

THE TURKS IN INDIA

CRITICAL CHAPTERS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF
THAT COUNTRY BY THE CHUGHTAI, BĀBAR,
AND HIS DESCENDANTS

BY

HENRY GEORGE KEENE M.R.A.S.

JUDGE OF AGRA

FELLOW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

AND

AUTHOR OF "THE MOGHUL EMPIRE"



LONDON

W. H. ALLEN AND CO, 13 WATERLOO PLACE

1879

produced by splitting lesser provinces, or such as were never held all at one period. The land revenue of the twelve *subahs* is stated by Abul Fuzl to have aggregated over nine *krors* of rupees, a sum which, in his detailed lists, with the addition of land and sea-customs and income derived from the inorganized provinces of Sindh and Kashmir, he brings to nearly one *kror* more, or say, Rs. 99,613,850. A large but unascertained contribution must also be allowed in the services of the *Bumi* (or "landwehr")—a large irregular militia of horse, foot, and artillery, assessed on the various districts independent of the levies maintained by the *Mansabdars* and the standing army of the Crown.

It would be indecorous to omit the mention of Mr. E. Thomas, F.R.S. in this connection. That distinguished scholar and numismatist has, on various occasions (see his "Prinsep," vol. ii., his "Chronicles," and "Revenue Resources"), made efforts to bring the figures of the "Ain" into harmony with estimates elsewhere derived. Finding, for example, that an accountant of Akbar's estimated the total revenue at 640,000,000 tankas, Mr. Thomas concludes that this equals £32,000,000 sterling, and hence concludes that Abul Fuzl has meant to state double the figures that he has stated, and that this must be doubled again, by the addition of what in modern Anglo-Indian parlance is called "Separate Revenue." Four times ten however would not yield thirty-two, but

forty—even if the exchange value of ten rupees to one pound English could be proved to have obtained in Akbar's time, of which there is no proof. Moreover, the proposed emendation of the text (from "three" to "six" *arbs* of *dáms*) does violence to all known versions of the "Ain Akbari," and to the context itself. The following is a strict translation of the important words taken from Professor Blochmann's Calcutta-text, iii., p. 386:—"In the 40th year of his reign, the Emperor Akbar had a decennial settlement of his dominions, at the annual revenue of three arbs, sixty-two krors, ninety-seven lakhs, fifty-five thousand one hundred and forty-six *dáms*, or rupees 90,749,881. 2. 5."

This tallies with other texts including the Lucknow lithograph of Munshi Nawal Kishor, which is highly esteemed by native scholars.

Four other provinces are mentioned by Abul Fuzl; namely, those of Multan and Tattah, forming the modern commissionership of Sindh, and part of the Punjab; and Kashmir with Cabul, a mountainous region, assessed chiefly in kind, and chiefly valued for purposes of sport and luxury.

The following specification of each province is abstracted from the same work compared with later lists. I have not thought it necessary to add the figures from the separate *Taksim Jamas* or detailed rent-rolls, which, though not prepared apparently quite

at the same moment as the descriptive parts, do not exceed the estimates there given very seriously, seeing that they contain some further items of separate revenue. Each province was in area about equal to an average European kingdom of those days. Of these provinces the most eastern was BENGAL, forming with ORISSA, a vast and fertile tract assessed at about one and-a-half krons of rupees. The capital was at Gaur or Lakhnauti. BAHAR (often united with Bengal under the general title of "the Eastern *Subas*") was the very finest part of the Gangetic valley, both in climate and natural advantages. It had, both on the north and south, fine mountain ranges for limits; abundant streams watered the soil. The name of the capital is not given in the "Ain"; it was probably at Patna. The land revenue was over forty-three lakhs.

ALLAHABAD and AUDH, or OUDH, often held by the same Subahdár, resembled Bahar in size, character, and conformation. The capital of the one was at Prayág, and derived from Akbar the name it communicated to the entire district. The capital of the other, Audh or Ajudhia, was near the site of the modern Faizábád. The aggregate land revenue was about a kror and-a-third.

AGRA (formerly Biána) was a compact division, extending from Kalpi to Rewári, and from Aligarh to the southern boundary of Narwar. The chief city was called Agra, and the citadel Akbarábád, after its founder. Besides the metropolis, it contained Gwáliar,

and other walled towns, cities, and fortresses; the land revenue was over a quarter of a million.

MÁLWA, a large province formed out of a conquered kingdom, stretched from the borders of Allahabad to those of Gujarát, and was famous for its woods, waters, wild flowers, and fine scenery. The climate was much esteemed, and its fertility proverbial. Mándu was regarded as the capital; the land revenue exceeded sixty lakhs of rupees.

KHÁNDES (named Dándes by Akbar, in honour of his son Dányál) was a small but pleasant province between the Nerbudda and Tapti rivers, intersected by the Satpura hills, and having for capital the ancient fortified city of Burhánpur, so often mentioned in the history of mediæval India. The land revenue was about seven lakhs and-a-half. The local governor in troubled times occupied the neighbouring fort of Asergarh, regarded as one of the strongest places in the empire.

GUJARÁT, another old Mussulman kingdom, was of great extent, and yielded a revenue—inclusive of customs—which exceeded a kror of rupees. This province was largely washed by the sea; and, besides the native capital, Ahmadábád, contained Baroda and other large towns. The Portuguese had a settlement at Surat, and made encroachments, towards the end of Akbar's reign, over the neighbouring districts.

The so-called *Subah* of AJMIR was one of the largest

provinces, answering nearly to the modern Rajputána. It was divided into three principal chiefships : Mewar, Marwar, and Harauti, corresponding to the modern Rajadoms of Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Kota Bundi. Other principalities, such as Dundar (Jaipur), were not apparently thought of much importance by Abul Fuzl, as they are not named in his list. The country was fine, the climate healthy, and the population hardy ; but the revenue was nothing more than a tribute estimated by Abul Fuzl at 571,000 rupees, and paid (when payment could be compelled) by the Hindu chiefs, who had been there before the Mughals came, and who very likely will be there after the British are gone. The emperors were fond of the town of Ajmir, where a famous stock of Persian darvishes, or hermits (the Chistie), had taken root. They also intermarried with the houses of Jaipur and Jodhpur ; but the province can only be reckoned nominally among Subahs.

DELHI was a province of average size, with a capital of the same name, and a revenue of one and-a-half krors from land.

LAHORE was a rather larger one, with a capital of the same name, and a revenue of nearly the same amount as Delhi.

MULTÁN was a long strip of sandy country lying along the left bank of the Indus. Capital, Multán ; revenue, nearly forty lakhs.

TATTAH was the rest of the Indus valley; the revenue only about one lakh and sixty thousand rupees.

KÁSHMIR, "the happy valley," and the scarcely less beautiful hills and dales of CABUL, were the Piedmont of the Asian Italy, valued for their climate, sport, and scenery. The revenue, given by Abul Fuzl, is estimated in sheep and rice, with the exception of that of Cabul Sircar, which is stated at twenty lakhs. Thomas estimates the total yield at no less than eighty lakhs. The aggregate of these items amounts to a little below ten kros; but they include some Sáyar items, though how much cannot be determined. In one or two instances in which these are stated separately, they are from two to four per cent.

Such was the territorial constitution of the Chughtai territory from the period of Akbar's consolidation (about the fortieth year of his reign) down substantially to the commencement of the conquests of Aurungzeb. The authorities to whose descriptions I am indebted for the means of comparing the facts of this period, of about half-a-century of equilibrium, differ enough to show that they were not absolutely accurate; but the *Bádshahnáma* and Bernier agree (writing about the end of the reign)* that there were twenty provinces at the termination of the period,

* The *Bádshahnáma*, adds Balkh and Badakshán, but the sway over them was scarcely even nominal.

and that the revenues were about twenty-two krons of rupees.

In the palmier days of Aurungzeb, the number of provinces were about the same. The revenue for 1666 (according to Thevenot) was 375,750,000 French livres; according to Manucci, whom Mr. Thomas pronounces "a competent witness at head-quarters," 317,935,050 rupees, an aggregate tallying with the totals of other lists. Of these the mean is about thirty-five krons, while his total, as we see, is nearly thirty-two; and there can be little doubt that this is near the correct figure. It is not, however, so clear what it represents in the modern figures. It is true that the rupee of those days contained about the same quantity of silver as does that of our own days; but we have the positive testimony of Manucci that the exchange value of the rupee in the European currency of his day was "*trente sols*," or fifteen pence. In this he is confirmed by Tavernier, who says that fourteen rupees were worth twenty-one *livres tournois*. Manucci's total, therefore, would be scarcely worth twenty millions sterling.

It is a farther question, whether the separate revenue was equal in amount, or nearly so? The answer seems to be that the separate revenue was derived from sources too vague and fluctuating to be so estimated. It chiefly came from escheats and fines—to speak according to European usage—and the

amount must have depended upon the character of the sovereign, the longevity of incumbents, and similar things, to an extent which would make it impossible to make an approximation for any one year.

Lastly, it is to be noted that, besides the provinces named above, the empire had, for a few years of Aurungzeb's reign, a claim—more or less practically exercised—to parts of the Bálághát, and the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. But these were never made into regularly organised Subahs, nor did they appear upon the rolls, and they soon became totally independent.

The following is Manucci's list of the provinces at the beginning of the reign of Aurungzeb—the numbering being brought into correspondence with that of the annexed map:—

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1.—BENGAL, without Orissa, was assessed at over four <i>krors</i> (which is three times more than in the other lists). | |
| 2.—BAHAR | Rs. 1,21,50,000 |
| 3.—ORISSA (called by Manucci "Urcha") | 57,07,500 |
| 4.—ODDH (called "Rajmahal" apparently) | 1,00,50,000 |
| 5.—DELHI | 1,25,50,000 |
| 6.—AGRA | 2,22,03,550 |
| 7.—ALLAHABAD | 77,38,000 |
| 8.—LAHORE | 2,32,05,000 |
| 9.—CABUL | 32,07,250 |
| 10.—AJMÍR (Rajputána, temporarily subjugated and heavily assessed) | 19,00,000 |
| 11.—MULTÁN | 50,25,000 |
| 12.—MÁLWA | 99,06,250 |

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 13.—GUJARÁT (probably including Customs) | Rs. 2,32,95,000 |
| 14.—KHÁNDES | 1,11,05,000 |
| 15.—BERAR | 1,58,07,500 |
| 16.—GONDWANA (no assessment given in any list but of Aurungzeb's reign). | |
| * 17.—AURUNGÁBAD, or a part thereof, (called "Baglana" from Bágghelána a hilly tract in the heart of the Mahratta country). Tallies with estimates of Tavernier and Bernier. | 68,85,000 |
| All Aurungábád or Daulatábád rated much higher in native lists. | |
| 18.—BIJAPUR | 5,00,00,000 |
| 19.—HAIDARÁBÁD (not named by Manucci, probably included in "Golconda") | 5,00,00,000 |
| 20.—BIDAR (<i>i. e.</i> "Nanda" aggregate in other lists running from 93 lakhs to over two <i>krors</i>) | 72,00,000 |
| Total | Rs. <u>31,79,35,050</u> |

It will be seen that there are discrepancies, both as to names and rating, between Manucci's list and those derived from native sources. But such, just a century after the completion of Abul Fuzl's record, were the collections according to a European residing at the Imperial Court in a position of trust. He does not name the Subahs always as they are named in other lists that have come down to us; and he gives some names (such as "Bakar" and "Ujain") that are not found elsewhere.

For some further details as to Revenue, see Note to Chapter I. and Appendix A.

N. B.—This list is extracted from a paper of mine read by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and printed in their Journal.

* These four represent the chief substantial acquisitions of Aurungzeb.

APPENDIX A.

IN comparing the passage from Nizám-ud-Din with that from De Lact, it seems *possible* that the latter relates to the accounts as found by Jahangir on his father's death (Thomas, "Chronicles," p. 440); that the three *arbs* forty-nine *krors* of *tankahs* means the same as the similar estimate (in *dams*) of the "Ain Akbari"; and that, taking Nizam to have meant half *that tankah* or *dam*, his estimate of six hundred and forty *krors* means sixteen *krors* of rupees. I say "possible"—but no more—and his sum *may* have risen to seventeen *krors* forty-five lakhs between the date of the "Tabákát" and Akbar's death, when Khándes had been thoroughly settled, and part of what was afterwards Aurungabad added to the empire. If we are at liberty to adopt Mr. Thomas' suggestion, and estimate the separate revenue at a corresponding sum, this would give us something close upon the £349,000,000 estimated by Mr. Thomas as the total revenue (from all sources) at Akbar's death. But this appears very doubtful. Hawkins' notion that Jahángir got fifty *krors* of rupees from the land alone may be at once set aside as a monstrous exaggeration. Mr. Thomas ("Revenue Resources," p. 23) thinks that Hawkins had means of knowing the truth, but admits in a foot-note that the estimate must have included customs, taxes, and all other miscellaneous receipts. But Hawkins declares that his estimate applies to the land alone—"the king's yearly income of his crown-land"—which seems to dispose of his claim to be considered an authority. It is further to be remarked that Coryat, the eccentric but inquisitive vicar of Odcombe, who was in India at the same time, declared that the revenue (q.d. from land?) was only "forty millions of crowns of six shillings each" (£12,000,000), which tallies very fairly with the account in the "Ain." The author of the "Badshahnáma" in the next reign put the revenue of the whole empire at £22,000,000, giving details for each province of which that forms the total. He states that this was twenty years after

the emperor's accession, at which time the income was only £17,800,000. The latter estimate is confirmed by the entirely independent testimony of Ramusio. Valuable MS. records cited by Mr. Thomas ("Revenue Resources," pp. 33-35) give £24,056,114 as the net return in the early years of Aurungzeb (1654-5); the returns for later years come to over £34,000,000, which Manucci raises to £38,000,000, according to Mr. Thomas. But, as he says that the 38 krors were equal to 580,000,000 French livres, it is very likely that at that time the exchange was not at the original par of two shillings. Lastly, in Harris's "Voyages" is an estimate, which Mr. Thomas seems to value highly, from which it would appear that the total was £30,179,686 in the last years.

The following is the conspectus of these estimates (rejecting those of Hawkins and Carreri which are apparently extravagant). It is possible that the higher totals express the mixed totals or *whole* of the *fixed* revenues, whether from land or customs and poll-tax, though they can throw no light on what may be termed "accidental items," gifts, fines, escheats, and such like.

CONSPECTUS OF LAND REVENUE.

Akbar—about £10,000,000.

Jahángir—from £12,000,000 (Coryat) to £17,500,000.

Shahjáhán—about £22,000,000.

Aurungzeb—from £24,056,114 to £34,000,000, but declining in the last year or two to £30,179,686.

It must be confessed that the subject is obscure and the evidence conflicting. But, to those who are in favour of the higher estimates, it may be suggested that, in the first place, the "Ain" is not likely to have been far wrong, and that ten millions may very safely be taken as a starting-point for the income of the empire. If, in the height of Aurungzeb's power, and when he was wringing a new poll-tax from the bulk of the population, and was vigilantly administering nearly the whole of the Deccan, in addition to the heritage of his fathers, he more than tripled the revenue of 1596, he did as much as could be expected from the ablest financier. It will be seen that I do not believe the estimate of £80,000,000 which Mr. Thomas seems disposed to accept upon European testimony. European travellers in those days saw Eastern matters—especially the wealth of India—through convex glasses.