

CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIES

Old-time Industries

The weavers of Khairabad (which was one of the famous centres of cloth manufacture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) have long been noted for their workmanship. In 1640 the English East India Company established a factory in Lucknow for the supply of handloom fabrics woven in Khairabad and Daryabad to England, France, Holland and some other European countries and to East Africa and East Asia. European merchants described the cloth prepared in this centre as the 'Kerriabauds'. The cotton industry continued to flourish in the first half of the eighteenth century also and Khairabad remained a centre for the manufacture of calico, chintz and *gazi* (white coarse cloth). That this place continued to be well known for this particular industry till the occupation of the district by the British in 1856, is evident from *Papers Relating to the Administration of Oude* (1861), which mentions (on page 102) that the city had 889 cloth merchants and 6,949 *rafugars* (darners), *ajulahas* (weavers), *chhipis* (printers), *dhunias* (carders), dyers, etc., all connected with cotton and the cottonyarn industry. In those days cotton was grown in plenty in the district. Cotton weaving and printing were also carried on in Biswan and a few other places. The traditional old looms were in use, but much of the handloom trade in the district, in the opening years of the present century, depended on the yarn imported from Ahmedabad, Kanpur and Agra. A survey made in 1922 revealed that 10,23,583 yards of *tapli* check and *garha* cloth were sent from Sitapur to the neighbouring districts of Kheri and Lucknow.

Biswan is an old centre for the manufacture of *tazias* which are even now in great demand during Muharram. In 1922, about 20,000 *tazias* were sold, the prices ranging from 50 nP. to Rs 200 per piece. It was also well known for its pottery, a speciality being the making of beautiful *gharas* (clay pots) and other vessels of common use on which floral designs were painted on a dark green ground with great skill. They had reached such a high excellence that Bandu, an artisan of Biswan, was awarded a bronze medal for his artistry in pottery at the Empire Exhibition held in London in 1886. Pottery was also manufactured in Mahrajnagar and Qutubnagar but the pottery manufactured in this district does not seem to have been exported and was chiefly meant for presentation purposes. Utensils of an alloy of copper, zinc and lead were made not only in this place but in

