

## CHAPTER XVII

## NILGIRI STATE.

THE State of Nilgiri lies between 21° 17' and 21° 37' N., and 86° 25' and 86° 50' E., with an area of 278 square miles. It is bounded on the north and west by the State of Mayūrbhanj, and on the east and south by Balasore district. One-third of the area is taken up by hills, some of which contain valuable timber. There is much land awaiting reclamation. Valuable quarries of black stone are found and there are also good granite quarries in the hills close to Nilgiri, the headquarters of the State. The climate is hot in the summer, but tempered by breezes from the sea: the average rainfall for the six years from 1902-03 to 1907-08 was 64·38 inches. The headquarters of the State are at Nilgiri, 13 miles from the Balasore railway station on the Bengal-Nāgpur line and five miles from the Trunk Road from Calcutta to Madras. Nilgiri contains the residence of the Chief, a fine building picturesquely situated at the foot of a fine range of hills: the public buildings consist of a dispensary with indoor accommodation, a jail, courts and public offices, a Middle English school, a commodious circuit-house and combined post and telegraph office.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

As regards the origin of the Nilgiri Rāj family it is alleged that the State was founded in 1125 A.D., by two brothers who came from Chota Nāgpur. During the time of the Mughals, the tribute of the State having fallen into arrear, *kilā* Mangalpurpatnā and Talmundā were made into separate *tahsils*, and the area of the State was thus considerably reduced. In the time of the Marāthās the zamīndārs of *parganas* Mukharā, Khejuri, Armalā, Kudāi, and Bānchās, in the Balasore district managed to get some of the eastern villages of the State included in their zamīndāris. The Rājā of Mayūrbhanj, too, is said to have taken possession of some of the villages on the north-west boundary, and included them in his State. The thirteenth Chief Nārāyan Basant Birāt Bhujang Māndhātā received the title of Hari-chandan from the Mahārājā of Orissa, for having ably defended the celebrated goddess of the State (Udarchandi) and her temple, which had been built by the Mahārājā—from the inroads of Kālāpahār. The fourteenth Chief was honoured in 1596 A.D. by

HISTORY.

the Mughal Emperor Akbar Shāh for having assisted his Wazir, Mān Singh, during the attack on the Pathāns on the bank of the Subarnarekhā river, and for having humbled the pride of the Athkhunta Bhuiyas in Nilgiri.

The fifteenth Chief obtained in 1611 A.D. the title of Mardarāj for the assistance he rendered to the Mughals against the Pathāns on the bank of the Subarnarekhā. The thirtieth Chief received from the Marāthās the title of Fateh Singh Bahādur for having assisted Motirām, the Marāthā *Fauzdār* at Balasore, in his war against the Jāmkundā Bhuiyās. The present Chief, a brother of the Chief of Mayūrbhanj, obtained the *gadi* by adoption. The Chief is a Kshattriya. The emblem of the State is the flower *karallā*.

THE  
PEOPLE.

The population increased from 56,198 in 1891 to 66,460 in 1901; it is contained in 466 villages, and the density is 239 persons to the square mile. The most important village is Nilgiri. Hindus number 58,896, Musalmāns, 101, Christians, 161, and Animists, 7,302. The most numerous castes are Khandaits (15,000), Bhumijs (6,000), Brāhmans (5,000) and Gauras and Hos (4,000 each). A small Christian community belonging to the American Free Baptist Mission is established at Mitrapur, 11 miles west of Balasore town. The Mission was started in 1855: the Christian community at Mitrapur numbers 80: an Upper Primary school is maintained and is attended by Christians, Pāns and Santāls and is open to all without distinction. The population is classified as follows:—Hindus—males, 29,479. females, 29,417, total 58,896 or 88·6 per cent. of the population of the State; proportion of males in total Hindus 34·7 per cent. Musalmāns—males, 80, females, 21, total 101 or 0·15 per cent. of the population. Animists—males, 3,581, females, 3,721, total 7,302 or 10·98 per cent. of the population. The number of persons able to read and write is 3,660 or 5·5 per cent. of the population. The average number of villages per square mile is 1·6; persons per village, 142; houses per village, 28·6; houses per square mile, 47; persons per house, 49. Of the 466 villages in the State there are 455 with less than five hundred, 10 with from five hundred to a thousand, and one with from one to two thousand inhabitants. The people are well off for the most part and fairly advanced, at any rate in the southern and eastern parts of the State owing to their close proximity to Balasore and the line of rail.

PUBLIC  
HEALTH.

There is a good dispensary with indoor ward attached at the headquarters: a medical officer with the qualifications of an Assistant Surgeon is in charge assisted by a Civil Hospital Assistant,

who also looks after vaccination work, and there is also a qualified female Civil Hospital Assistant for female patients. The total number of patients treated during the year 1907-08 was 7,004. The eastern and southern areas of the State are not unhealthy, but fever as usual is prevalent in the hill and forest areas. The State suffers from time to time from severe epidemics of cholera. Vaccination is carried on by licensed vaccinators, but is not popular: it has however recently made progress and in 1907-08 revaccination was successfully undertaken. In 1907-08 the number of primary vaccinations was 2,228 and that of revaccinations, 597.

The soil is fertile and in the open country to the south and east the lands are well cultivated and abundant rice crops are raised. The villages in this area are prosperous and tanks for irrigation are common: no special attempts to introduce better varieties of seed or new crops have been made by the State.

The average rent per acre of first, second and third class rice lands is Rs. 2-0-8, Re. 1-9-0 and Re. 1-2-9 respectively and of uplands, Re. 1-0-8. During the period from 1893 to 1902 there has been a decided rise in wages by nearly 50 per cent. in the case of skilled labour with a somewhat smaller rise for unskilled labour: the average daily wage during that period has been as follows: superior mason, 6½ annas, common mason, 4 annas; superior carpenter, 6 annas, common carpenter, 4 annas; cooly, 2 annas; superior blacksmith, 4½ annas, and common blacksmith, 3½ annas. The rate of wages is now likely to increase further with the opening of the granite quarries. During the same period the prices of rice, gram and salt have remained practically stationary and have averaged 18¾ seers, 11½ seers and 10¾ seers respectively.

Of the total population more than half, *i.e.*, 55.5 per cent live by agriculture: 15.97 per cent. follow industrial pursuits and 10.4 per cent., professions: 9.9 per cent. are engaged in trade. From the quarries of blackstone found in this State a considerable quantity of stone cups, bowls and platters are manufactured and exported. The granite quarries of the State are now being worked and it is intended to export the stone to Calcutta for road metal: the quarries are connected with the line of rail at Balasore by a tramway. The principal imported articles are spices, mill-made goods, kerosene oil, salt, cotton yarn, iron and brasswares, and the principal exported articles are paddy, rice, soapstone, stoneware, tusser cocoons, myrobalan, timber, fuel, horns and hides.

There is a good road from the headquarters linking up with the Madras Grand Trunk Road: by this route Balasore is

AGRICULTURE.

RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES.

OCCUPATIONS, MANUFACTURES AND TRADE.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

13 miles distant from the headquarters: a fair surface road runs up to the border of Kaptipadā, an estate in Mayūrbhanj with a rest-house close to the border: there is also a surface road to Mitrapur: there is a good bungalow for travellers at the headquarters. The headquarters of the State are connected with the Balasore town by a telegraph line and the imperial post runs to and from the headquarters *via* Balasore.

**LAND  
REVENUE  
ADMINIS-  
TRATION.**

The land revenue system is similar to that prevailing in the other States: the land revenue demand is Rs. 53,689. The last settlement was completed in 1898. There are no zamīndāris in the State and no cesses are levied.

**GENERAL  
ADMINIS-  
TRATION.**

The terms of the *sanad* granted in 1894, which was revised in 1908, regulate the relation between the State and the British Government: an annual tribute of Rs. 3,900 is paid. The State has an estimated income of about Rs. 1,37,000. In the year 1907-08 the forest revenue amounted to Rs. 12,555. Civil suits are numerous, but petty: the number of suits instituted in 1907-08 was 350. Crime mostly consists of petty theft and burglary. The number of cases reported to the police in 1907-08 was 225. The police force consists of one Inspector, 3 Sub-Inspectors, 4 Head-Constables and 36 men. The jail accommodation is small and a new jail is about to be erected. In 1907-08 the average daily population was 13. There is a regular Public Works Department and the State has good public buildings. In 1907-08 the State spent Rs. 47,261 on account of public works.

**Finances.**

**Forest.**

**Civil  
justice.**

**Crime.**

**Police.**

**Jail.**

**Public  
Works  
Depart-  
ment.**

**EDUCA-  
TION.**

In 1907-08 the number of schools in the State was 87, consisting of one Middle English school, 10 Upper Primary schools, 37 Lower Primary schools, two Sanskrit *tois* and one *Guru*-training school. The number of students on the rolls was 1,987, and the expenditure by the State amounted to Rs. 11,692 and the grant from Government was Rs. 2,347. The people are appreciative of the benefits of education and several of the Lower Primary schools are privately maintained. Special attention is paid to the education of the Santāls. There are two special schools for girls and one for aborigines.