CHAPTER XIII

THE RETURN OF THE PORTUGUESE TO HOOGHLY

The Return to Hooghly, 1633

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 exspelled [from] Hugly hath found greate favour with Shawgahan (Shah Jahan) and re-entered that place to the number of 20 persones ; hows cavidall (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 beestowed on them. So that our exspectation [of] Hugly is frustrayt and I feare likwise Pippoly will n [ot by] us be obtainened 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 Harssapoore

* 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 Piplī 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.

The Privileges of the Portuguese

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

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* J. F. J. Biker's *Coleccão de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes, Tom. XII*, Lisboa, 1886 pp. 17-25. J. H. Cunha Rivara first published it as an addition to Teixeira Pinto's *Memorias Sobre as Possessões Portuguezas na India*, Nova-Goa, 1859.

† Biker's *Collecção 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 *pião*, (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 *Sercar* (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.

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* *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 *nenhum* (no).

11. Should fires break out in the houses of Bandel, and bambus, stakes and straw be necessary for rebuilding them, the Sercar 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 (*fretes*) shall be taken from them.

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

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 Fordar (*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 baixo* : lower down) should not take from the Franguis more than was at first customary.

In 1641 Shāh 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 Frei Rita or perhaps the *farman* of 1646 which seems to have escaped the ravages of 1746, says of the re-settlement of the Portuguese,† "A firman was promulgated by beat of tom-tom through all the country ordering the immediate return of the

* *Sketch of the Administration of Hughly.*

† *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, Fouzdars 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..."

The Explanation of the Return

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.

The Miracle

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

* *Bengal Past and Present*, Jan.-Mar. 1915, pp. 49-50 and *J. A. S. B* 1911, Vol. VII, No. 3 pp. 53-56.

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 brethren 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 persecuting 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 surmises that perhaps through a bribe Mīr Muhammad Azīm 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 seige, remains unexplained.

The Property of the Crown or the Church

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 Portuguese Settlement of 1633 included all the foreshore from the present jail, which is to the south of the area covered by the map, to the northern limit of the Circuit House Compound.

the Bengal Missions to furnish the desired infomation. As a result of those dealings, Fr. João de S. Nicolau, who had been many years Prior of the Bandel Convent, drew up in 1785 after having retired to Goa a memorial, referred 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 760 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 Sirāj-ud-daulā'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 nacassares 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

* Manrique, Fr. Cardon's Trans. *Bengal Past and Present*, 1915 Vol. XII, p. 50.

HOOGHLY SURVEY MAP OF 1886, SHEET NO. 1, SECT. 1, SCALE 16″=1 MILE

The Portuguese Settlement of 1633 included all the foreshore from the present jail, which is to the south of the area

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 Jahāñ 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).

After the Return

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-

* *Storia do Mogor*, Irvine's Ed., Vol. II, p. 89.

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.‡

Commercial Rivalry

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

* Bernier's *Travels*, Constable's Ed., p. 439.
† *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.

CHAPTER XIV

EASTERN BENGAL

The Fall of Gonsalves and the Rise of Piracy

The Fall of Gonsalves, 1615-1616

The power which Sebastião Gonsalves had acquired in Sandwīp was not destined to last long. In 1615 Gonsalves conceived the plan of conquering Arakan. Though he had always ruled as an absolute and independent prince he proposed to the Portuguese Viceroy in Goa offering to acknowledge the suzerainty of the King of Portugal and deliver every year a galleot of rice either at Malacca or Goa as a yearly tribute if he would help him in the conquest of Arakan. He further assured the vast treasures of the King of Arakan would be at their disposal. The Viceroy Jeronymo de Azavedo, who was quite pleased with this offer, fitted out an expedition of fourteen galleots, a flyboat, and a pink under the command of Dom Francisco de Menezes Roxo, the former Governor of Ceylon*. This expedition arrived on the 3rd of October 1615 and after a consultation with Gonsalves it was decided that Menezes should attack Arakan, the head quarters of the King and that Gonsalves should follow him. A new power had however come to help the Arakanese, a power that eventually contributed a good deal towards the downfall of the Portuguese in the East. On the 15th October the Portuguese saw a Dutch fleet coming down the river composed of such a large number of ships that, as Faria y Souza says†, the Portuguese could not see the end of it.

* This expedition is described by Bocarro, *Decada XIII*, and by Faria y Souza, *Asia*, Stevens, Vol. III, p. 226.

† *Asia Portuguesa*, Stevens, Vol. III. p. 224 *et seq.*

Against this force Menezes had to defend only with sixteen vessels, nay, only with fourteen, because one had fled and another had gone in pursuit of it. Yet they engaged the combined fleet of the Dutch and the Arakanese. The fight lasted the whole day. Though the Portuguese lost four galleots they wrought terrific havoc among the Dutch. In the evening the Dutch retreated thinking fresh succour had come to the Portuguese, while it was only the pink that had gone in search of the running vessel. Gonsalves now joined Menezes with fifty ships and they arranged themselves in two squadrons. The fight commenced again and all throughout, the advantage was on the side of Portuguese, but at about sunset D. Francisco de Menezes fell struck with two musket balls. Ebbtide then set in and the fleets parted. The Victory was more on the side of the Portuguese than of the Dutch.* About two hundred Portuguese died and were buried in the sea. The Portuguese sailed back to Sandwip and D. Luiz de Azavedo who had succeeded Menezes in command, returned with his squadron to Goa inspite of Gonsalves's repeated requests not to do so. Many of Gonsalves's men took this opportunity to abandon him and returned with D. Luis de Azavedo to Goa. In the following year (1616) Gonsalves being quite abandoned by many of his followers, the King of Arakan invaded Sandwip, defeated Gonsalves and took possession of the island besides some other islands in the Sundarbans. Gonsalves was, as Faria y Souza says, reduced to his former miserable condition.

Character of Gonsalves

In estimating the character of Sebastião Gonsalves one cannot ignore from what beginnings he rose to be a potentate, whose alliance was sought for by the ruling princes of Bengal, though more from

* L. S. S. O'Malley says in the *Chittagong Gazeteer p. 38*, that the Portuguese were defeated by the Dutch. This is inaccurate according to the Portuguese historians. The most that can be said is that the victory was indecisive.

fear of his power than from a friendly feeling for him as a ruler. He was an adventurer, unscrupulous and remorseless. But he was not, as he is supposed to be, a pirate, in the strict sense of the word. He committed at the outset of his career some piratical raids on the coast of Arakan, but it was in revenge for the massacre of Dianga. There is no evidence that during the eight or nine years of his rule (1607-1616) in Sandwip, he fostered piracy. However, many of his treacherous acts stain his character with the darkest blots. As in Rob Roy of old, wickedness and worth are often çuriously blended together. It is wonderful, indeed, how Gonsalves was able maintain his sovereignty, beset as he was with such powerful enemies as the Mughals and the King of Arakan, not to speak of the chiefs of the other principalities that lay near his kingdom. Referring himself to Faria y Souza's remarks that the kingdom of Gonsalves passed like a shadow, that his pride was humbled and his vileness punished, H. Beveridge justly makes the following observations,* "such are the unsympathising remarks of the Portuguese historian about a man who at least possessed vigour and ability, and who owed his fall in great measure to the impetuosity of the Portuguese officer who was sent from Goa to assist him, but who was too proud or too rash to co-operate fully with him. The Viceroy was also to blame, for he directed his officer not to wait for Gonzales. We cannot but think that if Gonzales had been an Englishman and his historian of the same nationality, we would have heard a great deal about Anglo-Saxon energy, the Barseker-spirit and the Vikings." If D. Luis de Azavedo had, indeed, co-operated with Gonsalves and had not sailed back to Goa, the the fate of the Portuguese possession of Sandwīp might have been different. Incidentally, the dispersal of the Portuguese in Eastern Bengal and Arakan would not have taken place if

* *District of Bākarganj*, p.38.

they had not lost their possession of Sandwīp, and thus no occasion would have arisen for them to live mainly by piracy, which has sullied their name.

The Rise of Piracy

From the time of the fall of Gonsalves upto 1665, the history of the Portuguese in Eastern Bengal is a history of the Portuguese in their worst form. The fall of Gonsalves did not mean the end of his men. The vast rivers of Bengal and their banks became their homes. Schooled as they were not to recognise any law or authority, they sought the means of subsistence in plundering and piracy. Arising as a necessity, piracy eventually became an art, a trade. It was a time, morever, when plundering was generally accepted as the best method of avenging wrongs, real or supposed and of punishing the enemy. The Afghan Kings of Bengal, the Kings of Arakan and of Tippera ravaged one another's territories without the least scruple. But this game was generally carried on from land. The Portuguese introduced a new element with their fast sloops and newer methods of ship-building, so that depredations began to be carried more from the sea and the rivers of the delta. The Portuguese were neither the originators of these nefarious practices nor the only culprits. The Mughals themselves indulged in them and the Arakanese or the Maghs were the greatest of all plunderers. Wonderful legends connected with the famous pirate and bandit Dilal Khān are still current in Sandwīp. He is said, however, to have protected the poor, though he plundered the rich.* It was Husain Bey, the general of Shaista Khān who eventually captured Dilal Khān and confined him in a prison at Dacca, where he ended his days. Still more striking is the story of the English free-booter J. Shepherd, who made the Sunderbans the scene of his piratical exploits until he was arrested and banished for life only a few years ago.

* J. E. Webster, *Noakhali Gazetteer*, pp. 19-20.

The Offer of Chittagong to the Mughals

An event occurred in 1638 which gave an additional impetus to the game of piracy in its most frightful form. Ever since the Mughals had made themselves masters of Bengal, they were bent upon conquering Chittagong from the King of Arakan and, if possible, the whole of his kingdom. A favourable opportunity arose in 1638. Matak Rai, the Governor of Chittagong rebelled against the King of Arakan, named Islam Khān Mushaddi, and acknowledging himself the vassal of the Mughal Emperor handed over Chittagong, though nominally to the Mughal Governor of Bengal. This action of the Governor of Chittagong did not materialize into anything, but it served to light up the fire of a long-standing enmity. To revenge on the Mughal kingdom of Bengal, the King of Arakan made friends with the Portuguese adventurers, took them into his service, paid them high salaries and settled them in Dianga. With their help he built vessels large enough to carry cannon. Thus equipped he began ravaging and laying waste the Mughal territory, and extended his depredations even up to Dacca. These cruel practices of the Arakanese and the Portuguese, to which the people of Bengal were subjected, continued till 1665 when Shaista Khan conquered Chittagong and broke their power for ever.

Portuguese Relations with Piracy

Various statements have been made to the effect that all the Portuguese in Bengal were generally pirates or adventurers, and even to-day in the folk tales of Bengal the name of the Portuguese is always associated with piracy. Nothing could be farther from the truth, than a generalized statement of this kind. It was only the Eastern and not Western Bengal that was a haunt of the Portuguese adventurers. These men were taken into the employ of the Arakanese who in conjunction with them devastated the southern part of Bengal, especially the Sunderbans. The Portuguese of Western Bengal were quite

a different section. In the Hooghly river there were, however, a few Portuguese pirates about twelve miles above the Saugor Island whence the river or one of its branches at that part of its course was known as the *Rogue's River.** Their field of operations was the coast of Hījilī (Midnapore) and Orissa. These men who had leagued themselves with the Arakanese were not of the type of the Portuguese from Hooghly, but were outlaws and fugitives from Goa and other Portuguese places. They were disowned by their own Government in Goa and were not recognized by their own brethren in Hooghly. It is true the Portuguese Viceroy sent help to Gonsalves, but then he was not a pirate but an independent prince who agreed to pay a yearly tribute of a ship of rice to the King of Portugal, in return for the help received. Even before Gonsalves and his troops had taken to buccaneering, Stephen Palmeyro who was an aged and a genuine type of Portuguese, refused to command them because they had committed a few justifiable depredations on the coast of Arakan out of revenge on the massacre of the Portuguese in Dianga. Ruy Vaz Pereira who saw in Chittagong a Moorish ship, built after the Portuguese fashion, being used in privateering, seized it because such practices would unjustly sully the name of the Portuguese.†

The Pirate Damião Bernaldes

An excellent example of how different the real Portuguese in Bengal were from the adventurers in the Sunderbans, was afforded on the very coast of Bengal. Nuno da Cunha, the Portuguese Governor, gave in 1531, to Damião Bernaldes a license for a voyage to Bengal.‡ After rounding the Cape Comorin he turned a corsair and in Nicobar captured a Moorish

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* A Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, Vol. II, p. 3. Also *vide*, *Yule*, *Hobson-Jobson* s. v. Rogue's River.

† *Vide* pp. 30-31.

‡ Castanheda, *Historia*, Vol. VIII, p. 46. Also Correa, *Lendas* Vol. III, p. 446.

ship worth £9000. Nuno da Cunha, on hearing of this, asked Khājeh Shiāb-ud-dīn, who as already said,* was a friend of the Portuguese, to seize Bernaldes when he landed in Chittagong or else to kill him and his crew on the spot. There were then seventeen Portuguese vessels in Chittagong which in concert with Khājeh Shiāb-ud-dīn awaited the arrival of Bernaldes. When this pirate actually arrived they did him no harm immediately, believing that he would ask for pardon and give up his mode of life. Far from doing so he seized a influential Moor and though his men who had landed were captured, he refused to exchange this Moor with his men except for a ransom of £2000. The Portuguese spared no efforts to capture him and he was at last caught in their settlement of Negapatam, sent to the Governor in Goa in chains and banished for ten years, during which he died. Such was the punishment accorded by the Portuguese to the pirates. When the Portuguese became the masters of the whole Bay and rivers of Bengal they indeed, enforced their principle of not allowing any ships to sail without their passes but they granted these passes freely and these ships were absolutely safe except when they fell into the hands of the adventurers lurking at the mouths of the Ganges. Even the Muhammadan historian Khafi Khān gives the credit to the Portuguese while he has much to complain against the English. Speaking generally of the Portuguese he says† "On the sea they (Portuguese) are not like the English; and do not attack other ships, except those ships which have not received their pass according to rule, or the ships of Arabia or Maskat with which two countries they have a long-standing enmity, and they attack each other whenever opportunity occurs. If a ship from a distant port is wrecked and falls into their hands they look upon it as their prize." The author of the *Bādshāh-*

* *Vide* p. 33.

† Elliot, *Hist. of India*, Vol. VII, p. 344.

nāmā has another story about the Portuguese. He says* "The village and districts of Húglí were on both sides of the river and these the Europeans got possession of at a low rent. Some of the inhabitants by force, and more by hopes of gain, they infected with their Nazarene teaching and sent them off in ships to Europe. In the hope of an everlasting reward, but in reality of an exquisite torture, they consoled themselves with the profits of their trade for the loss of rent which arose from the removal of the cultivators. These hateful practices were not confined to the lands they occupied, but they seized and carried off every one they could lay their hands upon along the sides of the river." This contrasts very strongly with what Khafi Khān says about the Portuguese. The passage in the *Bādshāhnāmā* is really based upon the report of Kasim Khān whom Shāh Jahān had sent with preconceived ideas against the Portuguese and who in spite of his constant and minute watching could not find any *casus belli* for four years to overthrow their power. In this report the charge of piracy and aggressions was, however, levelled only against the Portuguese of Eastern Bengal, while it accused the Portuguese of Hooghly of fortifying themselves, of drawing away all the trade from Sātgāon and of having committed many acts of violence, presuming to exact duties from all the boats and vessels which passed their factory.† It is true, the Portuguese of Hooghly had grown insolent and haughty but they cannot be said to have been pirates. Writers who have never cared to differentiate the real Portuguese from the outlaws of Sunderbans have made sweeping generalizations against them all. Far from being pirates, the Portuguese of Hooghly promised Akbar and also Jahanghír to stamp out piracy and agreed to keep the Bay clear of the pirates that nestled

* Elliot, *Hist. of India* Vol. VII. p. 32.

† Stewart, *History of Bengal*, pp. 266-267.

there. They did not however keep their word. Yet it must be said they did not in general indulge in the very thing they had promised to extirpate.

As to the Portuguese in Eastern Bengal in the seventeenth century no amount of vituperation and invectives would be too strong for them. As Manucci says* they had reached the very acme of evil doing and at one time even a priest named Frei Vicente acted as their leader. The horror of their practices can better be imagined than described. Yet they held a secondary place to the Maghs. François Bernier gives a very graphic account of them. He says† "For many years there have always been Portuguese in the kingdom of *Rukan* (Arakan) or *Mog*, and with them a great number of their *Mestices* or Christian slaves and other *Franguis* gathered together from all parts. This was the retreat of fugitives from Goa, Ceylon, Cochin, Malacca and all the other places once occupied by the Portuguese in the Indies. Those who had fled from their convent, who had married twice or three times, assassins—in a word, outlaws and ruffians, were here welcomed and held in repute, and led a detestable life, utterly unworthy of Christians, going so far as to massacre and poison each other with impunity, and to assassinate their own priests, who were often no better than themselves. The king of Rakan, in perpetual terror of the Mughal, kept these people for the defence of his frontier at a port called *Chatigon* (Chittagong) assigning them lands and letting them live and follow their own devices. Their ordinary pursuit and occupation was theft and piracy. With small and light half-galleys called *galleasses* they did nothing but sweep the sea on this side; and entering all rivers, canals, and arms of the Ganges, and passing between the islands of

The Practices of the Pirates

* *Storia do Mogor*, Vol. II, p. 117.

† Bernier, *Travels*, Constable Ed. p. 174-175. The translation adopted is from *Calcutta Review* 1871, Vol. LIII, pp. 65-66.

Lower Bengal—often even penetrating as far as forty or fifty leagues into the interior—they surprised and carried off whole villages and harried the poor gentiles, and other inhabitants of this quarter at their assemblies, their markets, their festivals and weddings, seizing as slaves both men and women, small and great, perpetrating strange, cruelties and burning all that they could not carry away. It is owing to this that at the present day are seen so many lovely but deserted isles at the mouth of the Ganges, once thickly populated, but now infested only by savage beasts, principally tigers". It must be said to the credit of Bernier that however bitterly he may vent his wrath on the Portuguese he acknowledged that the Portuguese who carried on these frightful depredations were outlaws, fugitives and ruffians, that fled to this convenient buccaneering haunt in the River Delta of Bengal from other Portuguese settlements. The practices referred to here by Bernier are correct but he ascribes them all to Feringhis while the fact is that the main offenders were the Maghs. In Rennel's map of Bengal published in 1794, the note "this part of the country has been deserted on account of the ravages of the Maghs", is written across the portion of the Sundarbans, south of Bāckarganj. Bolts refers to the Maghs alone and not to the Portuguese as plunderers of the Sunderbans.* The Sunderbans, at least the greater part of them, were never in a flourishing condition, and as it has been shown, the portion, south of Bāckarganj, was plundered more by the Maghs than by the Portuguese. Bernier continuing says that the Feringhis sold a part of their slaves in Goa, Ceylon, St. Thomé and to the Portuguese of Hooghly, and that a part of them were converted to Christianity and were trained in theft, murder and rapine. He concludes that in spite of the strong militia and numerous bodies and guards and also a small

* Bolts, *Indian Affairs*.

naval armament of *galleasses* which the Mughals maintained, the Portuguese did not "cease to make frequent and strange ravages and to penetrate into the country, laughing at all this army of Mughals, having become so bold and so expert in the use of arms and in navigating these galliasses that four or five of their vessels would not hesitate to attack fourteen or fifteen of those of the Mughal—destroying, taking or sinking them, and coming off with flying colours."* The Muhammadan historian Shiāb-ud-dīn Talish gives a much more detailed account of the practices of the pirates in the Bay of Bengal and apportions the blame both to the Maghs as well as to the Feringhis, though the translation of Mr. Jadunath Sarkar is headed "The Feringi Pirates of Chatgaon".†

Shaista Khān's Conquest of Chittagong (1665-66)

No sooner was Shaista Khān appointed Viceroy of Bengal than he determined to invade Arakan and conquer Chittagong in order to put an end to the piratical raids of the Arakanese and the Portuguese and also to avenge the murder of his nephew Shāh Shuja whom the King of Arakan had put to death when he had gone to take refuge there, after his defeat by his brother Mir Jumla.‡ Shaista Khān assembled a large fleet of 300 ships and an army of 13000 men. Abul Hassan was ordered with 200 ships in Sangrangar to oppose the Arakanese and the Feringhis. Muhammad Beg Abakash with 100 ships was to stay at Dhapa and re-inforce Abul Hassan when necessary. His own son Buzurg Umed Khān was appointed to command the army, consisting of 4000

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* *Calcutta Review* 1871, Vol. LIII, p. 68.

† *J. A. S. B.* 1907, June, Vol. III, pp. 419-425.

‡ In this short account of the conquest of Chittagong, I have mainly followed Shiāb-ud-dīn Talish's *Fahiyyah-i-ibriyyah* (J. A. S. B. June, 1907) and the *Alamgirnama*, (*Vide*, an extract in M. A. Salam's Trans. of *Rizazu-s-Salatin* p. 229 *et seq.*). Cf. also Manucci's version of the Conquest of Chittagong, *Storia*, Vol. II pp. 117-118 and Bernier's version, *Travels* pp. 179-182.

men, which was to march by land and co-operate with the fleet. Seeing that the conquest of Chittagong would be no easy task so long as the Portuguese defended it, Shaista Khān sent his officer Shaikh Zia-ud-dīn Yusūf to the Portuguese captain of the port of Hooghly, requesting him to write to the Portuguese of Chittagong to desert the King of Arakan and enter his service and offering them a large grant of land where their families could form a colony. He promised imperial favours and offered much better terms than those granted by the Raja of Arakan. The Portuguese gladly accepted the terms, but according to the *Alamgīrnāma*, all the Feringhis did not desert the Raja. Some of them informed the Raja of Arakan about the desertion and he planned to murder them all. The *Alamgīrnāma* says that some letters fell into hands of a Magh who communicated them to the King of Arakan. What followed is described in the *Alamgīrnāma**: "The Feringis learning of [the intended Arracanese treachery] resisted and fought the Arracanese, burnt some of the ships of the latter and started for service in Bengal with all their goods and ships. On the 19th December 1665, fifty *jalbas* (Shiāb-ud-dīn says 42 *Jalbas* or *Jaleas*) of the Feringis full of guns, muskets and munitions and all the Feringi families reached Noakhali". As soon as the Feringhis left Arakan, Shaista Khān decided to attack Chittagong and, as Shiāb-ud-dīn Talish says, considered the coming over of the Feringhis as the commencement of the victory. They were taken, says Shiāb-ud-dīn Talish, in the imperial army and liberally rewarded, but Bernier very unjustly remarks that Shaista Khān ill-treated them and put an end to those wretches.† The ablest of the Portuguese were chosen to take part in the campaign against the King of Arakan and the rest were sent to the Governor,

* *J. A. S. B.* June, 1907, p. 408, n.

† Bernier's *Travels*, pp. 181-182.

who allotted to them a large area, twelve miles south of Dacca, known as Feringhi Bazar, where still the Portuguese descendants reside.*

Shiāb-ud-dīn Talish gives a spirited account of what passed after the Feringhis left Chittagong†: "In December, 1665, the Feringis of Chātgāon, partly in fear of Arracanese treachery and partly won over by Shaista Khan's tempting overtures came with all their families in 42 *jalbas* and took refuge with Farhād Khan the Mughal *thanadar* of Noakhali. The Khan sent their chief, Captain Moor‡ with a few of their great men to Shaista Khan at Dacca, while he kept all the others with their ships a Noakhali, with great attention and kindness. The captain and other leaders of Feringis had audience of the Nawwāb at night and received splendid robes of honour and other unexpected favours. The Nawwāb asked them, 'What did the zeminder of Maghs fix as your salary?' The Feringis replied, 'Our salary was the Imperial dominion! We considered the whole of Bengal as our *jāgīr*.

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* Manucci has a different version, *Storia*, Vol. II p. 118. He says Shaista Khān sent for a Portuguese, named Antonio de Rego, who was in Hooghly and had a brother named Sebastião Gonsalves in Chittagong. The Nawab paid Rego Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 50,000 more for his brother Gonsalves in order to deliver Chittagong to him. Gonsalves instructed Rego to send the Mughal fleet up to Sandwīp. Chittagong was then captured without any loss of life. It would be interesting to know whether this Gonsalves was the same Sebastião Gonsalves Tibau who had made himself Lord of Sandwīp. He came to India in 1607 and if he was, say about 25 years old then, he would be about 83 years old in 1665 and might have been living. But it is impossible that even till 1665 he could wield such power in Sandwīp and Chittagong as Manucci suggests. That the names of the two brothers are quite different is no evidence against the fact, because there are many instances in Portuguese history in which two brothers had no common names or surnames, the latter having been, perhaps, surpressed by the Portuguese historians.

† *J. A. S. B.*, June 1907, p. 425.

‡ Both Shiāb-ud-dīn Talish and the *Alamgīrnāma* refer to the Portuguese captain named "Moor". This is not a Portuguese name. Muhammadan historians have frightfully mutilated Portuguese names. Pedro Tavares has been converted into Partab Bar (*Vide* p. 52), and Rodolfo into Radif in the *Akbarnāmā*. The real name of captain Moor might have been Mourão or Moraes.

All the twelve months of the year we made our collection, [i.e. booty] without trouble. We had not to bother ourselves about *amlas* and *amīns*; nor had we to render accounts and balances to anybody. Passage over water was our [land] survey. We never slackened the enhancement of *our* rent viz. booty. For years we have left no arrears of [this] revenue. We have with us papers of the division of the booty village by village for the last forty years.' One can infer from this answer the condition of things and the weakness of the Governors of Bengal. The coming over of the Feringis gave composure to the hearts of the people of Bengal. Two thousand rupees were presented from the Nawwāb's own purse as reward to Captain Moor and the other Feringis who had come from Chatgaon and from the Imperial treasury a monthly stipend of Rs. 500 was settled on the Captain, and other comfortable salaries on others of the tribe."

The conquest of Chittagong by the Mughals and their mastery over the Sundarbans broke the power of the Portuguese adventurers and thenceforward they joined hands with the other Portuguese that were spread all over Bengal even after the siege of Hooghly, becoming peaceful civilians and merchants. They drove a peaceful trade and must have wielded much influence and power especially in Chittagong oven up to 1727, for Alexander Hamilton writes*: "The *Mogul* keeps a *Cadjee* or Judge in it (Chittagong) to administer Justice among *Pagan* and *Mahometan* Inhabitants but the Offspring of those Portugueze that followed the fortune of *Sultan Sujah* when he was forced to quit *Bengal*, are the domineering Lords of it". There is an earlier account of the Feringhis of Chittagong by

* A *New Account of the East Indies*, Vol. II, Chap. 35. p.25. Bernier (*Travels* p. 109) also mentions that when Shāh Shuja was driven away from Bengal by Aurangzeb, he went to take refuge in Arakan in Galliasses manned by the Portuguese. He adds that the Portuguese robbed Shāh Shuja of his precious stones on the way. Hamilton betrays little knowledge about the origin of the Portuguese of Chittagong.

Fr. Barbier, a Jesuit missionary, who in 1723 describes in a letter to another Jesuit Father, an Episcopal Visitation by Rev. Fr. François Laines, Bishop of St. Thomé, Madras.* In a detailed description of the Feringhis and their customs, he says that they were divided into three colonies each having its Captain, its Church and its Missionary. They were held in great respect by the natives ; they carried arms and had military discipline and full liberty to celebrate the feasts in the same order and with the same solemnity as in Europe. The writer regrets, that Chittagong was not chosen in preference to Hooghly as the headquarters of the European (Portuguese), settlements. It is very interesting indeed to see that the Portuguese and their descendants had a sort of military discipline even in the eighteenth century. At this time, however, the Portuguese in Eastern Bengal were mere mercenaries. Even till 1786 when Chittagong District was invaded by the Arakanese under a Peguan general, against whom Major Ellerber was sent, the Arakan army contained 500 Portuguese mercenaries.†

* This letter appearing in the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses* Vol. XIII, Paris 1781, has been translated by W. Firminger in *Bengal Past and Present*, 1910, Vol. VI, pp. 200-215.

† O'Malley, *Chittagong Gazetteer*, p. 39.

PART III

RELICS

OF THE

PORTUGUESE IN BENGAL.

CHAPTER XV

THE RELICS

General Outlines

Though the Portuguese Empire in the East has long fulfilled the grim destiny which rules the duration of nations and empires, they have left important vestiges that no time can erase. The Portuguese have long disappeared from Bengal, but everywhere can be seen their various relics, eloquent in their silence, of departed power and glory. How many scenes that appear so fresh to-day have been wistfully gazed upon by the old navigators? On how many ruins of their houses, have modern architects reared their proud edifices? And equally so, how many places alive with the hum of the Portuguese and busy with their industries are desolate to-day? It is not, however, the historical remains of the Portuguese, as much as the silent forces which they have left behind that, though generally unknown, are all the more striking.

The influence of the Portuguese in the East has not yet been adequately dealt with, though a lot has been written on the Portuguese navigators, their conquests and their heroic feats. The permanent Portuguese influence, largely working unkown, is felt in numerous walks of life in India. The Portuguese were the first to establish an intimate contact between the East and the West. The first impressions of the East about the West were largely such as the Portuguese created. These impressions were, therefore, more profound and lasting than it is generally recognized.

The Portuguese introduced in the East new methods of agriculture opened new industries, established new customs,

taught a new religion and countenanced a policy of intermarriages between themselves and the natives. The results of each of their sphere of activities are manifest to-day. The latter European comers often modified or sometimes amplified the work of the Portuguese, but they have not removed the traces of the original influence. Dr. Heyligers* recognises this Portuguese influence in the Indian Archipelago as an absolutely singular force in its history and traces it under the headings : population, race, customs and language. This is equally true of Bengal as of India in general.

In Bengal, though there is a great tendency of self identification with the ruling nation, the Portuguese stamp can be discerned on whatever they came in contact with. Their names, their blood, their institutions, their churches, their language and their archæological remains, speak to-day of their domination in Bengal.

Portuguese Descendants or Luso-Indians

It was the principle laid down by the Portuguese from the time of Albuquerque that, in order to establish an affinity between Portugal and her dependencies, the Portuguese should give to the people under their influence the Portuguese names, the Portuguese religion, the Portuguese dress and even the Portuguese blood. Intermarriages between the Portuguese and Indians were also advocated by Albuquerque's successors. It must be said this privilege was considered a great honour and none but men of valour were allowed to marry Indian women of high families on their becoming Christian.†

There was generally neither promiscuous nor illegitimate union between the Portuguese and the Indians. There must have been certainly some abuses, and during the declining years

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* *Traces de Portugais dans les principales langues des Indes Orientales Neerlandaises*, La Haye, 1889.

† *Commentaries of Affonso de Albuquerque*, Hakl. Ed., Vol. III, pp. 41-42.

this policy was not rigidly followed, especially in Bengal where the piratical section of the Portuguese recognized no law nor principles of morality. The number of marriages between the Portuguese and Indians was enormous throughout India. "For already at this time" say the *Commentaries** "there were in Goa about 450 married men, all servants of the King, Queen and of the Lords of Portugal and those who desired to marry, were so numerous that Afonso Dalboquerque could hardly grant their requests, for he did not give permission, except for the men of proved character, to marry."

It cannot be ascertained how extensively this policy was followed in Bengal. All that is certain is that marriages between the Portuguese and the Indians were very common and that the converts were given Portuguese names on their becoming Christians. They were also named after the Portuguese who became their sponsors. There was on the other hand a voluntary effort on the part of the Indians to identify themselves with the Portuguese. Lafitau mentions that many Hindus took Portuguese names like Albuquerque, only for the honour of it.† In Ceylon the pride of possessing Portuguese names is very remarkable. Emerson Tennent relates that while the Dutch feats in Ceylon have been buried in oblivion the chieftains of southern and western Ceylon perpetuate the Portuguese title of *Dom* and to their ancient patronymics prefix the sonorous names of the Portuguese.‡

There are numerous communities of the Portuguese descendants all over Bengal. Some have identified themselves with the natives of the place. Others preserve their traditions of Portuguese parentage. Many have changed their names

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* *Commentaries of Affonso de Albuquerque*, Hak Ed., Vol III, p. 41 *et seq.*

† Lafitau, *Histoire dés Découvertes des Portugais dans le Nouveau Monde.*

‡ Tennent, *Ceylon, an Account of the Island*, Vol. II, pp. 70-71.

and form part and parcel of the Anglo-Indian community. In the eighteenth century the community of the Portuguese descendants was a distinct one. They are all called Portuguese in the English records, in the accounts of the travellers in the Bengal Directories and by the historians. Many Indians who were given or took Portuguese names have been also called Portuguese. Hence much confusion has arisen in estimating the relative characters of the Portuguese race, those of their descendants and those of the Indians who identified themselves with the Portuguese. It is time, therefore, a proper denomination were given to the Portuguese descendants. They will be referred to in this work as Luso-Indians,* in contradistinction to Anglo-Indians, by which name the descendants of the English are now called.

The Portuguese Language

The Portuguese influence in the East can most remarkably be seen in the extent their language has affected the Asiatic languages. As Dr. Schuchardt says,† the history of the Portuguese discoveries and conquests is the history of the propagation of the Portuguese language. It was the *lingua franca* throughout the East not only among the Portuguese and their descendants but among the different indigenous races and, what is more, among the Europeans of other nationalities, who followed the first conquerors. It was spoken all along the coast of India, in Malasia, Pegu, Siam, Tonquin, Cochin-China, Basra, Mecca, and,

* Lusitania is the classic name for Portugal. As first shown by Garcia de Menezes in the fifteenth century and then proved by Bernardo de Brito, Lusitania was the Roman province of the Iberian Peninsula, and was identical with Portugal. Bernardo de Brito, therefore, claimed the great Viriatus as a Portuguese hero. The Portuguese are called the Lusian people and Camões named his immortal Epic *Os Lusiadas*. Hence Luso-Indians would be a proper denomination for the Portuguese descendants.

† *Beitrage zur Kenntniss des kreolischen Romanisch Vol. V.* (Quoted by Mons. R. Dalgado).

in fine, wherever the Portuguese domination had extended.* "This they (the Portuguese) may justly claim" says Lockyer in 1711,† "they have established a kind of *Lingua Franca* in all the Sea-Ports in *India*, of great use to other *Europeans* who would find it difficult in many places to be well understood without it." Sixteen years later Alexander Hamilton found the Portuguese language still maintaining its hold in India. He writes, : "along the sea-coasts the *Portugueze* have left a Vestige of their Language tho' much corrupted, yet it is the Language that most *Europeans* learn first to qualify them for a general Converse with one another, as well as with different inhabitants of *India*."‡

What is still more remarkable is that the Portuguese language continued to be the medium of general converse long after the Portuguese power was extinguished. The Dutch also dominated great many eastern centres. But their language in the East disappeared with them and left no vestiges in the languages of the East. Emerson Tennent thus speaks of Ceylon,§ "Already the language of the Dutch which they sought to extend by penal enactments has ceased to be spoken even by their direct descendants, whilst a corrupted Portuguese is to the present day the vernacular of the middle classes in every town of importance." The reason why the Portuguese language exerted such an influence on the Asiatic languages was evidently that the Portuguese were the first Europeans who introduced new things in the East and along with them, the names which they called them by. Besides, they helped to bring about a better communication between the eastern trading centres, transmitting the eastern

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* Cunha Rivara, *Grammatica de Lingua Concani.*

† *An Account of the Trade in India*, p. 286.

‡ *A New Account of the East Indies*, *Preface* p. xii.

§ Tennent, *op. cit.* Vol. II p. 70.

goods and customs from one place to the other. Thus one finds Chinese words like *Cha* (Tea) introduced in the Indian through the Portuguese language, and Arabic words like monsoon, typhoon in the Anglo-Indian vocabulary.

The influence of the Portuguese language on the languages of Bengal is very striking. The English,* the Bengali, the Hindustani, the Ooryia and the Assamese possess a vocabulary containing numerous Portuguese words. This is not, however, surprising as Portuguese was really at one time the *lingua franca* of Bengal, as will be seen in a separate chapter.

Portuguese Archæological Remains

The most vivid and apparent remains which bear testimony to the Missionary work of the Portuguese are their numerous Churches and Convents all over India. Excepting the doubtful remains of some Portuguese forts and factories, the Churches are practically the only archæological remains of the Portuguese in Bengal. The factories of the Portuguese merchants have long disappeared and even the sites on which they stood are forgotten. The rich houses and proud edifices of the Portuguese governors and grandees have crumbled into dust. But many of the Churches which the Portuguese Missionaries erected still exist in all their original grandeur commanding the respect and mystery of hoary antiquity. In Bengal, the old Portuguese Churches are not as numerous as in Western India. There was, however, scarcely any place of importance in Bengal where the Augustinians had not built their Churches. The oldest Christian Church existing, is in Bandel, Hooghly, and is still administered by the Portuguese Mission. Its origin dates back to 1599. There are various other Portuguese Churches in Bengal, which will be briefly

* The Anglo-Indian words now current in the English language are referred to.

dealt with in a separate chapter. As works of architecture, they compare very unfavourably with the majestic convents existing in Goa, which have been compared by foreigners with the best edifices of Europe.*

It is not only in the number and the architectural beauty of the Churches, that the magnitude of the Portuguese Missionaries can be seen. The vast number of Roman Catholics who existed in Bengal in the sixteenth and the seventeenth and even in the eighteenth centuries bear evidence to the missionary zeal of the Portuguese. The remains of these Roman Catholic communities still exist in many parts of Bengal.

Geographical Names

Many of the geographical names which the Portuguese gave to places in Bengal and were adopted by the later Europeans are no longer current. Porto Pequeno (Sātgāon and Hooghly), Porto Grande (Chittagong), Ilha de Gallos (at the mouth of the Hooghly) are names only of historical interest to-day. They were at one time in general use and were used by Cæsar Federici, Van Linschoten and even by the servants of the East India Company. Some geographical words such as Dom Manik Islands at the mouth of the Titulia in the Bākarganj District and Point Palmyras which is a headland on the Orissa coast, still survive. Feringhi Bunder in Chittagong and Feringhi Bazar in Dacca are also two places associated with the Portuguese. Bandel in Hooghly owes its name entirely to the Portuguese.† In a Portuguese Map in

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* Mandelslo (*Voyages and Travels*), Careri (Churchill's *Voyages*) Dr. Buchanan (*Christian Researches in Asia*) Dr. Wilson (*Oriental Christian Spectator*) Dr. Fryer (*A New Account etc.*) and others speak highly of the Goa Convents.

† Bandel is a corrnption of *bandar*, a wharf The Portuguese termed several of their ports in the East, *Bandels*. Thus there is mention of *the Bandel* of Chittagong, the Bandel of Ormuz etc. Though *the Bandel* of Hooghly (*Ugolim*) was the original termination, the word *Bandel* gradually dissociated itself from *Hooghly*, and came to be regarded as a place or a town.

Thevenot* "Ilha de Martim Affonso de Mello" is marked on the coast of Arakan, and it was evidently so called in commemoration of the feats of the Portuguese Captain.† The denomination does not seem to have been made use of by other European writers, and was probably confined to the Portuguese.

Plants introduced by the Portuguese in Bengal

Among various things which owe their existence in Bengal to the Portuguese, may be mentioned a good deal of plants introduced by them throughout India. Directly or indirectly, they have found their way to Bengal. It is worthy of remark that the first Indian botanical names were given by a Portuguese named Garcia de Orta in his celebrated work *Colloquios* etc. printed in Goa in 1563. C. da Costa followed him with his *Tratado*, published in 1578.

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* *Voyages Curieux*, Vol. I, map facing p. 128.

† *Vide* p. 31, *et seq.*

CHAPTER XVI

PORTUGUESE DESCENDANTS

(Luso-Indians)

Among the various relics which the Portuguese have left in Bengal, the most notable are their descendants. It is very remarkable, indeed, that no nation of Europe has less egotism of race and a greater tendency to identify themselves with the indigenous people than the Portuguese nation. It is not surprising, therefore, that all over Bengal, in Calcutta, Dacca, Hooghly, Chittagong, Noakhali, Assam and other places there are communities having some connection or other with the Portuguese and possessing their names if not always their blood. The quite characteristic names of the Portuguese are borne to-day by many, many families in Bengal. As it is in the eighteenth century that the history of the Portuguese merges into the history of their descendants the following list of Portuguese families in Bengal from 1700 to 1900 is compiled from old Bengal Directories, and especially from old Catholic Church Registers* of births, marriages and deaths. Many of these names are quire common to-day and appear in the latest registers and visitors' books. Some names, however, which were common between 1700 and 1800 have died out. These names as they are found to-day are not in all cases strictly spelt as the ones in the list below. The connection between them is, however, obvious. In many cases the

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* The Registers of Bandel Church (Hooghly) do not date earlier than 1757 and those of Murgihatta Cathedral earlier than 1740. St. John's Church (Calcutta) Records also contain numerous Portuguese names which show that many Luso-Indians adopted the Protestant religion.

Portuguese names have been Anglified or sometimes entirely changed so as to remove all trace of their Portuguese origin.

The Goans or the Goanese

The Goans, or the Goanese as they are termed in Bengal, must be differentiated from the Luso-Indians. The Goans are immigrants from Goa (Portuguese India) and have found their way to Bengal roughly from the beginning of the nineteenth century. As Goa is not an agricultural and industrial place, the Goans, especially in the humbler walks of life, meet the economic necessities by immigrating to British India. There are about a thousand Goans in Bengal at present, most of them (about 800) being in Calcutta.* They are not, in general, descendants of the Portuguese but are pure christianized Indians with Portuguese names and European customs and manners. Brought up with a close association with the Portuguese and in an atmosphere of four centuries of European civilization, the Goans are on the same social level as the Portuguese. However, some habits and institutions, like the caste system, characteristic of the Indian race, still linger among the Goans. The Goans have the same ideals and spirit of nationality as the Portuguese and possess equal rights of free citizenship with the latter. The names of the Goans, which are the same as the names of the Luso-Indians, have not been included in the following list of Luso-Indian names.

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* O'Malley's *Census Report of Calcutta of 1911* mentions 644, (619 males and 25 females), as being born in the Portuguese Settlements *i. e.* chiefly in Goa. Considering the number of Goans in Calcutta, who were born outside Goa, and the increase of their numbers since 1911, the figure 800 is approximately correct. In the *Census*, those who entered themselves as belonging to the Portuguese nationality were 254. Almost all of these were certainly Goans, because the Luso-Indians entered themselves as Eurasians or Anglo-Indians. Only 10 of them who gave Portugal as their birth-place may be said to have been European Portuguese, though one or two Goans may have also been born in Portugal. It may be remarked that only 53 entered themselves as Goans, though 298 mentioned Konkani (Goanese) as their language.

Common Luso-Indian Surnames in Bengal*

(1700—1900)

ABREU, D'ABREU
Affonso
AGOSTINHO
AGUIAR, DAGUIAR
ALCANTARA
Aleixo
Alerim
Alexandre
ALMEIDA
André
Argotte
Arnaldo

BAPTISTA
BARRETTO
Barros
BASTIAN, SEBASTIAO
Botelho

CABRAL
CARDOZO
Carneiro
Carnes
CARVALHO
Castellino
CASTRO
Cavella
Cenaculo
Colaço
Conceição
Consolação
CORNELIUS
CORREA
COSTA, DACOSTA
COSTELLO
Coutinho
COUTO
Couzo
CRUZ, DECRUZ
Curado

Dalgado
DANIEL
DIAS
DOMINGO
Dores
Duques

FARIA
FERNANDES
Fernando
Ferrão
Figueiredo
FONSECA
Frangos
FREITAS
Furtado

Gallis
GARRETT
GASPAR
Gill
Godinho
GOMES
GONSALVES
GOUVEA
GRACIAS
Gusmão

Henriques

Innocencia

Jesus
José

Leal
Leitão
Lobo

* The names printed in capital letters are quite common, at present, in Bengal. Some names like Alexander and Martins may not necessarily point to a Portuguese origin.

LOPES
Lovo
LUCAS
Luis

Machado
Malques
MANOEL
Marcos
Maria
Martins
MARTYRES
Mascarenhas
MELLO, DE MELLO
MENDES
MENEZES
Mercado
MESQUITA
Milheira
Miranda
Moira
MONTE
Monte Sinaes
Neves
NORONHA

Oliveira

PAIVA, DEPAIVA
Peicheiro
Penha
PEREIRA
Peres
Pessoa
Phillipe
PINHEIRO
Pinna
PINTO
Prazeres
Prezentina

Quadros

Ramos
REBEIRO
REBELLO
REMEDIOS
Robalo
Rocha
RODRIGUES
Roza
ROZARIO, DE ROZARIO

SA, DESA or DESSA
Salgado
Salvador
Santiago
Santos
Seixas
SEQUEIRA
Serrão
Soveral
SILVA, DE SILVA
SILVESTRE
Soares
SOUZA, DE SOUZA

Tavares
Teixeira

Urage

VALENTE
Vallis
Vás
Ventura
Verona
Viana
Victoria

Xavier

Common Luso-Indian Christian names in Bengal (1700–1900)

Agostinho
Alberto
Alexandre
André
Antonio
Assenço
Augusto

Bendito
Bernardinho
Bernardo
Boaventura
Bonifacio

Caitano
Candido
Carlos
Casimiro
Clemente
Constantino
Cornelio

Daniel
Diogo
Domingos

Estevam

Fernando
Florentino
Francisco

Gabriel
George
Guilherme

Henrique
Hilario

Ignacio

Jacob
Jeronimo
João
Joaquim
José
Juliano

Lazaro
Lourenço
Luis

Manoel
Mariano
Matheus
Michael

Miguel

Nicolau

Pascoal
Paulo
Pedro
Phillipe

Raphael
Raymundo
Ricardo
Roberto
Romaldo

Salvador
Santiago
Silvestre
Simão
Simplicio

Thomas
Timotheo

Valentino

Xavier

FEMALE NAMES

Agnida
Agostinha

Albina
Amelia

Anastasia
Andreza

Anna	Eulalia	Paula
Antonia	Izabel	Phillipa
Angelica		Prezentina
Apolonia	Joanna	
Aurora		Rita
	Leonora	Rosa
Catarina	Luiza	Rozalina
Clara	Luzia	
		Tereza
Dominga	Margarida	
	Maria	Victoria
Elizabeth	Mariana	

Different Elements in the Luso-Indian Community

All those who bear Portuguese names are not, however, the real descendants of the Portuguese, but most of them are pure natives, some of whom in the evolution of time mixed with other races, sometimes changing their names sometimes retaining them. As to the pure Portuguese there are very few, and these have come recently as sailors or with some other occupations and have settled in Bengal The Census Report of 1911 mentions only ten as being born in Portugal. In the *Calcutta Review*, Vol. LIII, 1871, H. Beverley* makes mention of a family of real Portuguese descent, residing in Chittagong. The Portuguese descendants were first known as Feringhis; indeed the Portuguese themselves were so called. This name was once applied to the Crusaders and was an honoured name but now it is used in derision. These Feringhis and the native Christians afterwards began to be known as *Topasses* (from *Topi*, a hat) especially in Eastern Bengal. At present, the Feringhis, the Native Christians and the heterogeneous

* *The Feringhees of Chittagong*, Cal. Rev. 1871, Vol. LIII, p. 82.

mass of people living in the slums of Calcutta, are called *Kintalis* (from *Kintal*, an enclosure).

There are no reliable statistics in any of the Censuses or the Gazetteers with regard to this community. It is difficult to give any accurate statistical account, considering the heterogeneous elements this community is composed of. They are at present all classed as Eurasians or Anglo-Indians. It is almost impossible to differentiate the racial characteristics excepting where Mongolian blood has entered and a great part of these so-called "Anglo-Indians" is a promiscuous fusion of the Portuguese, English, Indians, East Indians, West Indians and Chinese. However, the section of the "Eurasians" associated with the Portuguese in some form or other may be divided into three main classes :—

(1) Pure Indians, who are converts and bear Portuguese names.

(2) True descendants of the Portuguese, who though they have freely mixed with other races, still maintain the Portuguese surnames if not the Christian names.

(3) True descendants of the Portuguese who intermarried to a greater extent with the English descendants and who having changed their names into English names, have apparently lost all relation with the Portuguese.

The bulk of the community consists of pure Indians who having been converted to Christianity were given Portuguese names and adopted the European dress. The change of religion brought to a large extent the change of customs and a gradual association with the Europeanised population, made them lose most of the characteristics of the natives of India. Of course there are many Indian Christians who wear the *dhoti*, though they have Portuguese names, but they are not entered in the classification of the mixed community, as their national dress differentiates them.

First group—Pure Indians with Portuguese names

When the Portuguese came to Bengal, the slave trade was very rampant and was sanctioned by the Hindu and Muhammadan law. The Portuguese possessed a large number of slaves who were given Portuguese names. Many of them took Portuguese names when their masters died. The Portuguese missionaries in Calcutta used to buy slaves who were packed in many vessels and shipped there, rather than see them bought by others and ill-treated. They used to baptise these slaves with Portuguese names and then sell them to Christian masters. Hence among the so-called Portuguese descendants, there was a vast majority of simple Indian converts or slaves converted to Christianity. These Indian Christians, who formed part and parcel of a mixed Portuguese community, talked in the Portuguese language just like the Portuguese or their descendants even up to the end of the eighteenth century, but towards the middle of the nineteenth century the English language began to be generally spoken though many Portuguese words still survive. Their complexion is obviously as that of the ordinary Indian, and among their customs can be seen the relics of their ancestors. There is no sharp line of distinction between this class and that of the true Luso-Indians because both these classes have intermixed and acted and reacted on each other. The arbitrary classification holds good in that the first group is mainly Indian in blood while the second has to a certain extent affinities of blood with the Portuguese. That the mixed Portuguese community is mainly Indian has been attested to by many authorities. Abbé Dubois remarks :* "Most of them (Christians called Portuguese) have no more relation by birth, or otherwise, to the Portuguese or to any other European nation than to the Tartar Calmucks. They are partly composed of half-castes, the illegitimate offspring of Europeans and a few descendants of the Portuguese ; whilst

* J. A. Dubois, *State of Christianity in India*, Lond. 1823, pp. 75-76.

the majority of them are the offspring of Hindoos of the lowest rank, who after learning some one of the European dialects put on a hat, boots and the European dress and endeavour to copy the European manners." It must be remarked that as to acquiring European manners, the conversion to Christianity contributes to it more than an effort to copy European and to wear a hat, boots and the European dress. Most of the customs that differentiate the Indian from the European have their origin in the difference of religious tenets that especially in the Hindu religion include social and hygienic principles. Once the bar is taken away the acquiring of European manners is natural, provided there are Europeans or Europeanised people to associate with.

Second Group—True Luso-Indians

There is no sharp line of demarcation between the pure Indian members of the Luso-Indian community and the descendants of the Portuguese. The two classes can scarcely be distinguished. Colour is no criterion because the Luso-Indians could have had a pure Portuguese parentage or a parentage closely related to the pure Portuguese, for only one or two generations about two centuries ago, that is, up to the end of the seventeenth century after which very few Portuguese came to Bengal. After this period of time, the generations that followed were largely a result of intermixture among other Indian races and hence they have in general the Indian colour. During the last half of the eighteenth century and onwards, the servants of the East Indian Company and other Englishmen freely married with the descendants of the Portuguese,* and the resulting race naturally turned comparatively fair and this colour had been generally maintained as long as the marriages took place between fairer descendants. The representatives of this race are partly the fairer portion of the Anglo-Indians, many

* St. John's Church (Calcutta) Marriage Records show many names of Portuguese or Luso-Indian ladies married to Englishmen.

of whom have some Portuguese blood in them though they have not the Portuguese names. It is a mistake to suppose, as it has been done, that the descendants of the Portuguese naturally turned out dark while the descendants of the English turned out generally fair. In fact the opposite seems to be true if one observes the descendants of the real Portuguese in Goa among whom one can scarcely see a man of a dark complexion. Bishop Heber remarks in 1826*: "The Portuguese natives form unions among themselves alone, or if they can, with Europeans yet the Portuguese have, during a three hundred years residence in India became as black as Caffres; surely this goes far to disprove the assertion which is made that climate alone is insufficient to account for the difference between the Negro and the European." He seemed to have forgotten that almost none of those he saw was a real Portuguese and that in almost all of them the original Portuguese parentage was reduced to an infinitesimal degree through succeeding generations.

The generality of the members of the mixed community had Portuguese names as well as surnames up to the middle of the last century, as can be seen from the tombs in the cemeteries of Bengal. Then gradually the Portuguese Christian names began to be substituted by English Christian names. In modern times the tendency is to work a complete transmutation of name into an English or Anglicised one. It is this metamorphosis of names that offers the greatest difficulty in preparing a statistical account.

Third Group—Luso-Indians with English names

As to the third group there is little definite that can be said. A good many Anglo-Indians who have English names and who seem to have nothing in common with the Portuguese have Portuguese blood in them, though generally they are not aware of it. English names have been adopted

* Bishop Heber, *Narrative of a Journey* etc. Vol. I, p. 54.

for a long time past. The Portuguese name, Correa has been changed into Currie; Leal changed into Lea by an easy dropping of the L; Silva into Silver; Souza into Sauseman; Gouvea into Govey and so on. Still more recently a radical change has been worked in the names and what was a Pereira is now a Johnson and what was Gomes is now a Fitz Patrick. The adoption of such names has probably followed either betterment of circumstances or the acquiring of a fairer complexion. On the other hand the change of name might have had some influence in bettering the circumstances. The adoption of English names has removed from many Anglo-Indians all trace of connection with the Portuguese. Besides Portuguese blood courses in the veins of some Anglo-Indians from the mothers' side, and of this no names, obviously, can give an indication.

Luso-Indian Merchants

The Luso-Indian trade, as distinguished from the Portuguese trade, roughly began with the dawn of the eighteenth century. The Luso-Indians held quite a a subordinate position in the commercial activities of Bengal in comparison with the Dutch and especially the English who were rising on the tide of fortune. S. C. Hill remarks* that in the middle of the eighteenth century the Portuguese (i.e. Luso-Indians) in Hooghly chiefly traded as native merchants. The statement is exaggerated and has no evidence in the collection of letters of the English factors, which Hill publishes. Watts and Collet, in fact, wrote that "if the Nawab (Sirāj-ud-daula) admitted the English into Calcutta, it would not be on better terms than the Portuguese and Prussians trade on."†

The following Luso-Indian merchants are mentioned in the Calcutta Annual Directory and Almanac for 1806:—

Joseph Barretto, & Co., Antonio Rebeiro Pereira de

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* S. C. Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. I, p. XXXIV.

† *Ibidem*, Vol. I, p. 117.

Almeida, Philip and John Da Cruz, Joachim Joseph Mendes, John D'Abreu, Lawrence Picachy, James Robertson, Diego Pereira, Mark and A.Lackersteen, Philip Leal. It is worthy of note that L. Picachy, J. Robertson and the Lackersteens have no Portuguese names at all, yet the Directory mentions them as Portuguese. Similarly in a list of Portuguese militia in the same Directory, there are English names like John Bateman, and William Armstrong. This shows very clearly that early in the nineteenth century, and perhaps even long before, the Luso-Indians had begun adopting English names. It is probable they assumed the surnames of their mothers who happened to be English descendants. It is also possible that the English descendants went about as Portuguese—a much better denomination than a *half-caste*, which was a common expression at that time. This explains the remark of Dr. Carey who writing from Serampore in 1800 says that the children of the English, French, Dutch or Danes were all called Portuguese.*

The Barrettos

Barretto and Company, was a firm of renown until recently. The vast sums of money that the proprietors of the Company have left for different charities are well-known. The munificence of the Barrettos was, however, directed chiefly towards building Churches and endowing religious institutions. There is scarcely any old Church in or near Calcutta, which has not received some benefit from the Barrettos. Joseph Barretto was foremost among those who contributed to the enlarging of Murgihatta Church. The Dum Dum Chapel owes its origin to the Barrettos. When the artillery regiment was first stationed there the Catholic soldiers could not find a better place than a small hut of thatch and straw, lent by a kind widow, to assist their Sunday services. Though the artillery commandant raised a general subscription in his regiment to which the Protestants

* Smith's *Life of Carey* p. 152.

contributed freely, it fell short when Joseph Barretto came to the rescue. He, in fact, wanted exclusively to bear the cost of erecting the chapel. The first movement for building a Church in or near Boitakhana was initiated by Joseph Barretto. The Barretto family also built the Church of Santa Madre de Deus in Serampore. The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Dharamtala, owes its origin to Pascoa Barretto who had married Thomas deSouza. Many people in Calcutta are aware of the interesting legends concerning the erection of this Church founded on the fact of Louis deSouza, uncle of Sir Walter deSouza, having fought a duel from the judicial consequences of which he was saved. Mrs. deSouza (Pascoa Barretto) had really made a vow that should her son be acquitted she would build and endow a Church on her own land.

The deSouzas

The de Souzas were other Luso-Indian merchants whose opulence is within the memory of many Calcutta citizens. The original firm was established in Bombay and it carried on an extensive trade mainly in ivory, opium and Venetian beads. It had branches in China, France and Calcutta. The local firm was called Thomas de Souza and Company. The last representative of the firm was Sir Walter de Souza, whose intelligence allied to his munificence won for him laurels from various parts of the world. It must be mentioned his grandfather was born in Goa. Lawrence de Souza Junior, Sir Walter's half-brother, was no less famous for his charities, to which various educational institutions and Charity Homes still bear witness in Calcutta. Among other lesser charities in Calcutta, Lawrence de Souza Jr., who died in 1871, bequeathed Rs. 3,00,000 to the Doveton College, Rs. 25,000 to the Free School ; Rs. 10,000 to the Mayo Native Hospital ; Rs. 33,000 for a scholarship to enable East Indian lads to proceed to England to compete for the Indian Civil Service ; Rs. 15,000 for a scholarship in

English literature tenable at the Doveton, and Rs. 2,00,000 to found the Home for East Indian widows and orphans, which is seen in Dharamtala Street.

Luso-Indian Soldiers and Mercenaries in the Eighteenth Century

When in the seventeenth century the Portuguese power fell in Bengal, especially in Hooghly and in Chittagong, they and their numerous descendants either followed their profession of traders or employed themselves as mercenaries in the armies of the Bengal rulers. As a body, they do not seem to have engaged in military operations as they did during the memorable sack of Calcutta and Hooghly in 1756 in which they played an important though secondary part. In the East India Company Records, they are all called Portuguese though they were, mostly, Luso-Indians. It may be well to recapitulate the events of this period so as to bring out clearly the part played by the Luso-Indians.

On Nawāb Aliverdi Khān's death in April 1756, his grandson Sirāj-ud-daulā succeeded to the throne of Bengal. Scarcely twenty years old, profligate but strong-willed, he at once showed his hostility towards the English, by refusing to accept a present which they had sent him and appointing a spy Rajaram to watch their movements in Calcutta. Bent on ousting the Europeans from his kingdom he first directed his attention to the English. On the ground that the English had built some fortifications, that they had abused their privileges of trade and that they had protected the servants of his Government, whom he wished to be surrendered—grounds that were in a large measure true, he declared war against the English. He plundered the English factory of Cossimbazar taking all the English officers prisoners, among whom was Warren Hastings. At the head of 50,000 men he began his rapid march to Calcutta covering 160 miles in eleven days.*

* These facts are mainly based on the East India Company Records published in S. C. Hill's *Bengal in 1756-57*.

Strangely enough there were about 200 Luso-Indians in Sirāj-uddaulā's army as well as in the English garrisons. The Nawāb's artillery, consisting of Frenchmen and Luso-Indians, was commanded by a French renegade who styled himself Le Marquis de St. Jacques. The English militia under arms on the 8th June numbered 250. The letter of Watts and Collet to Council Fort George, and Drake's account say that out of the 250 men of the garrison 70 were English and a great part of the remaining 180 were Portuguese (Luso-Indians) and Armenians.* These were placed under the command of Captain Minchin and Lieutenant Bellamy. The English who most feared the attack of the Nawāb's artillery, consisting of Frenchmen and Luso-Indians, sent through some priests three letters asking them to desist from fighting on the side of a Moorish ruler but they replied they had no other choice.

Luso-Indians in the English and in the Nawāb's Armies

Sirāj-ud-daulā forced the Mahratta Ditch and on the 17th June was entering the town of Calcutta burning and pillaging everything before him. The English were seldom so panic-stricken as they were on this occasion. The Luso-Indian and the Armenian soldiers scarcely knew what they were about. Drake, Holwell and Baillie had great difficulty in persuading the British themselves to take up arms and, as Holwell says in his letter, among the European militia there were few "who knew the right from the wrong end of their pieces."† The British women were admitted in the Fort and as the Luso-Indians and the Armenians refused to fight unless their families were also safely lodged in the Fort, they were allowed to "crowd into

The Luso-Indians during the Capture of Calcutta and the Black Hole Tragedy

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* S. C. Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. lxviii and p. 129.

† S. C. Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. p. 28.

it to the number of thousands." The women and children were eventually placed on board the English vessels which steered two miles down the river. Meanwhile the Nawāb had broken through the lines of defences surrounding the Fort. Drake, the Governor of the Fort and Captain Minchin jumped into the two boats that were remaining and basely deserted their comrades in the Fort. The angry soldiers and officers elected Holwell, a civilian, their leader and resolved to hold out to the last. There were 170 men capable of defence besides the Luso-Indians and the Armenians. But they could not hold out long. On June 20th the Fort capitulated. Holwell was brought to the Nawāb in bonds but the latter released him and promised him and the prisoners his protection. The joy of the prisoners was great but it was soon dispelled. The great tragedy of the Black Hole (doubted by some) was to close round them. Its description is irrelevant. What is of interest is that Holwell refers to the Portuguese (Luso-Indians) who were among those ghastly forms that perished in the Black Hole.* Captain Grant in his account, dated 13th July 1756 confirms Holwell and says : "They were put into the Black Hole, a place about 16 feet square, to the number of 200 Europeans, Portuguese and Armenians of which many were wounded."† The Luso-Indians who escaped took refuge in Chandernagore. A letter from Watts and Collet, dated 7th July 1756, says that the French Government and Council maintained in Chandernagore by charity 3,000 poor Portuguese men, women and children, who were inhabitants of Calcutta.‡ The names of the Luso-Indians who died in the Black Hole are not spared to posterity. However, in the Mayor's Court Proceedings, 3rd May 1757, it is said one

* S. C. Hill. *op. cit.*, Vol. III. p. 153.
† S. C. Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 88.
‡ S. C. Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 59.

Maria Cornelius died during the siege and in the western aisle of the Bandel Church there is a tombstone of one Elizabeth de Sylva, with a Latin inscription to say that she died on 21st November 1756, aged 22 years from the troubles and infirmity arising from the war of the Moors against the English.

The Sack of Hooghly, 1756

After driving the English from Calcutta and re-naming the town *Alinagar*, Nawāb Sirāj-ud-daulā marched on the 25th June against their settlement of Hooghly, and sacked the town. It was not only the English who suffered. He demanded twenty lakhs of rupees from the Dutch who had a settlement in Chinsura. Rather than pay this huge sum of money the Dutch prepared to abandon their town altogether. Through the intercession of Coja Wasjid the sum was reduced to 4½ lakhs but the Dutch being unable to pay even this amount the Seths, the famous merchants, advanced it to them. The French were forced to pay to the Nawāb 3½ lakhs of rupees, the Danes Rs. 25,000, and the Prussians, or Emdeners as they were called, Rs. 5,000. The Portuguese or the Luso-Indians of Bandel had also to pay their toll of Rs. 5,000.* The amounts of money paid by the different nations, evidently indicate their relative commercial prosperity and importance. Though the Luso-Indians paid the least yet it is clear that in spite of not enjoying any privileges as they had enjoyed before or as the Dutch, the English and the French enjoyed at the time, their commercial activities had not ceased in Bandel. After playing this terrible havoc among the European settlers, Sirāj-ud-daulā wrote to the Emperor of Delhi in glowing terms priding himself upon "the most glorious achievement in Indostan since the days of Tamerlane."† The reply to this message was given by the guns of Clive

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* S. C. Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 306

† *Orme Mss., India* Vol. II, p. 79.