

CHAPTER XIX

Places of Interest

224. Ambabhona

The village is situated in the north-west of Bargarh subdivision 25 miles (40 Kms.) north of Bargarh. A road from Bargarh runs through Bhatli and from there through Duari to Ambabhona. This village was a fortified place in the days of the Chauhan Rajas of Sambalpur and the remains of the old fort are still in existence. There is an old stone temple dedicated to Kedarnath Siva. It is one of the eight Siva temples constructed by Dakshin Rai, the Dewan of Raja Ajit Singh of Sambalpur. The Kedarnath temple is located inside a tank with beautiful forest background and it reveals high standard of Chauhan architecture. Ambabhona is the headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti as well as a police-station. It contains an M. E. School, a post office, a rest shed, and a dispensary. The population of the village was 954 in 1961.

225. Attabira

A village in Bargarh subdivision situated 22 miles (35 Kms.) south of Sambalpur on the National Highway No. 6 on the right bank of the Jhaun river. A road from this place runs to Remenda which is 10 miles (16 Kms.) to the south. Attabira is a notable rice producing centre. A large number of Telugu cultivators have recently settled in the village and its neighbourhood to reap the benefit of Hirakud canals. The Hirakud irrigation project has led to double and sometimes triple cropping and has considerably improved the material condition of the agricultural community of the area. The village is also a centre of business, the main items of trade being foodgrains and textile goods. There is a rice mill and a sugar mill, both running on co-operative basis. A weekly market is held here on Monday.

Attabira is the headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti and a police-station. There are two High Schools, one of which is meant for girls only. The village has a Rural Health Centre attached to the Veer Surendra Sai Medical College, Burla. The students and staff of the college attend the centre and look after the health and sanitary conditions of the locality. There are also an Inspection Bungalow managed by the Works Department, a Veterinary Dispensary, a Telephone Exchange and a Post Office. Dasahara festival is held here with great pomp which is popularly known as the Ranjita festival.

Population of the village according to the Census of 1961 was 2,347

226. Badarama

A village situated on the National Highway No. 6 in Kuchinda subdivision 26 miles (42 Kms.) north-east of Sambalpur. It is located at the head of the Badarama Ghat of the National Highway. While driving through this Ghat in the night one may come across bisons, sambars, tigers and even elephants. Badarama is a centre of timber producing area. Offices of the Forest Corporation and the Forest Range Officer are located here. There is a well-furnished Forest Rest House. A big market is held here on every Thursday and is noted for forest produce. The Ushakothi game sanctuary is close to the village Badarama (see "Ushakothi"). The population of the village according to 1961 Census was 406.

227. Barakot

A village situated on the left bank of the river Brahmani, 20 miles (32 Kms.) to the east of Deogarh. It is served by the National Highway No. 6 and the Brahmani has been bridged close to this village. It is also connected by road with the steel town of Rourkela.

Barakot was formerly the headquarters of the ex-State of Bamra. But later, Deogarh became the headquarters. Before merger of the State, Barakot was the headquarters of a Tahasil. The village has a police-station, a dispensary, an agricultural farm, a veterinary dispensary, Forest Range Office and a High School. Its population according to 1961 Census was 635.

228. Bamra (Gobindpur)

A railway station on the Nagpur-Howrah line. The village close to the station is known as Gobindpur which is connected with Deogarh by a good road of 64 miles (103 Kms.). It is also connected by roads with Rourkela, Sundargarh, and Kuchinda. The place is noted for trade in timber, bamboo, and charcoal. Timber is mostly required for railway sleepers and also number of saw mills are found in the village. There is also a Match factory, a Biscuit factory and a sisal hemp research centre. A weekly market is held on every Monday. Gobindpur is the headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti and has the offices of the Regional Co-operative Marketing Societies and of Divisional Forest Officer. There is a High School. An agricultural farm and a veterinary dispensary are also located there. The place is noted for the Makara Jatra festival which is usually held in the middle of January. The population of the village (Gobindpur) according to 1961 Census was 2,857.

229. Bargarh

Situated on the left bank of the Jira river, Bargarh is the headquarters of the Subdivision of the same name. The town is on the National Highway No. 6, 37 miles (59 Km.) to the west of Sambalpur. It is also

served by the D. B. K. railway running from Jharsuguda to Titlagarkh. The Bargarh railway station is about two miles off the town. A meter gauge railway line connects Bargarh with the lime-stone quarry at Dungri. The main Hirakud Canal passes through the town and is known as the Bargarh Canal.

The original name of the place was Baghar Kota as known from an inscription of the 11th century A. D. It was called Bargarh probably from the time of Balaram Dev, the first Chauhan Raja of Sambalpur, who made it for some time his headquarters and constructed a big fort for its protection. Narayan Singh, the last Chauhan Raja granted this place in maufi (free hold) to two Brahmin brothers Krushna Das and Narayan Das, sons of Baluki Das who was killed in action by the Gond rebels led by Bandyay Ray and Mohapatra Ray. The grant is popularly known as the Sirkata grant.

The town of Bargarh is managed by a municipality. It has a first grade college established in 1960 mostly by financial contribution of the Grama Panchayats of the subdivision for which it is known as the Panchayat College. Bargarh is also a Panchayat Samiti headquarters and contains some important offices like those of the Sub-Collector, Regional Marketing Officer, Commercial Tax Officer, Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Central Co-operative Bank (Sambalpur), Assistant Director of Textiles, District Agricultural Officer, District Inspector of Schools, Executive Engineer (Canals Division), Executive Engineer (Electrical Construction Division), and Telephone Exchange. There are also a Sub-Jail, a hospital and a veterinary hospital.

The place is a flourishing centre of trade. A large number of merchants belonging to the Marwari community reside in the heart of the town. It is notable for grain trade in the district and is also an important centre of hand-loom industry. There is an agricultural farm. A weekly bazar is held here every Friday and it is the biggest of its kind in the district. There are two High Schools, one for boys and another for girls, and a Secondary (teachers) Training School.

The neighbouring areas of Bargarh are being heavily industrialised. Two miles (3 Kms.) to the north of the town, close to the village Khaliapali, has been built a big cement factory named as Hira Cement Factory, which went into production in 1968. It is managed by the Industrial Development Corporation and the product is branded as the IDCOL Cement. Three miles to the east of the town near the village Tora, a spinning Mill has come into operation, and near the Bargarh railway station the foundation stone of a Co-operative Sugar Milk has been laid by Maharaja Sir R. N. Singh Deo, Chief Minister of Orissa, on the 10th December, 1969.

The town has an Inspection Bungalow managed by the Works Department and a well-furnished Rest House. The Industrial Development Corporation has one guest house here. Formerly there was a Sarai house called the Moberly Sarai managed by the District Council. But it is no longer in existence. There is, however, a Dharmasala for the common people. Dhanujatra, held in January, is an important festival of the place. Population of the town according to the Census of 1961 was 15,375.

230. Barpali

The village is located 11 miles (19 km.) south of Bargarh on the State Highway No. 2 running from Bargarh to Borigumma. An undeveloped road from Sohela to Binka in Balangir district also passes by this village. It is also served by the D. B. K. Railway which runs from Sambalpur to Titlagarh.

Barpali was the headquarters of a feudal estate (since abolished extending over 98 square miles (254 sq. km.). It dated back to the reign of Baliar Singh, the fifth Raja of Sambalpur, who assigned it as a maintenance grant to his second son Bikram Singh. Narayan Singh, the last Raja of Sambalpur, was a descendant of Bikram Singh. The estate was taken under the management of the Court of Wards after the death of its last proprietor Bir Suryodaya Singh in 1927. The property of the estate was subsequently partitioned among three claimants—the Raja of Sonepur, the Maufidar of Jharsuguda and the Maufidar of Barpali—by a decree of compromise of the Supreme Court in 1964.

The village has a large number of temples, oldest among which are the temple of Samaleswari built by Bikram Singh, and the temple of Jagannath built by Hrudaya Sai, the son of Bikram Singh. The temple of Samaleswari with its beautiful tapering tower displays the style of Chauhan architecture, while the Jagannath temple is built in the Orissan style.

The village is inhabited largely by weavers, and gold and silver smiths. It is noted for textile, and bell-metal industries. It has also earned reputation for *tassar* weaving industry which is at present dying out.

The American Friends Service Committee spent 10 years (from 1951 to 1961) at Barpali for village service. They were assisted by a research team from the University of Massachusetts Amherst on achievement motivation research. Dr. Thomas M. Fraser, Junior, has prepared a report of his achievement motivation research at Barpali and neighbouring villages. An extract of the same is given in the next page.

“Almost all of the trainees were young men. The average age of all men trained was twenty-four, and many were only in their late teens. It had been hoped by Barpali Village Service that a fair number of older men, established in their villages either as craftsmen or cultivators, could have been drawn into the programme to learn new techniques and broader applications of their skills. Most of the trainees were men who lacked the mature responsibilities of established villagers towards their families and communities. Further more, it was apparent from the application forms submitted for training and from interviewing former trainees, that a considerable number of them saw in the training programme a means of enhancing their standing in the community or even of breaking away from the village altogether. In large part they viewed the training as vocationally oriented, potentially capable of being put to use in a trade or at least a form of training which *per se* would ensure the individual a somewhat higher status in his village. The programme itself however, had been specifically designed to limit the technical training to a point below that required for an individual to enter easily into urban trade or industry, and even to discourage vocational specialization in the rural village. Barpali Village Service hoped this limitation would make mechanical skills and knowledge generally available in the villages by means of trainees returning to their former occupations and community positions. However, because of the attitudes which many of the trainees brought with them and their reasons for learning as a means of *separating* themselves from the community or their former position in it, the purpose of this limitation may not have been fully attained.”

This summary has stood the test of experience. It is nearly 10 years since the Barpali Service Committee left. There is at present no indication that the village community of Barpali and its neighbourhood have learnt any thing from 10 years' effort of American Friends. The friends themselves did considerable research on improving sanitation and water-supply in villages. The Barpali latrine invented by them has been taken up by Community Development Blocks. It is becoming popular. They also invented a simple and efficient pump for wells. It has not, however, caught public imagination, even though Community Development Blocks are trying to propagate it. See also Appendix I to this chapter.

The village contains more than a dozen of big tanks which are mostly used for bathing purposes. One of the main branches of the Hirakud canals runs through the village and irrigates the cultivable lands of the neighbouring areas.

Barpali is the birth place of the famous poet Gangadhar Meher. The premier college in Sambalpur town has been named after him. A small and beautiful park is named after Lal Nrupa Raj Singh, one of the

enlightened Zamindars of Barpali. The park was opened in 1933 by Shri Nilamani Senapati, I. C. S., the then Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur.

The village is the headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti and a police-station. It contains two High Schools one of which is for girls, a Primary Health Centre, a veterinary dispensary and an Inspection Bungalow maintained by the Works Department. There are a privately managed saw mill, and a seed multiplication farm maintained by the Agriculture Department. An industrial project has been undertaken here by the Small Industries Corporation of Orissa. The village has got facilities of electricity. Tap water system is shortly being introduced. A weekly market sits on Monday. The population of the village according to 1961 Census was 6,415.

231. Belpahar

A place of industrial importance, famous for the Refractory Plant set up by the Tata Iron & Steel Co. (For details see Chapter V). The company has an air-strip here. Belpahar is also a railway station on the Bombay-Howrah section of South Eastern Railway.

The place contains a hospital, a high school, a rest shed, and a guest house of the Refractory.

Population, as recorded in 1961 Census (for Samda village), was 2,573. A weekly market sits at Samda on Saturday.

232. Bhatli

A village in the Bargarh subdivision, 12 miles (19 Kms.) north of Bargarh on the Bargarh-Ambabhona Road. It is an old village with large Brahmin and Kulta population. There is a beautiful modern temple dedicated to Dadhi Vamana Vishnu. Inside the temple there are beautiful wall paintings depicting Puranic stories.

It is said that one Paramananda Sahu of village Gangpur in modern Sundargarh district came to Bhatli with his family in 1900, the year of the great famine. His family consisted of himself, his wife, his son and the daughter-in-law. He also brought with him his family deity Dadhi Vamana from Gangpur and his daughter-in-law Kamala was worshipping the God. Paramananda soon became popular in Bhatli and subsequently became the Behera (Headman) of the village. As Behera he was in charge of the Sadabrata land which had been donated by generous persons for entertainment of pilgrims, Sanyasis and guests coming to the village. But the land did not produce good crops for some years owing to famine conditions and Paramananda also was unable to maintain his family as he did not have sufficient means of living. During the days of privation once a large band of wandering monks came to

Bhatli and demanded food from Paramananda. Both Paramananda and his wife could not decide what to do and how to satisfy the honoured guests of the village. Paramananda was greatly upset and he left home chanting the name of Dadhi Vamana with the hope of collecting food from some generous persons.

It is said that soon after Paramananda left the place some proxy of his came to the house and handed over a key to his wife saying that there was some food materials in the room where they used to store paddy. He told her to entertain the guests with that and hurriedly left the place saying that he will be coming back soon. The wife of Paramananda opened the room and was astonished to see different kinds of food inside. After some time Paramananda came back home greatly disappointed as he failed to arrange food for the revered guests. But he learnt from his wife that the monks were all satisfied with the rich food that was stored in the room meant for storing paddy and she narrated how he himself handed over the key of the room to her. Paramananda could not hold tears and weeping like a baby fell at the feet of his wife saying-- "You are a fortunate lady, you could see God Dadhi Vamana."

A few days after that, the thatched hut in which the wooden image of god Dadhi Vamana was enshrined caught fire. The fire was so terrific that all hopes of saving the divine idol were given up. But Kamala the daughter-in-law of Paramananda was determined to save her beloved God. She did not listen to the advice of others and without caring for her own life rushed inside the shrine wherefrom she never returned. Strangely enough, no remains of Kamala nor of the God could be found from the ashes and the villagers believed that Kamala completely merged with the divinity. Paramananda and his wife were overwhelmed with grief. In the night Paramananda had a strange dream. God Dadhi Vamana appeared before him in the dream and told him that a log of wood will be found next morning floating in the tank of the village which is called Chakra Bandha. His image should be newly carved out of that wood and be installed in a newly built stone temple in the village.

Next morning, the people of Bhatli and neighbouring villages assembled at the Chakra Bandha in large number. They all witnessed with wonder the sacred log of wood floating towards Paramananda who with tears rolling down his face entered into neck-deep of water and embracing the wood exclaimed, "My Dadhi Vamana, My Kamala.....".

The images of both Dadhi Vamana and Kamala were beautifully carved out. Donations came unasked for and people vied with one another to offer free and voluntary labour for construction of the sky scraping temple. Both the images were installed in the temple with great pomp and ceremony.

Cooked rice is not offered to God Dadhi Vamana. He and Kamala enjoy Balbhog only.

The village is the headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti. It has a High School, a Veterinary Dispensary and a Police-station. A weekly market sits on Monday. Its population, according to 1961 Census was 1,931.

233. Bheran (Bheden)

A village in Bargarh Subdivision, situated 18 miles (29 Kms.) to the east of Bargarh close to the confluence of the Danta and the Jira rivers. The village is surrounded on three sides by these two rivers and is approachable from Bargarh by the canal road. Bheran was formerly the headquarters of an estate extending over 33 sq. miles and the Zamindar belonged to the Gond family. It is said that the Chiefship of Bheran was established even before the coming of the Chauhan Rajputs to Sambalpur. In the rebellion of Surendra Sai, the Zamindar revolted and was killed in action with the British troops. The other members of the family surrendered under the amnesty. The last Zamindar of Bheran was Brukodar Singh whose father Balaram Singh married in the Zamindar's family of Kudabaga, the Zamindar of which died without a male heir and that Zamindari came under the possession of Bheran.

The village Bheran is also known as Bisaikele. It is notable for the textile industry and the weavers excel in tie and dye work. Tassar weaving which was once a profitable industry is fast declining. It is now a notable centre of trade in hides.

The village has a fairly old temple of Dadhi Vamana Vishnu. The Car Festival of God Dadhi Vamana is observed in the month of Ashadh with great pomp and ceremony. Besides this, Rama Navami and Sivaratri festivals are also observed in the local Ramji and Siva temples respectively.

Bheran is a Panchayat Samiti headquarters, and it has a High School, a Police-Station, Veterinary Dispensary, and a Primary Health Centre. A weekly market sits on Saturday. The population of the village according to 1961 Census was 2,072.

234. Bhojpur

A village in Kuchinda subdivision situated 25 miles (40 Kms.) to the west of Deogarh. A weekly market is held here on Sunday and is noted for forest produce. There is an Ashram School and a Veterinary Dispensary in the village. Its population, according to 1961 Census was 921.

235. Bijepur

A village in Padampur subdivision, 17 miles (26 Km.) south-west of Bargarh. It was the headquarters of an ex-Zamindari known as Uttal-Baisi. It is said that formerly there were two Gond Zamindaris, one of which was called Uttal with headquarters at Talpadar, while the other was called Baisi with headquarters at Bijepur. In the village Talpadar there are remains of an old fort called Uttal fort. The two Zamindaris were subsequently combined into one called Uttal-Baisi or Bijepur Zamindari by Maharaja Sai, the Raja of Sambalpur, who in 1821 made a grant of it to one Gopi Kulta for his loyal service. The grant was confirmed by the British Government in 1863 when the title of Garia was conferred on its Chief and a quit rent of Rs. 350 was fixed for a term of forty years. In 1903 when the term expired, a feudal tribute was fixed at Rs. 3,305. The net income of the Zamindari was Rs. 13,769.

The village Bijepur is inhabited mainly by cultivators and weavers. It is notable for napkins and bed-sheets manufactured by local weavers. It is the headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti and a Police-Station. There is a big tank called Sagar used for bathing purpose. The village has a High School, a dispensary, and a veterinary dispensary. A weekly market sits on Sunday. Its population, according to 1961 Census was 2,650.

236. Borasambar

A village in Padampur subdivision 8 miles (13 Kms.) south-west of Padampur. It is picturesquely located at the foot of the Gandhamardan hills and is inhabited mainly by Binjhals. It was formerly the headquarters of the Borasambar Zamindari extending over 841 square miles (2,178 sq. Kms.) and consisting of 476 villages. Later, the headquarters of the Zamindari shifted to Padampur. The Zamindar belongs to the Binjhal family and is called Pat-Bariha. According to tradition, the founders of the family were twelve archer brothers, who one day were out hunting a hare and boar of changing colour. While engaged in the chase, their arrows miraculously flew as far as Puri and stuck in the great door of Jagannath temple. The Raja of Puri endeavoured in vain to pull them out, and even the royal elephants failed to make them move. Only the twelve brothers could extract them, and thereupon the Raja, admiring their strength, made them rulers of this forest tract of Dandakaranya.

The Chiefs of Borasambar gradually grew in power and expanded at the cost of Phuljhar and Patna territories and subsequently Borasambar was considered worthy of being included in the cluster of States known as the 18 Garjats.

The Zamindar of Borasambar enjoyed the right of affixing the *ticca* to the Maharajas of Patna on their accession. The legend accounting for this practice is as follows:—

By the time the Sultan of Delhi conquered Rajputana a queen of one of the Rajput houses fled away to save her honour after her husband was killed and subsequently reached Borasambar where she gave birth to a son. The Binjhal Chief of Borasambar took pity on the mother and the child, and gave them shelter. Patna was at that time a dependency of Borasambar, and was being ruled by a chief elected by a council of eight Malliks. These Malliks were jealous of their power and had no intention of letting any man occupy the throne for any time. Accordingly, whenever they elected a chief, they took him to the temple of Patneswari (locally called Patnisri) and asked him to do obeisance to the deity. No sooner had he prostrated himself than he was beheaded by the Malliks, who pretended that the deity considered him unfit to sit on the throne and therefore devoured him. The result was that every day a man was elected Chief and then killed the same day.

A Brahmin of Patna on his visit to Borasambar learnt that the Chief had given shelter to a Chauhan princess and her son. On his request, the Borasambar Chief allowed him to take the mother and the son to Patna and to keep in his house. After sometime the Brahmin was elected by the Malliks to be the Chief of Patna. Being afraid of the inevitable death he sent the Chauhan boy who was then attaining manhood, as a substitute. The boy was duly elected and taken to the temple by the Malliks. The latter, as usual, asked him to prostrate himself before the deity, but he told the Malliks to do so first. When they were prostrating themselves, he killed them all with his sword and came out of the temple alive. As it became clear from this that he was approved by the deity, the people hailed him as their ruler and thus he became the first Chauhan Raja of Patna. The Binjhal Chief of Borasambar, the overlord of Patna, sanctioned his claim to the principality, came to Patna, and put the *ticca* of a Raja on his forehead. Till lately, each of his descendants had exercised the same right, also placing a *Pagri* or *Pat* of silk on the head of the Raja of Patna at the time of accession.

In the village Borasambar there is an old temple of Patneswari constructed of rough stone and mortar. The population of the village according to 1961 Census was 120.

237. Brajarajnagar

An industrial town, situated on the Howrah-Bombay line of South Eastern Railway. The place has its importance for the Orient Paper Mills (for details of this factory, see Chapter V).

The municipal administration of the town is run by a Notified Area Council. The Ib river Colliery, Rampur-Hingir Colliery and Orient Colliery are located here. There are two high schools.

(including one for girls), a police-station, a hospital, a veterinary stockman centre, an inspection bungalow, a telephone exchange, and a cinema house. A weekly market sits here on Sunday.

Population, according to 1961 Census, was 16,196. It is the third biggest town of the district.

238. Burkel (Barikel)

A village in Padampur subdivision situated three miles (5 Kms) to the west of Padampur town close to the Gandhamardan hills. It has two beautiful temples, one dedicated to Vishnu and the other to Siva. On the Siva temple, Asokan lion figures are found as decorative element. Near this temple, there is a small shrine of Bhairava where by the side of the deity are placed seven pieces of crystal. One of these pieces displays golden hue probably due to prismatic action which local people believe to be the emanation of Durga, the consort of Bhairava. The village is inhabited mainly by Savaras and Binjhals. The priest of the Siva temple is a Mali by caste and he claims to be a member of the Gandhamalis or Thanapatis. The Vishnu temple has a Brahmin priest. There is an M. E. School, a Sanskrit Tol, and an agricultural farm in the village. The weekly market sits on every Wednesday. Its population according to 1961 Census was 1,521.

239. Burla

Nine miles (14 Kms.) to the south-west of Sambalpur, the township of Burla developed in course of construction of the Hirakud Dam. It is called Burla after the name of a small neighbouring village. It started as a temporary colony of the engineers and officers engaged in the work of construction of the dam. Even at present, Burla is mainly a town of Government offices and the officials, the percentage of civil population being very small. The main offices are those of the Hirakud division of the Irrigation Department and of the State Electricity Board. The office of the Burla Construction Division of the Works Department has now shifted from Hirakud to Burla because of the construction of Sambalpur University Campus which is undertaken close to this town. The Veer Surendra Sai Medical College, managed by the Government of Orissa, and the University College of Engineering, managed by Sambalpur University, occupy major portion of the township. Foundation has also been laid for the construction of Sambalpur University Campus in the vicinity of the town. There is a High School, a Police Station and the office of the Notified Area Council. The power canal flowing from the Hirakud Dam divides Burla into two parts which are linked by a small and beautiful bridge. There is a small bazar catering to the needs of the people. There is a hospital attached to the Medical College and a Veterinary Dispensary.

Burla has three beautiful rest houses. The best one is the Ashoka Nivas, picturesquely located at the foot of the Jawahar Minar of the Hirakud Dam, and the next best, named as the First Class Rest House, is located close to the Medical College. These two rest houses are under the control of the Irrigation Department. The third rest house is under the control of the State Electricity Board.

The population of Burla according to the Census of 1961 was 10,230.

240. Charmal

A village in Rairakhol subdivision 10 miles (16 Km.) to the west of Rampur (Rairakhol). It is situated on the National Highway No. 42 and has an Inspection Bungalow managed by the Works Department. It has a Police Station, a veterinary stockman centre, and a Forest Range Office. The village is noted for forest produce particularly, Kendr-leaves. Its population according to 1961 Census was 528.

Closeby in the Suani hill, the image of goddess Suani and several other images are found. According to local legend, whomsoever the goddess married, died one after another. At last her father requested Yudhisthira, who had come to that country during the period of his exile, to marry her. Yudhisthira married her. But the Pandavas did not take her to their home as they were in exile and left her there with the consolation that she would be taken with them when they returned from exile. Now the people worship the image of goddess Suani. A big fair takes place in the month of Bhadraba (August-September) every year.

241. Chiplima

A village situated on the right bank of the Mahanadi 23 miles (37 Km.) to the south of Sambalpur town. It is mostly inhabited by the fishermen who were formerly earning their living by rowing boats from Sambalpur to different towns and villages down the river Mahanadi. The village deity Ghantlei is very popular in the neighbouring area. The devotees who come to worship her usually tie bells outside her shrine which make tinkling sound in the wind.

Near Chiplima is the village Chaurpur on the right bank of the Mahanadi which is said to be the seat of Balaramdeva, the first Chauhan Raja of Sambalpur, before his coming to Sambalpur town.

Chiplima was for sometime noted for the Kalyan Ashram founded by the late Dr. Janardan Pujari in 1944. The Ashram was shifted in 1949 to Baunsara situated on the other side of the Mahanadi in consequence of the construction of the hydro-electric project near the village.

Chiplima is at present well known for the hydro-electric project which was inaugurated by the Government of Orissa on the 14th September, 1963. The total expenditure of the Project is about Rs. 14.32 crores. A natural fall of about 80 feet (24.38 m.) in height in the Mahanadi is made use of for developing power. The State Live-stock Breeding Farm and an agricultural farm are located here. Its population according to 1961 Census, was 4,596.

242. Debrigarh

A peak in the Barapahar hills in Bargarh subdivision, having a height of 2,267 feet (691 m.) This used to be a stronghold of the Rajas of Sambalpur and according to local tradition, it was here that the Marathas under Chandaji Bhonsla captured Raja Jayant Singh and his son Maharaj Sai. It was a noted rebel stronghold during the revolt of Balbhadra Dao, the Gond Zamindar of Lakhanpur, who was killed here. Mohapatra Ray and Bandyai Rai also sought shelter here about 130 years ago (i. e., about 1840) after murdering Baluki Das, the muafidar of Bargarh, and Surendra Sai was captured here in 1864. The place is 20 miles (32 km.) north of Bargarh, from which place a cart-track leads to the foot of the hill, thence one has to climb the hill for 3 miles (5 kms.). There is, or rather was, a small village close by. As it has been acquired by Government and included in the forest reserve, its inhabitants have left it. Two miles north of the village is a large cave in the hill-side called Barabakhra, which is said to be capable of holding 400 men. There is a wild life sanctuary, details of which are given in Chapter I. The village contained a population of 109 in 1961.

243. Deogarh

It was the capital town of the ex-State of Bamra (Bamanda) and is at present the headquarters of the Deogarh subdivision. It is located 60 miles (97 kms.) to the east of Sambalpur town on the National Highway No. 6. The Bamra Railway Station on the Nagpur-Howrah section of the South-East Railway is at a distance of 64 miles (103 kms.) from this town. Deogarh is attractively situated with the background of wooded hills and waterfalls. The Pradhanpat hill with its picturesque falls offers a rare scenic beauty. Two beautiful guest houses named Basanta Nivas and Lalita Basanta were constructed on the hill by the former Rajas of Bamra. They are at present under the management of the Works Department. There are two waterfalls in the Pradhanpat range of hills, from one of which hydro-electric power is generated and the other serves as the source of water supply to the town. There is a newly constructed Dharmasala in the town and a Revenue rest house under the management of the Subdivisional Officer. The palace of the ex-Rajas of Bamra is located in the town, and with no compound walls it presents a simple and sober look. There are a number of temples in the town notable among which are of Gopinath, Jagannath and Gokarneswara.

The late Raja Sachidananda Tribhuvan Dev, who was looking after all-round development of the town, organised the Municipality of Deogarh. The Municipality is now serving well although it does not seem to have sufficient funds. It supplies filtered water and electricity to the town people. The town has a college with provision in both science and humanities, and two High Schools one of which is meant for girls. There is a public library named after the late Raja Sachidananda Tribhuvan Dev. It is now under the management of the Home (Public Relations) Department. The library is one of the largest in Orissa and was once famous in Orissa due to large number of books and documents preserved in it. There are a hospital, a sub-jail, a veterinary dispensary and a telephone exchange.

There are various Government offices in the town. Important among them are the offices of the Subdivisional Officer, Munsif, Divisional Forest Officer and the District Inspector of Schools. There is a daily market.

The population of the town according to 1961 Census, was 6,830.

244. Dhama

A village in the Sambalpur Subdivision, situated on the left bank of Mahanadi 15 miles (24 (kms.) south of Sambalpur on the Sambalpur-Sonepur road. The old Sonepur road crossed the Mahanadi near the village, but that road has now been abandoned. Dhama has an Inspection Bungalow managed by the Works Department and about 5 miles (8 kms.) south, at Larasara there is a beautiful Forest Bungalow. A weekly bazar is held in the village every Saturday which is noted for trade in rice, *gur* and forest produce. The village has a High School, a Post Office, a Veterinary dispensary and a Police Station. Population according to the Census of 1961, was 1,425.

245. Diptipur

A village in Padampur Subdivision 8 miles (13 kms.) to the east of Padampur on the Sohela-Padampur road. It is noted for the missionary activities of the Utkal Christian Council which started work here in 1956. The activities of the Mission are divided into three wings—health, education and agriculture. A dispensary was started in 1957 which became a hospital with 16 beds in 1958. The Mission is running one M. E. School in the village and also attempting adult education. They are helping the cultivators to irrigate lands by hand pumps.

246. Dungri

A place in Ambabhona Police Station of Bargarh Subdivision, situated 36 miles (58 kms.) to the north of Bargarh town—connected by good motorable all-weather road. In 1956, a limestone quarry was

opened here by the Orissa Mining Corporation, where over 1,200 labourers were being employed in 1968. The Hira Cement Factory at Bargarh gets its supply of limestone ores from this quarry. For carrying these ores a metre-gauge rail line (53 km.) has been constructed from Dungri to Bargarh. The quarry-township, which is growing, has been built entirely by the Corporation within its lease-hold area. The Tamdei Refugee Camp is only three miles from Dungri.

The place contains a guest house maintained by the Corporation, an M. E. School, a Dispensary, and a Post office. A weekly market sits here on Saturday. Population of the place according to 1961 Census was 888.

247. Gaisama

A village in Bargarh Subdivision 8 miles (13 kms.) south east of Bargarh. Picturesquely situated on the bank of the Jira river, it is noted for the temple of Balunkeswar Siva who is regarded as one of the eight Sambhus in the district. The temple was built by Dakshin Rai, the Dewan of Raja Ajit Singh (1725 -1766), although tradition assigns it to Raja Abhaya Singh (1766 -78). An interesting legend which has developed regarding the origin of the village Gaisama and the construction of the Siva temple is presented below.

It is said that one Kulta village headman of the ex-Patna State during the rule of Raja Rai Sing had two sons named Kuvera Sahu and Amar Sahu, and a beautiful daughter. An influential noble of the royal family wanted the hands of the girl and the old headman (whose name is not presented) apprehending trouble left the territory of Patna in a cloudy night with his family and belongings loaded in one hundred carts. About a thousand cows and bullocks came with the party. They crossed the river Ong (Ang) early next morning and reached the territory of Sambalpur. Standing on the northern bank of this river on the soil of Sambalpur, the old man heaved a sigh of relief and pointing his right hand towards the rising sun took an oath that in future he and his descendants would never cross the river Ong. The party proceeded further towards the north and passing through Barpali crossed the river Jira on the third day of their march and spent the night on the northern bank of that river. That night the old man had a strange dream. A goddess appeared before him in the dream and told him not to proceed any further and to settle there with the lands as far as his cows and bullocks were then taking rest. As a result of that a new settlement started on the spot and since the limits of it were determined by the presence of the cows it was popularly called "Gaisima" which later on came to be known as Gaisama. Within a short period the villagers excavated thirteen tanks round about the village and lived peacefully cultivating the fertile fields.

After about a year in one moonlit night the headman got the news from his attendants that a band of armed soldiers were coming towards the village. He could at once know the significance of the coming of the soldiers to his village. It was the wicked noble of Patna who had sent the band of soldiers to forcibly take away the young daughter of the headman from the new village Gaisama. He could not know what to do in the midst of that danger and prayed the village goddess to save the prestige of the family. By the time he lost all hope, an untouchable old woman of the Ganda caste suddenly came inside the house through back door and asked the headman to send the girl to her small hut where she could keep her concealed inside some big earthen pot. The soldiers rushed into the village and made a thorough search for the young girl. But without finding any trace of her they all left the village in haste after about an hour. The headman and his family fell at the feet of the untouchable old woman expressing gratitude but she was so excited with joy because of her performance that she fell down dead before all the villagers. The inhabitants of Gaisama cherish till to day the memory of the old Ganda woman who has been deified and receives Puja from them on ceremonial occasions.

A few years after that, one day Raja Abhaya Singh of Sambalpur had his camp near the village on his way to Patnagarh. After his bath, he visited the shrine of Siva which was close to his camp. The Thanapati priest became nervous as he did not expect the Raja at that hour in the shrine. As there was then no flowers near at hand he took the flower which he had on his ear and presented it to the Raja. The Raja, however, noticed a hair in the flower and asked what it meant. The priest out of fear told him that it was the hair of Siva. Raja Abhaya Singh became very angry at the explanation of the priest and told him that he would see the image of the god early next morning before leaving the village and if no hair would be found on His head the priest would be severely punished. The poor priest prayed to Lord Siva the whole night to save him from the wrath of the Raja. Next morning when the Raja came to the shrine he actually found hair growing on the head of the image of Siva. Suspecting it to be false hair kept by the shrewd priest he pulled one with his hand. Suddenly there came out a stream of milk from the root of the hair and the Raja was astonished at the miraculous power of the god. He at once ordered that a stone temple was to be built in honour of the god who was named as Balunkeswara Siva from that day.

Population of the village according to the Census of 1961 was 1,744.

248. Gaisilat

A village in Padampur Subdivision, situated about 12 miles (19 Kms.) from Padampur. Headquarters of a Panchayat Samiti and police station, it contains a high school, a veterinary dispensary, a dispensary and a rest shed. The primary health centre is located at Talpali.

Population at the 1961 Census was 1,182.

249. Ganiapali

A village in Padampur Subdivision, situated on the river Ong (Ang), 6 miles (10 Kms.) south of Melchhamunda. Contains some old relics. There are ruins of an ancient temple in front of the village school. Two Buddha images have been discovered there. One such image with a hooded-serpent is worshipped by local people as a goddess. Population, according to 1961 Census, was 1,118.

250. Ghens

A village in Padampur Subdivision, situated on the Sohela-Padampur road, 22 miles (35Kms.) from Padampur and 26 miles (42 Km.) from Bargarh (via Sohela). This was formerly a zamindari extending over 40 sq. miles (104 sq.Kms.) in Bargarh Subdivision. Originally it was an appanage of the Borasambar Zamindari and was subsequently created by partition or assignment. The Zamindars were Binjhals by caste. Some of them were involved in the insurrection led by Surendra Sai. One of the family was sentenced to transportation for life in 1864 and died while undergoing sentence. His son remained in outlawry for several years after the amnesty was proclaimed, but was captured in 1865 and hanged for murder. The *takoli* paid by the zamindar was Rs. 1,960 and his net income was Rs. 6,537.

The place is well connected by road. It contains a high school, a dispensary and a post office. A weekly market sits here on Thursday. Population in 1961 was 1,766.

251. Hatibari

A village in Jujomura police-station of Sambalpur Subdivision, situated amidst forests about 15 miles (24Kms.) to the south of Sambalpur. Connected with National Highway No. 42 (Cuttack-Sambalpur road) near Mundher by another branch road about 3 miles in length. The place has its importance for the leper home started here by late Dr. Isaac Santra, a reputed social worker, whom Government of India awarded the decoration of 'Padmasree' for his outstanding social service.

There are a veterinary stockman centre and a post office. Population, according to 1961 Census was 664.

252. Hirakud

A small island lying between two branches of river Mahanadi about 6 miles (10 Kms.) north of Sambalpur. Its area was 828 acres (335 hectares) but the population was very scanty, only 70 inhabitants being returned at the 1931 Census. The name means the diamond island, diamond mining being formerly carried on by a class of people called Jharas, for whose maintenance, it is said, the revenue of about 30 villages on either bank of the river Mahanadi was assigned by the former Rajas of Sambalpur. These people worked during the cold and hot weather, when the water was low. The work was done in the bed of the river in either branch, and some large and valuable diamonds are known to have been found in the right branch. Diwan Bahadur Kastur Chand of Kampti was granted a license to prospect for diamonds and other precious stones.

Situated about 6 miles (10. Kms.) north of Sambalpur, Hirakud is now a place of great importance. The Hirakud Dam is a multi-purpose project and is the largest earth dam in the world. The foundation of the project was laid on the 15th March 1946 by Sir Hawthorne Lewis, the then Governor of Orissa. It has a reservoir of 6.6 million acre-feet with irrigation potential for 6.72 lakh acres (2.72 lakh hectares) both in Khariff and Rabi seasons. Generators at the Dam and in the subsidiary power houses have an installed capacity of 252,500 Kw. of power. Stretching 3 miles (5 Kms.) across the river bank the main dam is a composite dam of earth, masonry and concrete. Nearly 13 miles (21Kms.) long earth dyke has been built on either side to close the gap in the surrounding hills. The dam has a maximum height of 200 feet at the power-house site and the earth dam is 190 feet high at the deep channel section. Out of the storage capacity of 6.6 million acre-feet of water in the reservoir, 1.88 million acre-feet is dead storage and the balance prove sufficient for flood control and live storage for irrigation and power generation. Canals take off from either side of the dam. The one on the right side has irrigation potential of 3,80,000 acres (153,900 hectares), whereas the two canals on the left side are expected to irrigate only 74,000 acres (29,970 hectares). The total length of all the canals is nearly 551.5 miles (888 Km.) and they benefit nearly 4,54,000 acres (183,870 hectares) of land in Sambalpur and Balangir districts. The work on the Dam was started in 1948, and the water was available for irrigation in Bargarh canal in September, 1956.

There is a small township at the project-site which is connected by good motorable roads with Sambalpur. The Calcutta-Bombay National Highway (No. 6) also passes at a point about 4 1/2 miles (7 Kms.) from Hirakud township. Travelling on the main Bombay-Calcutta railway line, one can reach Hirakud going up to Hirakud railway

station from Jharsuguda on Jharsuguda-Titlagarh line passing via Sambalpur. The Administrative Officers' Training School, a polytechnic, Re-rolling mill, Hira Cable Works, Hirakud Industrial Works, a rice mill set up by Food Corporation of India with Japanese collaboration, and two aluminium factories (Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries) are the important public and private institutions located in the area. The town has a police-station, Notified Area Council and a High School. Its population in 1961 Census was 8,593.

253. Huma

A village in the Sambalpur Subdivision, situated on the left bank of the Mahanadi, 14 miles (23 kms.) south of Sambalpur. The village contains the leaning temple dedicated to Siva, which was built in the reign of Baliar Singh, the fifth Raja of Sambalpur. The worship of Siva is said to have been initiated by a milkman (Gauda), who daily crossed the Mahanadi to a place on the bank where the underlying rock cropped out. Here he daily offered his dole of milk, which was at once drunk up by the rock, and this miraculous circumstance led to enquiries, which ended in the construction of the present temple. Huma is a place of pilgrimage, and is also visited by strangers out of curiosity to see the different kinds of fish in the river. They are said to be so tame that they will eat sweetmeats from the hands of those who bathe close to the temple. The temple has an endowment consisting of Huma and 6 other villages, which have been exempted from assessment so long as the temple stands and the religious ceremonies are maintained. The grant is an old one, said to date back to the time of Balaram Dev, the first Raja of Sambalpur.

The place is connected by road. A great fair takes place at the foot-hill in March every year on the occasion of Sivaratri. The presiding deity is Bimalesvara Siva, whom a large number of people worship on the auspicious day of Sivaratri.

The following commodities are mainly sold in the fair: bell-metal utensils from Kantilo, Sambalpur and Balangir; bamboo and wooden toys from Sonapur and Kadobahal; molasses from Sonapur and Dhama; and cotton, *tassar* and handloom cloth from Barpali, Bargarh, Sonapur, and Maniabandh. Population in 1961 Census was 402.

254. Jharsuguda

A town in Sambalpur Subdivision, situated 30 miles (48 kms.) to the north of Sambalpur on State Highway No. 10. The old village of Jharsuguda was only about half a mile from the new town. The village was held muaf (free-hold) by a member of the Sambalpur Raj family. It is a junction on the Howrah-Bombay section of South-Eastern Railway, from where a branch line runs up to Titlagarh via Sambalpur. It is also

the railhead of Sundargarh town, the headquarters of Sundargarh district, which is 22 miles (35 kms.) off. Jharsuguda has become a place of industrial and business interest.

The Central State Farm, extending over about 10,000 acres (4,050 hectares), is being set up in Jharsuguda Tahasil (on the periphery of Hirakud Reservoir) by Government of India with Russian collaboration. The headquarters office of this huge farm is located here.

The town has a municipality, established in 1951. There are a college, a high school, and an engineering school. It contains Bhaskar Textiles Ltd. There are an aerodrome, a telephone exchange, an inspection bungalow, a rest shed, a hospital and a veterinary hospital. The 2nd Battalion of Orissa Military Police is also stationed here. Other important Government offices located here are the Tahasil Office with a Sub-Treasury, Police-Station, Commercial Tax Office, State Bank, Divisional Engineer (Railway) Office, Divisional Office of Orissa Forest Corporation.

Population, according to 1961 Census was 19,227. It is the second biggest town in the district.

255. Jujomura

A village in Sambalpur Subdivision, situated on Sambalpur-Cuttack Road (National Highway No. 42). This was formerly a sub-zamindar of the Loising estate held by a Gond, the sub-zamindar paying revenue to the zamindar of Loising. This zamindari, extending over 95 Sq. miles (246 Sq. Kms.) was created during the first part of the 18th Century by a former Raja of Sambalpur. It was at Jujomura that Dr. Moore of Madras Army (mentioned in Chapter II) was murdered while proceeding to give medical aid to troops at Sambalpur engaged in suppressing the rebellion of Surendra Sai. Madhu, one of the Loising zamindar's family, was hanged for having taken part in the murder; but his brother was restored the estate of Loising after amnesty. The inhabitants of Loising, under the leadership of Surendra Sai, gave great trouble during the rebellion of 1857. Total assets of the zamindar amounted to Rs. 6,211 and 15 annas, and he was paying a *takoli* of Rs. 1,765.

There was a considerable area of forest consisting mainly of Sal but much has been cleared. Headquarters of Sambalpur-III Panchayat Samiti and of a police-station. There are a high school, a dispensary, a veterinary dispensary, an inspection bungalow and a post and telegraph office. A weekly market sits here on Tuesday. Population, according to 1961 Census was 900.

256. Kamgaon

A village in Bargarh Subdivision, situated 8 miles (13 Kms.) north of Bargarh town, mostly populated by Kultas. The village is a very old one, and is said to have been established by the Kultas, when they migrated to this part of the district from Boudh about the first part of the 16th Century. It contains a temple of Ramachandi (Goddess Durgā), which is held in great veneration by the Kultas, whose chief families, the Bhois and Pradhans, are its priests. The temple is maintained by *muafi* lands in the village. There is a high school.

Population in 1961 Census was 3,070.

257. Kharsal

A village in Bargarh Subdivision (Bhatli Police-Station), situated in the north of Bargarh. Formerly a zamindari extending over 23 Sq miles (73 Sq. Kms.). The nucleus of the zamindari was formed in the reign of Ballar Singh, the fifth Raja of Sambalpur, by the grant of the village of Kharsal to one Udam Gond as reward for services rendered. In 1860, the then zamindar was hanged for having taken an active part in Surendra Sai's rebellion. The *takoli* paid by the zamindar was Rs. 1,535 and his net income was Rs. 5,107. The zamindar had the hereditary title of Sardar and his headquarters were at Kanakbira.

Population, according to 1961 Census was 1,104.

258. Khinda

A village in Sambalpur Subdivision (Katarbaga Police-Station) situated 21 miles (34 Kms.) north of Sambalpur town near Lapanga Railway station. The place is famous for being the residence of Surendra Sai. The village was a *muaf* grant assigned for the maintenance of the family of Surendra Sai, who belonged to the Raj family of Sambalpur, and claimed succession in preference to Raja Narayan Singh, the last Raja of Sambalpur. This claim he endeavoured to enforce by means of disturbances, which culminated in the commission of a murder in 1840, for which he was sentenced to imprisonment for life. Four years later, this village was given *muaf* by Raja Narayan Singh for the maintenance of his family. He was released by the mutineers in 1857, and returning to Sambalpur headed a revolt against the British Government. In 1862 he submitted, but he was subsequently found to be carrying on secret intrigues, and was deported from the district in 1864 along with his son Mitrabhanu Sai. The Government of India having passed orders allowing Mitrabhanu Sai to return to his home at Khinda, he returned there in 1907.

A weekly market sits here on Tuesday. Population, according to 1961 Census was 1,329.

259. Kolabira

A village in Laikera Police-Station of Sambalpur Subdivision, situated about 25 miles (40 Kms.) north of Sambalpur. It was formerly a zamindari extending over 278 square miles (720 Sq. Kms.), of which 40 Sq. miles (104 Sq. Kms.) were under forest. The zamindari was created in the reign of Jayant Singh, Raja of Sambalpur. The then zamindar took an active part in the rebellion of Surendra Sai, and was hanged; while his son died an outlaw. The zamindari was, however, restored after the amnesty. The *takoli* paid by the zamindar was Rs. 9,350, while his net income was Rs. 31,149. It was also called the Jaipur estate.

Headquarters of Laikera-III Panchayat Samiti, the place contains a dispensary, a high school, a veterinary dispensary, and a rest house. A weekly market sits here on Monday. Population, according to 1961 Census, was 1,154.

260. Kuchinda

Headquarters of the Subdivision of the same name, situated 31 miles (50 Kms.) from Bamra railway station and 33 miles (53 Kms.) from Deogarh on Bamra-Deogarh road. Also connected by good road with Sambalpur, the distance being 52 miles (84 Kms.). Formerly, it was the headquarters of Kuchinda Tahasil of Bamra ex-State. There are a college, a high school, an inspection bungalow, a rest shed, a hospital, a veterinary dispensary, a sub-jail and a District Agricultural Office. The offices of Subdivisional Officer, Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies, and the Court of Subdivisional Magistrate are also located here. A weekly market sits on Friday. Population, according to 1961 Census, was 2,543.

At Lasa, a village about 2 miles (3 Kms.) from Kuchinda, two pre-historic implements of polished stone celt type have been found. (For details see Chapter II).

261. Kudabaga

A village in Rengali Police-Station of Sambalpur Subdivision about 30 miles (48 Kms.) north-west of Sambalpur. It was here near Bursapal that V. Ball in 1876 discovered a palaeolithic stone implement. Kudabaga was formerly a zamindari extending over an area of 29 square miles (75 square Km.). The zamindar was a Gond by caste, and the family took an active part in the rebellion of Surendra Sai. The *takoli* of the estate was Rs. 1,430 and the net income of the zamindar was Rs. 4,783.

Population, according to Census of 1961, was 364.

262. Kuilighoghar

A temple situated in the jungle of Chuikhanch near Kudabaga, about 31 miles (50 Kms.) north-west of Sambalpur. The village was a muaf (free hold) grant assigned for the maintenance of the temple. It is a place of pilgrimage. The temple is dedicated to Maheswar Baba and is supposed to be of superhuman construction. There is a waterfall near the temple, and the deity is said to live in a pool at the foot of the fall, which is well-stocked with fish and snakes. There is also a cave in the adjoining rocks called Maheswarnath, said to be his place of retreat.

263. Kumbhari

A village in Barpali Police-Station of Bargarh Subdivision, situated 8 miles (13 Kms.) south of Bargarh at the junction of Jira and Ranj rivers. There are two temples here, one dedicated to Mahadeva (Siva) and the other to Jagannath, Balabhadra and S bhadra. Both the temples are maintained by muaf lands in the village. Rathajatra and Sivaratri are the two important festivals of the place. According to King's Gazetteer, * Kumbhari was growing "the best sugarcane in the district". A weekly market sits here on Wednesday. There is a high school.

Population in 1961 Census, was 4,513.

264. Kuruan

A village in Bargarh Subdivision, situated about 8 miles (13 Kms.) south-east of Bargarh town. The village was a *muafi* village held by the zamindar of Padampur. There is an old temple here dedicated to Maheswari, also called Uma. The temple is a small tiled building, but the deity, which it enshrines is held in great veneration by the Hindus, especially by Dumals. A fair is held during Dasahara festival in October every year, and is attended by a large number of people. Married people having no children visit the temple on this occasion. On the eighth day of the bright fortnight of the month (i. e., Durgastami) one of the Dumal priests of Maheswari is believed to be possessed by the deity, whose spiritual influence is shown by his violently shaking his head.

On this day in the year, he has the privilege of taking out from the temple two sticks (made of Mahua wood), which are said to be the sticks of the deity, and of washing them in the Danta river about a mile off. While proceeding to the river with the sticks, a crowd of worshippers follow with offerings. Those who long to have children, fast on this day and appear before the Dumal, while under the influence of the deity. The cloths of both husband and wife having been tied together, they fall at the feet of the Dumal, and do not rise until they are asked to do so by the

* Sambalpur District Gazetteer (1932) by F. C. King—P. 246

deity speaking through his lips. They are then told whether their prayer for offspring has been granted or not. Population in 1961 Census was 1,151

265. **Laira (Laida)**

A village in Katarbaga Police-Station of Sambalpur Subdivision, situated about 28 miles (45 Kms.) North-East of Sambaipur town. This is the village where Agharias are said to have first settled when they migrated to the district. Formerly, it was a zamindari extending over 40 square miles (64 square Kms.). The zamindar was a Gond who paid a *takoli* of Rs. 1,675, his net income being Rs. 5,584. It was a Khalsa Gaontiahi village. The village contains a ruined temple to which the following legend attaches. More than 200 years ago (i. e., about beginning of 18th Century), it is said, one Jewar Gond had a dream in which it was revealed to him that a temple was buried under the ground where he lay. With difficulty he induced the people to believe him, but the place being dug up, his dream was found to be true.

There are a rest house, a veterinary stockman centre. A weekly market sits here on Tuesday. Population according to 1961 Census was 2,960.

266. **Larambha**

A village in Attabira Police-Station of Bargarh Subdivision, situated on the Gurbhaga-Gandturum road (a road connecting National Highway No. 6 at Gurbhaga), about 25 miles (40Kms.) from Sambalpur and 23 miles (37 Kms.) from Bargarh (via Gurbhaga). Late Brajamohan Panda, an eminent educationist of the district, belonged to this village. And due to his untiring efforts, a high school and a degree college could be established in this small village populated by only 738 persons (according to 1961 Census), majority of whom belonging to backward classes. This is the only college in the district situated in a village.

267. **Melchhamunda**

A village in Padampur Subdivision, situated 23 miles (37 Kms.) from Padampur on Sohela-Padampur road. Some Buddhist relics have been found at Ganiapali, about 6 miles (10Kms.) from here. The place is identified with ancient Muchalinda, which is said to be a centre of Buddhist learning. (In this connection please see the discussion in Chapter XV.) It contains a Police-Station, a high school and a rest shed. Population, at 1961 Census, was 770.

268. **Narsinghnath**

A place of pilgrimage in Padampur Subdivision on the Northern flank of Gandhamardan hills, situated about 20 miles (32 Kms.) South-West of Padampur and 2 miles (3 Kms.) from Paikmal. Connected by

good motorable road. There is an inspection bungalow at Paikmal, which is 31 miles (50 Kms.) from Khariar Road Railway Station and 18 miles (29 Kms.) from Padampur. On Nrusimha-chaturdasi day (in May) a big fair takes place here and thousands of pilgrims visit the God.

Beglar's description of the place and of the temple has been quoted from King's Gazetteer¹ and given as Appendix II at the end of the Chapter. G.R. Bhandarkar's² account, published in the Report of the Archaeological Survey of India for 1904-05 and quoted in King's Gazetteer, is reproduced below:

"The temple is situated at the foot of a hill, and is surrounded on all sides by one of the thickest jungles of the Central Provinces³. A streamlet gurgles closeby, the water of which is regarded as sacred, and at five places accumulates itself into five pools, called *Kundas*. The trees and shrubs, with which the hill is overgrown, are so tall and numerous that even at mid-day the sun-light that filters through their foliage is hardly stronger or brighter than that of the morning outside the jungle. Higher upon the hill towards the South-East near the first *Kunda*, are four colossal figures, rudely carved out of the rock. They are shown as the first four of the five Pandava brothers. Close beside the Northern door of the temple is another huge rude figure carved out of the rock, which is pointed out as that of Sahadeva, the remaining fifth Pandava brother. Near him is another colossal figure, which is of Ganapati. Not far from these may be noticed, amongst the broken sculptures lying loose, a nicely chiselled pedestal with seven horses in front of it. The image which was originally set up on it must, doubtless, have been that of Surya.

"The temple faces the East, and consists of a shrine and *jagmohan* or hall. In front of the temple, on the other side of the streamlet, is a Garuda *stambha* or pillar, with a small niche at the top where a lamp lighted during the Diwali festival. It is said to have been erected but seven years ago. Near the *jagmohan* are small chambers, which are modern erection. One of them is used as a granary and a cooking-room, where the *bhoga* or offering made to the deity is prepared. Others are occupied by the *pujaris* or worshippers, and one of them has been reserved as a *dharmasala* for pilgrims.

"The walls of the *jagmohan*, as they are at present, are unquestionably rebuilt. The hall had originally three door-ways, facing the East, North and South, but now only the first two remain, the third being blocked up

1. Sambalpur District Gazetteer (1932) by F. C. King, p. 218

2. *Ibid*—pp. 250—254

3. Padampur was then in the Central Provinces. From 1905 it formed a part of Orissa.

and replaced with masonry work, thus, giving an uncouth and unsymmetrical shape to the side wall. The remaining door-frames are of stone of a dark colour, and are deeply and beautifully carved. That on the North has Gajalakshmi occupying the post of honour on the lintel. Lakshmi sits on a *padmasana* or lotus throne with her right leg resting on the throne and her left hand loose and touching a stool down below. On each side of her is a *chauri* bearer, and above the latter are two elephants, one on each side, standing on lotuses and holding water-pitchers in their trunks. In old temples in the South, Gajalakshmi plays a prominent part on the door-ways, specially of the halls. And it is not surprising that the figure of Gajalakshmi should be seen in an old temple in Orissa, which is connected with the South more than with the North, and as a matter of fact, even in Orissa, at Cuttack, we meet with a sculpture representing Gajalakshmi in one of its ancient caves¹.

“Now, to turn to the temple of Narasimhanatha—the door-frame on the north has three moldings, the central one mostly carved with pairs of musicians and the other two with floral ornamentation. It holds, in relief near the bottom on its proper right, Siva in one compartment and Ganga on a *makar* or crocodile in the other, and on its proper left, Siva again in one compartment and Yamuna on a *kurma* or tortoise in the other. The door-frame facing the east is almost exactly like this, but the figures at the bottom are not Siva and Ganga or Yamuna, but a *dyarapala* or door-keeper and a female *chauri* bearer. In the projecting wall above this door-way are Navagraha or the Nine Planets, which are generally sculptured over the entrances of halls or shrines to ward off the influence of evil spirits. Near this door-frame on its proper left is the standing image of a warrior with hands folded and with a sword held against the breast between it and the left hand. Judging from analogous instances this seems to have been a figure of the personage who was principally connected with either the construction or the restoration of the temple*. The roof of the *jagmohan* is supported by the walls, and four columns of stone of a reddish colour and nicely sculptured. In the walls, outside, have been built some sculptures, which, in all likelihood, formed part of the original exterior of the hall.

“On the lintel of the shrine door-way is again a figure of Gajalakshmi but here Lakshmi is seated cross-legged. The door-jamb contains, near the bottom, images of Jaya and Vijaya in niches elegantly carved. In

1. Cave Temples of India, by Fergusson and Burgess, p. 71 and pl. I.

* This statue, and another statue (riding a horse) discovered by Dr. N. K. Sahu in 1964 may be identified with that of Vaijaya Dev, the Raja of Patna, who erected the temple. Photos of both these statues have been printed in Balangir District Gazetteer (1968), as well as in this gazetteer.

other respects, the shrine door-frame is plain and devoid of all ornamentation. There are only three principal niches on the exterior of the shrine. That facing the north has an image of Trivikrama with four hands, one broken off and the other three bearing a conch, a discus, and a mace. Near his foot, on one side, is Lakshmi and on the other are three figures, viz., of Vamana, Bali, and his minister. In the niche at the back is Narasinha, and in that facing the south, Varaha.

“Inside the shrine is a very small image of what is called by the people there Marjarakesari, a form of Vishnu with the head of a cat and the body of a lion. It is thickly swathed in clothes and has a brass nose, eyes and mouth. A long description of the genesis of this incarnation of Vishnu has been set forth in a local *mahatmya* composed in Oriya, but a brief account of it will not here be out of place. A certain *rishi* was performing religious austerities on the banks of the Godavari. He had a daughter of the name of Malati. Ravana, the demon king of Ceylon, once came thither and was smitten with her beauty. He ravished her, and thereupon the *rishi* cursed her and forthwith quitted the place. She fell into a swoon, and was thrown in this condition into the river by Ravana. But Godavari protected her, and she was brought back safely to the bank. When she regained her consciousness, she began to search after her father. Finding her search to be fruitless, she took to weeping. Her wailings were heard by Musaka (mouse), the vehicle of Ganapati, who came up to her. He promised to restore her to her father on condition of enjoying intercourse with her, and thus from Ravana and Musaka was born of her a demon called Musakadatta. When the latter grew up, he ate his mother up. Thereafter he performed religious austerities, which propitiated Siva. The God conferred on him the boon that he would have cause for fear from none but Narasinha of the *Satya Yuga*. The demon thus became a source of trouble to the Gods. The Gods repaired to Rama Chandra and prayed for his mercy. Rama Chandra assumed the form of Narasinha and came within sight of Musakadatta. The latter fled in fear and was pursued by Narasinha. The demon approached the mountain called Gandhagiri, where the temple stands, and he sought him to grant him refuge. This was granted, and the demon assumed the form of a mouse and entered the mountain. Narasinha had, therefore, to become a cat, and continued the pursuit. But Gandhagiri interceded and so did the Gods also, who requested Narasinha to establish himself there in that feline form, and devour Musakadatta when he came out”.

There is an inscription in proto-Oriya script and in Oriya language on a slab of black stone in the temple. The date of this inscription is 14th March 1413 A.D. (Vide Chapter II-p.52). The inscription is assigned

to Vaijal Dev, Raja of Patna. It consists of four lines which read as follows :

Text of the inscription

- L. 1—ନମଃ ଶ୍ରୀ ନରସିଂହାୟ ସ୍ଵର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଶ୍ରୀ ବିକାରି ନାମ ସମସ୍ତରେ ଚୈତ୍ର ପୌର୍ଣ୍ଣମୀ ଶୁକ୍ରବାରେ
ହସ୍ତା ନକ୍ଷତ୍ରେ ପାଟଣା ନଗରସ୍ଥିତ ବସ୍ତ୍ର ରାଜଦେବ ରାଜାଙ୍କର ପୁତ୍ର ବୈଜାଳ
- L. 2—ଦେବ ମନୋହର ପୁତ୍ରାର୍ଥେ ଗନ୍ଧମାର୍ଦାନ ପର୍ବତେ ବିରାଜ ନରସିଂହନାଥ ସ୍ଵାମୀଙ୍କର
ଦେଉଳ ତୋଳାଇଲା । ହୃଦୟ ଭୂଷଣ ରତ୍ନମାନ ଗାଇ ଶତେକ ଲୋହାସିଂଗା
- L. 3—ଗ୍ରାମ ପାଶେ ଆଦି ମେରଡ଼ା କରିଲେନା ଲୋକଦେବୀ ଭୂମି ରାପଙ୍ଗ ପଦାଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ଅହସ୍ତ
ରାତ୍ରିଃ ଉଭୟ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଧର୍ମେ ପୂଜା ପଢ଼ି ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରପାକ ପାଣିଗ୍ରହୀ ପୁରାଣେ
- L. 4— . . . ଦେଲା । ପ୍ରଶସ୍ତିକାର ଅପା ଶ୍ରୀ ନରସିଂହସ୍ୟ ପ୍ରୀତୟେ ।

Translation

Vaijaladeva, son of Vatsarajadeva, the Raja of Patna, caused the erection of the temple on the hill Gandhamardana and presented a necklace of precious stones along with 100 cows to the God Vidala Narasimhanatha. He also granted to the priest of the temple for maintenance of worship some lands situated on the locality known as Adimerada and Varilonala and a mango grove known as Rapanga lying in the vicinity of Lohasinga. The gift was made on Friday, the full-moon day of Chaitra, the moon remaining in the Hasta *naksatra* in the year Vikari. The object of the donor in making the gifts was to have a son through propitiation of God. The text was composed by Agha¹.

269. Nildungri

A village in Sason police-station of Sambalpur Subdivision, situated about 9 miles (14 Kms.) from Sambalpur on Sambalpur-Deogarh road (a portion of National Highway No. 6). The place is famous for the sisal farm, which extends over an area of 1,481 acres (600 hectares) in two blocks (i. e., 751 acres at Nildungri and 730 acres at Beldungri). The farm was started by late John Martin Casey, an Irish-man, who grew here Sisal plants having brought the main crop from East Africa.

Mr. John Martin Casey was the pioneer in India for cultivation of Sisal hemp and manufacturing ropes with its fibre. He was born in 1872 and became a civil engineer. He served in the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway and in the Assam-Bengal Railway. When posted at Chittagong he had such severe attacks of malaria that he was advised to give up his job. Then he joined the Tea Districts Labour Association and was posted at Sambalpur. There, while living in a thatched house

1. "Narasimhanath stone inscription of Vaijaladeva" by Binayaka Misra published in the Indian Historical Quarterly (Edited by Narendra Nath Law) Vol. XII, No. 1, March 1936—pp. 485-486.

of a Baptist Missionary called Pike, he grew sisal in a small patch in his garden. In 1904 he took lease of 800 acres of Nildungri forest. In 1906 he moved to Nildungri and started the Sisal plantation. In 1922 he took lease of 600 acres of Beldungri forest and extended Sisal plantation. He died at Nildungri in 1940 at the age of 68. He grew 2 varieties of *Agave Rigida* (Sisal and Elongata). He built his farm house at Nildungri and in addition to Sisal he also grew paddy for feeding labour and oranges for business. He kept large herds of bullocks and cows and was self-sufficient in all respects including having a little dispensary for his family as well as for the labour colony. His ropery which he started in 1930 consisted of a few bi-cycles without wheels. The rope produced was as good as the rope produced by any ropery in Calcutta. After extraction, the Sisal waste became manure for his vegetable garden and for his fields. After his death in 1940, the plantation was being managed by his widow and by his 3 daughters--Clare, Madge and Peggy. After the death of Mrs. Casey, the 3 sisters found it difficult to manage the property in the face of persistent labour agitation. They sold the property to Government in 1964 for Rs. 7 lakhs. It was in such good running order that Government made a net profit of Rs. 3 lakhs in 1967. An account of Mr. John Martin Casey has been given by his daughter Mrs. Clare Morris.

Population of the place, according to 1961 Census, was 220.

270. Padampur (Raj-Borasambar)

Situated on the Sohela-Khariar road 48 miles (77 Kms.) from Bargarh, is the headquarters of Padampur Subdivision. Formerly, it was the headquarters of the Zamindar of Borasambar, who has his residence here. Historical details of his family have been mentioned under 'Borasambar'. After remaining a part of Bargarh Subdivision for several years, it became a separate Subdivision from the 1st July 1969, consisting of seven police-stations. Narsinghnath, a place of pilgrimage, is only about 20 miles (32 Kms) from here.

There is a Notified Area Council which conducts municipal administration of the town. A few Government offices are located here, viz., offices of the Subdivisional Officer, Taha ildar, Panchayat Samiti, District Inspector of Schools, Sub-Treasury, Forest Ranger, and Regional Marketing Co-operative Society. It contains a degree college, two high schools including one for girls, a Kanyashram, a police-station, a cinema house, an elementary training school for women, an inspection bungalow, a hospital and a veterinary dispensary. A weekly market sits here on Saturday.

Population according to 1961 Census was 5,574.

271. Phasimal (Phasimal)

A village in Kuchinda Subdivision, approachable from Jamunkira (Jamankira) and Kuchinda by fair-weather roads. Some cultivators of the village are practising improved methods of cultivation and are having good return. There is a High School, a Veterinary Stockman Centre, and a Panchayat Office. Population according to 1961 Census was 543.

272. Rampur

A village in Jharsuguda police-station of Sambalpur Subdivision situated about 25 miles (40 Kms.) north-west of Sambalpur and 8 miles (13 Kms.) from Jharsuguda. It was formerly a zamindari extending over 149 square miles (386 Sq. Kms.). The zamindari was created in the reign of Raja Chhatra Sai of Sambalpur who conferred it on a Rajput named Pran Nath, a scion of the royal house. In the time of Narayan Singh, the last Raja of Sambalpur, several of the relations of the zamindar were murdered by Surendra Sai and Udwant Sai, who for this offence, were sentenced to imprisonment for life. The *Takoli* of the estate was Rs. 4,865 and the income of the zamindar was Rs. 16,225.

The area is famous for occurrences of coal. Population according to 1961 Census was 671.

273. Rampur (Rairakhol)

Headquarters of the Rairakhol Subdivision, situated on National Highway No. 42 (Cuttack-Sambalpur road) at a distance of 42 miles (68 Kms.) from Sambalpur. Formerly, it was the headquarters of Rairakhol ex-State. There are an inspection bungalow, a rest shed, a hospital, a sub-jail, a veterinary dispensary and a high school. Besides the Subdivisional offices and Judicial Courts, the office of Rairakhol Forest Division is located here. A weekly market sits on Saturday. Population according to 1961 Census was 2,449.

274. Sambalpur

Principal town and headquarters of the district. The Jharsuguda-Titlagarh section of South-Eastern Railway passes through the town, where there are two railway stations namely, Sambalpur road and Sambalpur. They are only 2 Kms. apart. The place is also connected by road with important places of the State, as well as of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. National Highway No. 6 passes through the town. The town lies along the left or north-eastern bank of the Mahanadi and is very picturesquely situated. The view is especially fine in September, when, from some such point as the circuit house hill over-looking the river, fields heavy with irrigated rice can be seen stretching away for miles together while in the background wooded hills fringe the horizon.

seeming in the clear atmosphere of this season to be less than half their real distance away. In the foreground is the Mahanadi, which is nearly a mile broad. The Brooks hill inside the town and the Budharaja hill at the northern end of the town also make the view yet more charming.

According to tradition, Sambalpur derives its name from the Goddess Samalai Devi, its tutelary deity, who was installed here by Raja Balaram Dev, the founder of the town and the first Raja of Sambalpur. Legend relates that Balaram Dev, who had been given a grant of this part of the country by his brother Raja Narasingh Dev of Patna, established himself at a place called Chaurpur on the western bank of the Mahanadi. One day while hunting, he crossed the river, and set his hounds at a hare, only to find after a long chase that they had been repulsed by it. Struck by this extraordinary exhibition of courage by the most timid of animals, he concluded that there must be some supernatural virtue in the land. He therefore determined to make his capital there, and having built a town, installed in it the tutelary goddess of his family. The place where her image was set up was an island (*Kud*) on which stood a cotton tree, and hence was called Semul-Kud, while the goddess was given the name of Samalai. Local tradition asserts that the place where the Raja's dogs were repulsed by the hare is a spot, known as Badiraj, in front of the old city police-station near the Balibandha tank, and that the old town founded by Balaram Dev was between the city police-station and Samalai Devi's temple.

The goddess is now enshrined in a temple called *Samalai gudi*, said to have been erected by Chhatra Sai, the seventh Raja of Sambalpur. The image of Samalai is a large block of stone, in the middle of which is a projection with a narrow groove regarded as the mouth. On both sides of this are depressions covered with beaten gold leaf to represent the eyes. The temple itself is a square building standing on a high plinth and surmounted by a spire. It has a verandah on each side and four domes at the corners, and is built of stone cemented with mortar (*see also Appendix III*). Another temple, known as the temple of Bara Jagannath, which is within the Gopalji Math, is said to have been erected by Bansi Gopal, a son of Madhukar Sai, fourth Raja of Sambalpur.

A third temple, called the Brahmapura temple, because it is situated in Brahmapura, the Brahman quarter, is of great sanctity. Many civil suits were being decided by the oaths of parties taken at it. The temple is small but it has a large hall in front with a roof consisting of nine hemispherical vaults. The door-frame of the temple is made of a reddish-coloured marble, and on the architrave is carved an image of Krishna sitting upon a lotus and playing a flute. On the right jamb

of the door there are nine images carved, and inside the nine domes are more carvings believed to represent the nine *avataras* (incarnations) of Vishnu, the tenth being represented by Krishna himself over the doorway. Inside the temple are images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra carved in wood.

Other temples deserve mention are those of Ananta Sajya and Patneswari. The temple of Ananta Sajya is said to have been built by Balaram Dev. The image of Anantasayi Vishnu enshrined in it was brought from Surguja by his queen, who was a daughter of the Raja of Surguja. The temple was renovated by Ban si Gopal. It consists of the Vimana, a pillared porch and a Garuda-Stambha in front. The temple of Patneswari was built by Balaram Dev in the last part of the 16th century. It consists of a sanctum with an enclosed circular court. Patneswari is goddess Kali.

Historically, the old fort to the north-west of the town is more interesting. This is said to have been built in the beginning of the 18th century by Raja Ajit Singh, who was naturally induced by the raids of the Marathas to fortify the portion of the town in which his palace stood. He, therefore, excavated a moat round the palace, the two ends of which joined the Mahanadi, one at the side on which the city police-station stands, and the other to the west of Samalai Gudi. All round the palace thorny bamboos were planted to form a barrier against invaders, and the bank of the Mahanadi from the Mahan Darwaza to the Samalai Gudi, a length of 2,443 feet, was defended by a stone wall. Towers or bastions with embrasures for guns were erected at intervals on the wall. They were 18 feet high and 72 feet in circumference, and were faced with stone 3 feet thick and filled in with earth. Nothing now remains of the fort but the crumbling stone wall on the river face and a few smouldering bastions. One gateway only is left, that of Samalai near the temple of the Goddess, and though the remains of the moat are still visible, it is filled up here and there.

Several important Government offices are located here. Of the circle and divisional offices, the following need mention :—

The offices of Revenue Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Conservator of Forests, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Assistant Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, Superintending Engineer (Roads and Buildings), Divisional Manager of State Transport Service, District Engineer (Telegraphs), Courts of District and Sessions Judge, Superintendent of Post Offices, Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry, and Deputy Registrar of Co-operative Societies. Besides, district level offices of various departments are also located here. All-India Radio has its station here. Important educational institutions located in the town are Gangadhar Meher College,

Government Training College, Government Women's College, Gangadhar Meher Evening College, Lajpat Rai Law College, Zilla School, Convent School, and a Central School. This is also the seat of the Sambalpur University for the present. There is a Municipality to look into the administration and sanitation of the town. There are a jail, a hospital, a veterinary hospital, the Mahanadi Club, three cinema houses and an agricultural research station. A Circuit House, two Inspection Bungalows, a rest house, a sarai and a few lodging houses and hotels are also there where visitors can stay. Population, according to 1961 Census, was 38,915.

275. Sason

A village in the Sambalpur subdivision, situated 8 miles (13 Kms.) north of Sambalpur on Sambalpur-Jharsuguda road. There is a railway station of the same name (in village Ranikhinda) on the Jharsuguda-Titlagarh section of South-Eastern Railway. It contains a temple dedicated to Gopinath, which was built in the 18th century during the reign of Ajit Singh, but became dilapidated and was subsequently repaired by one Hari Guru with subscriptions raised by the Brahmins. There is another temple dedicated to Nilakantheswar Mahadeva. This village and the adjoining villages were, as the name shows, a *sason* grant, and were *muafi malguzari* villages. The village is also called Ajitpursason (as the 1961 Census records it), probably named after Raja Ajit Singh.

The term *Sason* is old dating to the time when Brahmins enjoyed the patronage of ruling Rajas. They were given numerous grants of villages rent-free, and the central portions of such villages were marked out for the exclusive residence of Brahmin families devoted to the practise of religious rites or the cultivation of Sanskrit learning. A typical *sason* as the Brahmin portion of the village was called, had a road, some feet broad, running through it, lined on each side by coconut groves, behind which were the residences of the Brahmin families descended from the original grantees.

Sason is the headquarters of a police-station. It contains a high school, a rice mill, a veterinary stockman centre, and a dispensary. Population, according to 1961 Census, was 394.

276. Sohela

A village in Padampur subdivision, situated 16 miles (26 Kms.) west of Bargarh and 32 miles (51 Kms.) from Padampur and connected by good roads. It is on National Highway No. 6 and is one of the chief trade centres. A good deal of trade in foodgrains is carried on here. On the west bordering Madhya Pradesh, it serves as the gateway of the district. Day and night, a considerable motor traffic passes through this place to Bombay, Raipur and other places of Madhya Pradesh.

It is also the headquarters of a police-station. There are a high school, a dispensary, a veterinary dispensary, an elementary training school, an inspection bungalow, and a rest shed. A weekly market sits here on Saturday. Population, according to 1961 Census was 2 529.

277. Ushakothi

This is a picturesque wild life sanctuary located 43 kilometres North-East of Sambalpur on the National Highway No. 6. It came into being in 1957-58. It offers great attraction to tourists. The visitors are usually attracted because of its easy accessibility and varieties of colourful wild life. The forest Rest House at Badarama situated about a mile from the sanctuary, provides enjoyable accommodation to the visitors.

The sanctuary lies at an altitude of 1,200 ft. from the sea level and covers the entire Ushakothi Block of the Bamra Forest Division—an area of about 80 sq. miles (207 sq. Km.). The main attraction of the sanctuary are the huge herds of bison and Sambar, which one seldom misses. Besides, the visitors can see tiger, panther, bear, wild bear and leopards as well as herds of elephant, barking deer and spotted deer. There are two masonry watch towers each 30 feet high on which the visitors can get the experience of watching the animals roaming in their natural surroundings. The sanctuary is open for watching all the year round, but the best period is from November to June.

The sanctuary, however, lacks water supply particularly in summer months when many animals move away to neighbouring areas. It is, therefore, necessary that some tanks be dug at different places. Road system inside the sanctuary also requires improvement.

278. Vikramkhol

Located 16 miles (26 Km) to the west of Jharsuguda railway station, it is a cave containing pictographic inscriptions of antiquity. This pre-historic find is of remarkable importance and is yet to be deciphered. Swami Jnanananda, an educated Sadhu, discovered the inscription and informed Dr. K.P. Jayaswal, who examined it and published his treatise in historical papers in 1933. (This has been given as Appendix IV). After this, Vikramkhol came to limelight. Recently, a plaster-cast of the inscription has been brought to and kept in the Orissa State Museum at Bhubaneswar. For detailed discussion, see Chapter II.

APPENDIX I

(Barpali)

The American Friends Service Committee introduced various programmes in Barpali and its neighbourhood to bring forth changes in the social, cultural and economic life of the people. Thomas M. Fraser, Jr. in his book "Culture & Change in India" has grouped those programmes into three categories. They are as follows :—

"training programmes, in which groups of people selected on the basis of certain criteria, were given instruction designed to improve their skills in certain areas; substantive programmes in which a specific practice or item was sought by the project to be introduced as widely as possible, either as a substitute for or as a supplement to an existing practice or item; and organizational programmes, in which groups of villagers, selected on the basis of certain criteria, were encouraged to organize and co-ordinate their efforts toward the achievement of a specific goal."

A little elaboration of these programmes is given below :—

TRAINING PROGRAMME

The very purpose of the training programme was to motivate village workers, village mechanics and health workers to accept the innovation for a successful implementation of schemes in the locality.

SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMME

The aim of this programme was either to replace an existing item or practice, as covered wells for unprotected water supplies and improved poultry for local fowl or to add to existing practices and items, as the introduction of vegetable growing among members of Kulta caste and innovation of latrines. The latter two innovations may be taken as substitute for existing practices.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The Organizational programmes were introduced to organise and co-ordinate the efforts of the villagers to cope with the change and changing socio-economic conditions. The Chamars' Co-operative, the weavers' Co-operative and the pre-paid medical service Co-operative were formed to bring forth socio-economic changes.

But unfortunately these programmes left no lasting impression on the minds of the local people. Thomas M. Fraser, Jr. has attributed the following reasons to the failure of these programmes.

(a) Village workers gradually assumed their roles as paid employees and found losing initiative to work with a spirit of dedication. But this did not fit too neatly with the project's conception of a village worker as a dedicated, self sacrificing and service oriented individual.

(b) Lack of staff continuity and inconsistencies in policy matter hampered the progress of the programme to a considerable extent.

(c) Lack of technical knowledge of the villagers had a greater impact on the intangible nature of these programmes. Villagers also failed to perceive the advantages of the programmes in terms of their felt needs.

(d) Organisational programme suffered from a common failure due to non-visualization of ultimate organisational goal.

(e) The staff stationed at Barpali had not adequate knowledge of the local culture which otherwise would have been of much help in implementing the programmes successfully.

(f) Also the Indian counterparts whom the American Friends Service Committee regarded as "Cultural Guides" did not have specific cultural knowledge that might have been useful in implementing the same.

(g) The village workers were found unable to create motivation among the villagers to adopt to the innovations. This is one of the most important reasons for which the programme could not stand the test of experience.

(h) Because the local culture failed to absorb the innovations in its fold, it became very much difficult to make the programmes successful. In the words of Fraser "if the innovation is to replace an element of the culture, it should be able to approximate closely all of the relationships of the old element; if the innovation is planned to add to the culture without replacing traditional elements (a situation in practice difficult if not impossible to achieve) it should be able to fit in harmoniously with the rest of the cultural system. Because no two cultures are patterned or integrated in precisely the same way, the innovation of even superficially simple, utilitarian objects may be totally locked because of the differences of fit and meaning between the *innovating* and receiving *cultures*."

Utilisation value of the pump well though immense, since it could not be able to fit into the existing practices it proved failure. It is true that an innovation if not fitted into an existing pattern cannot grow in a new cultural soil. When attitudes and actions of the people are shaped by a frame-work of belief, a lot of sincerity is needed to create motivation among the villagers for a change over to a new culture. But the American Friends Service Committee failed to instill that sincerity into the hearts of the village workers who are working in the project for which serious impediments were faced in achieving the developmental objectives of the project.

APPENDIX II

Account on Narsinghnath given by J. D. Beglar*

The tirtha is at the source of the Papaharni Nala (a tributary of the Ang), at the point where it finally leaves the hills after numberless cascades. It rises at the top of the hill and is said to first see the light at the foot of a large mango tree, where it bubbles forth from a spring. It soon increases in volume by various additions, and descends the west slope of the hill in a series of cascades and rapids, some of which (three) are very high up, and of some height, the third cascade being distinctly visible from a distance of fully 10 miles with the naked eye, and probably from a greater distance. The temples are situated at the point where it finally leaves the foot of the steep hill and starts on its way fairly in the undulating plains, the temples are neither very large nor very remarkable, though sufficiently so for this part of India.

The most important temple is a tolerably large one in the Khajuraha style, once very elaborately sculptured inside and out, but having fallen into decay, has been repaired with a liberal allowance of plaster, which covers up everything. The *mahamandapa* which, however, I was not allowed to enter, has three entrances, and so far is an improvement on the Khajuraha style. These entrances are about the only external portions of the temple not buried in plaster, they are small but elaborately sculptured. All round the tower of the sanctum are rows of statues as at Khajuraha, but these rows of statues are not continued on to the *mahamandapa*, which on this account, as well from a certain want of proportion (so far as I could judge by the age, for I was not allowed to measure), to the sanctum, I consider to be a subsequent addition, the original one having most probably fallen down. The *mahamandapa* is supported internally on pillars, which are well carved and apparently old, so far as I could judge looking at them from outside the entrances.

Tradition ascribes the building of the temple to Bijal Deo Gangabauri, Raja of Orissa, and it is said that seven successive Pandas have officiated as priests in this temple since its erection. This statement is certainly strange, and I accordingly interpret it thus—That Bijal Deo was the founder and the temple fell into decay, but was repaired at one time, since when seven successive Pandas have officiated. This would place the repair of the temple about 150 years back at the utmost, and its erection a few centuries earlier. But we have better grounds to go upon in determining the age of this temple from an inscription which

*The account was taken from an article of J. D. Beglar published in 1882 in the reports of the Archaeological Survey of India, Volume VIII and quoted in Sambalpur District Gazetteer—(1932) by F. C. King pp. 248—250.

is let into the wall. The inscription, it is true, is on a detached slab simply let into the temple outside, and may or may not belong to it but it certainly belongs to some temple which once at least existed here. and as this one is clearly the oldest now existing, and therefore, if not the identical one, at least one of a group of temples to which the inscription belonged, its age can with every confidence be ascertained within moderate limits from it, if the statement of the inscription be not inconsistent with the age which, on architectural data, ought to be assigned to it.

The inscription is in transitional Oriya characters, very closely approaching modern Oriya. It mentions Baehla Raja of Patna and Bijal Raja, his son, and records the gift of the village of Loisinga. It is dated, but here is the puzzle. The date is either 672 or 728, which is utterly inconsistent with the forms of the characters, if referred to either the Saka or the Vikrama eras. I am, therefore, inclined to consider it as a Hijra date, for it was no uncommon thing to use the Hijra or Fasli date all over Bengal down to so late as a score of years ago, and there is nothing improbable or impossible in its having been used elsewhere also, it being clearly the recognized official era ¹. If then we consider it as the Hijra, all difficulties are cleared away, for the form of the characters and the character of the architecture both agree with the date.

Besides this principal temple, there are some other shrines, which are modern and of no interest, there is one small shrine to Mahadeva, which appears old, on the opposite or north bank of the nullah, but it is of no interest. The other objects of interest, or at least of reverence, are the various *kunds* or pools in the bed of the nullah, which are considered efficacious in washing away sins. The lowest is at a spot near the temple called Gan Kund, though why it should be called a *kund* is not evident, as there is no pool, deep or shallow, here at all. Higher up, at short distance, is a beautiful, small roaring cascade, which falls into a pool below, the cascade is known as the Gaj Dhar. Higher up is another with a fall of about 20 feet known as the Bhim Dhar, and still higher, a small water-worn hole in the rocks on the right bank, known as the Sita Kund, it is fabled to be the spot where Sita, going to wash certain soiled garments of hers, was blamed greatly by Rama for attempting to pollute the stream, and she accordingly scooped out the *kund* or hole that exists. Higher up is the Panch Pandu Kund, and other sacred spots. There are several rock sculptures of rude execution mostly figures of Siva, Nandi and the Lingam, but also of Brahma and of Vishnu and of some seated figures.

1. General Cunningham points out that the date of the inscription cannot be the Fasli year.

APPENDIX III

(SAMBALPUR)

Sakta Goddesses of Chauhan dynasty

Prior to the advent of the Chauhans, Patna-region was a strong hold of Saivism and Tantric religion. The Chauhans brought their own faith with them. But they did not enjoin it upon the people ; rather they reckoned their own faith, with that of the locality. This they did under political expediency to please the local people. Ramai Deva, the first Chauhan ruler, was a devotee of Asapuri Devi, the tutelary goddess of the Chauhans, all over India, but in Patna, he identified her as Patneswari meaning the presiding goddess of Patna. She was regarded as an aspect of Durga and her image was installed in the temple built by Ramai Deo inside the fort. He assigned for the worship of the Goddess five small villages viz., Deulgan, Kalangapali, Diadumber, Uchvali and Ghunghutipali, which are still being enjoyed by the worshippers. Since then Patneswari was the tutelary Goddess of the Chauhans of Patna-house. Balaram Deva, who established a new kingdom in Sambalpur region, exalted the local deity Samalai and accepted her with his own tutelary Goddess, following the example of his fore-father Ramai Deva. Thus the Chauhans made it their principle to esteem and extol the deities of the people wherever they expanded their territory. This made them very popular among the subjects and aided to a great extent to the success of their long reign.

The Sakta temples of the Chauhans mostly include those of Patneswari and Samalai, the former being the family deity of Patna-house and the latter of the Sambalpur-Sonepur house. Patneswari temples are found at Patnagarh, Balangir and Sambalpur. The temple of Patnagarh was erected by the first Raja of Patna, Ramai Deva, in the middle of the 14th Century A. D. while that of Sambalpur was constructed by Balaram Deva in the last part of the 16th Century A. D. The Patneswari temple at Balangir is of late construction and it was built along with the temple of Samalai by the time the new township was laid out in the later part of the 19th Century. Although the Chauhan domain had only three Patneswari temples mentioned above, the number of Samalai temples in the Kingdom was quite large. Remarkable among them are noticed at Sambalpur, Barpali, and Sonepur.

In the religious life of the people of Sambalpur district, Samalai occupies a pivotal position. She is being worshipped under a tree in the form of a stone in the vicinity of every village. Goddess Samalai was mentioned as witness in the Copper Plate Grant of Jayanta Singh, which is dated at 28th April, 1790 A. D. There are also a few references to the Goddess Samalai in the Kosalananda Mahakavya, written by Gangadhar Misra, the court-poet of Baliar Singh. There is a legend that

during the demolition of Hindu Gods and Goddesses by Kalapahar, the pandits of Puri fled with the image of Jagannath, and buried it in Sonepur on the Mahanadi, to the south of Sambalpur, and Kalapahar followed them to Sambalpur with his army. Goddess Samalai is said to have assumed the form of a milk-maid, and sold milk and curd to his soldiers, which spread desolation among his army. At this time the army of king Balabhadra drove back Kalapahar. This indicates the extent of reverence shown to Goddess Samalai.

But the origin of Samalai is steeped in mystery. Because of phonetic similarity between Samalai and Simul (silk-cotton), King in his Gazetteer of Sambalpur gives credence to the story that the Goddess worshipped under a silk-cotton tree on an island came to be called Samalai. Gangadhar Misra has advanced the same theory in his *Kosalananda Mahakavya*. But beyond phonetic similarity there is nothing else to justify acceptance of this theory. King also mentions that the Chauhan Ruler—Balaram Dev who established Sambalpur brought with him from Patnagarh his family deity, but there is nothing to show what deity it was. He is said to have established his family deity at the place where his hounds were repulsed by a hare and because a Simul tree stood on the island the deity was called Samalai. This is obviously unacceptable as there is a temple at Patnagarh, which was the original seat of Balaram Dev, by the name of Samaleswari.

Samalai in Sonepur is represented by a fierce looking image, but in Sambalpur and Barpali her image conveys a very different conception. The image of Samalai is a unique sculpture and it does not correspond with any of the forms of Devi icon of Hindu iconography. It is a huge block of stone in the middle of which is a projection with depressions on both the sides and close under it a narrow groove which is regarded as mouth. When dressed with usual ornaments, the image very nearly resembles the face of a female deity. British archaeologist Beglar, who visited Sambalpur towards the end of 19th Century, describes it in the following words. It is a "large block of stone in the middle of which is a projection resembling the mouth of a cow. The extremity of this projection has a groove of a thread-breath which is called the mouth. At both sides of this projection, there are depressions, over which beaten gold leaf is placed as a substitute for eyes". The image of the Goddess does not resemble any other Sakta Goddess found in Orissa. She appears to be a non-Aryan deity worshipped by the local people and with the rule of Balaram Deva was accepted as the family deity of the Chauhan rulers of Sambalpur. According to Siva Prasad Das, there is another *parva-devata* of Samalai called as 'Pitabali'. 'Pitabaladi' is the Goddess of Khonds. People of 'Sahara' caste worship Samalai in Sambalpur district. They were considered as untouchables. Buffaloes are sacrificed before Samalai. All these indicate the character of a primitive deity.

The establishment of Goddess Samalai at Sambalpur may be about the year 1348-49 A. D. Balaram Dev enshrined the Goddess inside his fort. During his rule the Puja-services were supplied from the royal-treasury. The present temple was built during the reign of Chhatra Sai about the year 1691 A. D. He assigned for the worship of the Goddess forty villages. But the priests have made it their personal property during the British rule, either by hiding or destroying the copper plate grants. Anyhow, they are managing now the *puja* performances of the Goddess. The temple has no property.

The temple is of the Gothic order. "The plinth is about 16 feet high. Above the plinth the building is square, 21 feet 7 inches \times 21 feet 7 inches. The arched roof commences at a height of 18 feet, and then tapers to the height of 35 feet, where the gradual diminution of the bulk has been abruptly interrupted by a hip-knob, over which a gold pot and spire are placed. The arch is supported by abutments, each of which is gradually diminished, 1 inch in size, by each successive layer. The arch is an oblong vault, or half of an ellipse, with regular longitudinal furrows and elevations throughout the whole surface. Commencing from each corner at the base project four subordinate buildings 11 feet square, they are so situated that if the sides of the square base of the temple be produced, they will only touch two extremities of each of the buildings. Each of them has a domed roof, supported by six pillars. A hip-knob, pierced by an iron spike, adorns the top. Between these domes there are flat roofs supported by pillars, thus forming a square veranda on each side of the temple, with four domes at the corner, in the midst of which the steeple rises above all with a gilt pot and spire glittering in the sun-shine.

The temple is built of a kind of stone as durable as granite, cemented with lime mortar. The whole building is plastered, but in the course of time the surface has become mouldy¹.

As a rule, the temple of Samalai faces the north and that of Patneswari temple faces the south. The latter has only a sanctum with a surrounded circular court which serves] as circumambulation path. The outer porch in the Patneswari temple at Patnagarh is a later addition.

But the Samalai temple is more elaborate and spacious. It consists of two structures, the sanctum which enshrines the Goddess and a pillared hall in the front which serves as the audience hall. The peculiarity of this temple is that it has, in addition to the inner sanctum, a covered path of circumambulation round the sanctum.

¹Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. XVII—1881-82, Pp. 660

In between the sanctum and the audience hall is an open air courtyard which serves not only as the link of the two structures but also admits light and air into the sanctum.

In case of Samalai temple at Sonepur, are found some architectural deviations as it was built late. Unlike the Samalai temple of Sambalpur, it has no covered path for circumambulation round the sanctum, but there is an outer-sanctum where can be found, images of many Sakta deities. The porch is a hall in front of the outer sanctum, but it is not pillared. The *torana* of the porch has magnificent design and carving and is a beautiful piece of architecture.

So far as Vimana (Pyramidal roof) is concerned, the Patneswari temple at Patnagarh exhibits the Chalukyan style of architecture while those of the Patneswari temple at Sambalpur, and Samalai temples at Sambalpur and Barpali have affinities with the Khajuraho style with slender shape adorned with miniature temple-motifs.

The image of Patneswari in the temple of Patnagarh is a representation of ten-armed Mahisamardini Durga. The deity holds the different weapons of war, such as the sword and the shield, the bow and the arrow, the thunderbolt and the snake as well as a long trident which pierces the heart of the demon Mahisa, shown as a human figure issuing out of the decapitated body of a buffalo. Such images of Durga are not rare in Orissa and in the Chauhan temples, they are commonly found. They are seen in the outer walls of Siva and Sakta temples as Parsva Devatas. The deity was beautifully sculptured on the eastern Torana of the Samalai temple of Sonepur. In Vaishnava edifices like the Gopalji temples of Sambalpur and Sonepur, she is found as isolated sculptures. The image of Patneswari in the temple of Sambalpur is however, quite different, it being the image of Goddess Kali. A replica of the image in the name of Kali has been enshrined in a small temple inside the old palace of the Zamindar of Barpali.

During Durga Puja the image of Goddess Samalai was being painted to display her different aspects. On new moon day of Aswin, Samalai used to appear in the form of Goddess Ganga and she was being painted white that day in place of scarlet red as on other occasions. A week after that, she was being presented as Vyagrahi Devi with spotted marks all over her limbs.

The following story which is extant to day may have bearing on Samalai being painted as a leopard during Dasahara. The story is as follows :

A worshipper had flowers on a plate and was offering prayers to Samalai while his daughter was standing by his side. He found suddenly that the deity had disappeared and looking up found the deity devouring

his daughter. He threw the plate at the face of the deity and it stuck there. According to the story the deity is facing away from the entrance and that is why there is no face.

Whatever the meaning of the above story may be it was obviously meant to frighten children away.

Samalai of Sambalpur town is a shapeless rock made to appear like a face with two gold leaves in the form of eyes. According to Shri Siva Prasad Das in his book *ମୟୂରପୁର ଉତ୍କଳ* published in 1952, Samalai is a deity of the "Saharas" (SAVARA) who is worshipped as a Goddess in every village in Sambalpur district along with a Kandha deity and a number of other deities named after natural phenomenon. In fact, all these deities are mere pieces of stone. What they represent is a subject for research. What exists today and has come on for centuries is the institution of "Jhankar" who is a hereditary village servant, remunerated by free-hold land. His sole duty was to worship the village deity. Later some police duties were allowed to him which have now been abolished. Thus Samalai appears to be an unembodied divinity and is widely believed not only in Sambalpur district but in the entire region.

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THE VIKRAMKHOL INSCRIPTION*

(SAMBALPUR DISTRICT)

BY K. P. JAYASWAL, M. A., (OXON.) BARRISTER-AT-LAW

1. Vikramkhoh lies within the jurisdiction of Police thana Jhar-suguda in the district of Sambalpur, Bihar and Orissa. It is approachable from the small railway station Belpahar on the main line of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. From Belpahar one has to go four miles south-west to Grindola, and thence another four miles in the same direction to Vikramkhoh. The road from Grindola crosses a corner of the Gangpur State. There is a village, Titliabahal, near the rock of Vikramkhoh. The inscription is in a natural rock-shelter, six feet below the top. The rock is a rough sandstone. The rock-shelter is 115 feet in length and 27 feet 7 inches in height from the floor. It faces north-east.

2. The inscribed portion is about 35 feet by 7 feet. Some of the letters are sharply cut, but the incision-marks of the majority do not show sharp cutting. It seems that an iron chisel was not used. Some of the letters are partly cut and partly painted, while some letters are only in paint, but the majority are completely cut. It is evident that all the letters were first painted before being incised, which was the method regularly employed in the period of Brahmi inscriptions. The colour of the paint is red-ochre, with which we are familiar in the pre-historic and historic caves and cave-buildings in India. To take a continuous photograph of all the letters (incised and painted) the incised letters have been carefully coloured. I have also had impressions of the incised letters taken by the usual method, and photographs in four parts of the squeeze are reproduced on the accompanying plates, together with the complete view referred to above and sections of the continuous photograph on a larger scale where the letters are very clear. I have also had tracings made of the painted portions. All this material is now in the Patna Museum. The estampages and the tracings have been made by the curator of the Museum, Rai Sahib Manoranjan Ghosh. The photographs have been taken by the Patna Museum staff under the supervision of the curator. The material has been collected under my direction.

3. The inscription was discovered by an educated Sadhu, Swami Jnanananda. Mr. Lochan Prosad Pandey, founder and Secretary of the Mahakosala Society of the Central Provinces, rendered valuable

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service by bringing it to our notice. At first I obtained an eye-copy of the letters, and since then scientific copies have been procured for the Patna Museum. I have to thank Mr. Senapati, Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur, for the material help rendered to us in obtaining these copies.

4. An examination of the letters, which at first sight give the impression of having Brahmi forms, showed that the writing was a mixture of Brahmi forms and a developed type of the Mohenjodaro script. As the announcement of the discovery of the inscription and my opinion thereon has led to numerous inquiries, I hasten to publish the record for study by scholars, along with a few observations of my own, as set out below.

Conclusion

5. The inscription is a writing : this cannot be doubted. My reasons for this conclusion are :—(i) The symbols were first carefully painted and then inscribed after the fashion of inscriptions (ii) the writing is in regular lines (the lines are not always straight owing partly to the very rough surface on which they are inscribed), (iii) the symbols have set forms, which disclose 'writing habits' in the phraseology of handwriting experts. The hand which first painted the letters was used to writing with a pen : this is evident from plate 6.

6. The system knows the *bindu* and also, the *visarga*. Some letters have dots placed below them, while in some cases, dots seem to give a discriminative value to the letters, as in Semitic writing.

7. The right hand corner top line on plate 8, where the same symbol is repeated more than once, may point to the employment of numerals.

8. There is an animal figure which is probably not a part of the writing, but a symbol. There is, however, one symbol like a bellows placed side-ways, which recurs.

9. The writing seems to me to be from right to left (see, particularly Plate 6).

10. It is evident that some of the letters disclose accentuation. Repetition of the same letter twice probably suggests consonantal duplication or conjuncts.

11. The writing seems to have reached the syllabary (alphabetic) stage.

Comparison with Mohenjodaro scripts

12. The bellows-shaped letter above the animal figure may be compared with the Mohenjodaro letter No. 119 (Vol. II, P. 440). The first letter (right hand) in the top line on Plate 6 should not be compared with Mohenjodaro No. 162, and the system of dots with the same system in series 175 (*ibid.*, P. 445).

13. The letter of the shape of the Brahmi 9 may be compared with Mohenjodaro Nos. 100—102, 133, 144, 146 and 148. The shape of Mohenjodaro No. 133 is identical with the eighth letter of the second line in Plate 8.

14. The fourth letter in line 2, Plate 8, may be compared with Mohenjodaro 96 series. A variation of it is found in the seventh, or bottom line at Vikramkhoh.

15. The X-shape of Vikramkhoh should be compared with Nos. 98-99 of Mohenjodaro.

16. The circle-letter like the Brahmi *th*, and the oval letters are noteworthy. They seem to be consonants on account of their repetition in one place. In plate 7, the third letter after the animal (reading from left to right) is accentuated. It occurs in plate 8 with two dots inside, resembling the Brahmi *tha*. These shapes may be compared with Nos. 224 and 219 of Mohenjodaro. The form at Mohenjodaro is always oval.

17. The Y-shaped letter has a Kharosthi look, and so have a few more forms. But, on the whole, the theory of a proto-Kharosthi script is excluded, unless we assume that Brahmi and Kharosthi had a common parentage.

18. I regret that I have not got sufficient time at my disposal at present to dive deeply into the matter and propose any reading. I present the problem for the consideration of scholars engaged in this field of study.

19. It seems that the theory I put forward in 1920 (*JBORS*, Vol. VI, P. 188ff), that Brahmi is an indigenous Indian writing, receives confirmation from this find, for its letters are nearer Brahmi;

than any other script. In that paper I also pointed out a very probable connection between Brahmi and the writing on the Harappa seals¹.

The Vikramkhoh inscription supplies a link between the passage of letter forms from the Mohenjodaro script to Brahmi. The Vikramkhoh record, however, need not necessarily be an Aryan piece of writing².

Age of the inscription

20. Now, what would be the approximate age of the Vikramkhoh inscription? The writing is certainly earlier than the earliest specimen of Brahmi known so far, and Brahmi was completed before 1500 B. C.³. We would be within the range of a fair approximation in dating it about 1500 B. C.

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1. "There is the cairn writing in the south but in the north, there is a vast gap between 1500 B. C. and the sixth century B. C. to be filled up by positive evidence. A link seems to be found in the Harappa seals, one of which was published by Cunningham, who maintained that it contained the origin of Brahmi. Two more seals in the same characters were published by the late Dr. Fleet (JRAS, 1912). The readings of two of these seal legends have been suggested by Cunningham and Fleet (JRAS, P. 699) and of the third one by me. (IA, 1913, P. 203,). It seems to me that it is possible to solve them in the near future, especially with our increasing knowledge of pre-Mauryan letters and with an increased number of Harappa seals. Sir John Marshall has got a few more of these seals which he has kindly promised to lend me for study. Letters from the photograph of two of them are reproduced in the chart with the permission of Sir John. Three things are certain about these seals. One of the legends ('C') of Fleet shows that it was intended to be read from left to right as the legend, does not cover the whole space, and its beginning and end are distinguishable. The script has the Hindu system of using abbreviated forms of letters, for one letter which appears in full in one seal ('A') of Fleet, appears as abbreviated, either as a *matra* or as a conjoint consonant in two places (in 'A' and 'B'). Then there is a legature where V is joined to Y or some other letter. That the characters are not a syllabary is seen by the addition on the head of one letter (in 'C') which appears without it in another place ('A'). The addition is evidently a *matra* probably an *a* in a stage when it is fully represented, it is separate from the letter on the top which it is placed. The characteristics therefore seem to be those of the Brahmi, but the letters are so old that they are not yet fully recognised. In the new seals we have a letter which is almost unmistakably *a* and the form is such that the oldest Semitic and Brahmi forms for *a* are derivable from it (the whole legend I tentatively read as Abhayah)"—JBORS, VI, (1920), PP. 199-200.
 2. The locality, according to the Puranic race-history would suggest the record to be a pre-Dravidian 'Raksasa', record. Raksasa is the generic name for the race dispossessed by the Aryans. They extended upto the Indian Archipelago, (Naga was probably a subdivision of theirs). The Gonds are their remnants.
 3. I have set forth in some detail my reasons for coming to this conclusion in JBORS., Vol. VI (1920), P. 198 to which reference is invited.