nicola Pareres, a “Portugall Merchant,” probably the same as Nicolo de Paiva, as Fr. Hosten supposes, assured William Hedges in 1684 that “their (Portuguese) whole community had wrott ye Vice King of Goa and besought him earnestly to send them two or three frigates with aid and assistance of soldiers to possess themselves of ye Islands of Kegeria and Ingelee (Khljri and Hijili) for which purpose they had sent him draughts and large descriptions of ye said Islands.” ‡

In Bhulua, which was an independent principality in the seventeenth century there was a colony of the Portuguese.

Bhulua

There were also numerous Portuguese converts in Bhulua who were very influential. Glanius who has left a graphic description of the wreck of *Ter Schelling* remarks§, “The Prince’s Guard (in Bhulua) consists wholly of Christians which are there in great esteem and although perhaps they are only Christians in name being Negroes born; subjects to the King of Portugal; yet they are counted such brave fellows, that they have a particular respect shew’d them and therefore the grandees of the court so highly prize their familiarity, that they relate to them whatsoever passes in Council.” The Portuguese influence was so completely established in Bhulua that many of the people spoke Portuguese.||

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* The Journals of Rennel, ut supra.
† J. A. S. B. 1911 pp. 27, 29.
|| Glanius, ut supra, p. 135, “we bought Milk and Rice which we drest in a Pot that was lent us by Moors that spoke Portugaise.”
Hijili is a littoral tract extending from the mouth of the Rupnarayan along the western side of the Hooghly estuary and forming part of the Midnapore district. It was formerly an island now united to the mainland and was a district of Orissa under native rulers. At the time of the Portuguese occupation it had its own chiefs but in 1505 according to the local traditions the Muhammadans under Taj Khān and his brother, took possession of it.* After a period of eight years however a Hindu chieftain recovered it. The Portuguese settlement in Hijili can be said to be the earliest European settlement in Bengal. The Portuguese not long after establishing themselves in Pipli (Orissa) in 1514 migrated northwards towards Hijili. Before the town of Hijili existed as such, the author of the Chandi was referred in 1577 to a Portuguese territory in or near Hijili as the “Feringhee Desh where they (the poet and his companion) ply their boats night and day for fear of the Harams (a term of abuse applied to the Feringhis) and pass it in twenty days.”† If the boats plying night and day, took twenty days to pass the country under the Feringhi influence the Portuguese occupation of the Hijili coast must have been an extensive one. On the return journey of the poet he refers to another Feringhi desh on the Orissa coast where they visited Jagannath Puri.

The Augustinians built in Hijili two Churches both dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary. In 1582 both Churches contained three hundred parishioners grown to an age of confession.‡ Sicardo refers to another Church built by the Augustinians in the Bandel or village of Banja (which Manrique places in the kingdom of Hijili), dedicated to Our Lady of

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* Blochmann; Contributions to the Geog. and Hist. of Bengal, p. 17.
‡ Fray J. Sicardo O. S. A. Christianad del Japon Ch. III. (Quoted by Fr. Hosten).
Salvation, "the Christian community there counting five hundred souls exclusive of those whom the commerce of that Port brought to the place albeit the climate is little salubrious." Manrique throws some light on the commerce of Hi. Referring to the Church of Bajja he says* it was built "to be able to cope with the great number of merchants who gather there to buy sugar, wax and Gingham (guingones) which I have said is a kind of cloth made of grass (yerno) and silk, a very nice and cooling texture to wear during the hot summer." An earlier account of Ralph Fitch (1586) says† "To this hauen of Angeli (Hijsi) come every yere many ships out of India Negapatam, Sumatra, Malacca & divers other places & lode from thence much store of Rice & much cloth of cotton wool, much sugar, & long pepper, great store of butter & other victuals for India."

W. Hedges mentions‡ in his Diary that the Portuguese were ousted from Hijsi in 1636 by the Mughals and in 1724 Valentyn referred to Hijsi as a former Portuguese settlement. The Arakanese and Portuguese pirates now began to commit depredations on the Orissa coast and in Hijsi. Tracts of lands became depopulated and the ryots left their fields. Shâh Jahân thereupon annexed Hijsi to Bengal so as to enable the imperial fleets stationed at Dacca to guard against these piratical raids.

The ruins of the Portuguese settlements in Hijsi can still be seen. A couple of miles south of Geonkhali lies Merepore, known still as Feringhi Para, where the S. P. C. Mission found in 1838 some Christians who declared that they were descendants of the Portuguese from Goa who were given the village of Merepore rent free as a reward for some services

Horton Ryley's, Ralph Fitch, p. 114.
† Yule, Diary of Hedges, Vol. II. p. 240.
rendered by them to the Raja of Mysadal, which is now in the Hooghly District.*

In Midnapore the Portuguese also had another important settlement in Tamlük. Tamlük is situated on the southern bank of the Rupnarayan and was an important seaport in ancient times deserving a mention as Tamalites in Ptolemy’s geography.† But it lost its importance towards the tenth century as the channel that afforded an easy communication with the sea gradually silted up. Hijili then rose into prominence. It is noteworthy, however, that the Portuguese settlement in Tamlük remained long after they were driven away from Hijili. In 1635 a church was built there through Manrique’s influence. Gemelli Careri refers‡ to it in 1695 as having been subdued by the Portuguese and in 1724 Valentyn remarks§ “Tamboli and Banzia (Banja) are two villages where the Portuguese have their Church and their southern trade. There is much dealing in wax here”.

Tamlük, like Pipli and Balasore in Orissa, had a great slave market where the Arakan and Portuguese pirates brought their captives for sale. In a description of the exploits of these pirates Shiab-ud-din Talish (about 1665) says,|| “sometimes they brought the captives for sale at a high price to Tamlük and the port of Baleswar (Balasore), which is a part of the imperial dominions and a dependency of the province of Orissa. The manner of the sales was this. The wretches used to bring the prisoners in their ships, anchor at a short distance from the shores of Tamlük or

* Indo-European Correspondence, Calcutta 1869 pp. 80-81. (Quoted by Fr. Hosten).
† M. Chakravarti, J. A. S. B. May 1908, p. 289.
§ Valentyn, Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien V de Deel p. 159.
|| The Feringhi Pirates of Chalgaon, J. A. S. B. 1917, p. 422.
Baleswar, and send a man ashore with the news. The local officers, fearing lest the pirates should commit any depredation or kidnapping there, stood on the shore with a number of followers and sent a man with a sum of money to the pirates. If the terms were satisfactory, the pirates took the money and sent the prisoners with the man. As, the Portuguese pirates did not actually land ashore, it is obvious that the Tamīūk settlement was not founded by these renegades but by the loyal Portuguese, like those of Hooghly, who according to Valentyn carried on a southern trade and possessed Churches even in the eighteenth century.

The earliest European settlements in the Gulf of Bengal were established in Orissa. It was the same with the Portuguese as with the English and the Dutch.* Ascending along the western shore of the Bay of Bengal the coast of Orissa was the first to offer a landing place. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, that is, a short time after the discovery of the sea-route to India (1498) the Portuguese established themselves on the coast of Madras. Alarmed at the growth of a foreign power, the natives rose against the Portuguese who escaped northward and in 1514 founded a town in Pipli† about four miles from the mouth of the Subarnareka River, establishing their earliest settlement on the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Pipli was then an important harbour on the Orissa coast and a great centre of Portuguese trade when their fleets commanded the whole sea-board from Chittagong to Orissa. It was also a great slave market where the Arakanese and the Portuguese pirates sold their prisoners.

Joannes De Laët refers in 1631 to this port as being in the possession of the Portuguese. Early in the seventeenth century

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* Before the English had any footing in Bengal, they settled in Pipli in 1625 and in Balasore in 1625.

† W. Hunter, Orissa 1872, p. 37. O'Malley in his Balasore Gazetteer asserts that the Portuguese settled in Pipli in 1599, Cf. p. 36 and 204.
the Augustinians had built a Church and a residence in Pipli, the Church being dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary.

The Portuguese settlement in Pipli continued to be a trading centre for a long period of time. Bruton describes Pipli in 1683 as a "Port town of the Portuguese where the Portugals are resident" and Fr. Barbier in his description of the Episcopal visitation of Bishop Laines in 1723 refers to a large Portuguese or Topas congregation.

When the East India Company sought for trade in Orissa there arose bitter hostilities between them and the Portuguese settlers. W. Hunter, in his History of British India, gives a graphic description of a fight between an English and a Portuguese vessel.* A Portuguese frigate from Pipli, launched an attack in Harishar, a port in Orissa, against the first English junk that came to Bengal in 1633 and assisted by some "ribble-rabble rascals of the town," nearly finished with the English. Ralph Cartwright, a merchant of E. I. Co., claimed before the Mughal Governor the Portuguese frigate as a redress for the Portuguese attack in a Mughal harbour. The Portuguese also entered their protests. The Mughals who were ill disposed towards the Portuguese and only a year before had sacked their settlement of Hooghly confiscated the Portuguese vessel for themselves to the great chagrin of Cartwright.

The famous English ship Swan which came to Bengal in the same year received a quite different treatment from the Portuguese. According to the Diary of Hedges† the Portuguese redeemed the Swan when seized by the Arakanese. "Last year (1633)," it says, "when the Swann was in Bengalla her boat beinge sent on shoare for water was suddenly surprized by some of the Kinge of Arackans Gelliaes

of Warr: 3: of her men killed, and the rest taken and carried to a place in Bengalla called Piplee where a Portugal Captain that came thither on a small vessel from Macassar redeemed them for 400: Ruppes which mony was presently sent him from Ballasarra.........for which affront we doe away all opportunitye to force a satisfaction.” This account is in marked contrast with that of the first junk in which the English came to Bengal.

The Portuguese also had a small settlement in Balasore of which no vestige now remains. Stirling however says* that in his time the only relic of this settlement was a small Roman Catholic Chapel with a wooden cross over the principal doorway. Even this has now disappeared. This Chapel or really a Church was dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary.

* Account of Orissa.
CHAPTER IX

PORTUGUESE MISSIONARIES

The ecclesiastical history of the Portuguese in Bengal would fill up volumes. No nation came to India with a religious zeal more fervent than that of the Portuguese. Their conversions went pari-passu with their conquests. The sword always allied itself with the Cross and while the one extended the domain of the Empire the other propagated the Christian faith. The first words of a sailor of Vasco da Gama in reply to the question of a Tunisian Moor, were "we have come to seek Christians and spices." In the propagation of faith, the methods as well as the agents would in many cases be open to reproach if judged according to the modern canons of liberty and justice. One may, indeed, blame the aggressive proselytism of the Portuguese missionaries, as the Portuguese themselves have condemned it, but it cannot be denied it was through their zeal and efforts that the best fruits of Christian civilization were spread even in the most recondite parts of India.

The first members of the illustrious Order of the Jesuits, came to India in 1542, among whom was St. Francis Xavier. Before them the Franciscans and the Dominicans had begun the work of evangelization in India. The Jesuits and the secular priests were, however, the earliest on record to have come to Bengal. The Jesuit Fathers Antonio Vaz and Pedro Dias arrived in Bengal in 1576,* and a secular priest named Juliano Pereira, Gangarides Archimystes, as Monserratte calls him is mentioned as a vicar in Sātgaon in 1578. Akbar invited him to his court in Fatehpur

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* Fr. Delamoot gives the date as 1579, Cf. Catholic Encyclopedia, s. v. Calcutta.
Sikri to explain to him the tenets of the Christian religion and he having done so as best as he could, requested Akbar to summon more learned priests from Goa.

The work of the Jesuits who came to Bengal between 1598 and 1600 is aptly described in their letters to Fr. Nicolau de Pimenta who was in Goa.* Pimenta sent in 1598 two Jesuits named Francisco Fernandes and Domingo de Souza from Cochin and two more in the following year, Melchior da Fonseca and André Boves. They arrived in Hooghly in May of the same year and preached in the bigger Church (summo templo) which was built before their arrival. They erected a school and a hospital, evidently the first one in Bengal. In Hooghly they received an invitation from the King of Chandecan to pay him a visit but they first went to Chittagong in the course of their missionary tour, leaving their school and their hospital in the hands of the Vicar of Hooghly probably a secular priest. They erected in Chittagong two Churches and a residence. Though Chittagong belonged at this time to the King of Arakan they found it almost entirely in the hands of the Portuguese. Fr. Fernandes gives the text of the letters-patent† which the King of Arakan granted to the Portuguese, allowing them to preach the Christian religion and build Churches in his kingdom. As the King of Chandecan was angry with the Jesuits for their not having responded to his invitation, Fr. Fernandes sent Fr. de Souza to Chandecan and he was received favourably. In October 1599, Fr. Fernandes himself went to Chandecan and obtaining from the King letters-patent with full authority to carry on his mission and to erect a Church and a residence. The Church was formally consecrated on the 1st January 1600. This was the first Jesuit Church in Bengal and was therefore dedicated to Jesus Christ. Fr. Fonseca was very successful in the kingdom of Bākla where

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* Pimenta's Carta. Cf. Du Jarric, Histoire, Part IV, Chapters XXIX and XXX.
he found many Portuguese. He obtained free permission from the King of Bākla to preach the Christian religion in his kingdom and the Jesuits actually built a residence and appear to have begun a Church.*

The successes of Fr. Fernandes and his companions unfortunately came to a melancholy end. In connection with the disputes between the Portuguese and the King of Arakan, already described, a tumult arose in Chittagong in which the Portuguese suffered heavily. Fr. Fernandes having attempted to save some children who were being forced into slavery by the Arakanese was mercilessly thrashed and deprived of one eye. On the 14th November 1602 he expired in prison. Fr. Andre Boves was also cast into prison with chains round his neck and legs. To crown all this ill-treatment, the Arakanese used the sacred chalice as a spittoon. Following the fortunes of Carvalho, they took refuge in Sandwip and then in Sripūr, Bākla, and Chandecan. Carvalho was soon after murdered by the King of Chandecan. Under these melancholy circumstances the surviving fathers eventually left Bengal, some going to Pegu and some to Cochin.

From the letters of Fr. Fernandes and his three companions, it appears that long before them, the Portuguese Fathers had begun missionary work in Bengal. The Jesuits, then as now, not only converted the people of Bengal but also sent Bengali children to be educated in the great Jesuit College of Santa Fé in Goa, which was afterwards known as the College of São Paulo. Fr. H. Josson S. J. mentions* the names of five Bengali children who were pupils of the College of Santa Fé in 1558—Filippe, Gaspar de Deus, Antonio do Ermo, and two Pedros. In the catalogue of the pupils of that College, dated 1559, and still preserved in

*Bengali Children, educated in Goa

the Royal Library of Ajuda, Portugal, several names of Bengali children are mentioned.*

From 1599 to 1617 there is no record of any Jesuits in Hooghly. The Augustinians meanwhile had established themselves in Hooghly and when the Jesuits came back in 1617 they found that the former claimed the sole right of evangelisation. The Jesuits however, took possession of their College of St. Paul and their hospital and in the same year they erected in Hooghly their first Church and residence. Three years after, both these buildings had to be re-constructed, because they were too close to the river.

The Augustinians accomplished the most important work in Bengal. They were the fourth religious Order to come to India, their first batch of twelve missionaries having arrived in Goa in 1572. When they came to Bengal, is a disputable point. Sicardo and other Augustinian historians say that they came to Bengal in 1599. Manrique however asserts that they came after the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly in 1580. When Tavares came to Bengal with a farman from Akbar granting the Portuguese full religious liberty and permission to preach openly the Christian faith, to erect Churches and to baptize the natives, who would consent to be Christians, he applied to the Viceroy at Goa and the Bishop of Cochin for missionaries. The Augustinians having been chosen to minister in Bengal they came to Bengal as soon as the season permitted, with Frei Bernardo de Jesus as superior and in his absence Frei João de Cruz. Probably Sicardo has lost sight of the first batch of missionaries that came to Bengal. Tavares and his Portuguese certainly required religious missionaries to carry on their religious work and as the two Jesuits who were in

Hooghly had gone away, only secular priests or Augustinians could have ministered in Hooghly at this time. Whatever be the truth, all agree that five Augustinians came to Hooghly in 1599 and the same year they built their Convent dedicated to Sam Nicolau de Tolentino, to which was attached the Church of Our Lady of Rosary. They took possession of all the Churches existing there. They also built a Casa de Misericordia (Alms House) with an attached Chapel. The parishioners of the Churches numbered five thousand including the Portuguese, their descendants and Indian converts. The next batch of seven Augustinians came in the following year, that is, in 1600.

The Diocese of Cochin formed in 1557 was at the head of all the Catholic missions in Bengal but Dom Frei André, a Franciscan Bishop of Cochin, transferred the sole possession of the Churches and right of evangelization to the Augustinians of Goa. These Augustinians extended their labours all over Bengal. They established themselves in Hijilí (Angelim) where they built two Churches dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary; in Pipili where they also erected a Church dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary, and in Tamlik (Tumbolim) where they built a Church in honour of Our Lady of Hope. In 1606 the Diocese of Mylapore was created and the jurisdiction of Bengal passed from the diocese of Cochin to that of Mylapore. But the Augustinians continued to enjoy their privileges. In 1612 they established themselves in Dacca where they built a Church dedicated to Our Lady of Assumption. They also erected Churches in Nuricol, Sripūr and Caturbo.

The Augustinians extended their activities to Chittagong in 1621 and, in fact, took the place of the Jesuits who had up to that time ministered there and had undergone many troubles. In 1598 there were 2500 Portuguese and their descendants in Chittagong, and Arakan; besides these there were Indian
Christians. In the massacre of Dianga which followed Brito e Nicote demand of this port, all the Churches of the Jesuits were pulled down and some of the missionaries were killed. Those who escaped to Sandwip and established the Catholic religion there, were afterwards massacred by Fateh Khān. When the Augustinians established themselves there in 1821, a revival of Christianity took place. They built a Church and residence in Angaracale, and also a chapel in Arakan dedicated to Our Lady of Success. This was the time, it must be remembered, when the Portuguese were in the service of the King of Arakan and along with the Maghs were committing frightful depredations all along the banks of the rivers in the Sunderbunds carrying off Musalmans and Hindus as captives. Between 1621 and 1624 the Portuguese brought to Chittagong 42,000 slaves of whom 28,000 were baptised by the Augustinians. Besides these, they converted 5000 Arakanese or Maghs. In 1640 the Augustinians spread to Balasore where they built a Church dedicated to our Lady of the Rosary. They also built a Church in Ossampur and two Churches in Rangamati dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Guadeloupe.

Though the Christian religion was flourishing in Eastern Bengal, it received in 1622 a great check in Western Bengal owing to the siege of Hooghly. During the sack the lofty Convent of the Augustinians was burnt down and all the Churches and buildings belonging to the missionaries were destroyed. Only the Jesuit College and a few other houses escaped destruction as the Mughal officers took up their abode in them. According to Fr. Cabral four Augustinians, six or seven secular priests and three Jesuits lost their lives in the siege. But the number of Jesuits killed must have been more

* Fr. Delaunoit, Catholic Encyclopedia s. v. Calcutta.
because he records that Fr. Fialho S. J. died during the night and that Br. John Rodrigues S. J. died in the vessel which Pedro de Couto blew up and that the corpses of three Jesuits more, Fathers Pedro Gomes Benedicto Rodrigues and Gaspar Ferreira were dug up from the graves by the Moors, who surprized at their not being decomposed very respectfully deposited them again in the Jesuit Church which was broken down. Four Jesuits, including Father Cabral escaped with those who took refuge in the Saugor island, numbering in all three thousand Christians of whom two hundred were Portuguese. Among the four thousand Christian prisoners who were taken to Agra there were two Augustinians, Frei Antonio de Christo and Frei Francisco De Incarnação and two secular priests Manoel Garcia and Manoel da Anhaya. Considering the brilliant arguments of Father Hosten, it is doubtful whether Frei João da Cruz, the hero of a miracle in Agra was among these captives.* According to Manrique he was severely wounded across the shoulders while escaping during the siege of Hooghly with some Portuguese descendants (*Topasses*) and was left for dead. These *Topasses* carried him to a neighbouring Hindu village from where a Hindu merchant took him to his own house. His wounds were so bad that worms set in. A *Topass* removed the festering flesh and cured him with applications of cocoanut oil and tamarind. Frei Bernardo de Jesus who was superior of the mission, was thrashed to death in Dacca at the time of the siege.

The siege of Hooghly, however, checked the progress of the Catholic religion only for a short time. The following year the Christian Fathers and other Portuguese returned with a grant of 777 bighas of land (about 260 acres) from Shāh Jahān and with privileges the like of which they had never enjoyed

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* Bengal Past and Present Jan.—Mar. 1915, p. 49 et seq.
before in Hooghly. They did not establish themselves at their former site in Hooghly proper but a little outside the town in Balagarh, the present Bandel. Fr. Hosten supposes that they must have erected new Churches on the ruins of the former buildings. The Augustinians took possession of the 777 bighas of land, about 280 bighas of which still belong to the Bandel Convent. They spread themselves all over Bengal, and it is chiefly through their efforts that numerous people in Bengal were converted to Christianity. In 1666 Bernier wrote that Hooghly (Ogouli) alone, contained eight to nine thousand Christians and that the Jesuits and the Augustinians possessed there large Churches.

Although the Augustinians had raised in Goa a monastery to St. Augustine which as Mandelso said,* looked from a distance like one of the noblest palaces in the world and in which there was a Library the sight of which made Dr. Buchanan suddenly transport himself to one of the libraries of Cambridge, yet their Mission in Bengal was the wealthiest. Cottineau says † regarding the Augustinians in Bengal, “The Mission of Bengal is the chief source of their opulent situation; the two churches in Calcutta, one of which is the richest now in all India (probably Murghatta Cathedral) and all the other Churches in Bengal under the British Dominions are exclusively entrusted to the care of the members of this Order sent directly from Goa though they take the faculties or licences of exercising the ministry from the Bishop or Administrator of St. Thomé of Mylapore near Madras who is commonly since near a century a member of the same Order.” Their chief seat was the Bandel Convent and Church, on which depended all the Churches and parishes in Dacca, Solicur, Chandpur, Banja, Pipli, Balasore, Tamluk, Jessore, Hijili, Tesgāon Chittagong Dianga, Rangamati, Catroba, Sripūr and Arakan.

* Voyages and Travels, p. 81.
† Historical Sketch of Goa p. 123.
When the French started a factory in Chandernagore in 1688, the Augustinians erected their Churches there and claimed sole jurisdiction to the chagrin of the French Jesuits. But the French Government intervened and the Bishop of Mylapore created in 1696 a parish for the French Jesuits. The Capuchins built a Church there in 1796. In 1753 the Catholic population in Chandernagore was four thousand.

The Jesuits got back their property in 1640 through the good offices of Fr. Joseph de Castro S. J. but they did not get permission to build a Church until 1663, when the historian Manucci interviewed the Mughal Governor Mirzagol on their behalf.* Manucci remarks that he was told in Hooghly by the Jesuit Fathers that before 1663 they had built a tiny Church made of straw. When a new Governor succeeded Mirzagol in 1664 he forced the Portuguese to pay Rs. 1,000 because they had built without permission a Church, which, as Fr. Hosten supposes, must have really been the Jesuit Church. Abbate Ripa called it a fine Church in 1709. They had a residence and a garden which is still known as *Sam Paulo Bagan*† and which marks the site of the Jesuit residence and College. Various writers refer to a College of Jesuits in Hooghly and their superior was indeed called the Rector. According to Fr. Barbier S. J. who wrote an account‡ of the Episcopal Visitation of Bishop Laines of Mylapore in 1712-15 this Bishop died at the College of Hooghly. Fr. J. Tieffentaller S. J. who wrote a sort of a statistical account of Hooghly§ in 1765 speaks of the Jesuit College as already in ruins. But

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† The Jesuits were known as Paulists in India from their great institution in Goa, Collegio de Sam Paulo de Sante Fé.
‡ *Bengal Past and Present*, 1910, Vol. VI, p. 223 et seq.
§ *Vide* Tieffentaller in Bernoulli, *Description historique et geographique de L'Inde.*
Fr. Hosten holds that this College was nothing but the Jesuit residence in which only two or three Jesuit Fathers lived with occasionally a lay brother.* The Jesuit Mission ministered in Hooghly till 1740 when Fr. George Deistermann the last Jesuit Rector died. But Fr. Delaunoit says† there was one Jesuit managing the Church and the college even up to 1746 when they were given up. At present there is no trace of the Jesuit Church and college but Fr. Hosten unearthed in 1915 in the Sam Paulo Bagan a wall 47 ft. long and 2 ft. 11 in. broad, which he believes formed part of the Jesuit Church. Most visitors to Bandel have probably seen this Jesuit garden, about four acres in area, now occupied by Bengali tenants and planted with various kinds of trees including cocoanut trees, mango trees and plaintain trees. Excepting the southern wall the other walls are decaying.

When Job Charnock founded Calcutta in 1690, the Portuguese and other Christians followed him and obtained a plot of ground where the Augustinians built a Chapel. In 1797 this Chapel was replaced by a Church dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary now known as the Cathedral Church. Its history will be dealt with later. As Calcutta was growing in importance and in population a need for another place of worship was felt; consequently a new Church was erected by Mrs. Grace Elizabeth at Boitakhana in 1808. The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Dharamtolla Street was built in 1834 by a Portuguese lady, Mrs. Sabina Barretto de Souza in fulfilment of a vow. The Barretto family is noted for the erection of many chapels and for munificent donations for the Churches in Calcutta and in its neighbourhood.

The year 1834 marked a new era in the history of the Catholicism in India. Hitherto the work of evangelization

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* Bengal Past and Present, Jan.—Mar., 1915 p. 66.
† Catholic Encyclopedia, S. V. Calcutta.
was carried on only by the Portuguese Missions under the sanction and protection of the Portuguese Government. The Pope with a view to supply the growing needs of the Church created an Apostolic Vicariate and entrusted it to English Jesuits. But Portugal claimed the sole right of religious (Catholic) jurisdiction, known as Padroado, which she had received from the Pope for her zeal in the propagation of the faith in the East. The Marquis of Pombal, the Portuguese premier aggravated matters in 1835 by suppressing all Portuguese Religious Orders. Thus interminable disputes and controversies went on between the Courts of Rome and Portugal for over fifty years. This period may be passed over in silence while mention may be made of only a few points of interest to the Church in Bengal. An Irish Jesuit, Robert St. Leger, was appointed the first Vicar Apostolic of Bengal and he took possession of the Portuguese Murgihatta Church. By the suppression of the Religious Orders in 1835 very few friars were able to come to Bengal to carry on the work of the Mission among the Christians that were converted by the early Portuguese missionaries. The vast field of the Vicar Apostolic in Bengal was divided in 1850 and a new Vicar Apostolic was appointed for Eastern Bengal and Assam.

In 1857 the Concordat between the Holy See and the King of Portugal curtailed furthermore the rights of the Portuguese Mission. The Augustinians having now left Bengal the Goanese who had stood up for the rights of the Portuguese began to supply missionaries for Bengal while the English Jesuits being unable to cope with the work, the Pope entrusted the Mission to the Belgian Jesuits while the Fathers of the Order of the Cross took the place of the Benedictines. The rivalry did not subside until 1887, when the Delegate Apostolic Mon. Agliardi came to carry out the clauses of the Concordat entered into
between the Holy See and the King of Portugal Dom Luis I. By that Concordat it was decided that the following parishes and Churches should belong to the Portuguese Mission in Bengal under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Mylapore:—Boitakhana in the town of Calcutta; Chinsurah and Bandel in the district of Hooghly; in Eastern Bengal Dacca, Tes-gong, Nagory, Hashnabad, Sripur, Tangarakali and Tuital; while all other places passed on to the Jurisdictions of the Archbishop of Calcutta and of the Bishop of Dacca.
CHAPTER X

PORTUGUESE TRADE IN BENGAL

The high hopes which the Portuguese had entertained regarding the possibilities of trade in Bengal were realized beyond their expectation. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century a great part of the Bengal trade and shipping passed into the hands of the Portuguese. As early as 1535 Diogo Rebello had forbidden any alien ship to touch at Sattgāon without the permission of the Portuguese. The Portuguese applied to Bengal the law they had enforced in the Indian seas in order to destroy the Moorish trade. Any ship that travelled without a Portuguese pass was treated as an enemy ship and was either not allowed to sail or captured. The superiority of Portuguese vessels over native craft rendered the enforcement of this principle practicable, though sometimes the Portuguese met with their rivals elsewhere in the Turkish and the Egyptian ships. The ordinary merchant vessels of the Portuguese consisted of a captain, a master and a pilot, while among the crew there would be Māors or any class of Asiatic people. Until the Portuguese established their great settlement of Hooghly in 1580 their ships did not permanently stay in Bengal. However, the Portuguese ships commanded the whole sea-board from Orissa to Chittagong from about 1537, when they had founded their settlements on both the arms of the Bay of Bengal. Kabi Kankan mentions in the Chandī, written in 1577, that the coast near Hijili was dangerous on account of the Feringhi ships. The Portuguese came with their goods before the monsoons set in and spent the rainy months in Bengal buying and selling goods and transacting their business. When the monsoons were over the
ships would repair to Goa and other Portuguese ports laden with the merchandise of Bengal.

The earliest commercial relations of the Portuguese in Bengal were with Chittagong (Porto Grande). De Barros wrote in 1532 "Chittagong is the most famous and wealthy city of the kingdom of Bengal, on account of its port, at which meets the traffic of all that eastern region." From 1517 expedition after expedition had come to Chittagong with no great success until the Portuguese founded their settlements in 1537 and owned independent custom-houses both in Chittagong (Porto Grande) and Sātgāon (Porto Pequeno). Ever since the fall of Gaur and especially after the foundation of the Portuguese settlement in Hooghly, Chittagong had begun to lose its commercial importance. Even then Eastern Bengal and the kingdom of Arakan continued to be the seat of many industries and Portuguese ships used to go to Chitagong with their goods, though Hooghly was a more frequented port. In 1567 Cæsar de Federici found more than eighteen ships anchored in Chittagong, and he writes that from this port the traders carried to the Indies "great store of rice, very great quantities of bombast cloth of every sort, sugar, corn, and money with other merchandise."

In Western Bengal, Sātgāon was the emporium of Portuguese trade since 1537. It was then the chief mart where all the merchants of Northern India flocked with their merchandise. After the Portuguese had settled in Hooghly in 1580 this port became the centre of their trade while Sātgāon gradually dwindled into in significance. Hooghly was then termed Porto Pequeno.

The Portuguese ships of the larger type, came up to Garden Reach or rather Betor (Howrah) where they anchored because the river Hooghly was not navigable higher up than

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Adhiganga (now Tolly’s Nollah) except by smaller vessels. Caesar de Federici who was in Hooghly in 1567 says* that in the Hooghly river the large ships of the Portuguese came up to Betor (near Sibpur, the modern Howrah), whence the smaller ships sailed up to Sātgāon and laded “Rice, Cloth of Bombast of divers sorts, Lacca, great abundance of Sugar, Myrobolans dried and preserved, long Pepper, Oyle of Zerseline and many other sorts of merchandise.” In Betor the goods were stored in thatched houses of straw or bamboo and were either sold or exchanged in big local markets or taken to other places. Gradually these goods swelled the markets of Calcutta and Chitpore, which were then very insignificant villages. It is to these thatched houses and villages which as Federici and Manrique say, were made and unmade by the Portuguese when they went back, that can be traced the origin of the great city Job Charnock founded. It is in these marts of Betor, Chitpore and Sutanuti which were supplied by Portuguese goods that can be seen the first glimmerings of the great commercial importance that Calcutta attained many years later. C. R. Wilson well remarks,† “It is under their (Portuguese) commercial supremacy that the place which we know by the name of Calcutta first began to have any importance; it is to them that we are chiefly indebted for our first reliable information about Hughli and its markets.”

The best account of the Portuguese trade in Bengal is found in Manrique’s Itinerario. ‡ Manrique, it must be stated, was in Bengal during the palmiest days of the Portuguese and actually saw what he described. The Portuguese imported into Bengal various kinds of goods from other places which

* Purchas, His Pilgrimes; C. Frederick, Vol. X. p. 114.
† Early Annals of the English in Bengal.
‡ Vide Fr. Cardon’s Trans. of the chapters relating to Bengal in Bengal Past and Present 1915, Vol. XII, No. 24.
were visited by the Portuguese vessels. The principal things they brought to Bengal were from Malacca, Sumatra and Borneo, such as "Brocades, Brocateles, Cloth, Velvets, Damasks, Satins, Taffetas, Tafiosisas, Tafissiras Escomillas or Muslins" of all colours but black, which colour was considered ill-omened in Bengal. From Malacca they also brought cloves nutmegs, and mace; and from Borneo the highly prized camphor. They brought cinamon from Ceylon and pepper from Malabar. From China they brought silks, gilt furniture such as bedsteads, tables, coffers, chests, writing-desks, boxes and very valuable pearls and jewels, for labour being cheap in China "these were made in European style but with greater skill and cheaper." From the islands of Maldives they brought sea-shells (kaurim) which were, during the period of Hindu kings, current in Bengal as coins and were known as couuries. The bigger kind of shells called changuos were brought from their fisheries on the Choromandel Coast. They imported from Solor and Timor both the white and the red varieties of sandalwood which was in Bengal a rich commodity. These commodities fetched such high prices that according to Tavernier, if the Dutch had not come to India there would be no piece of iron in the Portuguese factories but all would be gold and silver, for the Portuguese with two or three voyages to China, Japan, Philippines and Mollucas would earn as much as a thousand per cent on their goods. In spite of the Dutch having come, however, gold and silver abounded in Portuguese houses in Goa and other parts of India.

From the records of the East India Company we learn a good deal about the trade and power of the Portuguese in Hooghly and in the rivers of Bengal. In a letter dated the 26th February 1616, the English factors at Surat communicated to the East India Company, "that hitherto they had not
found it practicable to open a trade in the countries bordering on the Ganges, the Portuguese being in exclusive possession of the commerce in this part of the Peninsula." Another communication in 1618 says that "for small shipping there were no ports but such as the Portuguese possessed." The Portuguese extended their commerce to Patna in Bihar, in which connection Hughes and Parker, who had gone there from Surat to found a factory, write in 1620,∗ "The Portingalls of late yeares, have had a trade here in Puttana, cominge up with theire friggits from the bottom of Bengalla where theye have two porttes, th, one called Gollye, th, other Pieppullye and therein are licenced by this kinge to inhabitt. Gollye is theire cheefest porte where theye are in greate multitudes, and have yearlye shipping both from Małačka and Cochine. The commodites theye usiallye bringe up hether is for the most part tyne, spices, and China wares, in live whereof theye transporte ambertye callicoes, carpets and and all sortes of thine cloth, which theye die into redds purposiye for saile to the sothwards. This cittye stands upon the river Ganges, whose sufite currant transportes theire friggits with such dexteritye that in five or six dayes theye usiallye go hence to theire portes, but in repairinge up againe spend thrice the tyme."

In their other communications, Hughes and Parker throw some light on the Portuguese trade. "There are" they wrote on July 12th 1620,† "some Portingalls at present in towne and more are latlye gon for theire portes in Bengala ; into whose trafigue I have made enquirye and gather that theye usialye bringe vendable here all sortes of spices and silke stufes of Chyna, tyne and some jewelleres ware ; in lewe wereoff theye transporte course Carpets of Junapore (Jaunpore), amberyes cassaes (a kind of cloth) and some alike." On the 6th of

† Ibidem, p. 115.
August 1620 Hughes and Parker spoke of many Portuguese frigates having come to Patna from Sātgāon and remarked that the Portuguese merchants were wont to buy all they could lay hands on.*

The Portuguese shipped various things from Bengal, seat as it was of a great many industries and manufactures. Pyrard de Laval who travelled in Bengal in the beginning of the 17th century says,† “The inhabitants (of Bengal), both men and women, are wonderfully adroit in all such manufactures such as of cotton, cloth and silks and in needlework, such as embroideries which are worked so skilfully, down to the smallest stitches that nothing prettier is to be seen anywhere.” The natural products of Bengal were also abundant, and various are the travellers who have dwelt on the fertility of the soil of Bengal watered as it is by the holy Ganges. When Manrique came to Bengal in 1628 he found there plenty of foodstuffs, fowls, pigeons, castrated goats whose meat the people preferred to mutton, veal, vegetables, rice, butter, sweetmeats and milk, sweets. To export such commodities as rice butter, oil and wax 100 ships were annually laden in the ports of Bengal. Rice was very cheap, a candi (about 500 lbs. but in Bengal 1200lbs.) costing only three or four rupees; one contaro of butter (75lbs) cost only two rupees. Twenty or twenty-five fowls cost also about two rupees (one peso). A cow cost a rupee (three or four reals); 200 lbs of sugar seven or eight annas. These prices which Manrique gives may seem extraordinarily cheap but many others confirm him. In Bowrey’s time (1669-1679) prices had gone a little high excepting of fowls. He says ‡ “A very good cowe is sold for foure shillings six pence vis., two rupees, a good hogg for ¾ of a rupee, 45 or 50 fowls for one

* The English Factories, ut supra, p. 197.
‡ Countries Round the Bay of Bengal. pp. 193, 194.
rupee." Bowrey adds that the Portuguese themselves used to prepare in Hooghly all sorts of sweetmeats from mangoes, oranges, lemons, ginger, mirabolans, ringroots etc. and also make pickles from mangoes, bamboo, lemon etc., which were all good and cheap.

Fruits seem to have been abundant in Bengal, the daintiest of all being mangoes on which unstinted praise has always been lavished by European writers. There were no wines in Bengal but spirit distilled from rice and jogree was plentiful. The trade in opium and its extracts was very great as it was used as an aphrodisiac. Dacca was then the Gangetic emporium of trade. It was there that those priceless muslins were made even as early as the Roman days. Its thread was so delicate that it could hardly be discerned by the eye. Tavernier mentions,* "Muhammad Ali Beg when returning to Persia from his embassy to India presented Cha Safi III with a cocoanut of the size of an ostrich egg, enriched with precious stones, and when it was opened a turban was drawn from it 60 cubits in length, and of a muslin so fine that you would scarcely know what it was you had in your hand." These muslins were made fifty and sixty yards in length and two yards in breadth and the extremities were embroidered in gold, silver and coloured silk. The Emperor appointed a supervisor in Dacca to see that the richest muslins and other varieties of cloth did not find their way anywhere else except to the Court of Delhi. Strain on the weavers' eyes was so great that only sixteen to thirty years old people were engaged to weave. These are the men who with their simple instruments produced those far-famed muslins that no scientific appliances of civilized times could have turned out.

The betel-leaf alone brought four thousand rupees of revenue to the Governor of Dacca. In Midnapore scents were manufac-

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tured from flowers and scented oils from a kind of grain and they were highly valued because they were used by the people to rub themselves with, after bath. In Hijili there was a great trade in salt, sugar, wax, silk and cloth made from grass (Gingham). There was a vast trade in salt in Sandwip and annually as many as two hundred ships laden with it sailed from there. Ship-building material was very cheap in Sandwip and Cæsar de Federici says that the Sultan of Constantinople had found it cheaper to have his ships built there rather than at Alexandria. He calls Sandwip “the fertilest Iland in all the world.” Speaking about the cheapness of goods he remarks,* “And when the people of the Iland (of Sandwip) saw the ship, and that we were coming a land : presently they made a place of Bazar or Market, with Shops right over against the ship with all manner of provision of victuals to eate, which they brought downe in great abundance, and sold it so good cheape, that wee were amazed at the cheapnesse there of. I bought many salted Kine there, for the provision of the ship, for halfe a Larine a piece, which Larine may be twelve shillings sixe pence, being very good and fatte, and foure wilde Hoggges ready dressed for a Larine ; great fat Hennes for a Bisse a piece which is at the most a Penie ; and the people told us that we were deceived the half of our money, because we bought things so deare. Also a sacke of fine rice for a thing of nothing and consequently all other things for humaine sustenance were there in such abundance that it is a thing incredible but to them that have seene it.” In the beginning of the eighteenth century Captain A. Hamilton says† that he was informed by one who wintered there “that he bought 580 pound weight of rice for a rupee or half a crown, eight geese for the same money and sixty good tame poultry for the same, and cloth is also incredibly cheap, it is but thinly inhabited.”

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* Purchas, His Pilgrimes, Frederick, Vol. X, p. 137.

The Portuguese took full advantage of the cheapness of goods in Bengal and sold them at an enormous profit in their numerous ports in the East. The wealth that such commerce brought to the Portuguese is unimaginable. It also brought luxury in its train. Pyrard de Laval says* that the Portuguese men of quality travelled on horseback, and that the harness of horses coming from Bengal, China, and Persia was all of silk embroidery enriched with gold and silver and fine pearls. The stirrups were of silver gilt, the bridle was adorned with precious stones and silver bells. The grooms carried fine horsecloths of red velvet fringed with gold and embroidery for covering the horses when their masters dismounted. It would be out of place here to relate the luxuries and wealth, which the trade of Bengal as of the whole East brought to the Portuguese. One of the reasons why Akbar asked two Portuguese from Hooghly to come to him was that he was charmed to see the precious goods they brought there. The Portuguese had found the trade of Bengal so profitable that even in the latter half of the eighteenth century there was an attempt in Lisbon at the proposal of Viceroy Conde de Ega to form a Company exclusively to trade with Bengal.† The Company was however soon wound up and the plan, like most of the plans at this time, was never realized.

† Conselho Ultramarino No. 32. Vide Danvers, Report on the Portuguese Records etc. p. 15.
CHAPTER XI

THE PERIOD OF DECADENCE

...Ah! Que desmaio
Apaga o marcio ardor da Lusa gente?*
Barbosa du Bocage

With the dawn of the seventeenth century the Portuguese power in the East had begun to decline. After spreading her influence over two worlds, Portugal had exhausted herself. The task undertaken was too great for a small nation. The energy soon spent itself out. Sailors could not be found to man her fleets even when outlaws and convicts were set at liberty. Even the expedition of the Governor Estevão da Gama who came to India in 1540 was chiefly composed of convicts. The later Portuguese were not of the type of Albuquerque, Cunha or Castro. In judging of the Portuguese of the seventeenth century, one should remember that the ships which sailed from the Tagus brought chiefly the refuse of Portugal to India. The last flash of Portuguese genius shone in D. João de Castro, Viceroy of Goa, 1545-1548. The subsequent half a century marks the period of transition from glory to actual decadence.

Pampered by wealth, the Portuguese in India had grown indolent. Luxury bred vice and profligacy. The civic virtues of the earlier rulers had given place to venality and corruption. Concealed beneath the pomp and splendour of the Portuguese grandees in India lay the seeds of decay and dissolution. Vice and corruption as in the days of the

* Ah! Lusians, what dull gloom o’erspreads, what dire dismay
Quells the conquering fire, where heroes held their sway?
        Trans J. C.
Roman Empire were but the symptoms of the impending collapse. The earlier Portuguese were schooled in hard facts, while those who followed were easy-going and reaped the harvest which had been sown after years of hard struggles. Growing immensely rich without any difficulty they lost themselves in a whirl of orgies.

The ecclesiastical supremacy in the political atmosphere had also its own results. In 1560, during King Sebastião's reign, the Inquisition was introduced in India. Its excesses in Europe alienated other European nations from the Portuguese who in a religious zeal cultivated this institution. Diogo de Couto has painted in vivid colours how the interference and preponderance of priests in politics contributed to the downfall of Portugal.* Ennes calls Dom Henrique, the Cardinal King, the grave-digger of Portugal, for tolerating ecclesiastical abuses and allowing a free hand to the Inquisition.†

The monastic orders in India had really grown to be an imperium in imperio. The Viceroy's of India though beset with numerous enemies, considered the friars and secular priests the most dangerous of all. The Jesuits not only arrogated to themselves magisterial power but even collected custom duties from the vessels, sailing past their convents, threatening to open fire from the cannon planted on the towers.‡ The government could hardly enforce submission and even when the Portuguese galleys threatened to bombard the Franciscan monastery in Goa they had to retreat when the Sacred Host was exposed to their view. As it has been said, one does not know how far, the abuses of power and the defiance of law, were the causes or symptoms of the collapse of Portuguese power in India.

* Dialogos do Soldado Prático, Lisbon, 1790.
† Historia de Portugal.
When King Dom Sebastião, "a beardless youth enamoured of glory" was killed whilst fighting on the sands of Kassr-el-kebir and his successor the Cardinal King Dom Henrique died before a year was over, the crowns of Spain and Portugal were united in 1580 under Philip II of Spain, (Philip I of Portugal). The event sealed the fate of Portugal. The Spanish King had no sympathies with Portugal, and treated her as a conquered country. A nation fettered with the bonds of captivity and slavery could no longer rule the world. Another little nation was now destined to break her bonds of servitude. Spain dominated at this time the Low Countries which possessed the two great ports of Antwerp and Amsterdam. It was to these ports that the Portuguese commerce of the East was shipped and thence transported all over Europe. But the Flemish and the Dutch having broken with Spain, the "fatal Philip" closed all the Portuguese ports against the Dutch in 1594. Being thus deprived of their trade in eastern commodities, the Dutch determined to sail to the East with a view to secure it for themselves. Portugal paid dearly for Philip's crime by the loss of an Empire.

The Dutch not only wrested a great part of the trade from the Portuguese but in the constant struggles that followed for the next sixty-nine years, at length emerged victorious. Portugal whom "Neptune and Mars feared" was unable to stand before a small nation but recently under the Spanish yoke. It was not that the Dutch were bolder than the Portuguese. A nation that had won the supremacy of the seas from the Arabs and the Turks when the Crescent was supreme even in Europe, cannot be said to have been excelled in maritime power and enterprise. The fact was that the Dutch, free from a foreign yoke, found the Portuguese demoralized and groaning under the oppression of the Spanish monarch. The Dutch first captured from the Portuguese the fort of Amboina and then
the forts of Ternate and of Tidore in the Moluccas. In 1641 fell Malacca, the rich gateway of commerce and the scene of the heroic feats of Albuquerque. Galle, Trincomali, Baticola, Negumbo, Calacature and Colombo in Ceylon were then captured. The fort of Jafnapatam, the Island of Manar noted for its pearl fisheries, Tuticorin, Negapatam, the forts of Quilon, Cranganore, Cannanore and the city of Cochin successively passed into the hands of the Dutch.

The English followed in the wake of the Dutch and bitter hostilities arose between them and the Portuguese. The English and the Dutch, indeed, combined to overthrow the Portuguese supremacy in the Indian Seas Three English vessels* and four Dutch ones blockaded Goa in January 1623 but were forced to retire by the middle of March. The English, did not wrest so many places from the Portuguese as the Dutch. They, however, lent assistance to the Persians in conquering Ormuz and were indirectly responsible for many Portuguese losses which followed.

The rivalry of the European nations was no less keen in Bengal. The Dutch ships arrived in Bengal for the first time in 1615, though Dutchmen like Van Linschoten† visited Bengal towards the latter half of the sixteenth century. The Dutch fleet joined the King of Arakan and signalized its first appearance in Bengal by fighting with the Portuguese, near the coast of Arakan‡. The battle lasted one day but the victory was indecisive. Thereafter the Dutch continued to trade with Bengal but did not settle permanently in Bengal until towards the middle of the seventeenth century§ when they

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* The names of the vessels were Exchange, Ann, and Diamond.
† It may be mentioned that Van Linschoten served in the Portuguese Indian fleet.
‡ Vide Chapter XIV.
§ Orme loosely says that the Dutch settled in Bengal in 1625. Cf.
THE PERIOD OF DECADE

established their factory in Hooghly. The Dutch rapidly extended their sphere of activities while the Portuguese settlement in Hooghly sustained a severe disaster in at the hands of the Mughals in 1632. Though the Portuguese continued to trade in Hooghly long after, the Dutch easily outrivalled them. The Dutch erected their Fort Gustavus in Chinsura, founded a silk factory in Cassimbazar, another factory for salting pork in Baranagar, north of Calcutta, owned a beautiful garden near Chandernagore and later on established a station at Fulta for their merchant vessels.

The first attempt of the English to open a trade with Bengal in 1617 through the influence of Sir Thomas Roe was unsuccessful. The attempts of Hughes and Parker in 1620 and of Peter Mundy in 1632 to establish factories in Patna also proved failures. The first English vessel that came to Bengal or rather Orissa, fared badly in a fight with a Portuguese frigate. In the letters of the early English factors who strove to secure trading concessions in Bengal there are various references to the supremacy of the Portuguese and to their possession of most of the ports in Bengal. Through the good offices of Dr. Gabriel Boughton who cured the Emperor Shāh Jahān of an illness, the English obtained a farman from the Emperor permitting them free trade in Bengal. In 1651 the English founded their first factory in Bengal and six years later they established subordinate agencies at Balasore, Cossimbazar and Patna. How the English spread all over Bengal and triumphed in the end is ably dealt with by other writers.

*History of Hindustan Vol. II, p. 8.* Bowrey remarks that both the English and the Dutch owned factories in Hooghly about the time of the massacre of the English in Amboina (1623) Yule however has shown that the English had no factory in Hooghly before 1651. In the English Factories records there are references to the Dutch trade but not to their factory till after 1650. Toynbee's reference to the Dutch farman of 1638 is not confirmed by Stavorinus in his List of Dutch farman.
The first French settlement in Bengal was the result of an accident. The first French ship, the Fleming, which made its appearance in Bengal in 1674 did not come of its own accord but was brought a captive by the Dutch from Balasore to Hooghly. The vessel was however set at liberty and the Frenchmen established near the Dutch garden, a small factory, which is mentioned by Streynsham Master.* The foundation of the great French settlement of Chandernagore is believed to have originated in the farman of Aurangzeb granted in 1688. The French, however, did not put any difficulties in the way of the Portuguese trade in Bengal. Until Joseph François Dupleix was appointed Intendant of Chandernagore in 1731, this little French territory was an insignificant place containing a few families and, as Alexander Hamilton said, "a pretty little church to hear mass in which is the chief business of the French in Bengal."

The first factory of the Danes was established at Balasore about 1636, and in Hooghly they settled sometime after 1676. The factory was built in Gondalpara to the south-east of Chandernagore. A part of Gondalpara is still called Dinemardanga, that is, the land of the Danes. They obtained the settlement of Serampore in 1755 from Ali Vardi Khan. As the rise of the Danes, the Prussians, and the Flemish who successively established themselves in Bengal, did not contribute to the downfall of the Portuguese in any way, their account need not be given here.

It was the Mughals who struck the fatal blow at the Portuguese power in Bengal. Once their best friends, the Mughals proved to be their worst enemies. The siege of Hooghly in 1632 was the beginning of the downfall of the Portuguese in

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THE PERIOD OF DEcadence

Western Bengal. In Eastern Bengal the Portuguese were, indeed, flourishing at this time, but only as adventurers and pirates. When Shaista Khán conquered Chittagong in 1668 the era of piracy was over. From this date onward the Portuguese cannot be said to have wielded paramount influence in Bengal. The day of the Portuguese was gone while that of the other European nations had dawned.
CHAPTER XII

THE FALL OF HOOGHLY

The privileges which Akbar had granted to the Portuguese were well maintained by his son Jahāngīr; for the latter like his father was glad at the promise made by the Portuguese to keep the Bay clear of pirates. He was, however, a weak-minded man and was entirely ruled by his wife, Nur Jahān. This fact had its influence on the history of Bengal. Nur Jahān favoured the fourth son of the emperor, Shāhryar, who had married the daughter of her first husband and tried to secure the throne for him. Prince Khurrum (Shāh Jahān) raised the standard of revolt in 1621, but being defeated he fled to Bengal and resided in Burdwan. During the time of the Mughals, every Mughal prince who was driven away from Delhi or had fallen into trouble in some way or other, looked to Bengal as a place of refuge, as it was far from the influence of Delhi and not peopled by warlike races. Humāyūn had done the same, then the Afghan Sher Shāh, and then again Prince Khurrum. From Burdwan Prince Khurrum asked Miguel Rodrigues, the Portuguese Governor of Dacca (or Hooghly), to help him with men and artillery and promised in return immense riches and vast tracts of land. Rodrigues declined to help him because he was a rebel son.* This insult cut the future Emperor to the quick and he swore revenge. Whatever the intention of the Portuguese Governor might have been, whether he thought it was unjust to help a rebel or that by helping the son he would incur the displeasure of the father,

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his rebuke was destined to cost the Portuguese a good deal. According to Fr. Cabral S. J., a Portuguese actually went to help him with a few ships and then deserted him.* Prince Khurrum fought the Mughal Governor on the banks of the Ganges, defeated him and he became the sole master of Bengal in 1622. But under the conditions he was placed in, he could not muster a force strong enough to give any trouble to the Portuguese. Two years later the imperial army engaged Prince Khurrum again and defeated him, but on his asking pardon his kindly father forgave him. On the death of Jahāngir, Prince Khurrum ascended the throne in 1627 as Shāh Jahān and appointed his best friend, Kasim Kháñ, Governor of Bengal ordering him to keep a watchful eye on the Portuguese, so that the earliest opportunity might be taken to drive them from Hooghly. Another cause which heightened Shāh Jahān’s wrath against the Portuguese was that the year before the siege of Hooghly he had sustained serious defeats losing more than 50,000 horse in his quarrel with Adil Kháñ of Bijapore, and he attributed the latter’s success to the help which the Adil Kháñ had received from the Portuguese.†

Fr. Cabral S. J. and Manrique who have left the best accounts of the siege of Hooghly enumerate many other causes which led to that tragic event. Fr. Cabral was an eye-witness of the siege and was one of those who escaped. Manrique was in Bengal at the time and was in fact mixed up with the causes of the siege. Shāh Jahān, relates Fr. Cabral, felt the affront of one Manoel Tavares, a country-born Portuguese who having gone to his help with a few galleys when he rose in revolt against his father, had abandoned him at a critical moment. To add to the insult, the Portuguese of Hooghly had not sent him an embassy to congratulate him on

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* Fr. Cabral, Fr. Besse’s Trans. Catholic Herald of India, Feb. 6, 1918, p. 111.
† Faria y Souza, Asia, Steven’s Trans., Vol. III, p. 402.
his ascending the throne. They were, it was alleged, in league with the King of Arakan who committed depredations on the Mughal territories and were supplying him with men, munitions and galleys. Above all the Mughals seem to have been exasperated at the conduct of a Portuguese captain of Chittagong who seized a fair and pretty Mughal lady during one of his piratical raids. Manrique dwells at length on this episode in which he intervened the lady to console her daughter and mother-in-law in their misfortune. It was this incident which according to him precipitated the siege. Fr. Cabral S. J. supposes that the Mughals were indeed afraid that the Portuguese might possess themselves of the 'kingdoms of Bengal,' considering their increasing power in Bandel (Hooghly) and the high regard in which they were held by the native Hindus.

According to the Muhammadan historians the causes of the siege of Hooghly were quite different. Kasim Khan the Governor of Bengal is said to have sent a report to Shāh Jahān complaining "that instead of confining their attention to the business of merchants, the Portuguese had fortified themselves in that place (Hooghly), and were become so insolent that they committed many acts of violence upon the subjects of the empire, and presumed to exact duties from all the boats and vessels which passed their factory, and had completely drawn away all the commerce from the ancient port of Satgong, that the Portuguese were in the habit of kidnapping or purchasing poor children and sending them as slaves to other parts of India and that their pirates in consort with the Mughs committed innumerable aggressions on the inhabitants of the districts on the eastern branch of the Ganges."* Though it is true that the Portuguese in Hooghly had grown insolent and took many liberties, they were not in league with the Chittagong pirates. They

* Stewart, History of Bengal, p. 240.
however, bought the slaves sold by the pirates as they would buy of any body else. Kidnapping people and committing aggressions were not the practices of the Portuguese of Hooghly but of the Portuguese of Chittagong and lower Bengal, who had disowned their King and country and were mercenaries in the pay of the King of Arakan. As to the alleged aggressions in Hooghly the Mughals themselves indulged in them freely as can be seen from Fr. Du Jarrie's description of the visit of Domingo Carvalho to the Portuguese of Hooghly.

There might have been some private Portuguese individuals against whom the accusations made by the Mughals might have been rightly made. But considering as a whole, it is necessary to differentiate between the adventurers of Chittagong and the Portuguese of Hooghly. It was thus that the Portuguese replied to the Mughals during the peace negotiations. “To the complaints of the two Moors, the captain and his assistants answered in writing stating that the greater part of the charges against the city were mere falsehoods, the inventions of Martin Afonso and his crew. If necessary they would prove it by the authoritative evidence of the merchants, Moors and Pagans who had been for many years trading at Hugli. The other accusations concerned private persons, they contended, and they were in possession of a document confirmed by king Jehangir and Sultan Paraves, his son, to the effect that the Bandel would never be held responsible as a body for the misdemeanours of particular individuals.”

It may be added that Asiaticus mentions as the cause of the siege of Hooghly, that “In 1632 the Portuguese committed excesses on the Imperial Mahal at Hooghly: the emperor demanded satisfaction which was denied him.”

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* Vide Chapter IV, p. 72-73.
† Fr. Cabral, Catholic Herald of India, Feb. 13, 1918, p. 130.
to say what was the source of Asiaticus's information but the fact is that as Fr. Hosten S. J. says, the Emperor never had any Imperial Mahal in Hooghly. There is also a Mughal story to the effect that the Empress who had a dislike for the Portuguese prevailed on Shāh Jahān to crush their power in Bengal. When she was in Bengal she is said to have been offended at the sight of the holy pictures and images which were in the Portuguese Churches. Manucci* says that she was enraged with the Portuguese because when she was residing near Hooghly (Burdwan) with his husband, the Portuguese seized two of her beloved slaves, which they refused to return in spite of her urging them to do so.

Of the plan and the conduct of the siege there are excellent accounts in Fr. Cabral's Letter, Abdul Hamid Lāhorī's Bādshāhnāma and Khafi Khān's Mun-takhābul-lubār. The latter repeats more or less the Bādshāhnāma and Stewart's description is chiefly based on them. The most graphic and certainly faithful description is that of Fr. Cabral S. J. who took part in the siege and was one of those who escaped. Other accounts can be found in Faria y Souza's Asia Portuguesa, Manucci's Storia do Mogor, Bernier's Travels and Fr. Catrou's "General History of the Mogol Empire." The Muhammadan historians are at great variance with the Portuguese historians, who themselves do not exactly agree in certain points.

When Kasim Khān got orders to march against Hooghly he knew it was no easy task. He postponed the attack as long as he could, till it happened that a Portuguese half-caste named Martim Affonso de Mello, whose evil doings had alienated him from the sympathy of the Portuguese, went especially to Dacca and prevailed upon him to march on Hooghly. De Mello disclosed to Kasim Khān the treasures of the Portuguese

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and informed him that the defences were not as strong as he supposed. Being thus assured, Kasim Khān delayed no more in making preparations for the attack and ordered all his ships and his land forces to be in readiness.

Kasim Khān's son 'Ināyah-ulla was given charge of the army though Allāh Yār Khān was the real commander. Bahadur Kambu with five hundred horse and a large force of infantry was sent with another army making it ostensibly appear that he was going to capture some lands in Mackusaba. The object of all these forces was rumoured to be an attack against Hijīli. According to Manrique the armies were commanded by fourteen Nawabs (Muraos); according to Frei Nicolau by eighteen Nawabs and according to Asiaticus by twenty-two Omrahs or Nawabs. A fleet consisting of five hundred ships (Manrique says 600) was sent under Khwaja Shere to operate from the river and cut off the retreat of the Portuguese. This fleet appeared on the 24th June 1632* in the river about ten leagues south of Hooghly and only two days later the army consisting of hundred and fifty thousand men† ninety castled elephants and fourteen thousand horse (Manrique) began the operations by advancing from the north within a league from the town. Captain Manoel de Azavedo‡ conducted the defence. The Portuguese

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* I have followed the dates of Fr. Cabral. Various incorrect dates have been assigned to the siege. Elphinstone (Hist. of India) Beale (Orient. Biog. Dict.), Maāsir-ul-Umara give the date as 1631 and Faria y Souza as 1632. The Bādshāḥnāma relates that the first attack was made on 2nd Zil-hijja 1241. The Portuguese official account says that the siege lasted from June 21 to Sept. 29, 1633, Vide Danvers Records p. 29.

† This is according to Fr. Cabral. Faria y Souza's number is 200,000.

‡ Fr. Catrou and then Asiaticus say that Michael (Miguel) Rodrigues who had refused help and insulted Shāh Jahān in 1621 was captain of the Portuguese in Hooghly at the time of the siege. This is wrong. Fr. Cabral and Manrique have a greater right to be believed.
forces consisted of only three hundred Portuguese including their descendants and about six hundred Native Christians. According to Cabral and Manrique the Portuguese had neither a fort nor even artillery. Khafi Khān distinctly says† that the Portuguese had a strong fort with towers and embattlements furnished with artillery, but his description is only an enlargement upon the Bādshāhnāmā‡ which does not make any distinct mention of a fort though it says that the Portuguese had erected large substantial buildings fortified with canon and muskets and other implements of war and that the town was defended by the river on one side and on the other three sides by a ditch filled from the river. Manrique says,§ "The town was situated in an open plain along the banks of the Ganges and was exposed on all sides. It had neither wall nor rampart but only an earthen parapet which they had thrown up, a thing of little value and still lesser strength." Fr. Cabral also asserts that the Portuguese had only erected barricades and built palisades from house to house, during the siege.

The plan of the Mughals was to attack both by land and by sea. The siege began on the 24th June, 1632 when Khwaja Shere's fleet appeared before Hooghly advancing from the south, while on the 26th the army began to operate from the north. First of all, the Mughals captured the lands which the Portuguese possessed on both sides of the river outside the town. By July 2nd all the northern suburbs and the Casa de Misericordia with its

* The numbers given by Fr. Cabral are three hundred whites besides natives. Manrique gives 180 Portuguese and 600 slaves. The official version puts down the Portuguese forces to 200 Portuguese and 600 Christian slaves. Cf. Doc. Remet. Liv. 30 fols. 281 and 282, or see Danvers Records etc. p. 29.

† Elliot, Hist of India, Vol. VII, p. 211.
§ Catholic Herald of India, May 29th, 1918, p. 414.
Church was in the hands of the enemy. But the attack cost them a good deal. An Augustinian friar converted the tower of his Church into a citadel and delivered such blows from there with seven or eight Portuguese and ten or twelve natives that after the attack was over, it was found that the compound was strewn over with many corpses of the enemy. The Bādshāh-nāmā says that the Mughals captured or killed all the Portuguese they could get hold of before attacking the town itself and forced four thousand Bengali boatmen, who were serving the Portuguese, to join them. After playing the havoc, both sides desired for peace, and entered into negotiations. The Portuguese delivered to the Moors four vessels and ninety Christian slaves on promise that the siege would be raised. But Kasim Khān again demanded 700,000 patacas* from the Santa Casa de Misericordia and the moiety of all the goods of the inhabitants. After much fruitless dallying, the fight was resumed.

The Mughal forces pressed on and the handful of Portuguese gave up the defence of Bali where all the Churches and the buildings of the Augustinians were situated and retired southwards to their main town of Hooghly. While retreating, the Portuguese set fire to their buildings and to the great Augustinian convent. The Moors who occupied Bali completed the destruction of the Portuguese buildings but spared the Jesuit College where their officers stayed. From the 31st July the Moors began to attack the main town of Hooghly and that little band of Portuguese under the command of Captain Manoel de Azavedo offered a stubborn resistance although without any defences.

The Moors hurled repeated attacks, the fleet co-operating now and then, but each time they were repulsed. Hardly a

* Pataca was a silver coin worth about two rupees eight annas.
day passed without fighting. The Portuguese were so few in number that they kept themselves mainly on the defensive, content to work as much havoc as possible in the enemy ranks. Meanwhile the Moors received reinforcements, artillery and ships from Rajmahal, Dacca and Burdwan. They dug up new trenches and mined the whole of the Bandel. They launched a naval and a land attack, but the Portuguese ships stood the attack bravely. Fighting continued in this way for a month and half. The Moors entered again into negotiations and the Portuguese eager to rid themselves of the scourge paid 100,000 tangas (rupees) to them. They however never meant to make peace but only under false promises to extort money from the Portuguese in order to pay the soldiers that were clamouring for salaries. Meanwhile Martim Affonso was preparing to bar the flight of the Portuguese down the river. He bridged the river with a pontoon of boats and also threw across the river many thick cables and iron-chains. Fire-ships were kept in readiness and trenches were dug along the banks of the river for more than five leagues.

Hostilities were again resumed and the Portuguese unable to hold the town any longer took to their vessels under cover of darkness and began their disastrous flight on the night of September 24th. About fifty or sixty Portuguese remained in Hooghly and kept on the fire to give an idea that the town was not evacuated, but on the next day the Moors launched a violent attack capturing the town*. The description of the flight down the river by Fr. Cabral, is one of the grandest pages in the history

* The town was therefore captured according to Fr. Cabral on the 25th September, 1632. The Portuguese official account fixes the date of the capture on the 29th September and the Bādshāhnāma on the 14th Rabi-al-Awul 1241 (Elliot). Stewart, however, gives the date 14th Rabi-al-Awul 1042 (Hist. of Bengal). According to Fr. Cabral the siege lasted exactly for three months and according to the Bādshāhnāma for three months and half.
of the Portuguese in the East. The bravery the Portuguese ships displayed has been seldom surpassed. In fact the defence of Hooghly can only be compared to D. João de Castro's defence of Diu, and well may Fr. Cabral say, "Ours did wonders never heard of before". Each of the Portuguese pataches, and there were many, contained about twenty-five or thirty Portuguese and some natives and few falconets and guns. With these they had to pass through the narrow width of the Hooghly river opposing five hundred ships, a land force of a hundred thousand strong and a hundred and twenty pieces of artillery protected by trenches extending on either side of the river for a distance of five leagues. The pataches commanded by Pantaleão de Seixas, Luis de Maya, Pedro de Couto and Gomes Bareiros did wonders. But the tactics of Khwaja Shere and Martim Affonso cut off all means of escape. Most of the Portuguese ships were sunk. On September 27th Pedro de Couto's boat was blown up and it went down with 60,000 tangas belonging to private individuals. The widow of Pedro de Couto and many Portuguese and natives jumped into the river and kept on swimming and diving until they were rescued by six boats that had managed to escape. Even these six boats met with opposition at Betor (Howrah) in the iron chains that were put across the river. The patache of Domingos (Dsoes) De Seixas cut asunder an iron chain and passed proudly on leading two other boats but capsized further down. At the pass of Betor the pataches of Luis de Maya and of Pantaleão de Seixas were lost, after desperate and heroic fighting against both land and sea forces. Some Portuguese ships however escaped safely carrying three thousand people, a hundred and odd Portuguese, sixty or seventy Portuguese ladies (whites) the rest being country-born people and slaves. The King of Arakan sent to the Portuguese an expedition consisting of some galleys, and manned by Portuguese soldiers but the help arrived when the tragedy was over and
the town of Hooghly had passed into the hands of the Mughals.

About a hundred Portuguese were either killed or captured; besides them four Augustinians, three Jesuits, six or seven secular priests and twenty-five married soldiers with their boys and girls lost their lives.*

Fr. Cabral does not give the number of the “slaves and the coloured people” lost, but the Bādshāh nāmā says that ten thousand Feringhis and rayots died. This number is probably correct if it includes all the Portuguese, their descendants and the natives who died during the siege and in course of their flight. They could not be, however, all fighting men whose number did not exceed a thousand (300 Portuguese and 600 natives) and a vast majority must have been of the civil population. In the Batavia Dagh Register 1631-1634, it is mentioned that the Dutch heard that 1,560 Portuguese had been killed and 1,500 taken prisoners. The Mughals captured four thousand Christian prisoners and sent them to Agra. Regarding the Portuguese fleet, the Bādshāh nāmā says that out of 64 Dinghas (large vessels) 57 grabs and 200 Jalies, only one Ghrab and two Jalies escaped.†

On the Mughal side the losses were enormous. The Bādshāh nāmā admits that only 1,000 of the Imperial army died in the conflict. Fr. Cabral holds as probable the estimate which a Mughal gave him in Arakan, namely 4,300 dead or missing.‡ This number does not agree with the number of Faria y Souza who says§ 50,000 Mughals were killed. It may, however, be taken as the probable one. As to the vessels of the Mughals, Fr. Cabral says “they lost 32 boats in the fire

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* Fr. Cabral, Catholic Herald of India, March 27, 1918, p. 243.
† Elliot, Hist. of India, Vol. VII, p. 34.
‡ Catholic Herald of India, March 27, 1918 p. 243.
§ Asia Portuguesa, Stevens’s Trans., Vol. III, p. 403.
raft engagement more than 60 in the pontoon affair, and more than a hundred of their ships remained stranded on the shore, disabled for ever".*

The three thousand survivors, among whom was Fr. Cabral, fled to the Sauger Island where they took refuge, but sometimes after a plague broke out, and those who escaped its ravages migrated to Hijili and Banja. Meanwhile they obtained permission from the King of Arakan to build a fortress in Sauger and Manoel de Azavedo proceeded with the work. The King of Arakan who was in league with the Portuguese of Dianga granted many other concessions to them and to the survivors of Hooghly. He ordered the captains of his fleet to be always in readiness to help the Portuguese in Sauger if the Mughals attempted to do them any harm.

On the other hand the fate of the four thousand Christian prisoners taken to Agra, where they reached in July 1633, was indeed lamentable. Manrique dwells at length on the martyrdom of these men and fortunately for the historian, completes the description of Fr. Cabral. Bernier in a few words summarises the cruelties to which the prisoners were subjected in Agra.† He says, they were all made slaves; the handsome women were shut up in the seraglio, the old women and others were distributed among different Omrahs. The young lads were circumcised and made pages; and men of age renounced for the most part their faith, either terrified by the threatenings they heard daily, that they should be trampled upon by elephants or drawn away by fair promises. Some Friars persisted in their faith and the Missionaries of Agra, who notwithstanding all this unhappiness remained in their houses, found means after-

* Catholic Herald of India, ut supra.
† Bernier’s Travels etc. Constable Ed. p. 177.
wards, partly by friends, partly by money, to get many of them away, and to have them conveyed to Goa, and to other places belonging to the Portuguese. According to the Portuguese records the Viceroy of Goa really sent an expedition to Bengal in 1643 to rescue the Portuguese survivors. *

* Danvers, Report on the Portuguese Records etc. p. 29.
CHAPTER XIII

THE RETURN OF THE PORTUGUESE TO HOOGHLY

It is really surprizing how the Portuguese established themselves again in Hooghly scarcely a year after the siege of Hooghly. This is all the more surprising because Shāh Jahān was at the time badly disposed towards the Christians and had not ceased persecuting them, even up to 1635. Yet it is true the Portuguese returned to Bengal with full liberty and a grant of 777 bighas of rent-free land by July 1633. The account of their return is found in a letter (July 17, 1633) written from Harishpur (Orissa) to Mr. Cartwright of Balasore regarding the possibilities of English trade in Bengal.* The writer says "Those Portinggalls whilome expelled [from] Hugly hath found greate favour with Shawgahan (Shah Jahan) and re-entered that place to the number of 20 persones ; hows caviddall (whose capital) for theirs commensing a new investment is the third part of there goods formerly cessed on, which with large priveliges and tashareefes (presents) with honer the King hath bestowed on them. So that our exspectation [of] Hugly is frus-strayt and I feare likewise Pippoly will n [ot by] us be obtaineded beeing a nancient (convenient) Randyvoes of the [irs] how som 10 parsones have latly complained to this Nabob of our seeking to put them from that porte ; have answered we intended on such matter but only for Bollasary [Balasore] or Harssapooore

* Forster, The English Factories in India, 1630-1633, p. 308-309. This letter is not signed." Sainsbury in his Calendar supposed that the letter was written by John Powell (Poule) and Yule accepting the conjecture printed part of the letter in his Hedge's Diary, Vol. III p. 177. The fact is however that John Powell does not seem to have been in Harishpur until Sept. 19. C. R. Wilson therefore changed the date of the letter to Oct. 17 (Early Annals, Vol. I, p. 17). Forster discussing this question in a note (p. 307) concludes that it was Thomas Colley who wrote the letter.
(Harishpur) so with great delassa (encouragement) they were dismissed.” It will be seen from this letter that the English agent distinctly says that the Portuguese who had been expelled had now returned with such powers that all hopes of the English to establish trade in Hooghly and even in Pipili were frustrated. This is well confirmed by Frei João de S. Nicolau in his memorial * of 1785 and also by Frei Luiz de Santa Rita, the prior and administrator of the Convent of Bandel in another memorial † prepared by him in 1820 for the Provincial of the Augustinians who had been requested by the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa to furnish information about the grant of seven hundred and seventy-seven bighas of land which he wanted to transfer for the Crown of Portugal. Frei Luiz de Santa Rita reported that in the archives of Bandel he found a MSS. memorial from which it was clear that Shāh Jahān’s farman was given in 1633 to the Augustinian Missionaries and the Christians of Bandel. He added that this farman was lost in 1756 when Sirāj-ud-daulā besieged the English in Hooghly and sacked Bandel. He however found in the archives of the Convent a copy of the farman written in Persian with a Portuguese version attached to it.

Besides the grant of 777 bighas of rent-free land it conceded to the Portuguese the following seventeen religious and commercial privileges:‡


†, Biker’s *Colleccao etc. ut supra*, Tom. XII, pp. 12-17. It was first published by Cunha Rivara in *O Chronista de Tissuari* Vol. I, pp. 60-62.

‡ The English translations of the Memorials of Frei Nicolau and of Frei Luiz de Santa Rita were first published by Fr. H. Hosten S. J. in *Bengal Past and Present*, Jan.-Mar., 1915 pp. 106-118. Regarding these privileges I have not, however, availed myself of Fr. Hosten’s translation wherever I found that it did not strictly conform to the original.
1. That at the time of the Mass, no Moor, or piao, (footman, soldier) shall have the power to enter the Church to cause a disturbance.

2. That the Padre of Bandel shall administer justice to its inhabitants in all matters except in crimes punishable with death, not excepting theft.

3. That the Padre shall give the property of the deceased to their heirs or creditors, and the surplus to the poor, and the Serca (government) shall not interfere in this matter.

4. That, if the owners of the ships of both the Portuguese and the Dutch which land there, happen to die, the Dorbar shall not interfere with any of the ship's goods, but only the custom-dues for the said goods shall belong to him (the Dorbar).

5. That the Dutch ships shall not have the power to seize the Portuguese ships coming to Bengal.

6. That the Portuguese ships coming to Bengal shall sell their goods in any harbour of Bengal, and that no change shall be made in the custom-dues.

7. That, should the slaves of the Christians run away and be caught again in any place whatever, no Moor shall have the power to hinder them (being caught) and still less to make them Moors.

8. That no Dorbar shall be allowed to retain the servants or employees (officiaes) of whatever class of Christians if they run away to another territory.

9. That, in time of scarcity, no ships shall be allowed to take in rice for exportation.

10. If the Christians are found to live in concubinage, the Dorbar shall have nothing to do with this matter.

* Dorbar or Durbar means a court, levee or government. Here, however, it seems to stand for a government official as, a little below, Dorbar is qualified by nemhum (no).
11. Should fires break out in the houses of Bandel, and bambus, stakes and straw be necessary for rebuilding them, the Serrar of the Moor shall not have the power to levy tolls, (tomar direitos) or to prevent their being bought or obtained from any other place.

12. That, if some married families come from Europe, and wish to take a house to live in this Houguli, it shall be given them free and no customs (fretos) shall be taken from them.

13. That all eatables coming to this Bandel, shall not be liable to custom-duities.

14. That in criminal cases the father shall not pay for his son, nor the son for his father, but each one for himself.

15. That families coming from Europe shall have the power to remain here for what time they like, and no one shall have the power to stop them, when they wish to return to Europe.

16. That the Fodar (Faujdar) shall not have the power to call all the Christians for military service in case of war, but only four or five of the oldest and the best counsellors.

17. That, the two xequis (Shaikhs) who were down the river (para abaixo: lower down) should not take from the Franguis more than was at first customary.

In 1641 Shâh Shuja granted a new farman confirming all the privileges of the first farman and promising the Portuguese his protection. Toynbee also refers to this new farman.* Dr. Wise who says he based his Statistical Account of Hooghly on MSS. records and must have, probably, seen the document of that time or perhaps the farman of 1646 which seems to have caused the damage of 1746, says of the re-settlement of the Seys that a farman was promulgated by beat of tom-tom through all the country ordering the immediate return of the

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† Bengal Catholic Herald, 21st May, 1842.
captives (Portuguese) who were loaded with presents and sent back to their former residence. The Portuguese thus received into favour obtained a charter (sunud) signed by the Emperor by which he allowed them to return to Hooghly and to build a town to the north of the former Fort, still known by the Europeans as Bandel and by the natives by that of Balaghur (strong house). The land thus assigned to the Christians consisting of 777 beeghas was given free of rent and the Friars were declared exempted from the authority of the Subadars, Fouzdaris and other officers of state. They were even allowed to exercise magisterial power with regard to Christians but were denied that of life and death—at the same time the Emperor ordered all his officers and subjects in Bengal to assist the brave Portuguese. The Christians returned to Bengal in 1633..."

It is difficult to make out how the Portuguese could have been allowed to come to Hooghly, and given such great power by the Emperor only ten months after the siege of Hooghly and at a time when he persisted in persecuting the Portuguese and the Christians in other parts of his Empire. Almost all the writers on Hooghly, Rev. Long. Dr. Wise, Crawford, Asiaticus and others attributed the return of the Portuguese to a miracle worked by God in the case of Frei João de Cruz who was they say among the captives taken to Delhi. The first account of this story about Frei João de Cruz's miracle was given in 1785 by Frei João de S. Nicolau who was prior of Bandel 1782-84, in a memorial drawn up by him after his retirement to Goa. The later writers especially Asiaticus and Dr. Wise added much to what Frei Nicolau related and the recollection of which, he said, was fresh in the memory of the people living there. Between the occurrence of the miracle, it may be added, and its account by Frei Nicolau a full century and a half had passed.
Divested of its embellishments, the story of the miracle is that after all the Christian prisoners from Hooghly were dealt with, Frei João de Cruz, being well known for his piety, was reserved for a special punishment. The Emperor and his court having assembled on a gala day Frei de Cruz was placed in a large hall before them and a wild and infuriated elephant was let loose. To the surprise of all, the elephant did no harm to the kneeling friar but on the contrary lay prostrate before him in reverence and caressed him with his trunk. This created such a profound impression on the Emperor's mind that he pardoned Frei de Cruz, whereupon, the elephant as an expression of joy made three profound bows before the Emperor. The Emperor then granted Frei de Cruz and the Christians of Hooghly a charter allowing them to return to Hooghly and build a new town.

Fr. Hosten has very forcibly questioned the truth of this story and asserted that Frei João de Cruz never went to Agra at all and that Shāh Jahān did not grant liberty to the Christians brought from Hooghly.* He adduces the authority of Manrique who saw Frei João de Cruz in Hooghly in 1628, who was in Arakan from 1630 to 1635 and again visited Bengal in 1640, and who surely would have known everything about the miracle if it were true. Manrique far from referring to any such story, says that Frei João de Cruz was severely wounded when trying to escape from the siege of Hooghly that he was saved from death only by a miracle and that he lived in great sanctity in Goa where he died. "If Frei João da Cruz" asks Fr. Hosten, "had been the chief hero in the wonderful events which legend has grouped around his name, how is it that the Jesuit letters from Agra say nothing about him, and that Manrique says hardly more about him for the period

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1633-38 than what we have related; how is it that in the
large collection of letters of the English and the Dutch
factors or in the accounts of travellers we do not find the
slightest allusion to the scene of the rescue alleged to have
occurred at Agra; chiefly how it is that the writer of his
menology who intended the private edification of his breth-
ren in religion should not have picked up the most marvellous
facts of his history? The reason must be that he did not
find them in the Augustinian histories or that he found them
contradicted or self-contradicting”. These arguments and
Manrique’s evidence conclusively prove that Frei João de Cruz
could not have worked the miracle which tradition and modern
writers have ascribed to him. It cannot be denied, however,
that by itself, the grant of land by Shāh Jahān only ten months
after the siege of Hooghly and at a time when he was persecut-
ing the Portuguese elsewhere is nothing short of a miracle.
On the other hand Manrique says that Frei João de Cruz,
indeed, escaped death from his festering wounds only by a
miracle. Seeing that Frei João de Cruz’s recovery was
indeed associated with a miracle it is quite possible that his
name has been mixed up with another miraculous event, or a
wonderful physical occurrence which had actually taken place.
Fr. Hosten suggests that Shāh Jahān never made this grant,
though the copy of the original farman which was destroyed
in 1756, says that in 1633 ‘Emperor Sajan Mahameo Sujakam’
made the grant of land and the privileges to the Fathers and
Christians of Bandel. If the Christian captives taken from
Hooghly did not get the concession of 777 bighas of land and
other privileges from Shāh Jahān, what other Portuguese could
have got them and who gave them? The constructive part
of Father Hosten’s arguments and the explanation of this
concession is not as striking as the destructive one. He sur-
mises that perhaps through a bribe Mir Muhammad Azim
Khān, Governor of Bengal, 1632-39, made the grant on the
sly to a few Portuguese families (from where?) and that this grant was probably a confirmation of a part or whole of the grant made by Akbar to Tavares before 1580. It is not probable that Azim Khān could have taken such a step when Shāh Jahān’s wrath had not yet abated and when it was quite certain that the Emperor would come to know of such an important concession through some of the numerous Mughals who were in Bengal and who could not have been well disposed towards the Portuguese only a few months after the siege. As a matter fact, Azim Khān continued to be Governor of Bengal for six years after this suggested treachery with full confidence of the Emperor. Hence all that can be said at the present state of our historian researches is that the return of the Portuguese to Hooghly, under the sanction of Shāh Jahān only a few months after the siege, remains unexplained.

The Augustinians took possession of the 777 bighas of rent-free land and out of them about 280 bighas still belong to the Bandel Convent, the rest being lost through many litigations and bad management of the Priors. It is questionable, however, whether the grant of land was made to the Church, or to the Portuguese government. In 1782 the Portuguese ambassador in London learnt from an English merchant who had returned home from Madras that the Portuguese possessed an important commercial port near Calcutta managed by some runaway Portuguese who lived without any order or government but who raised a Portuguese flag, maintained a priest and abided by his authority. The Portuguese ambassador having informed the Home Government about this Portuguese possession, the Viceroy at Goa was asked to furnish detailed information regarding it. The Viceroy however knew no more about the affairs in Bengal than the Government at Lisbon and asked the Provincial of
the Bengal Missions to furnish the desired information. As a result of those dealings, Fr. João de S. Nicolau, who had been many years Prior of the Bandel Convent, drew up in 1783 after having retired to Goa a memorial signed to above. In this memorial he stated that the flag, raised in Bandel, was that of Our Lady of Rosary and not of the Portuguese Government and that the lands or the settlement belonged to the Augustinians, since the farman was granted to Fr. João de Cruz by the Mughal Emperor "signed with his own hand and sealed with his royal seal, bestowing on him 70 bighas of land in a place left to the Father's choice." When the Portuguese Government raised the question of the property again in 1820 and asked the Augustinian Provincial for a copy of the farman, Frei Luis de Santa Rita, vicar of Bandel, drew up another memorial in which he gave a detailed account of the settlement. He stated the farman was granted by the Mughal Emperor to the Fathers and the Christians, that it was destroyed during Siraj-ud-daulah's sack of Hooghly, and that its copy existed in the Bandel Convent, from which he had copied the seventeen privileges they enjoyed.

From what the Augustinian Fathers asserted in the memorials, it would appear that the Bandel lands belonged to the Church and not to the Portuguese Government, or to private persons. According to Manrique, an Augustinian friar, the Augustinian Fathers always refused to accept the grant of lands, "The Padchá or Emperor Acabar," he says, "as well as his son Zia-hianguir or Ianguir as he is more commonly called, tried more than once to give the Fathers lands for their maintenance, or assign to them mainás, that is a monthly allowance to be paid from their nacassesares or Royal treasuries, but the religious of St. Augustin always refused to accept such income, not only in this Empire (Bengal) but also in Persia.

and other infidel kingdoms where they live." In view of this, it would seem that the Augustinians could not have accepted the lands even if they were given to them. The grant was made in 1633 and Manrique's experience is of the same time, since he was in Bengal and Arakan from 1628-1636 and again in 1640. Thomas Colley or John Poule said that twenty Portuguese occupied the Bandel lands, without mentioning, however, whether they represented the Church or the Government.* There is a petition which a Portuguese named George Germain made, on the 31st December 1784, to the Queen of Portugal requesting her government to take possession of the lands that he declared belonged to the government and not to the Church.† This petition is earlier in date than the memorial of Frei João de S. Nicolau by two months and did not seem to have reached Portugal before the Portuguese minister in London communicated to his government the information he had received through an English source. George Germain maintains in the petition that the settlement of Bandel belonged to the Portuguese; that when the number of European Portuguese was diminishing in Bandel the Augustinians took charge of the lands and that these Fathers thinking themselves masters of the property lost the farman under conditions which he describes. He states that Fr. da Cruz influenced Shah Jahān to confirm the earlier grant of 777 bighas of land to the Portuguese, though he does not refer to any miracle. It is difficult to say how much credence the different statements deserve. It may be, taken for granted on the authority of John Poule or Thomas Colley, at least until the copies of the original farmans are discovered, that the grant of the lands was made to twenty private Portuguese persons who subsequently made

* Vide p. 141.
† This important document has been published in O Oriente Português, 1906. Vol. III, pp. 129-134. For its translation Vide Addenda II.
over the lands to the Church. Frey de Santa Rita said in 1820 that the Prior of Bandel delivered Shāh Shuja's farman of 1646 to the English government in 1786. It is possible, therefore, to find it in the Imperial Records Department. German in his Appeal of 1784, gives detailed directions regarding the finding of the copies of the farmans in the Mughal Records (vide Addenda II).

In whatever way the Portuguese might have settled again in Hooghly in 1633, they never regained their former power and political importance. As it has been already said, the Portuguese power in the East had long begun to decline and the Portuguese that came to India at this time were no longer the Portuguese of the days of Albuquerque. Besides, it was the time when European rival nations had come to Bengal and were striving to establish their supremacy by supplanting the power of the Portuguese. The Dutch obtained a farman from Shāh Jahān in 1625 to erect a factory in Hooghly and to trade in Bengal, and the Portuguese who had wrested the trade from the Moors, when their power was at its zenith even in Europe, could not compete with this brave little nation. The English who were for long powerless in Bengal on account of the Portuguese supremacy, obtained permission from Shāh Jahān to trade in Bengal in 1638 and gradually other nations stepped in where the Portuguese had an undisputed sway. Still the Portuguese trade continued to flourish to a considerable extent.

It is thus that the Venetian Manucci speaks of the Portuguese whom he saw in Hooghly about 1660: "Here I found the chief inhabitants of Hooghly, all of them rich Portuguese for in those days they alone were allowed to deal in salt throughout the province of Bengal."* He also adds "there were many Portuguese of good sense, of good family, well establish-

ed merchants at Hugli." Six years later Bernier says* that there were eight or nine thousand Portuguese and mesticos at Hooghly and that the Portuguese, driven from other quarters by the Dutch, resorted there. In 1669-1679 the number of the Portuguese and their descendants all over Bengal was no less than 20,000, according to Bowrey,† half of whom were in Hooghly. As in the palmiest days of the Portuguese in Hooghly, the number of the pure Portuguese did not exceed three hundred, Bowrey's numbers evidently include most of their descendants. Regarding the Portuguese trade in Hooghly Bowrey adds that many Portuguese ships sailed there transporting sundry commodities.‡

Though the English and the Dutch had obtained important commercial concessions, they met with a keen rivalry on the part of the earlier traders, though the latter had lost many of their own privileges. In the Diaries of Streynsham Master, who was Governor of Fort St. George and agent deputed by the Court of Directors to Bengal, several pages are devoted to the description of the business of a Portuguese merchant named João Gomes de Soito.§ This rich merchant rebuilt the Bandel Church (Hooghly) in 1661, and was buried in the Bandel Churchyard but unfortunately the tablet with the inscription on his tomb, which Asiaticus copied in 1803 is no longer to be found.|| On the ground that the E. I. Company refused to pay him a sum of about Rs. 6,000 due to him in 1652 on a consignment of cinnamon, sent by him to Persia in a Company's ship, he managed to have the English factors seized and imprisoned. A few years after, his son Pascal and his widow referred the

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† Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, Temple's Ed., p. 195.
‡ Ibidem p. 133.
§ Diaries of Streynsham Master, Temple's Ed., Vide Index s. v. De Soito.
|| Vide p. 230.
matter to the Nawab of Dacca and obtained a decree that the Company should pay him a thousand rupees. Such disputes frequently arose among the European traders in Bengal. In the struggle the Portuguese eventually fell. But up to the end of the seventeenth century they may be said to have maintained against powerful odds their sway over the commercial activities of Bengal. In the eighteenth century the Portuguese played a subordinate part in Bengal and their history merges into that of their descendants.