

CHAPTER II.

ATHMALLIK STATE.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS. THE State of Athmallik lies between $20^{\circ} 37'$ and $21^{\circ} 5' N.$, and $84^{\circ} 16'$ and $84^{\circ} 48' E.$, with an area of 730 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the State of Rairākhhol; on the east by Angul district; on the south by the Mahānādī river, which separates it from Baud; and on the west by Sonpur and Rairākhhol States. The country is for the most part covered with dense jungle, and a long range of hills clad with forest runs along its southern side parallel with the course of the Mahānādī. The country to the north of this range of hills rises to a fair elevation: the range is crossed by a picturesque defile which leads abruptly to the lower country on the south side of the range: between this range of hills and the Mahānādī river there is a belt of low land, fertile and opened up to cultivation, with an average breadth of 8 miles. There are deposits of graphite in this range of hills: iron ore of excellent quality is found universally over the State. There are no streams or rivers of any importance in the State. The fauna are the same as those met with in the other States of Orissa, and require no special notice. On the south-east of the State a tract of forest is reserved for elephant-catching operations: this tract joins up with the elephant forest in Angul. The Chief conducts elephant-catching operations generally about every third year: the catches do not usually average more than ten to fifteen animals. The average rainfall for the six years—1902-03 to 1907-08—was 53.16 inches. The headquarters of the State are at Kaintirāgarh.

HISTORY. The origin of the State is obscure. According to tradition, this State is said to have been founded by one Pratāp Deva who, with seven other brothers of the Rājā of Jaipur, came with their families on a pilgrimage to Puri. For some reason or other they had a quarrel with the Rājā of Puri, by whom two of the brothers were put to death. The remaining five brothers fled for their lives to the hills. The elevated plain known as Handapāgarh is, to the present day, renowned as the *garh*, or fortified residence of a Dom Rājā whom Pratāp Deva is alleged to have defeated. Pratāp Deva is said to have found a *handā* (metal

vessel) in a tank which he was excavating there and gave the place and the State the name of Handapā. In course of time one of the Chiefs who held sway after Pratāp Deva divided the State into eight subdivisions and placed a Chief over each with a view of bringing the aborigines into subjection. Hence the State changed its name from Handapā to Athmallik. The Rājā of Angul considerably reduced the area of Athmallik State and included large tracts within the boundaries of Angul. Official records, however, show that till lately the State had no separate existence and in the treaty engagement of 1804 it is mentioned as a tributary of Baud. It was treated as a separate State in the *sanad* granted to the Chief in 1894, the terms of which were identical with those contained in the *sanads* of the other Orissa Chiefs. The Chief was officially styled as the zamindār of Athmallik, and was addressed as *sāmant*. In 1874, however, he was officially recognised as Rājā, which title was also made hereditary, and in 1890 the late Chief, Rājā Mahendra Deva Sāmant, was given the title of Mahārājā as a personal distinction on account of his able administration of the State. Baud and Athmallik belonged to what was formerly known as the South-Western Frontier Agency, from which they were transferred to the Orissa Division in 1837. The Chief's emblem is a *kadamba* flower (*Nauclea orientalis*) and his family is called the *kadambabansa*. Another version of the origin of the Athmallik State will be found in the article on the history of the Baud State.

The population increased from 31,605 in 1891 to 40,753 in 1901, part of the gain being due to immigration from Baud and the Central Provinces. A great extension of cultivation has taken place in recent years, and the population is now nearly double what it was in 1881, but Athmallik is with the exception of Pāl Lahara, Bonai and Kairākhōl, the most sparsely populated of all the Orissa States, the density being only 56 to the square mile. Of the total population all but 106 are Hindus. The most numerous castes are Chasās (8,000), Gauras (6,000), and Gonds, Pans and Sudhas (4,000 each). There are 460 villages, the principal being Kaintirā, the residence of the Chief.

The population is classified as follows in the census report of 1901:—Hindus—males, 20,701, females, 19,946, total 40,647, or 99·7 per cent. of the population; proportion of males to total Hindus, 50·9 per cent. Muhammadans—males, 45, females, 36, total 81, or 0·2 per cent. of the population; proportion of males to total Muhammadans, 55·5 per cent. Other denominations—males, 15, females, 10, total 25, or 0·06 per cent. of the population; proportion of males to total 'others', 60 per cent. Total

population of all denominations—males, 20,761, females, 19,992, total population of the State, 40,753; proportion of males to total population, 50·9 per cent. The number of persons able to read and write is 558 or 1·4 per cent. of the total population. Averages—Villages per square mile, 0·6; persons per village, 88·6; houses per square mile, 10·6; houses per village, 16·8; persons per house, 5·3. The census report returns the total number of villages in the State at 460, classified as follows:—457 with less than five hundred inhabitants, 2 with between five hundred and a thousand and only 1 with between one thousand and two thousand inhabitants.

The people are very wild and far more backward than the population of the neighbouring States of Baud and Sonpur and the district of Angul. They are content with inferior cultivation and prefer to spend much of their time in the forests of the State, hunting and living on forest produce.

**PUBLIC
HEALTH.**

The people are healthy and of fair physique. There is a dispensary at the headquarters with a Civil Hospital Assistant in charge and 4,295 patients were treated in 1907-08: an Ayurvedic dispensary has also been opened by the Chief. The number of persons vaccinated during the year 1907-08 was 3,207, of which 1,350 were revaccinations: the operations are conducted by vaccinators trained in the Cuttack Training class and they are under a Sub-Inspector. The people being mostly denizens of the forests are strongly averse to vaccination.

**AGRICUL-
TURE.**

The crops are mostly coarse rice and other inferior grains, with a few oil-seeds: castor oil-seed, however, of excellent quality is largely grown in favourable years, on the clearings in virgin jungle soil, and from this crop the people are usually able to fully pay their rents and have money in hand. Irrigation is very little practised and cultivation is of the crudest: the people prefer to live on the abundant products of the extensive forests to labouring on the soil and improving their lands.

**RENTS
RATES
AND
TARIFFS.**

The average rates of assessment per acre for 1st, 2nd and 3rd class of rice lands are Re. 1-2-9, Re. 0-13-11 $\frac{2}{3}$ and Re. 0-10-5 respectively. The average rate of assessment per acre for uplands is Re. 0-8-4 and the average rate of assessment per acre for homestead land is Re. 0-4-11. During the period 1893-1902 the average daily wage of labour was:—superior mason and carpenter, 8 annas each; common mason, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ annas; common carpenter, 4 annas; cooly, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ annas; superior blacksmith, 5 annas, and common blacksmith, 3 annas. During the same period the average price of wheat, rice, gram and salt was 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers, 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers and 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers respectively.

After 1903, there has subsequently ensued a marked rise in prices as in the other States, especially those situated on the Mahānadi, a ready highway for the export of surplus stocks.

The chief occupation of the people is agriculture, 66·6 per cent. of the total population being agriculturists : only 1·38 per cent. follow trade : 4·47 per cent. accept State, domestic and other services : 21·9 per cent. maintain themselves on labour : and the remaining 5·68 per cent. earn their livelihood from other sources. The State boasts no special manufactures : iron ore of good quality is smelted and sent down to Cuttack. The principal trade consists in timber, fuel, and jungle products, which are carried by boat : the forests have been leased for sleeper cutting and have now been nearly worked out of large trees : there is, however, one large tract of forest untouched, which is kept as a reserve for elephant-catching operations. There is a small trade in oil-seeds by pack-bullocks, but the greater part of the trade is river-borne : the forests supply nearly all the timber used for oars by the boatmen who work over the whole length of the Mahānadi. The principal imported articles are spices, salt, mill-made cloths, brass and bell-metal utensils, piece-goods and kerosene oil.

The Cuttack-Sambalpur road runs through the northern portion of the State : a fair road from Kaintirā, the headquarters, joins up with the main road : it is a surface road and winds through the defiles in the hill range running parallel to the river. The Mahānadi affords a cheap and ready means of communication for the export of grain, timber and forest produce to Cuttack. There is a branch post office at the headquarters and the Imperial post crosses the river here and travels *via* Kantilo to Cuttack and *via* Baud to Sambalpur.

The land revenue administration differs but little from that of the other neighbouring States of the group formerly forming the Tributary Mahāls. The State, however, has always been more in touch with the institutions prevailing in the Central Provinces : for this reason the village headman is a more prominent person than in the other States and his service lands (*bhogrā*) have not disappeared : a regular settlement based on a pole measurement has been made by the Chief. The land revenue demand is Rs 25,770.

The relations between the Athmalik State and the British Government are, like those of the other States of the group formerly known as the Tributary Mahāls, governed by the *sanads* of 1894 and 1908. The State is liable to pay *nazarāna* on succession. The present Chief employs a regular *Dewan* and carefully follows a budget system. The total income of the

OCCUPA-
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TURES AND
TRADE.

MEANS OF
COMMUNI-
CATION.

LAND
REVENUE
ADMINIS-
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GENERAL
ADMINIS-
TRATION.

FINANCES.

State was Rs. 77,823 in 1907-08; the tribute was formerly liable to revision every twenty years, but was made permanent in the *sanad* of 1894 and fixed at Rs. 730. The forest revenue yielded Rs. 45,670 in 1907-08. In 1907-08 the excise income amounted to Rs. 3,215. Civil suits are all of a very petty nature; in 1907-08, 80 per cent. of the suits were of Rs. 50 in value and less, the number of civil suits for disposal during the year being 148. Crime is light and not of a serious nature: only 73 cases were reported in 1907-08 to the police. The police force consists of one Sub-Inspector trained at Bhāgalpur, 5 Head-Constables, and 25 men: besides 335 *paiks* (State militia) holding service lands. There is a masonry jail with accommodation for 8 prisoners, but a new jail on modern lines with capacity for 35 prisoners is under construction. The State spent Rs. 40,000 on account of public works in 1907-08.

Forests.

Excise.

Civil
justice.

Crime.

Police.

Jail.

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Depart-
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EDUCA-
TION.

In 1907-08 the number of schools in the State was 46, the number of pupils on the rolls being 1,163: there is a good Middle English school at the headquarters and also a girls' school: there are one Upper Primary school and 35 Lower Primary schools for boys in the State; there are besides 7 private schools. The Government *Guru*-Training school for teachers from the Baud and Athmallik States is located at Kaintirā. Education owing to the efforts of both the late and present Chief is making considerable headway in the State. The Chief spent Rs. 2,629 on education in 1907-08 and the State received an educational grant of Rs. 1,262 from Government in the same year.