

to the obscure records of the Gangetic Delta, and in priority of date bring us more than 20 years nearer to the first occupation of Bengal by Muhammad Bakhtyár *Khilji* in 600 A.H. As in the larger and almost-regal treasure trove of Kooch Bihár, the specimens in the present instance prove to be essentially of home or indigenous fabric. With the exception of a single northern piece of the supreme *Sultán* of India, they are one and all the produce of the mints of Bengal proper, and mark with singular fidelity the varied incidents of the alternate rise and fall of the provincial governors during the unsettled relations existing between suzerain and vassal from A.H. 614 to 627, when Altamsh came into real and effectual possession of the south-eastern portion of his Empire.

One of the most instructive facts disclosed by these few pieces is, that the rich and comparatively undisturbed territory of Bengal felt the want of a supply of *silver* money long before a similar demand arose in the harassed provinces of the north-west. The southern coins date, as far as can be seen, some nine years prior to Altamsh's earliest effort at a silver coinage in his northern dominions; and even Rizíah's silver money of deferred date bears every token of exclusive manufacture in the subordinate Lakhnautí mint.

I have already quoted the testimony of Minháj-us-Siráj, to the effect, that on the first conquest of Bengal by the Muslims, they found no metallic or other circulating media of exchange except that supplied by *cowries*;¹ even the compromise of the mixed silver and copper *jitals* of the various Hindú dynasties of the central Rájput tribes was unknown in the sea-board marts of the south.

The chronicles of the proximate kingdom of Orissa, whose boundaries touched if they did not often trench upon the ancient kingdom of Gaur,² explain how so infinitesimal

¹ J.R.A.S. (N.S.) II., p. 148. See also Hamilton's *Hindustán*, i., p. 40.

² Mr. Stirling says, under the Ganga Vansa line, for a period of nearly four centuries (from A.D. 1132), the boundaries of the Ráj of Orissa may be stated as follows: . . . "North, a line drawn from the Tribeni or Triveni ghat above Húgli, through Bisherpár, to the frontier of Patkúm: East, the river Húgli and the sea."—*As. Res.* xv., p. 164. Hunter, i., p. 280. "To the north of the mouth of the Saraswatí lies the broad and high Tribeni Ghát, a magnificent flight of steps,